

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Monday, September 27, 2010 – 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

**Speaker:** I'll ask the honourable members to remain standing. We are going to have a moment of silence for our friend and colleague, Mr. Todd Hardy. Thank you.

*Moment of silence observed*

## DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

## TRIBUTES

### In remembrance of Todd Hardy

**Mr. Cardiff:** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party caucus, I rise today to pay tribute to our leader, our colleague, our friend, Todd Hardy, the former MLA for Whitehorse Centre who I am sad to report left us a few weeks ago, this past July.

Todd remains close in our thoughts and in our hearts. Mr. Speaker, would you please join me in asking all other members in the House to recognize the members of Todd's family: Louise Hardy, our former Member of Parliament; her daughter Janelle, with her daughter Ellazora; and her son Tytus and his fiancée Rosemary. Unable to be with us today are Todd's son Lymond and their daughter Tess. I'd also like to welcome the other many friends and constituents of Todd who are here in the House today and thank them for joining us.

No one man can sum up another's life in the few moments that make up a brief tribute. I am grateful that much has already been said publicly by the media and by Todd's many friends and colleagues so that others can come to know who Todd really was.

When I think of Todd, I remember the man whose experience as a carpenter, as a brother in the labour movement, and finally, in politics gave him a deep understanding of the everyday struggles of Yukoners. I believe that it contributed to his ability to transcend social and economic barriers and to reach out and connect with people from all walks of life.

Todd lived by and taught others, including myself, the words of James Shaver Woodsworth: "We are thankful for these and all the good things of life. We recognize that they are a part of our common heritage and come to us through the efforts of our brothers and sisters the world over. What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all. To this end, may we take our share in the world's work and the world's struggles."

Those of us in his office who worked closely with Todd in the day-to-day of his political life would like to share what we knew about his commitment to life in politics. We knew his dedication to his family to be absolute. We knew he had a

commitment to give to his community. He did not know how to live life any other way. Todd approached the business of the Legislature thoughtfully and compassionately.

Todd was a voice for those in need. In the House he was at his best when putting forward motions or questions about poverty, social assistance, the minimum wage, health care, child welfare, addictions, seniors and housing issues. He did not hesitate to bring to the House his insight into the big picture.

He was not afraid to raise national and international issues such as world peace, nuclear disarmament, global warming, refugees and literacy. He could always capably draw the analogy that made those issues relevant to us here in the Yukon.

He had an oversight of the workings of the House that is rare and it survives in his bill for legislative reform. He taught us that politics can be done differently, that confrontation is not our purpose. He encouraged us to propose solutions, rather than to attack and criticize. He wanted us to offer constructive ideas, and because of this, many of his ideas have seen fruition in legislation and policy. He had a desire and an ability to work together outside the oppositional nature of this House. He preferred us to focus on the issue, the policy, the purpose of our work, rather than succumb to personal attacks in the Legislature.

His first approach was often quiet, thoughtful and cooperative, but when the day's proceedings revealed hypocrisy or prejudice, or ignored the rights of the less fortunate, his voice was strong and his anger and frustration were obvious to all of us.

In his last few weeks, I had the opportunity to sit with Todd and talk with him. One day we talked about important things that are necessary for politicians to do their job, and we talked about the need for truth, integrity and compassion. Todd was all of those things. He taught me a lot about all those things.

We will remember that Todd never stopped working, even when his illness took its toll. Todd led the last election campaign from a hospital bed in Vancouver, suffering from the side effects of chemotherapy and invasive medical procedures that we knew were causing him tremendous discomfort and pain.

Working steadily throughout, he would finally lead caucuses by telephone, even in his last few weeks. I'll breach confidentiality to tell you that Todd's caucuses were predictably unpredictable. He would come in and announce that we would all listen to a poem that had captured his attention. It was always a very thoughtful poem, perhaps written by Pablo Neruda or a local poet, and he would then set a calming tone to what often became a very noisy meeting.

At one special caucus meeting that coincided with his birthday, each person in caucus wrote a poem and read it to him, and I think that that was something that he remembered very much with affection. At another caucus, Todd would begin in silence, appearing to be somewhere else, allowing all others to speak and debate the debate, to marshal back and forth, while Todd sat silently overbuttering a piece of muffin, and he loved butter. To Todd, bread or muffins or scones were merely a delivery vehicle for that lovely yellow stuff. Then when the talk had gone around and around, Todd would finally

speak, perhaps a couple of sentences, that would end the discussion and leave heads nodding in agreement. He did not achieve this by force or by power of authority, but by common sense.

Todd could play the devil's advocate with the best of them, poking and prodding, sometimes gently, sometimes forcefully, challenging everybody around the table. He wanted us to step down from preconceived notions and entrenched positions to see things from different angles. He could be difficult, requesting changes to questions or motions at the last minute before going into the Legislature, sending the staff running to the computer and the photocopier, and then, finally standing in the Legislature, he would sometimes disregard the paper in his hand and speak eloquently, saying it better than what had taken most of the morning's work to produce.

