

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Monday, November 30, 2009 — 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Disability Awareness Week and International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Hon. Mr. Hart: I rise today in this House to ask my colleagues to join with me in celebrating this week as Disability Awareness Week in the Yukon. This week continues the tradition of the National Access Awareness Week, first established in 1988 to promote better community access for persons with disabilities.

Cette semaine s'inscrit dans la tradition de la Semaine nationale pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées, qui a été lancée en 1988 afin d'améliorer la participation de ces personnes à la vie en société.

And on Thursday, December 3, we will celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This day is held annually to increase understanding of issues around disabilities and attention to the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

It is time for all of us to stop and reflect on the positive things that can happen when we integrate persons with disabilities into every aspect of our political, social, economic, and cultural life. Globally, almost one in 10 persons is a person living with a disability. The World Health Organization estimates that number to be 600 million worldwide.

Those who are experts in this area tell us that disability is increasingly seen now as a social issue, which is not only based on medical reasons.

Disabled Peoples International defines disability as “the interaction between the person with the impairment and the environmental and attitudinal barriers he or she may face. Therefore, the reasons for the disability are always complex and can only be understood within the context of the society and cultures.”

The theme for this year's day is, “Celebrating empowerment through independence, inclusivity and choice” and speaks to the need to recognize and build on commitments to empowerment.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, many people with disabilities continue to face barriers to participation in their communities and are often forced to live on the margins of society. They often face stigma and discrimination and are routinely denied basic rights such as food, education, employment, access to health and reproductive health services.

Monsieur le Président, il est triste de penser que bien des personnes handicapées ont encore de la difficulté à participer à la vie de leur collectivité et sont souvent obligées de vivre en marge de la société. Elles sont souvent victimes de rejet et de discrimination, et se voient refuser des droits fondamentaux comme la nourriture, l'éducation, l'emploi et l'accès à des soins de santé et de reproduction.

Often the public and the decision makers are unaware of the number of people living with disabilities and impairments. Fortunately here in the Yukon, we have a number of excellent organizations that bring these issues to the foreground. Only last week a forum was held where members of the Whitehorse disability community and their advocates could speak out on issues they feel need to be addressed. This week, the Yukon Council on Disability will mark the day with a screening of the National Film Board of Canada and the People First of Canada film, *The Freedom Tour*.

This documentary is said to capture first-hand the stories of life in institutions for people labelled with intellectual disabilities. We are fortunate that our community has such strong and vocal advocates because their speaking out will make our community a more inclusive and better one.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci.

Mr. Mitchell: I rise today on behalf of the Official Opposition to support the proclamation for recognizing this week in the Yukon as Disability Awareness Week and also to pay tribute to International Day of Persons with Disabilities this Thursday, December 3, 2009.

Je me lève aujourd'hui à au nom de l'opposition officielle pour soutenir la proclamation pour identifier cette semaine dans le Yukon en tant que semaine de conscience d'incapacités et pour rendre également hommage au jour international des personnes avec des incapacités le jeudi 3 décembre 2009.

This Thursday, the Yukon Council on Disability is partnering with the Yukon Association for Community Living and People First Canada in bringing the 53-minute documentary entitled *The Freedom Tour: The Documentary* to the Beringia Centre. *The Freedom Tour* tells the story of People First Canada members fighting for the right of all people who are labelled with an intellectual disability to live in the community, not in institutions. This documentary is being offered free of charge and showing times are 1:30, 2:30, and 7:00 p.m.

The 2009 theme of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities is, “Making the millennium development goals inclusive: empowerment of persons with disabilities and their communities around the world”.

The United Nations' aim is to take this day to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the inclusion of persons with disabilities in every aspect of life.

Approximately 10 percent of the world's population, or 600 million persons, live with disabilities. Recent studies indicate that persons with disabilities constitute up to 20 percent of the population living in poverty in developing countries. For persons with disabilities, as for all persons, the denial of one

right can lead to the denial of other rights and opportunities throughout their lives.

As Canadians, we are fortunate that Canada has made considerable progress in all areas of disability. But we are also well aware that more can still be done to make improvements on many fronts. In the Yukon, we have the Yukon Council on Disability, which is a non-profit society, consisting of a volunteer board with cross-disability representation. The Yukon Council on Disability's mission statement is: "To be a resource for Yukoners with disABILITIES on issues of equity, community awareness, government policy and employment". The guidebook, *Services for People with disABILITIES*, is available on their website, ycod.yk.ca.

Along with the Yukon Council on Disability, the Yukon is fortunate to have a number of resources, such as Acquired Brain Injury Society of the Yukon, Challenge, Child Development Centre, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon, Learning Disabilities Association, Second Opinion Society, Autism Yukon, Yukon Association of Community Living, Teegatha'Oh Zheh, and Yukon Literacy Council, to name just a few, and I'm sure that that list is not all-inclusive.

We thank the many front-line workers, service providers, and volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of all differently abled, to make a difference in their lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

Mr. Cardiff: I rise on behalf of the NDP caucus to pay tribute to Disability Awareness Week and International Day of Disabled Persons. Ten percent of the world's population — 650 million people live with disabilities. They are disabled as a result of mental, physical or sensory impairment. Their lives are often limited by physical or social barriers. Although there are many proclamations and organizations worldwide and in Canada that support persons with disabilities, they still face many problems. Equality, full participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in society is an objective we fall far short of achieving.

Full employment and income security are major concerns of persons with disabilities. Only 41 percent of working-age adults with disabilities have jobs and many of the jobs are not full time; 55 percent of them live in poverty. Only two-thirds of adults with disabilities have post-secondary education, compared with adults without disabilities. People with disabilities experience a much higher rate of family violence and physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Millions of women worldwide acquire disabilities as a result of complications during pregnancy or childbirth. Persons with intellectual and learning disabilities, such as FASD, have even more barriers to overcome. Too many still remain in institutions and jails rather than in family homes. Community supports such as home care and independent living are needed to bring them home and to have them become productive citizens. Around the world, persons with intellectual disabilities are routinely denied basic rights such as equal recognition before the law and legal capacity, freedoms of expression and opinion, and the right to participate in political and public life. In Canada, many of these rights are withheld from persons with intel-

lectual disabilities through systemic structures that deny their abilities in the name of protection.

Canada signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in March 2007, although it has yet to ratify it. The continued marginalization of persons with disabilities shows us that we must strengthen capacities of communities to include and support people with disabilities in all aspects of community life, and we must urge the federal government to ratify and fully implement the convention.

A policy of inclusion is imperative for persons with disabilities. In the Yukon there are many non-government organizations working with persons with disabilities, such as the Council on Disability, Community Living, Learning Disabilities Association, People First Society and the Fetal Alcohol Society, as well as many others. They should be commended, and they should be supported wholeheartedly in their efforts to include persons with disabilities in our community.

Thank you.

In recognition of the Yukon tartan

Mr. Inverarity: I rise today on behalf of the House to pay tribute to the 25th anniversary of the Yukon tartan. The Yukon tartan was designed by Janet Couture, originally of Watson Lake, in 1965. The tartan was first proposed as the official territorial tartan for the 1967 Canadian centennial celebrations. Unfortunately, at the time it was not accepted by Lord Lyon, King of Arms, which was the governing body of the registration of tartans. It wasn't until 1984 that Lord Lyon King of Arms, of Her Majesty's new registry in Edinburgh, accepted the Yukon tartan as a non-traditional addition to the world's official tartans. That year, on November 29, the *Yukon Tartan Act* was passed by this Yukon Legislative Assembly.

The Yukon tartan has been the official icon of Yukon, along with the coat of arms, the raven and fireweed, Mr. Speaker, for 25 years. For those of you who lived in the Yukon in the 1980s, the Hougen's store was the first retailer of the tartan, which was being made by West Coast Woolen Mills in B.C. Subsequently the Stitch in Time fabric store took over the retailing of the tartan and, when they closed, Yukoners were unable to get the Yukon tartan. In the past few years it was found that West Coast Woolen Mills were no longer weaving the tartan due to lack of demand. Fortunately, another mill in B.C. was willing to weave the Yukon tartan and it is again available.

The description of the Yukon's official tartan is as follows: the crystalline blue background represents Yukon sky; the green symbolizes the territory's forests; the white symbolizes snow; the yellow suggest Yukon gold; the magenta is the colour of fireweed, the Yukon's floral emblem; and the dark blue represents the mountains. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the *Yukon Tartan Act*, the tartan not only suggests traditional icons but now it is a symbol representing the diverse cultures of the Yukon population that we could all be proud of.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Janet Couture for her foresightedness in designing our Yukon tartan. Janet is sitting in the gallery today with her granddaughter Jody, and I'd ask my colleagues here to give her a welcome today.

Applause

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the Assembly display the tartan at official events and gatherings. To better achieve this goal, I would like — with the Speaker's permission — to give each member a sample set of four coasters that I brought today made from the Yukon tartan. These coasters were made by Lois Gillis, a local craftsperson and tartan champion who is also in the gallery with her husband David. I'd like to welcome them also today.

Lois has been instrumental in raising the Yukon tartan to its current revived status as a symbol of Yukon heritage. Later today I will be tabling a notice of motion encouraging the Yukon government to make the year 2010 the year of the tartan.

I would encourage members of this House to honour the diverse culture of Yukon peoples as represented by the Yukon tartan. Mr. Speaker, I would also ask Yukon's cultural industry to take up the cry of the tartan by perhaps hosting a Yukon Tattoo in 2010, similar to the great Edinburgh Military Tattoo, or the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo. Such events draw people from all walks of life to celebrate cultural diversity. The tartan is a symbol of these events.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Inverarity: I have one other person to introduce today. In the House is my wife, Mary, who's along today with Lois and Dave and Janet and Jody.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Returns or documents for tabling.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Hardy: I have for tabling a letter from the Yukon Chamber of Commerce in support of credit union legislation.

I also have for tabling a letter from the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, supporting legislation to allow a credit union in the Yukon.

I have another letter of support from the Yukon Federation of Labour, supporting credit union legislation in the Yukon. I'm sure everybody in here knows they represent a large proportion of our society.

Speaker: Are there any further documents for tabling?
Reports of committees.
Are there any petitions?

PETITIONS

Mr. Hardy: I have for tabling a petition, summed up very simply as this: "The undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to support legislation which will enable development of a credit union in Yukon."

Speaker: Are there any further petitions for presentation?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Fairclough: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to respect local decision-making bodies and their recommendations by providing adequate justification for when recommendations from these bodies are rejected.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to support and respect Yukon boards, committees and commissions as a valuable resource to government and all Yukoners and, in so doing, provide justification for why recommendations from the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board with regard to a two-year moratorium on sheep hunting on Pilot Mountain were rejected.

Mr. Inverarity: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to declare 2010 the Year of the Yukon Tartan by:

- (1) educating Yukoners on the traditions of the Yukon tartan;
- (2) promoting the Yukon tartan at Yukon social and cultural events;
- (3) featuring the Yukon tartan at the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver;
- (4) encouraging all MLAs to wear or display the Yukon tartan at events or gatherings throughout the year; and
- (5) encouraging Yukon's cultural industries to host an annual Yukon Tattoo to showcase our diverse culture and heritage, similar to the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo.

Mr. Cardiff: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the minister responsible for consumer protection to raise with his federal counterpart in Ottawa, at the earliest possible opportunity, the inadequacy of the proposed voluntary code of conduct for companies that issue consumer credit and debit cards, and to press the Government of Canada to bring forward real proposals, such as lowering interest rates and hidden costs related to using credit and debit cards to assist debt-burdened Canadians.

Mr. Hardy: I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to introduce legislation in the Legislative Assembly within the next calendar year enabling the establishment of credit unions in the territory.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House calls on the Government of Canada to address the planet's defining crisis, climate change, through decisive action including but not limited to:

(1) committing to a medium-range target to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to a level that is 25 percent below the 1990 level by the year 2020;

(2) committing to a long-term target to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions to a level that is 80 percent below the 1990 level by the year 2050;

(3) reporting frequently to Parliament on the success of proposed measures to meet targets;

(4) establishing a carbon tax and cap-and-trade system;

(5) putting a moratorium on any new tar sands developments; and

(6) creating a series of incentive programs to lower fossil fuel consumption.

Mr. Cathers: I rise today to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Environment to continue working together to improve regulatory efficiency and effectiveness, including identifying further opportunities to make operational improvements related to inspections and testing.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motion?
Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre security and safety

Mr. Elias: I have a question for the Justice minister. Last Thursday, staff and inmates were endangered at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. One inmate deliberately set a fire in his segregation cell and another managed to assault four officers while they tried to evacuate him from the area. On top of that, several guards and two inmates had to be taken to hospital for smoke inhalation.

On the Department of Justice website, the first objective listed for the Whitehorse Correctional Centre is to provide a safe and secure environment for staff and inmates. When staff and inmates are assaulted and made ill, it's hard to call the correctional centre a safe and secure environment. This shouldn't have happened and Yukoners have a right to know. What is the government doing to make sure the WCC staff and inmates are not endangered like this again?

Hon. Ms. Horne: Mr. Speaker, this is an issue — I will not speak about an individual case at WCC. I can say to this House that the staff are trained; we have extensive training for staff. We have training for the inmates in emergency cases.

Mr. Elias: According to the Department of Justice, the correctional centre has about 80 staff with about 50 of those being correctional officers. Correctional staff has already raised concerns about institutionalized understaffing. They say it creates dangerous conditions for staff and inmates. There are 50 correctional officers in total; presumably a much smaller number of them were actually working last Thursday. That day, four of them were assaulted and several more had to be treated

for smoke inhalation. Corrections staff has already given this government ample warning about the dangers of understaffing.

When is this government going to make sure that the correctional centre staff have the support they need to do their jobs?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I said, our staff is well-trained in protecting themselves and the inmates.

We have certain circumstances where the staff — for instance, the swine flu — may be down some days, but we have auxiliaries who do come in. As far as I know, we are not understaffed. Safety of the inmates and the workers is very important to this government.

Mr. Elias: For years now, Whitehorse Correctional Centre staff have been worried about their working conditions. They warn that understaffing creates dangerous conditions for staff and inmates. They warn that auxiliary staff are overused without the benefit of making them permanent full-time staff. The correctional centre is not the place to cut corners. The safety of our correctional officers is not subject to scrimping.

Last week correctional staff were assaulted. Some had to be taken to hospital. Is this government finally going to step up to its responsibilities and provide that safe and secure environment promised to WCC employees and inmates?

Hon. Ms. Horne: In the last few years, we've had a recruitment drive. I believe we have hired 12 new female staff recently. In the past few years, our training is much more extensive. We have conditions that happen that are beyond what is normal. Even these emergency cases are covered with the staff.

Question re: Energy project cost overruns

Mr. McRobb: We've had a number of discussions in this House about the fact this Yukon Party government has had a hard time bringing capital projects in on budget. Yukoners know the Auditor General of Canada has also criticized this government for its habit of running up costs on projects. We've heard about the new correctional centre cost overrun which, under the Yukon Party, has skyrocketed from \$30 million to \$67 million.