Todd was a great role model. He said what he believed, and he believed what he said, which is something we want from all politicians. His standards were high, both for himself and for us. His work ethic was extraordinary, and he expected the same. Todd never let what the media was broadcasting and writing influence his politics. He spoke against ambulance-chasing and encouraged all of us to speak to issues that were on our constituents' minds, rather than what was the current theme.

He always asked us: "What are the people saying?" and would remind us that we were doing this for the people.

Another thing Todd used to always say was, "When we're in here, it's not necessarily about talking to each other or at each other. It's about talking to the people. We are trying to get our message to the people."

Glimpses into Todd's personal life left us knowing that he had eclectic interests, ranging from playing and listening to music, reading fiction and political books, to woodworking, team sports and martial arts. He loved flowers and dogs. He especially loved raising his Newfoundland dogs and reported regularly on their progress to us in the office.

His granddaughter Ellazora was one of the greatest joys in his life; his sons and daughters, his greatest support; his wife was his soul mate; his mother, he loved greatly, and his friends, he cherished a great deal.

Another thing I remember — I think it was toward the end of the last sitting, and we were just getting ready to go into the House and the phone rang. I picked it up, and it was for Todd, and it was, "Well, we're going into the House pretty quick."

It was Todd's mom phoning to wish him well that day. They talked regularly. He had a good relationship with his mom and he loved her dearly.

The practise of Buddhism was central to his life, and he found happiness often aided by a sense of humour that got stronger as his health worsened. He was a lover of traditions. In a winter newsletter to his constituents, he declared that he believed in Santa Claus — and he did. He loved April Fools' Day. The concept of duping and deflating folks who took themselves a wee bit too seriously was tempting to him. He was into it — not just for the jokes, but because of the place in its pantheon of human traditions and the universality of it all. April Fools' became an NDP tradition that was inaugurated by

Todd. Every year, it was a challenge to write an April Fools' Day motion, and we looked forward to it greatly. One year, the motion was about administering lie detector tests on MLAs. Another year, it was to abolish party politics in the Yukon.

And when Sarah Palin rose to prominence as a vice-presidential candidate, Todd suggested in an April Fools' Day motion that the Yukon health care review invite her as an advisor, given her vast experiences with our socialized medical system.

The staff would eagerly await reports from Todd about MLAs who had gotten taken in and had not remembered the day. As I recall, over the years, I heard about a few media who came rushing into the office, looking for clarification on our April Fools' Day motions. Someone in the office made a suggestion that we come clean and announce it was all a joke — April Fools'. This, however, was sternly rebuked by Todd. After all, to do so was a betrayal of the spirit of irony and the great day of April Fools'.

Our memories of his final struggle and his courage and the forthright approach to his own death were an amazing lesson for all of us. On behalf of the staff, I would like to ask you to remember Todd as we think he would have asked — a gentle soul, who loved his family, his colleagues and his Yukon with all his heart, and who gave everything to leave a better world behind for us.

No one man can sum up another's contribution to politics in a brief tribute, but in the words chosen by one woman, his wife Louise, I felt Todd's commitment was best expressed, as she quoted from one of Todd's Zen lessons: "When you do something, you should burn yourself completely, like a good bonfire, leaving no trace of yourself."

On behalf of our party and our office, I would like to thank Todd's family for sharing so much of his time with us. It was for a good cause.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I rise today to pay tribute to a friend, to a colleague and to a fellow Yukoner. You know, Mr. Speaker, Todd Hardy and I entered politics at the same time, some 14 years ago.

I had the luxury, and indeed the pleasure, to discuss with Todd many issues, many things, and over the years, if I were to sum it up, I think the one thing that I found out that defined Todd Hardy was inner strength. Through it all, never did partisan politics affect that relationship. We, the government side, indeed found Todd to be a very constructive colleague in this House. In closing, I must say that, having known him and having Todd present in this Assembly, we're all better for it. Thank you.

**Mr. Mitchell:** It is with great sadness that we in the Official Opposition pay tribute to our friend and colleague, Todd Hardy, the former leader of the Yukon New Democratic Party and the MLA for Whitehorse Centre. This is a very difficult tribute to deliver. Todd has left us too soon and we mourn the loss of a man so genuinely committed to helping others. Todd was down to earth, he was sincere, and he always put other people first. He was a man of dedication, be it to his fam-

ily, to his constituents, or to the many causes that he championed. He was an excellent MLA and representative for his Whitehorse Centre riding.

Todd was always a strong social activist and he played a pivotal role in founding the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and the Yukon chapter of The Council of Canadians. Todd was a founding member and president of Habitat for Humanity Yukon. Indeed, without his drive, there would be no such presence in Yukon today. Todd also had a long and varied list of community volunteering. We in this House differ frequently on issues of policy and priorities, but I think we all will agree that Todd's demonstrated passion and compassion for the causes he championed for Yukon's least fortunate citizens, for the homeless, the sick, for those challenged by disabilities, for youth at risk, for victims of violence — particularly women and children — these were traits and commitments that we all admired in our late colleague. His dedication to these issues and to raising them in this House made us all better by the debate that ensued and, in some notable cases, like SCAN and smoke-free places legislation and the changes that ensued.

We, along with all Yukoners, must thank Todd for his leadership in these areas. I don't have a quotation to read today, Mr. Speaker, but I am reminded of a famous quote from the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and I would like to paraphrase it for Todd: "Others see things the way they are and question why. Todd Hardy saw things that never were and asked why not."

Todd faced his illness with courage, perseverance and dignity. Through his Buddhist beliefs, he was at peace with death, as he lived his life fully with compassion, conviction and commitment. He was a son, husband, father, grandfather, friend and neighbour. We wish to express our deepest sympathy to his wife Louise, his children Janelle, Tytus, Tess and Lymond and his beloved granddaughter Ellazora. He was so very proud of you all, his family.

Todd Hardy has left his incredible mark on the Yukon, and we are all better for having known him. He will be missed in this Assembly and across Yukon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Au revoir, Todd, and merci.

**Mr. Cathers:** On this sad occasion, as we commemorate Todd Hardy's life and his contribution to all Yukoners and to this Assembly, I want to begin first of all by expressing my very deep sympathies to all of his family and to note that one thing I think all members in this Assembly would agree on is that we might disagree with Todd's policies but we could always respect his commitments to his beliefs, his attempts to be constructive in this Legislative Assembly and to work with other MLAs regardless of political affiliation.

We all know initiatives in this House that he was instrumental in championing, including the *Smoke-free Places Act*, the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act*, and of course those are only two examples of his work. So much has been said already and as my colleague, the Member for Mount Lorne, noted, it's very hard for any other man to sum up another's life, but I want to just emphasize my great respect for the work that Todd did, for the efforts that he made on behalf

of his constituents and all Yukoners — the fact that he worked on behalf of his constituents til the end.

Thank you to his family. I just want to thank you all for sharing him with us. Again, in closing, I express my sympathy to you. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Any further tributes?

Introduction of visitors.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Cardiff:** I know I mentioned it in the tribute, but I'd like everyone to join me in welcoming Todd's wife Louise, his daughter Janelle, and granddaughter Ellazora, and their son Tytus and his fiancée Rosemary.

*Applause*

**Mr. Cardiff:** I would also like to ask members to join me in welcoming the former MLA for Mount Lorne, Lois Moorcroft, and her parents, who are here visiting. I believe this is their first time in the Legislative Assembly.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Further introductions of visitors?

Hearing none, are there returns or documents for tabling?

Reports of committees.

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

## NOTICES OF MOTION

**Mr. McRobb:** I give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of all written correspondence, including e-mail, between the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the Premier's office, the minister responsible for the Public Service Commission and the Minister of Justice, regarding the issue of the chair's pay increase, a pay increase that was not in compliance with government rules.

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

THAT this House urges the chair and CEO of the Yukon Hospital Corporation to appear as witnesses before the Yukon Legislative Assembly during the fall 2010 sitting in order to shed light on:

(1) the decision to increase remuneration levels for board members;

(2) recent revelations of increased projected palliative care needs in the Yukon;

(3) the financing and planning of a \$40-million to \$50-million Whitehorse General Hospital expansion; and

(4) staffing decisions, particularly the reliance on nurses from out-of-territory on short-term contracts.

**Speaker:** Are there further notices of motion?

Is there a statement by a minister?

Hearing none, that brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Fiscal management

**Mr. Mitchell:** The Premier made a promise to Yukoners. He promised to manage their money responsibly. He also promised an open and accountable government. The Premier has failed to keep both of these promises. Instead of sound fiscal management, the Premier has now delivered two deficits in a row. Instead of open and accountable government, the Premier has even tried to deny that those deficits exist. Mr. Speaker, this is a government that promised balanced budgets. Yukoners have lost trust in this government.

Will the Premier finally admit that he has broken that promise?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, of course there is no admission on that count. The Yukon Party government has kept its commitment to Yukoners on fiscal management in spades, having doubled the fiscal capacity of the Yukon, having invested heavily in building Yukon's infrastructure, having invested heavily in programs and services for Yukoners, while still maintaining a savings account for the future. Mr. Speaker, we are very proud of our financial management record. I can't say the same for the Liberals in this House when it comes to commitments and backing up those commitments with action.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Despite all the increased federal revenue transfers for two years in a row, the Premier promised a surplus and delivered a deficit. Now that there's no surplus, he talks about what's soon to be a phantom savings account. Let's look at those savings.

In 2008, Yukoners had \$165 million in net financial resources; in 2009, \$136 million. At budget time last year, the number was at \$122 million. Yukoners will soon have just \$33 million left in that precious savings account, according to the documents in front of us. That's a dangerous trajectory and not one that the Premier should be proud of. In his Speech from the Throne last year, he promised open, accountable, fiscally responsible government. How can Yukoners trust this Premier when he breaks such high-profile promises?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Of course, once again, this government has tabled seven consecutive main estimates that show surplus. Furthermore, when the member talks about the savings account in the area of \$165 million, I would remind the Liberals in this House of who actually went and built up that savings account.