Now comes word about the Carmacks-Stewart power line. The Yukon Party government promised in 2005 this project would come in at \$31 million. We've now heard that the final cost is projected to be some \$70 million. We know this government had a lot to say about the cost overruns on the Mayo-Dawson line, and rightly so. It went well overbudget, but this government promised it would do better.

Will the minister confirm for the record the latest projected cost of the Carmacks-Stewart power line?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: First we have to once again provide some corrections for the Member for Kluane. The reference of a cost overrun in the correctional centre is incorrect. Our project, this government's project, for Whitehorse Correctional Centre is dramatically different from the former Liberal warehouse.

Whitehorse corrections is dramatically different from the formal Liberal warehouse. We are building a multi-purpose facility to deal with corrections in the territory as envisioned under correction reform. Secondly, I think the CEO of the En-

ergy Corporation has been very clear on the matter of the second phase of the connector to the Mayo-Dawson line from Carmacks.

In 2005 there were some very preliminary estimates for the next extension from Pelly to the Mayo-Dawson line. Now that the corporation has had a chance to actually advance the project, they are now dealing with more current, updated numbers. Furthermore, the time lapse from 2005 to today can be calculated based on an annual increase in cost of materials and supplies. Once again, the member is making correlations to matters that are inconsistent.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Speaker, those same excuses apply to the Mayo-Dawson line. That line didn't begin construction until about 2000, and I was at a hearing in 1992 when those preliminary estimates were given — some eight years before. Now, this government promised repeatedly that such cost overruns would never happen again. Well, Mayo-Dawson was budgeted for \$27 million and it ended up at \$40 million.

Under the Yukon Party, the Carmacks-Stewart line has skyrocketed from \$31 million to \$70 million. The cost overruns for this project, under this government's watch, are substantially higher.

Can the minister responsible explain how this was allowed to happen under his watch?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Again, Mr. Speaker, there are distinct differences between how this government manages projects in the area of energy and the former Liberal government. We did not circumvent the Yukon Utilities Board process. In fact, under this government's watch, all projects \$3 million and over will be taken before the Yukon Utilities Board, as will the Mayo B project be taken before the Yukon Utilities Board and reviewed under section 3 of the act itself. There are differences. Once again, this is not skyrocketing costs. This is a project that we are investing in the best interests of the Yukon public, because the alternative is the skyrocketing cost of diesel.

Mr. McRobb: The Premier cannot blame the Yukon Utilities Board for this skyrocketing cost overrun. The buck stops at his desk. When the Mayo-Dawson project came in overbudget, the Yukon Party government called in the Auditor General of Canada to investigate. The Auditor General made several recommendations, and the government was quick to say they would be followed. Yukoners could rest assured any future power projects would come in on budget, they said, but the evidence indicates otherwise. The Yukon Party government promised the new Carmacks-Stewart power line would cost \$31 million. The latest figure is \$70 million. This sounds like yet another undertaking for the Auditor General. How did this government possibly allow these costs to get so out of hand?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The Official Opposition, when convenient, loves to refer to the Auditor General, but let me remind the member opposite that the Auditor General's work those many years ago had a lot more to do than simply the Mayo-Dawson transmission line. The member will recall the issues around the Energy Solutions Centre and other matters. So again, the member is incorrect. Let me once again stress to the member that the Official Opposition should recognize when they are presenting information in this House that is inconsis-

tent with the facts. This is not a skyrocketing cost. Many years ago there was a preliminary estimate on the second phase of the Mayo B project; we are going before the Utilities Board — that is, the Energy Corporation.

We have a very solid partnership with Canada, and the total project is well in excess of \$160 million to \$170 million — yet to be determined, because they're still working on the final cost of other facets of this project. The bottom line is that the skyrocketing costs will be in the use of diesel without Mayo B and, therefore, a skyrocketing cost in ratepayers' costs for electricity.

Question re: Credit unions

Mr. Hardy: One in three Canadians use a credit union. Credit unions are owned by and accountable to their members. As a result, both the money invested in them and profits they generate tend to stay in the local economy. The Canadian credit union system has established a record of sound, prudent financial management.

Unfortunately, that can't be said of the financial institutions that created worldwide fiscal meltdown with their reckless actions.

The Yukon is the only place in Canada without a credit union. Does the Finance minister agree that credit unions provide many important and beneficial financial services that would be an asset for Yukon and Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I certainly agree with the Leader of the Third Party that, in other jurisdictions, credit unions do provide a service. I want to remind the member that the Yukon did at one time actually have a credit union. To know where we're going, we at least have to reflect on where we've been.

At that time, it wasn't a very good experience for the Yukon, and indeed it cost the Yukon taxpayer considerable money when the credit union closed. But I'm more than willing to listen to the Leader of the Third Party — his views and ideas around credit unions. We have a fairly solid base of banking institutions in the Yukon, and the member knows full well that in the global situation Canada's financial institutions — Canada's banks — were in much better shape than the rest of the banks around the world.

Mr. Hardy: The business decisions that credit unions make are based on models of sustainability. Credit unions also help people get into their own homes by providing education, unconventional financing, below-market housing developments, and advocacy — all things that the other banks aren't providing.

Yukon's first and only credit union was forced to close its doors; that is true. There has not been any legislation here to allow any credit union since 1980, which I think is ridiculous punishment. I was a member of that credit union, as a young man, and I'm still a member of a credit union because I want to be part of a credit union. I think the people in this territory also want to have that option of going to a credit union.

So will the Yukon government introduce legislation to enable credit unions to operate once again in Yukon? Just remove the barrier, and let's see what happens.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: We must be very careful on this matter, Mr. Speaker, because of the last experience. The other

term the member used is credit union delve into “unconventional financing.” Well, unconventional financing is really what contributed to the global financial meltdown.

I said the government is more than willing to listen to the Leader of the Third Party and any Yukoner who has ideas and views about credit unions. However, today the member is correct that there is no legislative framework to establish credit unions in the Yukon. We have a solid foundation of banking institutions here in the Yukon, and of course the government will be always monitoring and endeavour to be in tune with what the public believes to be a priority. I will let the member continue presenting his views about credit unions.

Mr. Hardy: The member opposite knows full well I have been presenting my views about credit unions for a long time. When we were colleagues I was doing the same thing. We know the debate that is happening on the floor very well. I just want to move it forward.

ABCs are what I would call unconventional investments and, frankly, those banks should be shut down that were involved in that but they still survived.

Many Yukoners signed the petition I tabled already. The Yukon Federation of Labour represents over 4,000 people and signed a letter in support of this. The Whitehorse and Yukon chambers of commerce, which represent businesses, have said we need more options in this area — options need to be available to small business in financing, which would be very welcome in the growth of this territory. I’ve read a motion into the record, calling on the Yukon government to do this.

Will the government table legislation in 2010 or not?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: One should never say never, but I can tell the member, based on the work we are embarking on as a government and as a Legislative Assembly, by 2010 to have legislation like this is probably not a reality.

Secondly, there is the issue of access to financing. The government today has a number of initiatives with banks that allow for that — whether it’s microloan or venture loan guarantee, or the initiative we have for risk capital with Dana Naye Ventures, based on collecting past loans, delinquent loans, on behalf of the Yukon taxpayer — actually collecting those loans.

Again, the government side and I will always listen to the members opposite presenting their ideas. I’m sure the member is going to want to debate the motion tabled today and the government will be very diligent in its response to the petition that the member brought forward.

Question re: Climate change

Mr. Hardy: Mr. Speaker, I can assure you, I’ll be knocking on the minister’s door very soon.

This question is addressed to the Minister of Environment. On Monday the minister said, “I always try to challenge individuals that the cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of acting.” We know that she just came back from a meeting in Ottawa with the federal Minister of Environment and other environment ministers to discuss Canada’s extremely shameful plans for Copenhagen. Did the minister challenge the federal minister to do more on climate change and will she share with the Yukon people the position she took on her recent trip to Ottawa?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Environment, I took the opportunity to certainly appear before the Minister of Environment from Canada to hear the Government of Canada’s position and overall objectives on their go-forward approach to the Copenhagen negotiations that will be taking place next month. Indeed, it was an opportunity for each of us as respective jurisdictions to put forward our concerns and our priorities for going forward.

Mr. Speaker, I very much put forward on the record that, indeed, Canada has to become more decisive when it comes to taking action and that, in fact, we cannot afford to wait for other jurisdictions, such as the United States or China — that, in fact, we do have to take decisive action and that Canada ought to be more ambitious in its overall targets going forward to Copenhagen. Also, Canada ought to have a domestic plan for taking action on climate change and certainly Canada needs to support the northern territories particularly, which are experiencing climate change at its very best, in terms of degradation of our infrastructure and impacts on our wildlife, forests and so forth.

Mr. Hardy: Okay, Mr. Speaker, that really didn’t tell me what the real position of the Yukon or the minister is. A new poll says most Canadians think that climate change is the planet’s defining crisis. Deep thinkers on the issue say that decisive action on cutting emissions to prevent temperature increases is needed now, but the Prime Minister is going for modest, achievable targets. There will be no action on perhaps the number one emissions issue in Canada; namely, the tar sands.

Unless there is a policy U-turn, Canada’s modest plans will have us branded, as it was in Poznań, a “climate villain”. This will happen at Copenhagen.

We saw it in Poznań last year; my colleague will be seeing it in Copenhagen this year. Is the minister providing her support to the federal government’s modest proposal on this plan to fight this crisis, or is she going to deliver a separate message?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Respecting that Canada is the negotiator for Canada, not the Yukon and not the provinces and territories, I have, however, made it abundantly clear that it is the subnational governments — our provinces and territories, states and regions all across the world, of which there are several organizations; and we belong to a couple — who will take action, regardless of what Canada does or does not do, regardless what the United States does or does not do. In fact, it is up to the subnational governments and to those who will be contributing up to 85 percent of the required action to meet the United Nations targets.

Mr. Hardy: When it comes to strong positions on climate change, I think the children and youth of the territory are leading, while the politicians are lagging behind. They’re organizing panel discussions and demonstrations — there was another one today — because they are concerned about the future. Last week we heard a lot of platitudes from many government members. Some of the statements were downright condescending and minimized the serious problem we face for our survival on this planet.

When I mentioned this, the Premier summed it up in reply to me with this nugget of denial. He cautioned me that we should not get into a situation where we're predicting the end of the world. Well, the world may not end, but maybe our participation on it will. Definitely the suffering will be huge. The federal government seems to be prepared to let Canadians and the world down.

Is this the message that the Yukon Environment minister is going to take to Copenhagen by backing the federal government?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I think the member should read my preliminary response to his initial question and go over the Blues and, by all means, I would be pleased to send him a copy of that, but again that's exactly why Yukon is going to Copenhagen. That is exactly why we'll be joining our two northern territories and counterparts and why I have invited members of the opposition, including members of the New Democrat caucus, as well as members of the Liberal caucus, as well as the Independent member across the way — to take Yukon's message to deliver to Canada and to deliver to the rest of the world. In fact, there are 191 other countries that will be sitting down to negotiate the next international treaty to replace Kyoto and our message will be clear — that the world does need to take decisive action, that the world does need to be ambitious in its targets and that we as subnational governments need to take action, which we are doing.

Yukon does in fact have a climate change action plan, which we launched earlier in February, based on our ability to do our part to mitigate and reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions, to improve our ability to adapt to climate change and to establish the Yukon as a northern leader when it comes to climate change research and innovation.

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre rebuild

Mr. McRobb: The minister responsible for Highways and Public Works has now had ample time to investigate the issue raised last week about construction concerns at the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre project. This matter was raised because Yukon contractors are abuzz with accounts of how the concrete footings may have been poured in the wrong location and, after the mistake was discovered, relocated and used to support the new structure. Of course, Mr. Speaker, if this actually did happen, it would be a serious breach of our contracting regulations and building practices, not to mention a bit of a waste of taxpayers' dollars. Furthermore, it might lead to yet another delay in the construction of this building. Can the minister confirm whether any of the relocated footings are being used in the new building?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I myself got many phone calls on this issue. These are issues brought to the floor of the House and we have to remember that people listen to this and this reflects on tradesmen and on professional people who work on that site. So I myself have got communications on this issue.

Now for the member opposite, nothing of the sort happened on that site. This truly is something that we should think about in this House when we mention inconsistencies like that, when we question professionalism in our tradesmen and on the

professional level. Again I remind you, Mr. Speaker, nothing of the sort happened on that site.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Speaker, the only person questioning trades people and identifying contractors by name is this minister. Now, where there is this much smoke, there is usually fire, so it's time to bring some flame to the minister's toes. The *Whitehorse Star* quoted a government spokesperson who said the crane was there to move a pre-cast manhole and a small section of test concrete. However, a local contractor was also quoted saying there were two cranes on the site. He believes the mystery crane was the same 100-tonne crane used to move the DC-3 weathervane at the airport.

Let's start there. Can the minister confirm whether this huge crane was on-site and, if so, what was it there to do?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Again I remind the member opposite, when we make comments on the floor of this House and take in professions, engineering and contractors and individuals who work on construction sites, people do listen to this. When people say things like what was put on the floor last Thursday, questioning the professionalism not only of individual Yukoners but engineers and contractors, they are very concerned.

There was nothing of the sort happening on that site at any time. That project is on time and on budget and they are highly professional.

Mr. McRobb: Again, it's this minister who is the only person questioning the trades people. He refused to confirm whether the large crane was on-site. I'm getting that feeling again that we're not quite getting the whole story here. I've heard now from several contractors who eye-witnessed the huge 100-tonne crane working on the building site. It's preposterous to believe such a huge crane would be required to move a manhole.

It has been brought to my attention that meticulous records are kept of all crane activity on this job — complete with lifting weights and times and pictures of these crane lifts. If the minister has investigated this matter as thoroughly as he promised, he will have already reviewed those records and pictures. So will he provide that information so that we can see it too? If he hasn't seen this information, will he undertake to provide it to us?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I have not reviewed the records of the crane, nor will I. We have highly professional people on-site there doing exactly what they are hired to do. We have Dominion Construction in partnership with Kwanlin Dun. We have contractors on-site and we have inspectors on-site. I will remind the member opposite the construction is on time and on budget, Mr. Speaker, and they aren't doing anything like the member opposite is insinuating on the floor of this House. It is handled very, very professionally. Those individuals are very professional and I apologize, I hope for all of us in this House, that these people would be brought on floor and have their expertise questioned.

Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation witnesses before Committee of the Whole

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Services. We have been asking

for more than a year for officials from the Yukon Hospital Corporation to appear in the Legislature.

Since the minister and the Premier decided to transfer responsibility for the new hospitals in Dawson and Watson Lake to the corporation, Yukoners are not getting answers about these new buildings. The minister has said, "Go ask the Hospital Corporation." We have been asking the minister to make those officials available to this Legislature, and his response has been no.

The government recently informed us that they have once again denied our request to have officials and the CAO of the Hospital Corporation appear this fall. Why is this government so unwilling to have officials answer questions about these new buildings and their \$50-million price tag?

Hon. Mr. Hart: We have been working with the Yukon Hospital Corporation with regard to the transfer of the Watson Lake facility to the Whitehorse Hospital Corporation and their management of that particular venue. We have a memorandum of understanding with them, and they are in charge of providing the good offer to all employees of the Watson Lake facility. That process is well underway. Offers have been made, and the staff has been given until early January to make a selection of one of those two facilities. Those staff who chose to go to the Hospital Corporation, and are able to go, will. Those who do not we will accommodate throughout the government.

Mr. Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, the minister answered a different question. I didn't ask him how the staffing arrangements were going to be made. We're trying to find out how we can ask questions in this House about these projects, because we can't ask them anywhere else. We've been asking now for a year to have these officials appear in the House. The government refuses. This is the open and accountable government that Yukoners currently have. The public has a lot of questions about the new hospital in Dawson and its location. They want to know why the cost of the new facility in Watson Lake has gone from \$5 million to \$25 million. They also want to know how much money has been borrowed to fund the construction of these new buildings and how much interest is going to be paid. Since the minister won't or can't answer those questions, we want to talk to someone who can.

Why is the minister refusing to make officials available?

Hon. Mr. Hart: In regard to getting the officials here in the House — I've stated previously on many occasions in public and as well as in this venue — here in the Legislature — that once the transfer is complete for Watson Lake, once the Yukon Hospital Corporation takes over that facility, once the offers are accepted by the employees and they take over management of that facility, then yes, I will bring the corporation into the House for their views, just like we do with the other corporations.

Mr. Mitchell: Last spring the minister told this House, "If and when the Hospital Corporation decides to take over the Watson Lake hospital, I will be more than happy to request the CAO and chair to come into the Legislative Assembly so they can sit here as witnesses for the members opposite

to respond to questions." He didn't say, "Once the transfer was complete"; he said "once the decision was made".

In July of this year, the government announced that, yes, the transfer was a go. They put out a news release to mark the occasion. I'll send it over in case the minister has forgotten. So the decision has been made, yet the government continues to refuse the request to have those officials appear.

There are some \$67-million worth of construction projects underway that have been transferred to the corporation, and we can't get any answers about them from this government. Why is the minister so reluctant to allow these officials to appear, or is this another decision that has been made in the corner office and the minister is just following orders?

Hon. Mr. Hart: Yes, he brought over the statement, and I did say that we would be transferring the facility to the Yukon Hospital Corporation, and we intend to once the agreement is passed. We have an agreement in place; it expires April 1, 2010.

As I just stated recently, the employees have until mid-January to make a decision on which firm they would like to work for, whether it's the Yukon government or whether it's the Yukon Hospital Corporation, and once the transfer does take place, yes, we will look at providing the CAO and the president, the chair, to come into the House for review.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Nordick): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 17, *Second Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 17 — Second Appropriation Act, 2009-10 — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 17, *Second Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Vote 53.

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — continued

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Chair, when we adjourned on Thursday of last week, I was going through my introduction and part of that was a commitment of \$110,000 that had been allocated for planning and development of a design option for the H.S. Bostock Geological Core Library project. Operated by the Yukon Geological Survey, the H.S. Bostock Geological Core Library is a facility that supports geoscience research in Yukon. The facility supports mineral exploration in Yukon and provides valuable information to enable stewardship and sustainable development of the territory's energy, mineral and land resources.

Originally built in 1972, the current facility houses the Yukon rock sample collection and over 120,000 metres of diamond-drill core donated by industry or recovered from field sites by the YGS. These cores are used by territorial, provincial, federal and university based geoscientists and other international geological surveys. Funding will allow for the identification of options to provide increased secure storage for current and future specimens, as well as for the storage of equipment required for geological field research. Both of these investments are built on this government's commitment, as outlined in the *Climate Change Action Plan*, to expand our research capacity and knowledge of northern climate change. Supported by the Arctic research infrastructure fund, these projects are fully recoverable from the Government of Canada.

Under Energy, Mines and Resources' sustainable resource division, there are two allocations in support of the Government of Yukon's joint land project with Teslin Tlingit Council. Working together to address the demand for recreational lots, the Yukon government and the Teslin Tlingit Council were pleased to recently offer 19 regional cottage lots for sale on Little Teslin Lake. Located just off the Alaska Highway between Squanga Lake and Johnsons Crossing, the 12 public land lots and seven lots on settlement land have been offered for lease through a joint lottery process. \$194,000 was allocated for the project for the necessary planning, survey and design work. This is funded under the northern strategy fund.

An additional \$390,000 has been allocated for the Little Teslin Lake roadwork necessary for this project. I am proud that this successful partnership with the Teslin Tlingit Council has resulted in the joint development of recreational lots on both public and settlement land. This project has set the stage for similar projects, providing the opportunity for more planned land development throughout the Yukon.

Following through with the transfer of the land planning branch to Energy, Mines and Resources this spring, this budget also includes \$85,000 revoted from Community Services to complete a number of area plans. This funding will enable Energy, Mines and Resources' land planning branch to continue work on the Carcross, Marsh Lake, West Dawson and Sunny-

dale local area plans. Local area plans help reduce land use conflicts. In the planning process, local area residents and First Nation governments work together to plan on how land in their local areas will be used in the future.

Also under sustainable resources is a \$100,000 budget increase for agricultural land development. The funding allocation supports the survey and planning work required to make an area of Government of Yukon's surplus land in the Mayo area available for agricultural development. We anticipate these agricultural lots will be offered to the public through an agriculture branch valued-added tender process within the coming year. This capital expenditure will be fully recoverable through the sale of these lots.

Capital recoveries in this budget are \$1,049,000 across a number of program areas within Energy, Mines and Resources. Overall, this supplementary budget will assist the government to reach its goals of building a strong and diversified natural resource economy. Energy, Mines and Resources continues to contribute to the Yukon government's goal to build a diversified economy that will benefit all Yukoners.

Despite the difficult economic times globally, we are seeing continued optimism in Yukon resource sectors and an increase in related economic activity. We are clearly seeing the results of our efforts to partner with First Nation governments, improve Yukon's investment climate, encourage private sector investment and provide regulatory certainty.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. McRobb: I would like to start by thanking all the hard working and dedicated employees in this very important department. I want to thank them for the excellent briefing we had. I would have hoped the minister would have sent over the materials that were requested during that briefing by now.

This department covers several major resource sectors of our economy: mining, forestry — although not much is happening in that sector — and oil and gas, and there are several other areas that are beginning to emerge within our economic structure in the territory.

The government has done some good work, Mr. Chair, but that said, there is a lot more it could be doing. I will just give the minister something to chew on here. The increase to this year's budget for the Yukon mining incentive program, or YMIP — when it was made, the minister said it was a one-time increase. I would suggest, Mr. Chair, this government has enough resources at its avail. This increase should be made long term and perhaps even elevated to the even \$2-million mark per year. Is that something the minister is going to let us know because the Yukon Party government would have already crafted next year's budget, or do we have to wait for his speech at Yukon night during the mineral exploration roundup in January?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Chair, these are certainly things we're looking at at the moment. It was very positive and it was received very well by industry. Certainly we would look very positively at renewing that program, but it's something that has to be addressed in the bigger picture, which is next year's budget.

Mr. McRobb: Well, Mr. Chair, what I put on the record already went there and further. I think what the minister said was a step backwards. So let's meet somewhere between and I'll ask him: what has been decided with respect to the future of this program during the internal budgeting process?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Chair, I've been very clear. It has been a very positive investment certainly from the department's side, but it's an issue that will have to be addressed in the bigger picture and that's next year's budget. I look forward to presenting it and working in the House here when that budget is produced. We have had very good feedback on it. As we look at it over the next period of time, we certainly will see the value in the investment.

That's all I can say to the member opposite. Next year's budget is in the middle of being put together as we speak, and it will certainly be one of the debates that we will bring forward.

Mr. McRobb: This government pre-announces its budget all the time. The minister let out the Mayo Road intersection announcement just last week, yet he won't say anything about YMIP now. Perhaps the Member for Lake Laberge will have greater success getting an announcement out of the minister.

Well, let's talk about something else. The Mayo B hydro project will be the most expensive energy project in Yukon history. Already, it's going through the YESAA process, and some announcements have been made regarding the capital cost structure and who's paying for what. I'd like to ask the minister if he can give us an outline of that.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Finance is working on this with Yukon Development Corporation so best save that question for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. McRobb: Well, it sounds like the minister is out of the loop. Here is the largest single energy project in Yukon history and the minister is content to let somebody else do his job. In the past, the minister has had no shortage of words to praise this project, yet he has a real shortage of words today when asked how it is going to be paid for. Mr. Chair, this is the more relevant question: how will this project be paid for?

Surely the minister must have at least talked to those in the know. He must know what the numbers are and who is paying for what. He is the Energy minister. What can he tell us about the numbers?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I remind the member opposite that the Finance department is dealing with this with Yukon Development Corporation. That would be a very important part of the dialogue — the Department of Finance.

As far as our partnership with the federal government, they're going to contribute \$71 million toward the construction of both projects, which is almost half of the anticipated total cost of construction. That's all I can say, Mr. Chair. At the moment, it's in the hands of Finance.

Mr. McRobb: I would suggest that for an Energy minister to say so little about the financing of the territory's largest ever project, at this point in time, so near to its development, really raises some serious questions about ministerial responsibility. All we heard from the minister was that the federal government has committed \$71 million. Mr. Chair, that's yester-

day's news. We would like to know who is going to pay the rest; surely the minister must know.

The government has indicated there won't be any net increase to power consumers from this project and the transmission line. I think it's a very reasonable question to ask: how will this government ensure that promise is kept? The minister should have been prepared to give us that information today. He knew his department was coming up for debate. This is Committee of the Whole for the supplementary budget, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, and he is the minister. He should know. He should have this information. Instead, he points to the Finance minister. Well, the Finance minister happens to be this minister's Cabinet colleague, and surely, they must be working closely together on these numbers for this biggest ever Yukon project.

I know the minister has the information close at hand. I'll ask him again. Will he put forward the numbers, in terms of project cost and who's paying the bill, along with an explanation of how consumers won't be paying more as a result of these projects?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I remind the member opposite that this question would be better served with the Minister of Finance, who is also responsible for the Yukon Energy Corporation and the Yukon Development Corporation. It would be better asked of him with those two responsibilities. It doesn't matter how many times the gentleman across the way gets up and asks me a question on this issue. The Minister of Finance, who is also responsible for Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation, would be better served to answer these questions. I am not privy to the information at the moment. All I have been aware of is that it is in the Department of Finance, working with Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon Development Corporation on exactly the question the member asked. So save the question for the minister who can answer the question properly and correctly at such a time when that minister is here answering questions.

Mr. McRobb: Well, Mr. Chair, this is hard to believe. The Energy, Mines and Resources minister is out of the loop on the Yukon's largest ever energy project — unbelievable.

Let's move on to something else. In 2007, the Yukon Party government promised that residential electric rates would go down, as the result of adding the Minto mine to the grid. In the new year, rates will go up, as a result of the Yukon Utilities Board decisions. The Yukon Utilities Board is postponing the complete rate discussions until a cost-of-service study and hearings slated for the spring are completed, and no reductions are expected in the short term.

All of this contradicts what this minister has said on numerous occasions. So I'll ask him to explain, on the record: given what is expected to happen, how can he possibly explain his previous commitment that power bills would decrease?

Hon. Mr. Lang: That's exactly why we put this in front of the Yukon Utilities Board — to make those kinds of decisions. This government also has prohibited any rebalancing of rates between classes until the end of 2012. We're doing our good work. We're not going to second-guess what comes out of the Utilities Board, Mr. Chair — that's not our job. That's an

independent board set up to do exactly what they've been charged to do.

Mr. McRobb: Did I hear the minister correctly? This government has prohibited any rebalancing of the rate classes until the year 2012? Can he expand on that for us?

Hon. Mr. Lang: The answer to that is yes.

Mr. McRobb: Can he expand on that for us? For instance, when was this direction given, how was it given and who gave it?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Okay, when we look at this from a consumer point of view, the reason we did that is that, without this prohibition, the residential class would be faced with a rate increase to bring the rates more in line with the cost of services. In other words, we're doing our good work in the government. We are going to work with the Yukon Utilities Board to do their good work and hopefully when the decision comes through — this coming summer — we will be privy to that information and then we can plan forward.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Chair, there are two sides to this issue. Sure, any decision would prevent the residential class from paying an amount closer to the true cost of service but it would also prevent the business class from paying less for the same reason. It is rather interesting the government has made this decision and even more interesting that the minister failed to indicate when the decision was made and who made it. So can he give us that information now?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Reminding the member opposite of June 2009, when this government put a residential customer electric rebate in place — the interim electrical rebate will provide residential electricity customers a maximum rebate of \$26.62 per month for the first 1,000 kilowatt hours. This rebate is an interim measure until the Yukon Utilities Board has completed a cost of service review. So this in place now until the Yukon Utilities Board comes back with their decisions.

This review will guide us in how we deal with electricity rates in the long term. The new IER is a significantly more effective means of supporting residential customers than the rate stabilization fund, which will be discontinued on July 1. Mr. Chair, this government is doing its work. We are waiting for the Yukon Utilities Board to come forward with their decisions and then at that point we will have to plan forward.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Chair, the minister is still avoiding the question. He said there is an order in place prohibiting the rebalancing of the rate class cost of service until 2012. Nowhere in that answer did he answer the question: when was this order given and who gave it? I will ask him again.

Hon. Mr. Lang: We don't have the exact dates but it was an order-in-council so that happened in the past. I am telling the gentleman across the way that we put the interim electrical rebate in place, which will benefit consumers — \$26.62 per month for the first 1,000 kilowatt hours. This rebate is an interim measure until the Yukon Utilities Board has completed a cost-of-service review. In other words, this is in place until the Yukon Utilities Board gets done their good work. This interim electrical rebate is a replacement for the rate stabilization fund, which was discontinued on July 1.

Mr. McRobb: The minister still didn't answer the question. That's all right — I've asked it three times; he had ample opportunity to respond with the answer; and instead he's re-announcing last summer's bill subsidy program, the temporary one that replaced the previous one that this Yukon Party government so vociferously attacked as a subsidy. Well, it was rather interesting to hear the announcement last summer about how the Yukon Party was suddenly transformed into believing that rate subsidies were good, after all it had said over the previous two or three sittings in this Assembly.

What's more, the minister stands up today and re-announces it three more times instead of answering the question about the 2012 deferral for the rebalancing of the rate class issue. Now that's really interesting. It seems this government will talk about anything regardless of what it is. Here the minister — when stuck for an answer today — kept going back to this bill subsidy program, even though it was something the government spoke about so condemnably in the past. That reminds me of the Premier referring to the joint position paper as evidence that somehow corroborates his view he wasn't working on a secret privatization scheme, or had any discussions whatsoever with the CEO and president of ATCO, the Alberta private company. Well, Mr. Chair, that paper clearly indicated the Premier was in discussions with that person, yet the Premier somehow turns the tables and uses that as evidence that he did not interfere.