Now we're investing it in areas that make sense for Yukoners — building Yukon's infrastructure for future generations, programs and services for Yukoners.

If the members have an issue with that kind of fiscal management in building up Yukon's fiscal capacity and reinvesting it back into the Yukon Territory and our citizens, the members should stand on the floor and tell Yukoners what they would cut. Where would they reduce? This is a member who has openly opposed all the good that has transpired in this territory since the Yukon Party government took office. Now they are calling for issues regarding fiscal management when, in fact, the last real final balance deficit in this territory was under a former Liberal government.

**Mr. Mitchell:** This Premier makes our point for us. His main estimates promise surpluses and his supplementaries deliver deficits. As for cuts, this Premier keeps talking of cuts. I'll remind him it's only the Yukon Party government that ever cut employees' wages. Perhaps he has an agenda he should be telling us about. Just what are these cuts he keeps warning us about?

There's only \$33 million left in the savings account. Let's remember there was \$165 million in that account just three years ago. That \$33 million is not cash readily available to be spent either. \$25 million of it is locked away in questionable investments that won't mature for years, and we can only hope that we would recover that amount if we were to sell it now.

The Yukon government spends about \$2 million a day on O&M. The Premier's much-lauded and rapidly shrinking savings account would last us less than a week. Does the Premier think a week's worth of savings is good enough for Yukoners?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, in the first place, when it comes to financial management, the correlation the Leader of the Liberal Party is making is not even relevant. Furthermore, it is important when you recognize that the Yukon government and the Yukon Territory — one of only two jurisdictions in the country that actually have a savings account — and furthermore, that savings account has served us well. That's why we can pay for programs and services. That's why we can pay for variances like employees' wages. Let me remind the member opposite that the last Liberal government was actually servicing debt to pay for employees' wages and programs and services for Yukoners. That's not the case today. Not only are we paying for those in full, we have a savings account for future decisions to be made.

### Question re: Whitehorse Centre by-election

**Mr. Inverarity:** We are here for another day in this Legislative Assembly. We are here to represent Yukoners and advocate for their interests. Unfortunately, it's also another day where the residents of Whitehorse Centre have been silenced because the Premier refuses to allow them to choose their own representative. As a recent editorial put it, and I quote: "That has raised valid questions about this government's interpretation of basic democracy and why it's prepared to rob the citizens of Whitehorse Centre of the right every Yukoner enjoys — representation in the Legislature." When will the Premier stop stalling and call the by-election?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, one thing that is very evident in this territory today is that the Yukon Party government doesn't stall. It works on building Yukon's future, and that's exactly what we are elected to do. It comes in various forms — economy, strengthening our social safety net, protecting our environment, increasing access to health care for Yukoners, and the list goes on and on and on. As far as the statement of refusing the rights of the Whitehorse Centre citizens for representation — that's not factual. Whitehorse residents of Whitehorse Centre are very well represented, have been very well represented and will continue to be very well represented. And we will make, in due course, a decision on exactly how we will proceed, whether it's a by-election or otherwise.

This is all part of due process that we must go through. Essentially, it comes down to the sad passing of the representative for Whitehorse Centre, which is truly unfortunate because the government worked very well with the former MLA.

**Mr. Inverarity:** We're proud to say that, last Thursday, Yukon Liberal Party members selected their candidate for Whitehorse Centre, who is actually in the House today. It was a close race between two candidates eager to have a run-down. The race created a lot of interest.

Tonight the NDP will acclaim their candidate. They have also been preparing for a by-election for some time. Both opposition parties believe Whitehorse Centre deserves representation; both opposition parties believe they're ready for a by-election that will accomplish just that. Only the Yukon Party seems to be dragging its feet.

Residents have already been without representation for two months. Why hasn't the Premier called the by-election?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** We at least share one belief, and that is that all citizens should be represented, but let's look at what has transpired. The Liberals in this House have opposed everything that has happened in Whitehorse Centre, and the list is long — very long.

So when it comes to representation, there's a distinct difference between verbally committing to citizens and backing that commitment up with action. At least the Yukon Party government has backed up its commitment to Yukoners and the citizens of Whitehorse Centre through action, not talk.

**Mr. Inverarity:** Is it possible the Premier won't call a by-election because the Yukon Party doesn't have a candidate? The Liberals have a candidate, the NDP have a candidate, but it appears the Yukon Party can't find a candidate willing to run with them. After all, Mr. Speaker, the candidate running for the Yukon Party would have a hard platform to sell. Yukoners don't want any more deficit spending, government secrecy or closed-door politics. Yukoners are tired of hearing, "We'll get back to you." Yukoners want trust, integrity and accountability in their government. Will the Premier call the by-election now?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** The Member for Porter Creek South is somehow speculating that a Yukon Party candidate would have a tough time selling a platform. "Nay, nay," I say. A Yukon Party candidate would not have a tough time selling the fact that this government is tough on crime. Unfortunately, the Liberals are not. The Yukon Party candidate would not have a hard time selling a platform where there's a significant amount of investments in infrastructure in the downtown riding. A Yukon Party candidate would not have a difficult time selling a platform that clearly demonstrates that we are investing in affordable housing in the downtown riding. A Yukon Party candidate would not have a difficult time selling the platform of revitalizing the downtown core and our massive multi-million dollar investment on the waterfront, including building cultural centres.