There are countless other examples, as well, and it seems when the Yukon Party ministers are desperate, they will reach and grab for anything to use as an excuse. We just got another one now using a bill subsidy program as a reason why this government deferred the rate rebalancing question. This one, in terms of contradictions, Mr. Chair, rates even higher than the joint position paper one, because we heard in response to several questions last year how this government does not support bill subsidies.

It supports all consumers paying an amount closer to the actual cost of service in order to send proper price signals to the consumer which, in turn, would reduce electrical consumption and avoid environmental impacts and costly energy investments. We all remember that, right? Yes — several times. That was the mantra.

Now, today, I didn't even ask a question about the subsidy program. I asked a completely different question, but all we heard about from the minister was this new bill subsidy program, like it's the greatest thing since sliced bread. Well, how do you reconcile the minister's beliefs today with his beliefs yesterday? How do you possibly reconcile these two extreme opposite perspectives? Yesterday, the government stood mighty high on the principle of sending the proper price signals. Today, it stands on the principle of bill subsidies and doesn't want to speak about true cost-of-service reviews. Instead, it has deferred the decision until 2012 and won't talk about it.

Well, Mr. Chair, an old saying comes to mind and it goes something like this: "If you don't like my principles, I'll show you another set," and that's what the minister has done today.

He showed us a completely new set of principles, as I have already defined on the record. That's a complete turnaround.

This raises all kinds of questions, and the timing of this deferral is very curious indeed — 2012. That happens to be beyond the mandate of this current government. I wonder why this government would push the cost-of-service review beyond the next election. I don't think you have to be a rocket scientist to figure that one out, Mr. Chair; it was done for political purposes. It was done so this government wouldn't have to make the decision before the election — just like the electoral reform initiative, which is to report back in the fall of 2011.

Well, Mr. Chair, we know there will be a new government in place in the fall of 2011. It won't be this same government. We know that, so it seems that anything slightly controversial is getting pushed out as a problem for the next government to deal with.

Mr. Chair, this raises some serious questions. It was this Yukon Party government that campaigned to the voters of the territory on the bonus of continuity and experience during the last election campaign. "We can get it done," they ballyhooed.

Well, Mr. Chair, they are not getting it done; they are deferring anything of any political controversy for the next government to deal with, even though it appears we are two years away from the next election. That is not rolling up your sleeves. That is no benefit of continuity, and that is definitely not working with experience.

Mr. Chair, I think once voters understand what they got compared to what they were promised, they're going to want their votes back, because we're seeing a different story. This whole shift in principles from proper price signals "good" to proper price signals "bad" is shocking, absolutely shocking. This government made no mention of this before. It has the opportunity in this House to stand on a ministerial statement announcing a new policy. This minister could stand and announce the Yukon Party's new policy to support bill subsidies instead of sending proper price signals. In that ministerial statement, he could include the announcement that the Yukon Utilities Board's review for rebalancing the rate classes would be pushed out to 2012.

Well, did the minister do that? The answer is no, he didn't. Well, Mr. Chair, he should have. It is newsworthy. It certainly is substantial enough of an issue to bring to all members' attention in this House. Why didn't he do it?

The ministers stand up day after day and read tributes and other things. Why not deal with some of the more difficult issues — that is what this Assembly is for as well. It is not all love and kisses in here, Mr. Chair.

I think I will sum it up by saying that I am sure there are a lot of Yukoners who are disappointed in what this government has ended up doing versus what it promised it would do.

Let's switch issues again and talk about land disposition issues. Back on April 1 of this year, the land planning branch was transferred from Community Services to Energy, Mines and Resources, as reported on a local radio station. The Yukon Hospital Corporation said the Minto Park location in Dawson City was the only one offered by the Yukon government for the hospital. As we know, this location has not been popular with

residents and it reinforces the image of an autocratic administration, along with several other examples.

Now, we've also heard that certain members of this government basically gave residents the ultimatum: either it goes in this location, or it gets moved to Mayo. I would like to ask the minister responsible for lands in the territory for an explanation on this matter.

Hon. Mr. Lang: That was quite a 20 minutes. The responsibility government has is to put the facts on the floor, and I'll do just that for the member opposite.

The member opposite is wrong on every level on every question on everything he put on the floor here this afternoon — like he was with the contractors, the tradesmen, and the engineers in the treatment centre and correction facility we have up the hill being built at the moment.

So, Mr. Chair, the facts on energy are this: the Yukon Utilities Board has reviewed the Yukon Electrical Company Ltd. and Yukon Energy Corporation general rate application revenue requirement for phase 1 of the general rate application. Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon Electrical Company Ltd. reviewed revenue requirements and rate changes have been approved.

Now here is where he went completely wrong. Yukon Utilities Board has ordered a joint phase 2 rate design and cost-of-service study to be filed — not in year 2012 but in January of 2010.

Okay, here is a bit of an overview of what government is doing to help Yukoners with high energy costs. Yukon government shares the concerns of all Yukoners over the cost of energy, especially for people with limited disposable income. Market factors are the cause of high prices for heating and motor fuels. The member opposite is one of the members who voted against the expansion of our hydro facility in Aishihik, which would put more burden on the heating and motor fuel requirements of the territory.

Yukon favours increased energy efficiency as the best response to high energy prices and offers programs to help homeowners, businesses and communities reduce the cost of energy and maintenance by improving energy efficiency. The interim electrical rebate was announced in June 2009 and provides residential electricity customers a rebate on their electricity rates. This program replaces the rate stabilization fund. By the way, Mr. Chair, the member opposite forgot to mention on the floor here today, the rate stabilization fund came from the Energy Corporation. The interim electrical rebate comes from the government — completely different, Mr. Chair. It's not a burden on the corporation; it's a commitment by this government.

Many programs are offered through Yukon Housing Corporation and the Energy Solutions Centre to help reduce energy costs by improving energy efficiency. These include home repair program and rental rehabilitation programs, home energy evaluations, green house certification and green mortgages.

A green home is a house designed, built or upgraded and tested to meet high standards of energy efficiency and indoor air quality. Rebates for selected high-efficiency equipment include Energy Star home appliances, solar domestic hot water

systems, heating, ventilation equipment and low-emission boat motors. All these are programs put forward by this government. A regular vehicle emission clinic was held by the government — not held by the government — but certainly financed by the government; training courses for homeowners and industry; and energy-saving information and tips through the Yukon government websites, newspapers and radio announcements.

The Energy Solutions Centre works with communities and First Nations to improve energy efficiency in municipal operations. Yukon has the lowest motor fuel tax in Canada. No Yukon taxes are applied to home heating fuels or motor propane. Several industries are exempt from the fuel tax. Yukon surveys and publishes biweekly motor and home heating fuel prices to assist consumers in finding the lowest prices.

The pioneer utility grant provides assistance to eligible seniors. This grant is indexed to inflation, Mr. Chair. For 2009-10, it is approximately \$946.18 per qualified household unit in the Yukon.

The interim electrical rebate provides residential electricity customers a maximum rebate of \$26.62 per month for the first 1,000 kilowatt hours. Other Yukon initiatives with respect to reducing energy costs include the following: investing in electricity infrastructure; the expansion of the Mayo hydroelectric plant; the connection of northern and southern electrical grids and a third turbine at Aishihik; releasing the energy strategy for Yukon in January 2009 and the *Yukon Climate Change Action Plan* in February 2009; conducting research into better construction techniques and constructing Yukon government buildings and housing to high standards — LEED Silver for public buildings and super green for dwelling units; increasing the use of bioenergy for heating government facilities, thereby reducing public expenditures on energy; demonstrating the viability of biomass heating options; and increasing the market availability of local/imported biofuels.

As we move along here, phase 2 of the GRA — rate design and cost services are required to determine the appropriate rate for each class of customers and this is where the member opposite got lost. Currently the residential class pays about 80 percent of the cost of service. The commercial class — including municipalities and First Nations — pays about 110 percent. The government class pays about 140 percent. In other words, the residential class was only paying 80 percent of the cost of services for that class and was being subsidized by the government and the commercial classes. The principle of utility regulators across Canada, including the Yukon Utilities Board, is to have customers pay as close to 100 percent of the cost that is required to service those customers. However, rate rebalancing was prohibited by the Yukon until the end of 2012. Without this prohibition the residential class would be faced with a large rate increase to bring their rates more in line with their cost of services.

You can see, Mr. Chair, with all the data I put on the floor this afternoon and looking at the time this afternoon and where we are going with this — we are doing our work as a government, working with other departments and working with the Yukon Energy Solutions Centre, to make Yukoners aware of their energy costs, and we're also waiting patiently for the

Yukon Utilities Board to come up with their decisions this summer. The government is putting together the finances to put the resources together. Instead of having the rate stabilization fund, which came out of the corporation, there will be a contribution toward the consumer through the territorial government, which will be looked at when the Yukon Utilities Board comes back with their final decision, which hopefully will be this summer.

Another thing I would remind the member opposite, when I was looking at the petition put on the floor here by the Leader of the Official Opposition on the question of land planning or the hospital in Dawson City, I was interested to see a bunch of people from Copper Ridge on the list. They signed the petition for the new Dawson City hospital, which I found was interesting at the least and I'm sure that when we build a school in Copper Ridge, we should get Dawson City to make the decision on it — and have them put a petition in Dawson City to see whether it would be viable to build a new school in Copper Ridge. I'm sure the people in Dawson would rather have the money spent somewhere else, if you would have a petition there.

Of course, again, this question would have been better put to the Minister of Community Services, but as far as Energy, Mines and Resources is concerned, the hospital question in Dawson — the land planning branch assists communities to develop local area plans, followed by zoning regulations to ensure orderly land development.

West Dawson and Sunnydale are outside the City of Dawson. Of course, the City of Dawson is a municipality. The member opposite might not realize that, but Dawson has been a municipality for many, many years, and a lot of the decisions made internally in Dawson are of Dawson's making and not of the territorial government.

West Dawson and Sunnydale — now, those two areas are not in the City of Dawson. Now, Mr. Chair, you might wonder why one would be called "West Dawson" and not be in the City of Dawson and, of course, Sunnydale — well, because West Dawson is across, to the west of Dawson, obviously, or I think it would have been called "East Dawson". It is across the river and is the responsibility of the territorial government. At one point — to remind the member opposite — in the past, West Dawson was part of the City of Dawson and, in their wisdom, they decided that it was hard to service because of the river. It's the Yukon River, Mr. Chair, which goes through Dawson. It splits Dawson City from West Dawson. If the member opposite would go up and look, there is a river and that is the difference between West Dawson and Dawson. If the river weren't there, Dawson City, West Dawson and Sunnydale could possibly be one community.

Now, Energy, Mines and Resources and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in are proceeding with a joint local area planning process for West Dawson and Sunnydale. The final plan is expected to be completed by the spring of 2010 — another project that's going on in Energy, Mines and Resources.

As he brought up land issues, I can say to the member opposite that we certainly want to talk about the success of the partnership between the Teslin Tlingit First Nation and us on

the lots that we built at Little Teslin Lake. I've had reports that both First Nations and territorial government lots have been taken, is that not true? It was a successful process and those lots are now in the process of being transferred. They've been very well received by the community and certainly we did need more rural residential land.

With the work we're doing in Dawson City on the new land use plan, we're doing the same important planning in Marsh Lake. That is a partnership between Kwanlin Dun, the Carcross-Tagish First Nations and us. That is proceeding. The Carcross land use plan is between ourselves and the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. Marsh Lake involves the two First Nations and us. That planning is going forward. There is also another planning process going in place for local planning.

Let's go back to the Teslin Tlingit Council. We're pleased to recently offer 19 residential lots for sale on the Little Teslin Lake. I've said that for the member opposite. There have been 12 public land lots and 7 lots in settlement offered for lease through a joint lottery process. I remind that that has taken place and it has been successful.

Certainly, there is an investment but that investment will come back to the government as we put the lots out to individual bidders who are successful at their bidding of the lots. That money will come back into the treasury and we will have 19 more recreational cottage lots.

Mr. Chair, it is important to say how successful this was, because this is an avenue where First Nations and the public government can partner and expand to offer the land availability to Yukoners. We look forward to working with the Kwanlin Dun in the future and looking at other First Nations that have a desire to go into a partnership and work with their selected land and public land for both governments to put land out into the general public.

We have certainly gone through an awful lot this afternoon, looking at the Energy file and Energy, Mines and Resources and the hospital in Dawson — which, by the way, Energy, Mines and Resources has nothing to do with on any level. The member opposite has forgotten one thing in the scenario, and that is the City of Dawson.

Of course, any of these questions could be asked of the City of Dawson, I imagine. They're certainly looking forward to their facility in Dawson and, out of curiosity and with all of the information that I've heard — I would have to say, Mr. Chair, a lot of misinformation on the location of a hospital. I didn't realize that the nursing station is on the site now. I didn't realize that the plan that the government has with the hospital board is that the brand new McDonald Lodge, which is the second phase, will be tied on to the new hospital. That's an existing building that is next to the new hospital.

The impression I had was that we as a government or the hospital board was going to build a hospital on the Minto Park land itself. In fact, that's not factual. The park will remain a park. The only part of the building that's going to be taken up is a playground that was leased from the territorial government to the city. We as a government certainly have had something to do with that because we've agreed to funding with the City

of Dawson to build a brand new, top-of-the-line playground for the City of Dawson.

We're looking forward to that investment next summer and certainly looking forward to the new facility, which will facilitate ambulance service and, of course, hospital services.

Of course, the second phase is the brand new McDonald Lodge, which will come out the side of that building. That's why the expanded kitchen, laundry facility — all of the things that go into a hospital of the size we're building in Dawson — have to be a size larger because of the demand that McDonald Lodge will put on it.

So I think, in the next couple of years, as this facility unfolds, the people of Dawson will be very happy and, hopefully, the people who signed the petition in Copper Ridge will be happy with the facility. I certainly look forward to taking them up on a tour of the facility that they were so adamant shouldn't be built in Dawson City. So we'll look forward to that tour. I'm certainly told that the individuals I know who are on the petition will wait and see. They, in turn, thought that this was going to take up the whole park in Dawson. Of course, being Yukoners, they were concerned about greenspace and about the use of the park. The park is a very integral part of Dawson City — whether we talk about the Dawson City Music Festival or, in the summer, on a daily basis, that park being used by Dawsonites.

So with the hospital and the location where it is going to be, it is going to replace the old nursing station, which is roughly in the same location, and then in turn we are going to see a brand new facility there to replace McDonald Lodge. I think that the people who signed the petition will come back and compliment the work that has been done by the Hospital Board on behalf of Dawsonites.

I hope that people in Copper Ridge who signed the petition will be happy with that too. I look forward to some of their responses if they ever go to Dawson and make the tour, once the structure is up and running and servicing that area.

Remember, Mr. Chair, the hospital will not only service the City of Dawson but it will also service communities like Old Crow and, of course, the expanded McDonald Lodge will facilitate the needs of Old Crow and the surrounding areas. I think the land issue in Dawson City is between the corporation and the City of Dawson. The City of Dawson and the corporation have been working on the land issue for two or three years at the moment. The decision was made between the City of Dawson and the corporation from a central point of view and from a service point of view, that the best spot would be in the location of the old nursing station.

We look forward to the facility being built. Engineers are on the ground now and I think we'd be looking at a structure being bid out in the next summer and look at the footprint being in place for next fall.

Mr. McRobb: We got the minister up with another 20-minute speech and in it all he failed to answer the pertinent question about the ultimatum his government gave to residents of Dawson. He must have forgotten about that point, so I'll remind him now so he can write it down.

He's also quick to point out any errors that anybody else makes, so I'll return the favour. The correct word is petition, not partition, and the correct word is turbine, not turban. Hopefully the record will show this, Mr. Chair.

The minister started his 20-minute speech by saying that everything I put on the record was wrong and then he pointed to a couple of examples to support his case. What I want to do now is just briefly touch on each of those examples.

In the first one, the minister said the bill subsidy program is being paid by the Yukon government, not the Energy Corporation or the Yukon Development Corporation, as the case may be. Mr. Chair, my response is quite concise: it was the Yukon Party that changed the financial burden to pay for this program from the Yukon government to the Energy Corporation. End of story.

The second piece of evidence he relied on to support his case that everything I put on the record was wrong pertains to the cost of service currently paid by the different electrical rate classes. I had put on the record that the residential class is lower and, on the other side of the equation, the business class is higher, and delaying any decision would further punish the business class.

The current ratios are about 80 percent and 110 percent respectively. Mr. Chair, there is no disagreement there. That is not evidence to bolster his case that I was wrong. We are both agreeing on this. It is a matter of fact. Further, Mr. Chair, there is not a requirement for the government rate class cost of service to be lowered. I hear the minister asking the official, "What is he talking about?" and that pretty well sums up what we've heard from the minister, Mr. Chair. That pretty well sums it up quite well.

The minister went on to also say that the rebalancing decision has been put off until 2012. Well, again, that was one of the premises I relied on arriving at the conclusion reached during my previous speech. The minister was confirming the pertinent aspects of what I said, yet arriving at a completely different conclusion, saying I was wrong on all these points.

I guess anything could be said in this Assembly, regardless of its association with the truth.

Chair's statement

Chair: Order please. I know the member was assuming that by implying in a general statement, it wouldn't be reflecting on one individual, but if it's implied, it is still wrong. Mr. McRobb, you do know that is not in order. You have the floor.

Mr. McRobb: All right. I realize we can't comment on rulings from the Chair. I'll respect that.

Chair: Order please. The Chair referred to "implying". The member can't imply that he is going to comment on the Chair's ruling and expect he will get away with that either. When the Chair makes a ruling, he expects members to listen to the ruling and understand the ruling and, if they have questions with the ruling, they may bring them up in the proper context.

Mr. McRobb, you have the floor.

Mr. McRobb: All right. Let's get to something a little closer to home for the member — the ultimatum given to resi-

dents of Dawson City by a Yukon Party MLA. Apparently, this Yukon Party MLA told residents of Dawson, "Unless this hospital goes at my location, you're going to lose it. It's going to get moved to Mayo." The minister got up and completely absolved himself and his department from any involvement in the hospital project in Dawson City — it's on the record — yet he spoke at length about the whole issue. That too is a matter of record.

I want to return to our discussion earlier this afternoon about how Mayo B will be financed, and the minister knew nothing. He was quick to point out several times that that's another minister's responsibility. He doesn't know how this largest ever project in Yukon's history will be financed, yet he knows all the details about the Dawson City hospital even though it doesn't have anything to do with his department.

There is something wrong with this picture. There is definitely something wrong here. This minister should be up to speed. He should be in the loop on the Mayo B financing. I would suggest if in fact his department has nothing to do with the Dawson City hospital, then instead of spending his time finding out about this project that he is not associated with, he should have been finding out about Mayo B so he could come into this House and fulfill his responsibilities as the Energy, Mines and Resources minister. That would be more helpful for debate — if he was able to answer for his responsibilities and give us that information. Instead, it is pass the buck.

Mr. Chair, there is a long list of examples of how the government passes the buck. Each example contradicts what we've heard from the Premier or the Finance minister — same person — who has always said that the buck stops at his desk.

Well, maybe it would be more appropriate to say "the buck gets passed" at the Premier's desk, because that's what it amounts to. The Energy, Mines and Resources minister's passing the buck on Mayo B, the Yukon's largest ever energy project. Earlier today, the minister responsible for the Energy Corporation passed the buck on the huge cost overruns on the transmission line. The government has passed the buck on all kinds of other examples about cost overruns. I don't need to recite the long list or I will be another 20 minutes.

After being a critic for this department for seven years and trying to hold this government accountable, it's quite sad that I now realize what in fact has transpired — because what has transpired completely contradicts what we were promised. The buck doesn't stop here.

Ministers aren't armed with information about important projects being undertaken by the departments for which they are responsible. Questions they should ask are getting passed to other ministers and this is not being accountable. It's not being open and it's not being transparent.

Just look at the previous Yukon Party campaign platform and you'll see a title at the top of one page to the effect that a Yukon Party government would be open and accountable and fiscally responsible. Well, that's exactly the problem we see today. This government has failed in each one of those categories, very badly.

The government likes to attack previous governments over some of their follies, or at least perceived follies. One of them

is this minister likes to be critical of those of us in the Official Opposition, the Yukon Liberal Party, for the cost overruns on the Mayo-Dawson transmission line.

Mr. Chair, the reality is that none of us here today was a member of that previous government. It is unfair to criticize the previous government because there is nobody here to defend them. This would be akin to me questioning the minister about the two-percent government rollback in a previous Yukon Party government or how a previous Yukon Party government wanted to imprison pregnant mothers. Well, those are very controversial matters, Mr. Chair, but you don't hear us mentioning those things.

The discussion in this Assembly should be on issues that are pertinent now and those with responsibilities should have the courage to stand up and be responsible for their actions and inactions and not point the finger. Mr. Chair, whenever somebody points a finger, there is that old saying that there are three fingers pointing back at them; that comes to mind each time this minister talks about the Mayo-Dawson transmission line, or the Premier when he talks about it or the rest of it. This government has plenty of examples that prove it is becoming a master of cost overruns. The Yukon Party government is becoming very familiar with the Auditor General of Canada. That relationship promises to become even closer in the future, as some of these enormous cost overruns become known and are identified as matters for her investigation.

Mr. Chair, earlier today we heard recollections about what the Yukon Party said, how it would change the whole procedure at the Energy Corporation for reviewing capital projects, especially large ones like transmission lines. Yet the evidence is now quite clear; the cost overrun on this big transmission line project will far surpass the cost overrun of the Mayo-Dawson line.

But do we hear anything from the Yukon Party members about this? The answer is no — nothing. The minister has the ability to bring a ministerial statement forward in this House and other members can respond to it at the beginning of the daily proceedings. Again, this is a matter the minister has ignored. It seems the Yukon Party wants to sweep this under the rug. Well, the Yukon Party's carpet is getting pretty lumpy these days, and the elephant in the room is under the rug because the cost overrun from this transmission line can be called to be of "elephant proportions" — more than double the original cost.

We heard earlier today — and this just occurred to me — the Premier used the excuse that the cost estimates were old — the original cost estimates.

During Question Period today, I pointed out that the same thing happened with the Mayo-Dawson transmission line. I was at the capital hearing in 1992 — I believe it was October 25, the whole week — and this project was identified and the Yukon Utilities Board included it in its decisions, and there was a number identified in the board's ruling. That became the estimated cost of the Mayo-Dawson line. Well, Mr. Chair, that line wasn't constructed or even started until some eight years later. Eight years — the excuse we heard today from the Premier was less substantial than the circumstances involved in the

other cost overruns for which this government has been so critical, yet so silent about this massive cost overrun today.

This brings us back to the point earlier, that ministers need to be accountable. We don't need the ministers to pass the buck. The buck should stop at the Premier's desk. That is what people want to hear. They expect the ministers of the Yukon government to be fully accountable. The Premier knows this too, and that is why the Premier — in his speeches or interviews or whatever — always says, "My government is fully open, accountable and fiscally responsible."

Mr. Chair, those are nice words and they are words people want to hear, but do those words accurately represent what in fact this government does? Well, Mr. Chair, this should be a matter for motion debate on an upcoming Wednesday, because the examples are too numerous to cite here. On that, I note that my time is almost up so I will ask a new question even though the minister hasn't answered the previous questions.

The CBC tower issue — the government didn't come through in time to announce the land transfer. I would like to ask the minister why he was a day late and a dollar short on this.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Chair, we have 11 more days of this with EMR. I think what we should do is get back to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the responsibility that that department carries out at a very high and professional level.

Certainly I would like to thank the staff at Energy, Mines and Resources for the hard work they do on a daily basis. It certainly reflects well on the Yukon Territory as you drive through the territory and see all the action that's going on out there. There is not much investment on the ground that doesn't have Energy, Mines and Resources' stamp on it, and it certainly represents the government very well. I would like to compliment them, because they certainly are an easy department to work with. They are well-organized, well-trained and professional — and that's very, very important.

In this supplementary budget, we're requesting a \$352,000 reduction of operation and maintenance expenditures. Of course, Mr. Chair, we have an increase of \$1,624,000 for capital expenditures. That's what it costs Energy, Mines and Resources to do the good work they're doing.

Then, of course, the range of initiatives across a number of different resource areas, to contribute to the Yukon government's goal to build a strong, diversified economy — that, as you know, Mr. Chair, is very, very important. Taking one aspect of Energy, Mines and Resources, Mr. Chair — forest resources. Strategic forest resource management plans have been completed. Mr. Chair, they've been completed and they're out there for Haines Junction and Teslin. A draft plan has been received from the Kaska Forest Resources Stewardship Council in the Watson Lake area. Planning is also underway in Whitehorse and Dawson. Implementation of the Haines Junction plan is well underway, with the first 250,000 cubic metres of wood now available.

Mr. Chair, the good work the department does — the Haines Junction plan is well on its way. Of course, we have a commitment of 250,000 cubic metres of wood, now available

to the general public. The new forest legislation is being finalized with the enactment of the *Forest Resources Act* expected in the year 2010. That's the new act that was brought forward on how we visualize managing forests into the future. Of course, the new *Forest Resource Act* and accompanying regulations feature a regime of forest practices, and 10-year opportunities to support forest industries while protecting diverse forest values.

It was a long and extensive overview of the *Forest Resources Act*, and we're looking forward to that coming out and being activated in early 2010.

The Yukon government is actively engaged with interested members of the public, stakeholders and local industry to obtain input on the new regime. In other words, we have done an extensive on-the-ground consultation to get as far as we have. The *Forest Resources Act* and accompanying regulations provide certainty around planning, tenure and enforcement, as well as enabling sound and sustainable forest management that is responsive to changing conditions. That in itself, Mr. Chair, is very, very important.

Another small part of the department but very big to Yukoners is agriculture. Where are we going with agriculture? Well, we are implementing the Canada-Yukon Growing Forward policy agreement, and I would really like to take a moment, Mr. Chair, to compliment the people in the department who work with Canada to resolve some of our issues involved with uniqueness of the industry and the territory to work with the federal government, the provinces and the other territories.

Now, it provided up to \$987,000 per year, on a shared basis of 60 percent federal and 40 percent territorial — another partnership between the federal government and us.

Growing Forward provides the means to implement programs and initiatives that will support the development of a profitable and sustainable Yukon agricultural industry — again, very, very important to the territory. In addition, the department is maintaining an emphasis on planning agricultural development to support commercial agriculture. We always have pressure out there to develop agricultural areas accessible to energy and to a customer base that would work as agriculture, but also individuals could purchase in such a way that it's economically feasible to farm.

As part of our efforts to increase the farming access rate of planned agricultural land sales, the agriculture branch has developed a value-added tender process for selling agricultural land as an alternative to the lottery system. In other words, Mr. Chair, we're modernizing how we're going forward with managing our agricultural dispositions.

The value-added tender process — and I imagine the member opposite is interested in that — allows Yukon to compare farming development plans for particular parcels and will allow the best projects to proceed to agreement for sale. In other words, that's how the value-added tender process will work.

Now another big part of our department is mineral resources. The department remains committed to these challenging economic times to continue to improve the investment climate by providing regulatory certainty and a streamlined regu-

latory regime. I remind the member opposite, our projections for this year's investment in exploration was approximately \$40 million. The last time I was briefed on it, it was somewhere around \$90 million. So we went from \$40 million, Mr. Chair to \$90 million, which is quite an improvement and certainly bodes well for the industry.

What did we do as a government? We completed the amendments to the claims administration of royalty provisions of the *Quartz Mining Act*. It now enables government to be more responsive to this dynamic and evolving industry and will provide direct benefits to claim holders and mine developers. Similarly, we finalized the amendment to the *Miners Lien Act*, which was another modernizing piece of work the department did to provide industry with better tools to quantify risk, while at the same time not diminishing the rights of Yukon suppliers to lien mines for unpaid bills. It is very, very important that the local suppliers are protected. That again was done by this hard-working department and I certainly compliment them for the work they did.

Mr. Chair, we've been talking about the Yukon mining incentive program. It provides financial and technical assistance to prospectors and junior mining companies for mineral prospecting and exploration activities in the Yukon. In 2009, a total of 106 mineral exploration projects were approved through this program. This year, the Yukon government provided a substantial increase in funding for the Yukon mining incentive program. With a one-time increase of \$1.1 million this year, the program totalled \$1.8 million.

I'd like to take a moment to thank the colleagues here in the House who supported the request to have that investment made and it did bode well when you look at the figures we see today on investments in the territory. It certainly helps the small investor and prospectors, exploration companies and has produced the good work that it was intended to. I look forward to working with industry and my colleagues on next year's budget to see if this program could be not just continued — which it will be continued — but continued at the level that it was held at last year.

When we look at the mineral resources here in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, we as a government — the Yukon government — supported Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Council of Yukon First Nations. The Yukon Placer Secretariat continues its work as a coordinated body for the new system for managing placer mining activity under the *Fisheries Act*. This is very, very important for the placer industry, Mr. Chair.

This new habitat management system is designed to recognize the importance of the sustainable placer mining industry to Yukon and the importance of conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat, supporting fisheries — in other words, the balance between the placer miner and fisheries.

Mr. Chair, I would like to announce here that this is an ongoing discussion, but has been very positive over the last couple of years.

Now, another part of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is the Energy Solutions Centre. We've been talking about that this afternoon and it continues to play a key role in

helping homeowners, businesses and communities reduce their energy costs. In other words, Energy, Mines and Resources has this tool in the department to do just that. It helps homeowners, businesses and communities reduce energy costs — delivers a broad range of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.

Mr. Chair, the Solutions Centre shows us how increased energy efficiency can have a real impact on reducing energy costs. Through the good energy program, the Yukon government is providing a \$100 to \$500 rebate to Yukoners who make a decision to upgrade to qualifying appliances, heating appliances and boat motors — in other words, improving their management of energy inside the home. Of course, the issue about boat motors — at the highest energy-efficient standard available.