No, it's not about platform; it's about action, not talk.

#### **Question re: Nurse shortages**

**Mr. Cardiff:** The Yukon Hospital Corporation's public meeting last week proved to be an exercise in frustration and futility, as far as getting any real answers. So once again

we're asking, by motion, to have the chair and the CEO of the Yukon Hospital Corporation appear before the Legislature this sitting to answer the many questions that we and the public have.

We're asking for greater accountability for the now \$100-million plus the board expects to borrow to build new buildings and expand existing ones. Today we will focus on one major issue, among many, the corporation is not addressing.

Is the Minister of Health and Social Services aware of how frustrated, how anxious and how demoralized nurses working at the hospital are feeling today?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I think we have to reflect on what transpired in this House a few short months ago. The very questions that the member is seeking answers to were asked in this House; the witnesses were before the House. I understand that the Third Party is frustrated. All things considered, I think anyone would be frustrated. However, we, the Yukon Party government, have actually taken over the NDP agenda when it comes to social programming services and health care. Our focus in those areas is second to none when it comes to NDP or Liberal governments.

As a Conservative government we're very proud of those commitments to Yukoners and the fact that we've delivered on them. By the way, we value the hard work that the members of the board of trustees are providing Yukoners in the delivery of health care. I think if you ask Yukoners today, we are very fortunate in this territory, considering our capacity overall in the health care system that we have, and this Yukon Party government has been a contributor to that health care system.

**Mr. Cardiff:** Not even close, Mr. Speaker. We've been advised that nurses at the hospital have filed dozens upon dozens of complaints about their various concerns and are still waiting to have these concerns addressed.

Because of the continued shortage of nurses, they are regularly called into work on their days off or when they are on holidays. As the minister knows, this leads to staff burnout, staff turnover, not to mention much higher costs for all the overtime pay. This is also not good for the patients. Having so many nurses employed as casuals or temporaries is not a good use of public money. It only has the appearance of saving money. Over the long haul, it actually ends up costing much more money.

When will the minister go to bat for the overworked, frustrated and demoralized nurses and ask the chair of the Hospital Corporation to sit down and address the many concerns that they have?

**Hon. Mr. Hart:** For the member opposite, with regard to the nurses' situation at the Whitehorse hospital, the situation has been reviewed. I've been advised by the CEO that they have conducted a study by an Outside firm with regard to the work being completed by the nurses and an evaluation of that process has been provided to the CEO. They are reviewing that information and will be looking forward to the recommendations coming from same to assist in providing assistance to the nurses at Whitehorse General Hospital.

**Mr. Cardiff:** We also understand that the hospital's emergency ward is short a nurse. The maternity ward is under-

staffed as well. These and other staffing shortages and problems have resulted in nurses breaking down in tears. They tell us they don't want to work here if they can't provide the level of care they feel their patients deserve.

We also hear that the hospital continues to rely heavily — far too heavily — on an Outside agency to bring nurses up here to fill in on a temporary basis. Of course, the agency charges a stiff fee for this service, and this is only further driving up nursing costs. Nurses have argued for a long time that it is far cheaper to offer nurses permanent positions and rely less on casuals and temporaries from Outside. If the corporation can't recruit and retain nurses at Whitehorse General Hospital, how does it hope to do so at the hospitals it is building in Watson Lake and Dawson City?

The issues I raise today were not adequately addressed at the corporation's public meetings, so I will ask the minister responsible: will he ask the corporation to sit down with the nurses and address their serious staffing and other issues —

**Speaker:** Your time is up. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Hart:** I thank the member opposite for his question, but I will repeat that the study on the nursing situation at Whitehorse General Hospital has been completed. Recommendations have been provided to the CEO and the board of directors.

They are reviewing that information. They are taking into consideration the use of casuals and looking at making some of them full-time. That situation is currently being reviewed. It will be discussed by the board and recommendations will be forthcoming to hopefully assist in that process and provide great health care services for all Yukoners, especially at Whitehorse General Hospital.

#### **Question re: Deep Creek infrastructure**

**Mr. Cathers:** This year's budget set aside \$2 million to develop a Deep Creek community well. I want to again thank the Minister of Community Services for that commitment and I'd like to follow up with him on the status of the project. In May, the minister told me the project was entering the preliminary planning stage, which would include determining the most suitable location for the well. Will the minister please tell me whether or not a location for the Deep Creek community well has been selected, and if so, where that might be?

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** In reply to the member opposite, we certainly did put money aside for the Deep Creek well. To answer his question, I would have to get an update to him on where we're at with that, but it was a commitment this government had made.

**Mr. Cathers:** I look forward to hearing about the location from the minister. The minister's last letter updating me on the Deep Creek community well project also indicated that hydrology studies and determining sizing of the facility would be part of the next steps.