In other words, they will get a \$100 to \$500 rebate if they can prove to the Energy Solutions Centre that this will be an improvement in their energy consumption as they move forward in planning their energy issues in their own homes.

These items will immediately lower operating costs, which is obvious. Over the long term, it will reduce Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions, which are important to us as a community.

Operation and maintenance is another part of the department. These expenditures are going to be \$352,000 less this year than the 2009-10 voted, bringing the revised 2009-10 budget to \$52,769,000. There are a number of notable areas within this amount. The reduction of \$105,000 has been applied to EMR's corporate services branch includes a \$30,000 adjustment to the Deputy Minister's office as part of an ongoing management of corporate allocations across government.

Now another figure: \$75,000 was transferred to Community Services under the changes to the Community Services/EMR interdepartmental resource sharing agreement.

Under the sustainable resource division — a very important figure — \$179,000 has been revoted for forest management branch-led fuel-abatement work. So there is another investment in Yukon.

Also with forestry, \$195,000 has been allocated under the national forest pest strategy agreement for our Yukon forest health risk assessment and, of course, the development of a Yukon forest health monitoring strategy plan — very important because, as we know, the spruce beetle situation in the southwest Yukon has been an ongoing issue, and this is going to be a very important information source for us as we go forward managing our forests.

These initiatives support the work of the department to manage Yukon's forest resources in the face of regional effects of global climate change — again, another important thing we have to do as we look forward in managing our forest resources, understanding that there is a climate change issue out there.

Now, another good-news part of this scenario is that the funds for the forest pest initiative are fully recoverable from our partner, the Government of Canada.

Under energy and corporate policy, Mr. Chair, there is another \$150,000 allocated to implement the memorandum of

understanding on the Mayo B project with the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun. Mayo B is important. Again, we talked about that this afternoon, Mr. Chair and we certainly have 11 more days to talk about it. Mayo B is an important part of the government's commitment to expand renewable energy in our Yukon.

The memorandum of understanding reflects both governments' desire to work cooperatively to identify and take advantage of potential opportunities associated with Mayo B. Overall, the O&M expenses under oil and gas and mineral resources has been reduced by \$790,000.

There is a \$346,000 revote for the northern strategy project funds to support the Yukon Mine Training Association. That again is another investment this government has made in training Yukoners to participate in the mining community — whether it is quartz or placer. There are roughly 500 individuals who are employed today in quartz mining in the territory and hundreds are employed over the summer in our placer operations. It is becoming more and more of a cornerstone in the Yukon's economy.

Yukon Mine Training Association is actually working to provide training opportunities and support for Yukoners seeking employment in the mining industry — again, just repeating what I said a moment ago. Of course it's important for the YMTA to help Yukoners discover the opportunities and huge benefits that Yukon's mining sector can provide — employment in mining sectors provides many Yukoners with real, tangible benefits. Again, I repeat that there are roughly 500 Yukoners directly employed by new hard rock mines in the territory and, by the way, we're looking forward to the opening of the Alexco operation in the Bellekeno area of the Yukon for next year and Yukon Zinc. That number will increase over the next 12 months.

Again, Mr. Chair, we're also about hundreds of individuals working in the placer mining operation and, with the price of gold, I think probably next summer you'll see more opportunities for Yukoners. Of course, now another resource that we have is managing type 2 mine sites. There is a \$1.6 million budget decrease for this investment. This aligns the Government of Yukon's budget with Canada-Yukon funding agreement and workplan, which we do on a yearly basis. As we know, the Yukon government has assumed responsibility for ongoing care and maintenance services at the Faro mine complex, and has secured Denison Environmental Services to act as care and maintenance providers. That's more work that the department has done.

In 2009, the value of these projects will be approximately \$1.5 million. In 2010-11, the value of the projects is anticipated to be between \$6 million and \$9 million — a great investment here in the territory, cleaning up what has been done over the last 50 years in these type 2 sites, and we're looking forward to those investments.

All the costs for conducting care and maintenance are provided — another partnership between us and the Government of Canada under the Canada-Yukon type 2 funding agreement — another agreement. I know I don't have much time left on my talk this afternoon, but I look forward to talking again about

the investments that Energy, Mines and Resources and individuals make for Yukon in the future.

Mr. McRobb: All right, Mr. Chair. It's hard to have a debate when the minister ignores what was said previously and chooses not to respond to any of the points of debate but instead, for 20 minutes, reads briefing notes from the department on completely unrelated matters — so much for the Yukon Party government's willingness to engage in debate — another promise broken, Mr. Chair.

Now the minister deviated from the issues at hand — energy-related and some land planning issues. He took us on a walk through the woods. He talked quite a bit about forestry issues before wandering a little further into something else. So I'll just go back to the previous page, Mr. Chair, and ask him a few forestry-related questions.

Now, the regulations for the *Forest Resources Act* are currently being developed. Public consultation on the regulations ended on October 30 of this past month. One of the stakeholders has expressed some concerns about the regulations. The Yukon Conservation Society feels the regulations were not sufficiently guided by conservation, and the Yukon Conservation Society pointed out how there is no holistic ecosystem-based planning. Instead this government is proceeding with only more limited timber harvesting plans, which consider roads and cut blocks.

What, in effect, this concern identifies is a piecemeal approach by this government to cherry-pick primary components of certain measures, instead of dealing with them holistically or comprehensively. That is certainly an issue to the Yukon Conservation Society.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. McRobb: The Premier says I'm not being very popular. Fine, Mr. Chair. Some of the issues we bring forward are not filtered through a political screen as to their popularity. It's about holding the government accountable. We need to find out if the Yukon Party is taking this piecemeal approach. So will the minister explain that?

Hon. Mr. Lang: That's why we went out for consultation and we took all of the recommendations back. We look forward to getting the regulations in place so we can manage our forests. That's exactly why we had the lengthy public consultation. Certainly we will take into consideration all the individuals who took the time out of their busy day to put their questions in front of us, and we look forward to coming out with the regulations as quickly as possible.

Certainly when we go back to our forestry question — I know the member opposite is interested in what we are doing here in the department and of course this is a supplementary budget on the Energy, Mines and Resources. The capital budget is \$1,624,000. Of course, there are a number initiatives within this proposed allotment, which again, under corporate services there is \$100,000 revote for the development of the forestry information system required to support the Yukon's new *Forest Resources Act* and related regulations. We are getting ready to put those regulations in place, and we have a management tool here and the resources to move forward. The system will provide a central collection area for electronic in-

formation related to forest tenures under the *Forest Resources Act*.

Mr. Chair, I am glad the member brought up forestry, because forestry is a big part of the department. As we move forward we have an additional tracking force. In addition to tracking forest licences and permits, the system will also provide important guidance to forest management branch staff to ensure that all appropriate procedural steps are followed such as providing timely response to applicants and timely referral to Yukon First Nations — another tool to make sure that we manage our forests in an appropriate way.

The system will also link EMR's geological information system, GIS, to enable on-line public access to up-to-date mapping information when applying for forest tenure — again, another great tool of modernization.

Also supporting the important work of the forest management branch is another \$545,000 for planning, design and initial contracting of the Yukon forest research infrastructure. In recent years, heightened interest in forest industry expansions has coincided with the growing awareness of the impact of climate change on Yukon's forest ecosystem so our forests will reflect the climate-warming effects this whole area is being affected by. To date, changes in the climate have triggered significant ecological responses in Yukon forests, including large-scale spruce bark beetles. The Member for Kluane would obviously understand that; he has been driving through it for years, and of course it has affected many Yukon communities.

This project will allow the upgrading and renovation of green houses built in 1989 and the development of a research laboratory at the forest management branch's compound and the research centre at the Gunnar Nilsson Mickey Lammers Research Forest. I would recommend that all members go for a walk through that research centre because it's excellent, not only for the research potential, but also for the amount of land that's there for the future. It's also right in our community, and it's very seldom you'll see this kind of facility so close to the general public and so open to the general public that they can walk through it and tour in the summer in the forest there or they can cross-country ski and snowshoe. It's a great facility for all the territory. Of course this will, again, enhance the Yukon government's current research capacity. It will enhance that, as well as create new opportunities for northern forest research partnerships, which again is very, very important.

Mr. Chair, I would like to bring up the \$110,000 that has been allocated for planning and the development of the options for the H.S. Bostock Geological Core Library project. It is a very worthwhile project — an ongoing project that has been with us for many, many years and, of course, it is operated by the capable individuals in YGS and the H.S. Bostock Core Library is a facility that supports geoscience research in the Yukon.

Mr. Bostock was an individual who came to the Yukon on a yearly basis for many years and did a lot of research on geoscience and geological potential here in the territory. It is a very fitting name that should be on this library. From the research level of things, this is a good-news story.

The facility supports mineral exploration in Yukon. It provides valuable information to enable stewardship and sustainable development of the territory's energy, mineral and land resources. It is very important.

The original one was built in 1972 and the current facility houses a Yukon rock sample collection of over 120,000 metres of diamond-drill core donated by industry or recovered from field sites by YGS. It has all of the history in that area of our mining communities throughout the territory. That is so valuable. Those drill cores are being maintained for the industry itself because industry has access to those for research and for investigations when the prospector goes out into the field. Of course, the cores are used by territorial individuals, provincial, federal and university-based geoscientists and other international geological surveys. So, in other words, it has overlapping interest, not only from us, but provincially, federally, and with university-based geoscientists. So that's a good-news story.

And, of course, the funding will allow for identification of options to provide increased security storage for the current and future specimens, as well as for storage of equipment required for the geological field research. It's very, very important in our conversation this afternoon that we understand that the storage of these samples is very, very important because it's a database that has to be properly recorded and properly maintained, because it's important when you're looking at samples that it's the proper samples. It takes up room and it's certainly a worthwhile project.

Of course, again, the investment is built on this government's commitment, as outlined in the *Climate Change Action Plan*, to expand our research capabilities and knowledge on northern climate change. All of this is part of our ongoing overview of the northern climate change, which we all know is happening. Of course, it is supported by the Arctic research infrastructure fund — again, another partnership with Canada. They are totally funded — or, they're fully recoverable from Canada.

In the department's sustainable resource division there are two allocations in support of the Government of Yukon's joint land project — again, we talk about our partnerships with First Nations, and this is an ideal time to talk about the partnership with the Teslin Tlingit Council — two governments working together to address the demand for recreational lots. The public government and the Teslin Tlingit Council were pleased to recently offer 19 recreational cottage lots for sale on the Little Teslin Lake.

As I was saying a minute ago — a couple of questions ago — the 19 lots were put out by lottery and all the lots were spoken for, so that's good news. That partnership is how we visualize working with land issues throughout the territory in partnership with First Nations and how to move forward in managing, not only public land, but First Nation land and how it can benefit both governments.

Now where are these lots? These lots are between Squanga Lake and Johnsons Crossing. The 12 public lots and seven lots on settlement lands have been offered for lease in a joint lottery process — so that's 19 lots. How did we resource it? Well, there was \$194,000 committed for the project for necessary

planning, survey and design work. This is funded under the northern strategy fund. Another additional \$390,000 was spent and had been allocated for the Little Teslin Lake roadwork necessary for the project. I would say that would be very necessary because of the access to these lots.

The lots, as I said a minute ago, have been spoken for on the leases and we're looking forward to, as I said, more partnerships like this, because this is how the two governments can work to benefit both governments and also fill a void, which was the lack of recreational lots in the Whitehorse area. Nineteen lots were spoken for, and I was told through the department that they would have sold 30 lots if it were possible to get them or enter into an agreement about them. There is a demand out there and as we move forward in partnership we can meet some of that demand as far as recreational land is concerned.

The land planning branch — the member opposite was getting mixed up between municipal land planning and what the responsibility of Energy, Mines and Resources is. We don't work within municipalities on planning their land process. We work with municipalities where we can to help them in doing the good work they do in the municipality when they do land planning and other forms of municipal responsibilities.

Of course, we have ongoing issues ourselves. We have an \$85,000 revote from Community Services to complete a number of area plans. Energy, Mines and Resources has taken some of the responsibility from Community Services to streamline the process, so that's where the \$85,000 comes from.

Here in the House, I'd like to thank the department again for all of their hard work. The land planning branch is going to continue work on Carcross — that's the town of Carcross — and, of course, Marsh Lake and, again, I talk about West Dawson and Sunnyside local area plans. All of these communities have ongoing planning processes. Carcross involves one First Nation, which is the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. Marsh Lake has two First Nations, those being Carcross-Tagish and Kwanlin Dun. They both have interests in that area. And, of course, West Dawson has one First Nation. So those plans are ongoing.

Of course, why do we do local area plans? Well, we do them because they reduce land use conflict and, in the planning process, which is a process we go through, local area residents and First Nation governments work together to plan how land in their local area will be used in the future.

In other words, it doesn't just involve the government or governments — it involves local representation so that we have local representation to work on the planning of their own communities.

Going back and talking more about agriculture and land development — that's under sustainable resources — we have a \$100,000 budget increase for the agricultural land development process. Where do we see this funding being invested? Well, the funding will support the survey and planning work required to make an area of Yukon surplus land in the Mayo area available for agriculture development. This investment is very important, but this will put some inventory of agricultural land in the town of Mayo and look forward to individuals having the opportunity to purchase it. It will be offered to the pub-

lic through the agriculture branch value-added tender process — again, the value-added tender process within the coming year.

This capital expenditure will be fully recovered through the sale of the agricultural lots. Again, a lot of this money we put into agricultural land development outside municipalities, we receive the resources back through the sale of the land itself. So, that's an investment going out the door, but eventually, as these lots are sold into private hands, those resources come back to us.

So, in talking to the member opposite about what the department does, and a supplementary budget does — well, it's interesting that — and we talked about the *Forest Resources Act*. Again, it was a very important part, through devolution — when we had devolution, we were looking at mirroring federal legislation because of the lack of legislation here in the territory. We made a commitment in devolution that, as we matured and as we moved forward, we would take these acts and do an assessment from Yukon's perspective — so, eventually get these acts modernized and out there.

One of the first ones out the door over the last period of time was the *Forest Resources Act*. These acts take time because, as the member was talking about one of his constituents or somebody had brought to his attention on the *Forest Resources Act*, there were some questions about regulations that they didn't like or whatever.

We do a thorough review of the act. We had public consultation and we were out there talking to individuals. We look forward to the regulations coming forward because we made a commitment when we put this act together that the regulations would go out to public consultation. We have done that and now they are back in the department and we are going over the recommendations that came from the general public — the general public and NGOs and other stakeholders in the industry.

I look forward to seeing the regulations and I look forward to implementing them so we can start managing the Yukon's forests through this act and through these regulations, to the benefit of all Yukoners.

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 17, *Second Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, Vote 53, Energy, Mines and Resources. Is there any further general debate?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Chair, I look forward to going through the budget with the members opposite and my colleagues here. It's an important budget for the territory. It's a small department when we're talking about what the department does. The supplementary budget was brought here before the House for the fall sitting and for us as elected members to ask questions about, look at and get the approval of the House as we move forward with managing this very important department.