Is he able to tell me today at what stage the planning for the Deep Creek community well is, including what stage design of that facility is at and whether or not it has yet been decided if that facility will be a fill point for fire trucks and/or water trucks?

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** He's correct on the overview that is being done. What I would again commit to do is give him an update of where we're at with that. As far as accommodating water and fire trucks, I would hope we would but I would have to clarify that, too, in that communication.

**Mr. Cathers:** Finally — and I'm guessing, based on the minister's previous responses, that he may have to get back to me on this later, but I hope and assume that the plan is to provide citizens of the area an opportunity to provide their comments on the design before it is finalized and built. If the minister is able to tell me today when he expects public consultation on the Deep Creek community well to occur, I would appreciate that; if not, I would appreciate it if he would commit to advising me in a letter following this Question Period.

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** It would be part and parcel of a project of this nature and there would certainly be consultation and community input. I'm not quite sure what level we're at now, but again, in our communication, I would definitely update him on that, too.

#### **Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation board remuneration**

**Mr. McRobb:** Once again, it's necessary to follow up on a question asked previously because this government chose to skate away from the issue instead of being open and accountable to Yukoners. The issue of the apparent overpayment to the Hospital Corporation chair and this government's lack of will to collect are important to the public because it smacks of political favouritism in how this government spends the public purse.

The Premier can again get on his high horse and challenge me to say it outside the protection of this Chamber, but frankly, I've done that and nothing ever happens because it's mere rhetoric from this Premier. Let's get to the bottom of this issue. Can the Premier explain how the hospital board chair refused to return the overpayment two weeks before the Premier's letter was even sent to him?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** In the context of openness and being accountable, at least the Yukon Party government puts the reasoning in writing and puts our name to it.

**Mr. McRobb:** Obviously, either the Hospital Corporation chair knew what the Premier was going to do in advance of speaking to reporters two weeks before the Premier's letter or he had decided to not return the unauthorized overpayment, regardless of the consequences.

Mr. Speaker, I would prefer to believe it was the former option, not the latter. Yukoners deserve to hear a substantial answer from this Premier, and hopefully he'll respond to the issue instead of deploying his standard deny-and-attack response. Did any communication occur between the Premier or his staff and the Hospital Corporation chair about this issue before the letter was sent, and what can he tell us about those communications?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, the letter tabled in this House last week is very detailed in its explanation. I don't know what else we can provide the Member for Klwane. If the member is in search of a sinister plot, certainly he is asking the wrong people — the government side. We have provided a

detailed accounting of exactly what transpired, and there is nothing more to it, Mr. Speaker, other than the government apologizing to those board of trustees members for subjecting them to this kind of approach by, in this case, the Liberals in this House.

We apologized openly, publicly. We tabled the explanation in great detail and in fullness, and there's nothing else to the issue.

**Mr. McRobb:** If I may, this matter smacks of political favouritism and the Premier has a duty to Yukoners to come clean. Has he done that? Has he answered these simple and clear questions? No. He's resorting to his old standby defence of deny and attack — so much for being an open and accountable government. Now that's a breach of trust.

The Premier campaigned on being open, accountable and financially responsible, and what do we get instead? Denials, attacks, finger pointing and political favouritism. This is indeed a breach of trust, and it's this Premier who has failed Yukoners. Let's try another simple and clear question.

Five days before the Premier sent his letter, I saw him enter the very Porter Creek establishment, in mid-afternoon, which is owned by the Hospital Corporation chair. Did he speak with the chair on that occasion, and was this issue raised?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Now that we've uncovered the sinister plot — the Premier entered the Casa Loma to buy four cans of Guinness. That's why the Premier entered the Casa Loma and, at the same time, talked to many of the patrons of how little they would support a Liberal government, given the fact that it is an issue of trust.

Now that the member had asked that question, there's the answer. Let me go on to suggest that when it comes to openness and accountable government, when you put things in writing and sign your name to it, that's a clear example. When you actually double the financial capacity of the Yukon and create a savings account, at the same time investing heavily in Yukon and its future, that's being open and accountable. And, by the way, following up commitment with action, that's what the Yukon Party government has done and continues to do, but that's not what the Liberals are doing and it takes a lot more to lead than leading from behind.

### Unparliamentary language

**Speaker:** Before the next question, honourable members, both sides have used the term "breach of trust." The Chair's understanding of a "breach of trust" is a breach of fiduciary responsibility, and unfortunately I let both sides use this term. Members, I just ask you to temper your comments. I'm not going to ask anybody to retract because both sides have done it, but the Chair feels that we're heading in a very uncomfortable direction when we're accusing honourable members of a breach of trust. It's a very serious charge.

### Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation board remuneration

**Mr. McRobb:** It appears we've got a tiger by the tail, but I know it's a paper tiger because I've taken the Premier up twice now on his challenges to repeat my words outside the Legislature and nothing ever happens.

The Premier has some explaining to do, yet he has chosen to go down a different road — a lower road, with his deny-and-attack approach instead of being open and accountable. The government's credibility and integrity is being challenged here by its own actions. The Hospital Corporation chair was the Premier's campaign manager and this matter smacks of political favouritism. The Premier certainly wasn't as gracious with the public purse in the case of the former workers' advocate, who served as the Liberals' campaign manager. How fair was it to treat his campaign manager so favourably when he treated our campaign manager so unfavourably?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** In the context of tiger by the tail, I must disagree with the Member for Kluane. Actually, it's a red herring on a hook, a barbless hook. The member is on a fishing expedition. It has nothing to do with political favouritism. It has everything to do with supporting hard-working Yukoners who are committed to building a better future for the Yukon regardless of what political stripe they may wear. That's the point. I would hope the Member for Kluane can live through it all. The fact that he believes there was an issue of favouritism is not the case. I hope he is not losing any sleep at night over this issue and I hope he hasn't Googled people on the board of trustees.

**Mr. McRobb:** Good governance is all about treating people fairly. That cannot be said about this government, especially when it comes to campaign managers. This government rewarded its own campaign manager with a pocket full of cash in the form of a smoothed over, unauthorized —

### Unparliamentary language

**Speaker:** Order. Those types of terminology have been ruled out of order in this House before. Accusing members of the public of accepting "a pocket full of cash" is beyond the boundaries of this Legislative Assembly. We're attacking people here who aren't here to defend themselves. Furthermore, honourable members, this Chair has always intervened when we in this Assembly make statements that are basically accusing members not in this Assembly of breaking the law.

You have the floor, please — go ahead. I won't deduct time for this.

**Mr. McRobb:** — in the form of a smoothed over, unauthorized salary overpayment. Yet a year ago it wrongfully dismissed an employee who happened to be our campaign manager, and falsely accused him of receiving a salary overpayment. How ironic. This government wrongfully fired the Liberal campaign manager for an alleged salary overpayment and then scurried to the rescue of its own campaign manager who received unauthorized overpayments. Is this being fair with Yukoners, or is this political favouritism?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** This Yukon Party government is all about fairness to Yukoners. Yukoners should receive what is duly coming to them for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the Member for Kluane is talking about. It is simply not relevant to the facts of the matter. Furthermore, the issues were put in writing. Is the member suggesting that what's in writing, duly signed, is indeed not factual? I would hope the member takes more time to think

things through and recognize what's happening here. It's another example of a long list of going after people, instead of recognizing that Yukoners who are doing hard work on behalf of their fellow citizens deserve fair and equitable treatment.

**Mr. McRobb:** Mr. Speaker, Yukoners deserve much better than this. They deserve a government they can trust, a government who is fair to everyone and doesn't spend the public purse filtered through political favouritism. Yukoners deserve an open and accountable government, not a government that denies and attacks. After eight long years of Yukon Party rule, Yukoners want an opportunity to clear the air, an opportunity to elect a government they can trust.

They don't want to live in fear of being ostracized. They don't want their money spent to reward political friends or to punish political foes. This Premier has hid from the voters longer than any previous government in Yukon history. When will he finally clear the air and call an election?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, we've actually been talking about those matters over the last few days in this sitting. Let me reflect on eight long years, as the Member for Kluane has stated on the floor of this House. Yes, in eight long years, the Yukon now has an economy. We have a growing population. Our children are moving back to the Yukon, obtaining gainful employment. We have doubled the financial capacity of the Yukon in eight long years. We have created the savings account.

By the way, our investments have earned over \$19 million in total. Furthermore, we've reformed corrections. We've entered into education reform. We've strengthened the social safety net. We've invested in health care. We've become a player on the national and international stage. It's not all government any more; today, under the Yukon Party eight-long-year reign, now the private sector is investing hundreds of millions of dollars in the Yukon Territory.

We are fourth in the world, Mr. Speaker, as an attractive place for mining investment. We are one of two jurisdictions in the country that have a savings account. We are one of the bright spots in North America that actually had economic growth in 2009 during the major global recession. Yes, eight long years — it's all about trust and we're in it together.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT BILLS

### Bill No. 21: *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10* — Second Reading

**Clerk:** Second reading, Bill No. 21, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Fentie; adjourned debate, Mr. Nordick.

**Mr. Nordick:** Last Thursday, I started off by comparing the Liberal Party's belief — I could say their motto — for this territory, in contrast to this Yukon Party government's belief, a belief we back up with action.

A quote by the Liberal Party leader last week in debate on governance, on page 6476, in *Hansard*, that: "There is a model, a good governance model of health care delivery used across Canada and the United States, and that is to concentrate resources in the greater population centres..."

So the Liberal Party motto focuses on the greater population centres. This statement by the Liberal leader is a core belief that the Liberal Party has and it is the fundamental underpinning for the decisions they would make if they were elected to lead this territory. They truly believe that, if you choose to live in rural Yukon, you should be expected to travel for services. As the Liberal leader explained on Thursday of last week, in a reply to this supplementary, he said, "...I lived for some 20 years in northern B.C. I see the Environment minister nodding, because he spent a lot of time living in the same community of Atlin. We had a Red Cross outpost nursing station there at the time. They gave us excellent care, but there were many things they couldn't do. As a result, we came to Whitehorse. Both of my children were born in Whitehorse ..."