If I could go back for a minute to forestry, to the *Forest Resources Act* and regulations that we talked about today and that we're looking forward to seeing in the new year. We don't diminish the input of any of the stakeholders that invested time and resources to contribute to the consultation. We take all the stakeholders and individuals very seriously when they do consult.

If we look at what this will provide, it will provide sound and sustainable forest management that is responsive to changing conditions. In managing renewable resources or resources like this, there are always changing conditions, so it's important that we're flexible in our legislation and regulations. The new legislation features the regime of current forest practices and 10-year opportunities to support forest industries and protect diverse forest values, and will contribute to sustainable communities. In other words, how do we manage our forests not only in the public lands outside our municipalities, but also our communities? How will the community benefit from this investment, and how can they participate in the management and the harvesting of forest as they need it?

The legislation is enabling. That is, much of the detail will be provided within the regulations. Energy, Mines and Resources is currently working with our partners — First Nations and forest values, forest industry stakeholder groups — on the policy options for the initial regulations that will be required for implementation of the act. In other words, again, we go back to the consultation. Seven regulations are being provided, including — very important in forestry is the planning.

Of course, people want to know about tenure, stumpage fees and other fees and timber marking. Annual allowable cut is important; annual limit on timber harvesting by region where no forest resource management plan has been approved and forest resource roads and silviculture — all of those seven issues are important for managing the forest as we move forward.

As you see, Mr. Chair, we have done our homework, and doing our homework and doing the good work takes time. This whole *Forest Resources Act* and regulations have taken approximately three or four years to get to the stage they are at now. As I said, I'm looking forward to the new year when I can look at the regulations and see how we manage the forest as we move forward.

Again, it's all about tenure and stumpage. With stumpage, there come fees, the marking of the timber and the annual allowable cut. All those things are going to be addressed as we move forward.

Another piece of work that we've done inside the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is our *Energy Strategy for Yukon* and we've all had copies of this since the last sitting when it was tabled here in the House.

Of course, it's a go-forward plan. This *Energy Strategy for Yukon*, came out approximately the same time as the climate action plan. Without both of them — the climate action plan and *Energy Strategy for the Yukon* — it really overlaps on what we see ourselves doing here and into the future.

The member opposite was interested in investments on the ground and what we're going to do with the energy question.

We talked about things here in the House that Energy, Mines and Resources is not responsible for on many levels, but we are very aware of the *Energy Strategy for Yukon* because this department was the one that tabled it, and we're the ones here to defend it and we certainly look forward to implementing a lot of the recommendations.

With the *Energy Strategy for Yukon*, as you go through it, it's very well done, in the sense that it's very readable. It's not complicated, and it covers our bases as we move forward in our small jurisdiction.

You're looking at 34,000 or 35,000 individuals here in the territory and of course managing their own energy and trying to contribute in the small way that 34,000 people can in the climate change; that, of course, is covered in the climate action plan, which is all part and parcel of how this government and hopefully governments in the future will move forward, because there is really very little argument now in the debate about climate change. We are being affected in the territory when we look at the situation we have in our forestry or the situation we have if you were in Highways and Public Works and aware of the permafrost and the work we did in Dawson City, looking at the investment we put on Front Street in Dawson City, where we took a very innovative go-forward plan on our paving program there. It is one of a kind in North America. It has been used effectively in northern Europe and the implementation of the testing and the underground process — the science end of it — so we can monitor that kind of investment to see if it is something we could do in the future or use somewhere else in the territory.

The north highway again has a big investment in that, talking about climate change; the highway south of Beaver Creek has been affected by permafrost and we're working with more partners on that. We've got universities and governments involved so we are looking at that to see how we could mitigate some of those problems.

But as we go forward with the climate change initiative, it's important that the department has committed to work across a number of resource areas to gain a better understanding of the impact of climate change. In other words, we've got to go out and look at what impact climate change has on us as a community and as a department.

The Yukon Geological Survey is working on four projects that will study how permafrost and landslides impact Yukon's terrain. These four research projects include — here's an overview of what they're investing in — building a GIS-compatible database of permafrost and geotechnical information along the Alaska Highway. It's interesting, Mr. Chair, because with that, the Department of Highways can take a look at situations along the Alaska Highway and take a look at situations that could cause landslides or other management tools for the road itself.

It's intergovernmental in the fact that it impacts other departments. Number two is monitoring changes at several large active landslides in the Carmacks area. That again is part and parcel of climate change. Monitoring landslide hazards and target areas — again, I talk about the Highways and Public Works. Accessing landslides along the Alaska Highway corridor: again it's part and parcel of what we're doing in our de-

partment to look at climate change and also how we can mitigate it within the department, for the help of these other departments.

Of course, the forest management branch is studying the impact of climate change on Yukon forests. With a comprehensive three-year research initiative started this year, the research will investigate the vulnerability to climate change and adaptive capacities of Yukon tree species and forest ecosystems — again, another important tool that we have in the department to just see what's happening in our forest over a 36-month period.

Now, conducting a Yukon forest health risk assessment — this assessment — again, that comes up in our budget, here — the resources and what we're doing with the resources in the sub-year, comes up with the health risk assessment. This assessment would identify past, pre-set and future health concerns, identify appropriate monitoring systems and suggest strategies for adaptation. Again, this three-year study is very important.

Conducted community fuel abatement projects in southwest Yukon — this is in partnership with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. The fuel abatement initiative is part of the Yukon government's *Climate Change Action Plan*. In other words, how do we manage our forests? Also, what can we do with the forests to benefit all Yukoners and also fit into the *Energy Strategy for Yukon* — the actual program. As you can see, as you thumb through here, it's part and parcel of some of the answers that we're putting out there on how we can better manage our energy.

Now, the agriculture branch continues. It's a small part of Energy, Mines and Resources, but a very important part, and it supports the local production and sales of agricultural products, which will reduce food transportation costs and increase local sustainability for Yukoners. In other words, farmers would become more sustainable here in the territory. And, by the way, individuals, corporations, stores and otherwise will not have to ship that product from other places in Canada, which creates a cost to the product and also increases our environmental footprint on how we manage our food. It supports development of agricultural infrastructure that creates access to markets such as — we're funding a permanent location for the farmer's market, working with the producers to see how we can expand their season and looking at reduced energy costs and Yukon greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy, Mines and Resources — what have we done? We're developing a bioenergy strategy that will provide a clear regulatory and economic framework for supporting the development of a bioenergy sector in the territory. Working with Yukon government's Property Management, again — another cross-department partnership — to assess the feasibility of converting several existing institutional hydrocarbon based heating systems in Yukon government buildings to a clean-burning, efficient, pellet heating system.

Now that would be a move forward and prove that we do have the resources in the Yukon and we can replace the hydrocarbons with a locally grown product and create the heat that we need, but also that our carbon footprint is even smaller than it has been.

Developing an assessment of the potential for using residue wood chips from a Dawson City lumber operation to displace the use of fuel oil for heating municipal water during the winter to keep it from freezing — there is another commitment this government has made to the City of Dawson in respect to the government's investment in looking at a pellet-burning process because we have a forest industry in Dawson and this would be a secondary part of that industry. It would also mitigate the cost of heating their water when it leaves the reservoir as it goes through the community. That would take the cost off the back of the Dawson City taxpayer. I wouldn't say it would eliminate the cost but it would certainly be a more reasonable cost for the consumer. Again, we have a secondary industry there in Dawson.

We are also conducting an annual vehicle-emission clinic to raise general awareness about the benefits of reducing emissions and specific information on how to optimize vehicle performance. In other words, we are getting out into the community. Mr. Chair, a lot of the issues we have here are on carbon footprints and vehicles. Of course, older vehicles are much more prone to some of the issues about emissions. I think as we put these kinds of projects out there for the general public, people become more aware of their own emissions and look at how they can work more in partnership with government or themselves on how we can mitigate some of these carbon footprints that we have.

When I talk about the energy we consume from a power perspective, 93 percent of our consumers are on hydro at the moment. With the expanded Aishihik project, which is the third turbine, that investment will mean that our diesel operation here in the Whitehorse vicinity will run even less. The day that we can take out that infrastructure and not be so dependent on it will be a very great day for the consumers in the Yukon. At this point, that investment is there for a standby situation so that we have 100 percent of our power available at any time. If we have a situation where we have a power outage or some sort of hydro disaster, those plants would pick up the difference and carry the load that they're programmed to do.

Then if you were to look at the transportation sector in the territory, we'll focus specifically on energy use. This study will establish a baseline for energy consumption in the transportation sector and will identify current trends and potential opportunities to reduce greenhouse gases. Those kinds of overviews, if you were to look at the Department of Highways and Public Works — property management and our fleet of vehicles — we are certainly very aware of the greenhouse gas emissions from our fleet, and we look at that as we move forward. As a government, we can't expect to turn our fleet over all in one year, but as we grow into it, we certainly improve our fleet every year that we buy new vehicles — understanding that this is not just limited to the cars and pickups the government has in their inventory. We look at it from every aspect, whether it's our dump trucks, our graders — all of this modern stuff that we purchase — part of the purchase price and part of the decision is based on energy and what it's going to do from a carbon footprint point of view.

I'd like to thank the Department of Highways and Public Works for doing the good work there because it adds another responsibility to the department — how they oversee and how they purchase vehicles.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Cardiff: Where to begin? First of all, I'd like to thank the officials for being here today, and for the briefings that were provided.

The minister has gone on at length about a variety of issues. I'd like to begin by asking the minister a little bit about water testing. There were some questions that were raised in the Legislature here about water testing, and the minister provided some information about that — about a memorandum of understanding, transferring the water-testing responsibilities from the Department of Environment to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, with regard to the Minto mine project.

I'd like to ask the minister a series of questions, and then sit and listen to what his answers are. I'd like to know why it was done this way and in the department's opinion, whether they have found this to be more effective than having the Department of Environment do the water testing and whether or not there are any memoranda of understanding for any other mining project in the Yukon and whether or not this is going to be becoming basically standard practice, I guess.

The concerns that we have, Mr. Chair, and the concerns that the public have is the fact that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources promotes mining — and they have done a pretty good job actually of promoting the mining industry along with the Minister of Economic Development — promoting the industry here in the territory and providing incentives to exploration. But it seems that there could be conflicts, I guess, within the department when the regulator is actually doing the inspections on the water testing; when you are promoting it on one hand and policing it on the other, so on one hand you're the promoter and, at the same time, you're actually a regulator.

We know that there were problems with spring runoff. This is a climate change issue the minister should be aware of and I'm just wondering whether or not that problem has been dealt with, what we've learned — I think this is two years running that we've had this issue come up — and whether or not, given that climate change is an issue, the planning that's going to be in place for any of the new mines that may be coming on stream, and whether this is something that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is going to require for mine plans — dealing with this increased runoff in the spring. Because it seems to have caused a problem in this instance. We know about water management problems at the Faro mine and how that's actually a concern, so if the minister could answer those questions, I'd be very pleased.

Hon. Mr. Lang: EMR environmental water quality inspection — working with the department and the individuals who work in the department — we do a lot of inspections. In addressing the member opposite's question about the mining, and would it be Energy, Mines and Resources: we inspect on all sorts of levels on mine sites; we don't just inspect on water. There is no conflict. We have a whole capable department;

they're there to do their jobs and they're well-qualified to do their jobs.

Client services and inspection branch provides specialist personnel with the technical skills and expertise necessary to provide neutral and objective inspections and monitoring services to a wide range of clients. Currently EMR provides client support and inspection for the following Yukon government departments and branches — as we go through this, you'll see a varied amount of responsibility. Of course there's us — EMR land management branch; EMR forestry — we do inspections, management branch; EMR agriculture branch. So we do all three of them, which are internal inspections. We work with the Highways and Public Works inspecting that.

There's also environment, water resources branch, environment and environmental programs, community services, wildland fire management, EMR oil and gas resources, EMR mineral resource branch, community services, emergency measures branch, Government of Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

So, we take on the responsibility to do the good work that we do and, by the varied representation on who we do it for, you'll see that we have to maintain a very high standard. Client support and inspection services are provided for a wide range of issues and industries, including: verifying land suitability and land use; forestry field work; issuing cutting permits; mining industry and water related issues; oil and gas industry assistance; highways and access issues and inspections; inspections of fish habitat related to placer mining for the federal government — another responsibility, another partnership — assistance with fire management and fire response; emergency response and incident management; guiding clients through permit process and providing project planning assistance; customer service; education and cooperation; providing technical advice and information exchange; ensuring field activities are in accordance with the terms and conditions of permits and licences; assisting with environmental assessment and scheduled inspection for oil and gas industry; verifying land suitability for agriculture land use; issuing personal use timber permits for firewood and around wood harvesting; inspecting mineral claims, staking or assessment work and at the request of the mining recorder; inspect placer and hard rock mineral exploration.

As you can see, Mr. Chair, we have a long list of what these inspectors do — inspections pursuant to quartz mining licence and placer mining operations; water use inspectors related to the Minto mine — as the member opposite said — client services and inspecting offices in Whitehorse, Haines Junction, Teslin, Watson Lake, Ross River, Carmacks, Mayo and Dawson.

So as you can see, part of Client Services' responsibility is to do just that. Having them working for Energy, Mines and Resources — there is no conflict that they do their good work. They work with the Minto mine. We have inspectors on the ground there. Minto knows them. They are there on a regular basis to do exactly that. As far as the runoff at Minto mine, I have been told that it won't happen next year. We had a very unusual snow load last year and the drainage was a problem.

This year I have been told that it has been mitigated. There has been work done so that the runoff didn't fill the reservoir or the open pit like it did. That has been mitigated through the company itself.

As far as the inspectors are concerned, they are highly qualified. They work for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, and they do a stellar job representing the Yukon on many levels.

As far as doing inspections, as you can see with the list I just gave you, they inspect for Fisheries and Oceans Canada. I mean, a partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada is something that Energy, Mines and Resources does. Fisheries and Oceans Canada is a very responsible department. I'm sure that they wouldn't enter into any agreement where they felt that our individuals who are doing the good work they do were any less than the same standard they would supply on the ground when they were doing the inspections.

I think the issue is — it isn't so much the quality of the inspector out there in the field — that our department can do many things while they're out in the field, so it saves Fisheries and Oceans individuals from duplicating the work they do in the field.

From an industry or an individual point of view, these corporations are seeing the inspectors arrive and they're territorial Energy, Mines and Resources inspectors, but I wouldn't diminish their capabilities or their professionalism on any level. I think to mix them up with mine developing per se — that they're out selling the mining industry to the world. Economic Development's responsibility is to go to work when the client is on the ground and make the investment to make sure that they're following the regulations or the process. Our inspectors are there to inspect to make sure they do.

Having them in Energy, Mines and Resources doesn't diminish the interest of the Environment department because they have responsibility too, but it doesn't mean that Energy, Mines and Resources can't do the inspection and report back to the department or to whomever they're working with to make sure that these individuals are following the regulations or what has been laid out for them.

I think what we did in the dialogue here is got mixed up with Environment and Energy, Mines and Resources and somehow Energy, Mines and Resources is the bad guy, and somehow we've had these individuals who are not of a standard who would be working for the Department of Environment.

I think that is patently false because, at the end of the day, what we want are qualified inspectors to do their good work and work within the government.

Mr. Cardiff: It's too bad the minister didn't listen to all the questions but I'm going to repeat a couple of them. The minister has been assured, he said, that this isn't going to happen again, that it has been mitigated. That's good, but the question I've got around this is — he seems to think this is a one-time weather event. We all know and we've been talking about climate change here in the Legislature for the past couple of weeks at least and longer. The climate change strategy came down last February, I believe. We need to take a little more

seriously that weather patterns are changing and glaciers are melting. We're seeing different precipitation patterns in some areas. The climate is changing. It's about ensuring that the proper planning has been done and that was one of the questions I have.

What have we learned from this because it has actually happened two years in a row? It is my understanding that there has been a request for emergency water discharge and changes to the water licences. If it happens again next spring, I am not sure what the minister is going to get up and say — that he has been assured that it is not going to happen again? I am not sure who he is talking to. Is he talking to the Minister of Environment, the weatherman or just whom is he talking about?

The science says that the climate is changing and we've got some new realities to deal with, whether or not we've learned anything from this situation and whether or not there are going to be any changes to what needs to be done, as far as better planning when it comes to planning some of these mines.

I would like to ask a couple of other questions. I would like to know what the government's position is on this. In some other jurisdictions, with the federal government's blessing, we have seen lakes used as tailings ponds. I'd like to know whether or not the government is considering this on any of the projects that are currently before the regulatory process — what the government's position is on that.

I know that there are a number of projects out there — Western Copper, the Mactung project, Alexco is gearing up — there's another group of projects at various stages. I'm just wondering what type of planning is being done with regard to socio-economic impacts and environmental impacts with regard to these new projects. I understand they have to go through the YESAA process — but what work is the government doing, itself, to ensure that we're not left with some of the legacies that we've been left with in the past — namely, places like Mount Nansen in Faro? If the minister could answer those questions, then we'll move on to a couple of others.

Hon. Mr. Lang: In addressing the Minto Exploration situation — the water — they've been very proactive on it. They've put a new water management plan for the mine itself into consultation with the Selkirk First Nation. They were partnering with the Selkirk First Nation. They submitted an application to amend its water licence to the Water Board and YESAA on July 31, 2009. So they're waiting for a reply to that.

We as a government are monitoring the situation at Minto mine and are working with the mine itself to develop a long-term solution for the ongoing water issue. Again, they're being very proactive, partnering with the Selkirk First Nation on this issue. So I look forward to the YESAA decision that should come down in the new year. They've been fairly busy.

As far as the question about lakes or anything like that — use of the tailings ponds — I think all those kinds of issues would be covered by YESAA. That's the process where people take those kinds of applications and move forward. But there are no plans at the moment that I know of where any mining investors are looking at lakes for tailings ponds. So I can't answer that question at the moment.

But I do know that YESAA would be very concerned if in fact that was brought forward and they would have to do their good work and would look forward to any kind of discussion YESAA would have or any decision that came down on an issue like that.

As far as Mount Nansen and these type 2 sites which have been a large scar on the Yukon for many years, we have a mine reclamation plan. As mines open up, they put resources in place to mitigate any kind of an environmental issue so that we're always aware of their environmental footprint and the cost of reclamation. This is something that is an ongoing inspection issue as these mines move forward. For example, as Minto moves forward, like any good corporate citizen, they would do reclamation as they managed the ore and managed the mine itself. We would have to assess all the time the responsibility to the mine to make sure that we had the resources available to us as a government, or to a government department, to take over any reclamation that would be a cost to the taxpayers. This mine reclamation process guarantees or safeguards the fact that people would leave a mine site in a situation that would cost taxpayers money.

I think we do an assessment on a regular basis internally in the government to make sure that we're abreast of whatever happens. Of course, there has to be a mining plan put in front of us. So we have inspectors out there to make sure the mining plan is going forward as planned. So we're always on-site with a set of eyes that is making sure that the reclamation and what they're doing on the site is appropriate and we work at having the resources together in case something happens. I mean, you never know what will happen in industry with bankruptcies or issues like that, so we need the resources to close a mine or do the reclamation that's needed to bring it up to a standard that's acceptable to us as a government and to Yukoners.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister was talking earlier and we may end up coming back to this issue again, but I'd like to get a few other questions on the record here. I am going to go back and read the minister's response.

I would like to ask him some questions about the energy strategy, specifically with regard to mining projects. For the minister's benefit, I will tell him where we are looking in the *Energy Strategy for Yukon*. I am on page 11 where it talks about future trends. It says large new mining developments could significantly increase the demand for electricity. Hydro-electricity capacity could be reached and we might have to rely on diesel to meet our electricity needs.

One of the goals of the energy strategy is to work in conjunction with the *Climate Change Action Plan*. What I am wondering is how we are going to manage the demand side of the equation here. It is my understanding that Mayo B is going to maybe add another five to seven-and-a-half megawatts of capacity on the grid.

The third turbine at Aishihik — the minister has already basically said that's more a standby. I'm not so sure that it's actually going to increase the capacity. It's more efficient than the other two turbines, but I don't know if there is enough water there to run all three turbines.

So the question comes up: if some of these mines come on stream, where are we going to get the electricity from? We've got a number of them. I mentioned a few of them earlier that are within range of actually hooking into the grid. One of them is already basically on the grid, which would be the Alexco project. I don't know what the requirements are, but I've heard figures in the neighbourhood of three or four megawatts for Alexco, 10 megawatts for the Carmacks Copper project.

I know that the Mactung project is not on the grid, or close to the grid — but here's another mining project that's going to contribute greenhouse gas emissions. If we're going to take seriously climate change — it's my understanding 12.5 megawatts of diesel generation, and the Casino project could be as much as 100 megawatts. We don't have the capacity and I don't see in the energy strategy where we're going to be able to get that kind of capacity.

So what is the plan? Is it independent power producers, and if it is independent power producers, if they're developed specifically to address the needs of these mining projects, what kind of agreements does the minister see as being in place?

I think the concern here is that you can put these independent power producers in place and they can supply the project and it can be tied in to the grid, but when the project is over, are the ratepayers going to be obligated — like they are in British Columbia — to continue to buy the electricity regardless of whether or not we need that capacity on the grid? If we've got our own hydro-generating capacity, our own green energy, why would we buy it from an independent power producer?

I don't know if the minister can address all of those questions in the time left, but it would be much appreciated if he would give it his best shot.

Hon. Mr. Lang: In addressing the *Energy Strategy for Yukon* on page 11 — there's a priority action list there that states the following: increase renewable energy supply in Yukon by 20 percent by 2020; develop a policy framework for geothermal energy; support and demonstrate renewable energy projects in communities off the electrical grid to reduce to diesel use — again, another management issue; support the development of a wind, hydro, solar, wood or geothermal project in a diesel-powered community — in other words, Watson Lake, Old Crow and Swift River are diesel-powered communities; conduct pilot studies to access the feasibility of renewable energy initiatives, new or expanded district heating systems — in other words, can we utilize some of this heat that we're producing for a secondary use, which would be a heating system; solar-powered irrigation system for a community farm — is there a viability where we could use that for the irrigation system? — another great cost to farmers and to our potential agriculture industry is the management of pumps and water and that's irrigation; wood-fuelled heating systems for institutional buildings — we would like to look at building a pilot project where we could utilize the pellets or secondary product from our forest industry; promote renewal energy sources for heating and transportation; provide financial incentives for renewable energy infrastructures; and provide training and technical assistance to build local skills for renewable energy production.

So, in other words, those are priority actions on how we're going to move forward. This is not going to solve itself overnight. This is an ongoing management issue, when you consider the size of our community and how our communities are spread out, as they are in the territory. Certainly, when we develop renewable energy, if we can reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy as a local resource can contribute to economic development and employment for Yukon.

If you were looking at a community like Watson Lake, with a potential of a pellet-burning system, you're also looking at the local benefits of creating the pellets, which certainly outweighs the fact that we ship in petroleum, we burn petroleum, and we don't get the benefit out of it that we would out of a locally created resource that would add a secondary industry to a forest operation in the Watson Lake area. These are just ideas I'm throwing out there today.

The energy strategy and its complement, the *Climate Change Action Plan*, both released in early 2009, identify opportunities to increase energy production from renewable resources to reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions. Specific strategies include — Mr. Chair, when you talk about the Mayo B and the Mayo hydro project, which has been there for many, many years, just the fact that we are looking this year at connecting the Mayo and Dawson grid to the southern grid, that in itself will give us a management tool that will benefit the consumer and the territory.

By having that hydro capacity as remote as it was doesn't give us the management tool to move the power to where it is needed in the whole grid; that in itself will be an improvement. Is that all we need? No, no, it is not all we need. As the member said, as we look at Minto — which is Capstone now and is up and running at the moment — they are on hydro; and then we look at the potential of Alexco, which is right next door to the Mayo project; and then of course Yukon Zinc, which will be independent and it will have to create its own energy because of the remoteness of the investment.

The member opposite is talking about Western Copper or Carmacks Copper — that's an investment. If you were to look at Casino, there's another investment. If you were looking at the Mac Pass — a huge investment. Of course, when we talk about areas that are very remote, Mac Pass would be one of them. What we can do, as a government, as we move forward and take this process out for public consultation now or very soon — the IPP policy and net metering policy — people in the Yukon will be able to discuss this and be involved in the actual process as it unfolds here over the next three or four months.

I recommend that everyone come out and participate in the independent power process and net metering to see how that could mitigate some of the issues the member opposite is concerned about. Most of the electricity produced in the Yukon is from renewable energy sources, primarily electricity generated from hydro, with a small portion coming from wind.

In 2006, for example, renewable energy counted for 93 percent of Yukon's electrical supply. As the member opposite says, if in fact we move forward with these growing demands

on our hydro, how are we as government or as a community going to address some of the issues?

I guess as we move through this, we have a significant supply of renewable energy in the electrical system. An estimated 17 percent of the total energy used in the Yukon comes from renewable resources. Diesel fuel for transportation, heating and electricity accounts for almost half of the non-renewable energy used. In other words, the diesel fuel for transportation is a big issue. It's a cost.

Ongoing activities to verify and demonstrate the viability of developing Yukon's renewable energy resources and to encourage their widespread adoption include the following: developing a wind resource assessment program for off-grid private sector clients. In other words, how can we work with individuals who are off the grid and move them off their own generation of power, which is a very expensive process, and look at wind resources for them?

I know that in Old Crow, Yukon Energy had test sites there on many areas to see what they could do from an investment point of view to try to mitigate some of the costs there of creating energy. We have the photovoltaic system, which is located on the roof of our building here, the administration building — grid-connected wind-solar system at Yukon College, solar beacon at Faro airport, demonstration of solar photovoltaic for agriculture water pumps with Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, and good energy rebates to encourage installation of high-efficiency wood-burning equipment and solar water heating systems.

As we move forward, the interesting thing about society as it grows into this dialogue is a wider circle of individuals. People are taking advantage of these energy rebates because they're good investments. It's a good investment up front and it's a good investment down the road to make sure that your home is as energy-friendly as possible. With our rebate program, there is lots of room in there for people to take advantage of those investments, which encourage people to upgrade their washers and dryers.

Not only are we looking at the dryer issue, water is a very big issue too, because we use energy to pump our water from homes and do whatever. So there are overlapping energy costs in everything we do in our homes. More and more people are going to that distant wood-burning boiler system, which is very efficient heat-wise, plus it's a very high level of engineering, so the amount of wood that it utilizes is mitigated. In other words, it's not as much as a wood stove 10 years ago would burn to heat the same area.

I remind the members that the wood is cut locally. I think the figure now is somewhere between 7,000 and 8,000 cords of wood are burned in the Whitehorse area a year and that's not counting the outlying areas. I think that's quite a figure when you think about the size of a cord of wood. People are taking advantage of that so that's good news from an environmental point of view.

As we move forward with the *Energy Strategy for Yukon*, it gives us a very positive blueprint on how this government and future governments could identify this strategy for the Yukon, but also how we manage our energy forward.

And then if we go to the IPP policy, it would offer both the Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon Electrical Company Ltd. increased options as to how to meet future energy demands in Yukon. Again I say to the members opposite, regarding the investment we have on the ground like the Whitehorse dam, you aren't going to see that kind of investment — I don't think — in the future because of the environmental impact it has or the footprint it has. I think as we go forward with this IPP and encourage not only ourselves, Yukon Energy and other individuals to invest, I think these kinds of questions could be asked as we go out for the public consultation.

The IPP and net metering policies are needed to make it viable for independent power producers and electricity customers to generate clean electricity for sale to Yukon's utilities. In other words, it is not only the independent power producers but electricity customers who could invest in this and then sell it back into the grid. A more diversified mix of power producers will serve to strengthen Yukon's energy security, keep electricity rates low and make the electricity system more reliable.

In other words, Mr. Chair, we have to move ahead on this investment to tie in our grid — in other words, the Mayo-Dawson to our southern grid. As you go down — if you were to go down the Alaska Highway, and you would look at a place like Rancheria — they create all their own energy. They have a whole system there they put in probably 10 years ago, and they are independent of the grid, of course, but they also mitigated — and they were able to shut down — their diesel operation and that's probably one of the reason they're open today: because of that resource that they have. That's a hydro project that the lodge put in on their own.

So there's a lot to talk about how we manage our energy, and I look forward in the years to come to see where, eventually, we can go as a community — the Yukon. The partnership with Canada on the Mayo B project is moving in the right direction because, in turn, we couldn't do it, as a community or as a corporation, without those kinds of investment. It would be very hard for us to make those investments on the ground in Mayo B.

If you were to look at Minto mines, or Capstone when Yukon Energy was working with them on the viability, not only did they invest in the line between Carmacks and Pelly, but they put the infrastructure in place from the main line to the mine itself and then they put a package — I'm not quite sure what the figure is — but there is a guarantee from the mine on consumption of power. In other words, if in fact they were to somehow shut down, that would reflect on them and they would still be obliged to purchase power.

I'm not sure what the figures are, but I know Yukon Energy Corporation has a balance there, where they are fairly protected from any kind of a downturn in the economy, which would mean that Yukon Energy Corporation would lose that size of a customer. So there is a bit of a cushion in there. But it's very important that we work with industry and in partnership. As I said to the member opposite, we're looking at a partnership with Canada for Mayo B. I'm not quite sure what the Yukon Energy Corporation is doing with Alexco.

Mr. Chair, seeing the time, I move that we report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Lang that Committee of the Whole report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. Taylor that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Mr. Nordick: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 17, *Second Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, and directed me to report progress on it.

Speaker: You have heard the report of the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:30, this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following document was filed November 30, 2009:

09-1-130

Credit Unions in Yukon: letters of support to the Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly, from Rick Karp, President of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce (November 18, 2009); Jerome Babyn, Chair of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce (dated November 20, 2009); and Alex Furlong, President of the Yukon Federation of Labour (November 26, 2009) (Hardy)