He went on to say, "That's just the way it works. You make certain decisions when you live in every community."

The decision to live in northern Yukon — Mayo, Dawson City, Pelly, Old Crow — that I made, my family made, my friends made, the teacher made, the miner made, the First Nation citizen made — the decision to live in rural Yukon. The decision should not mean we do not deserve the same level of health care as larger populations.

This Yukon Party government and I believe that all Yukoners, whether rural or urban, deserve the same level of health care as many Canadians receive in southern Canada. This Yukon Party government supports rural Yukon. We are building a new hospital in Dawson City, not against the wishes of my community, but for my community.

Last session, the opposition party said that this is an insane direction and reckless spending. Now I will quote another line from *Hansard* — another notable quote from the Leader of the Liberal Party — quote: "No feasibility studies were done before the decision was made to spend the money. It was a political decision and it has been left to the Hospital Corporation to explain." A political decision — only says the Leader of the Liberal Party. Please explain this to the citizens of my community and rural Yukon — that if their daughter or son or father or mother or friend or anyone is in need of observation or overnight stays, they would be medevaced to Whitehorse.

If you need oxygen administered overnight, you should travel to Whitehorse; if you're recovering or suffering with an illness of any kind, you should be in a bed in Whitehorse or a larger centre south of there.

Our government, this Yukon Party government, believes that Dawson City and rural Yukon deserve these services. We believe in providing stabilization, observation and monitoring, should you need it. You shouldn't have to go to Whitehorse. We believe in providing convalescent care; we believe in providing respite care in a community like Dawson City, if McDonald Lodge is unable to.

We believe in providing palliative care when it's not currently available in the community. We believe in providing acute



medical detoxification; we believe in providing acute mental health intervention; we believe in providing First Nation health programming; we believe that laboratory work should be done in a community; we believe that medical imaging should be done in a community; we believe in providing diabetic consultation; we believe in providing increased services in the communities.

The Leader of the Liberal Party believes that if you live in rural Yukon all your life, you deserve to spend the last days of your life in a larger populated centre, away from your family and friends; you chose this. Building a new hospital was a decision made for the betterment of my community and rural Yukon and its citizens. It was not a political one. We not only believe in rural Yukon, we back up our belief with action. I could spend all day listing off our actions in every rural community, but I will focus only on Dawson City this afternoon.

We are investing in a new Yukon College in Dawson City. We are investing in new affordable housing in Dawson City. We are investing in a waste-water treatment facility in Dawson City. That reminds me that when the former Liberal government, the Official Opposition, was in power, they facilitated my community in going bankrupt. That's how they support rural Yukon. They support rural Yukon by allowing a community to break the *Financial Administration Act* and go bankrupt. We solved that problem with concrete actions that led to the community getting back on its feet, and we are now solving the waste-water treatment issue that the Liberal government ignored. We are in partnership with the City of Dawson and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in in investing in a new arena in Dawson City to replace the failing Art and Margaret Fry Recreation Centre.

We are building a district heating system in my community. We invested in paving Front Street. We invested in a new playground for the youth in Dawson City to replace the decrepit, condemned one located where the new hospital is being built. Not only are we building a new hospital so my community will continue to grow, we are building a replacement McDonald Lodge, which will be connected to the hospital. They will share some of the same services to maximize the benefit.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Liberal Party will vote against this, because they believe this is reckless spending. They believe that you should travel to the larger population areas. I would like the members opposite to explain to the citizens of Mayo, Old Crow, Dawson City and Pelly why they don't deserve services in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, we invested in walking trails in Dawson City. We invested in a summer camp for the Dawson Childcare Association. We invested in an addition to the recycling depot for the Conservation Society. We are investing in a multi-group storage and maintenance shop for the Dawson City Ski Association. Mr. Speaker, we are partnering with the federal government investing in the Front Street improvements — the “take back the river” project with the City of Dawson.

We supported the Klondike Placer Miners Association by building a tribute to miners in the community. We are supporting rural Yukon in so many ways. I could spend all day listing this off. I have four or five more pages of line after line of how this Yukon Party government supports rural Yukon. I know my

time is running close to the end but I'm going to still list off a couple more. We have invested in tourism; we have invested in trail markings at Discovery Claim with the Klondike Centennial Society. We have invested in infrastructure for Dawson City — a new anchoring system for the dock on the waterfront for the City of Dawson. We've invested in walking trails. All you have to do is travel to Dawson City and you can now hike a trail called the Ninth Avenue Trail that this government paid for and built for the citizens of Dawson, promoting rural health in Dawson City.

As I mentioned last Thursday, if the Liberal Party were in government, they would say, “Walk in Whitehorse, not Dawson City, not Mayo and not Old Crow. Spend it all — only focus in on the larger population centres.” You could probably extrapolate that and say, “Forget the Yukon. Let's ship everybody to Vancouver. It's bigger. Focus it there.”

We continued investing in our community. We've build community gardens. We've upgraded and improved the soccer field in Dawson City. We did structural renovations for the Klondike Visitors Association to the sum of \$443,000.

Like I said, I could go on all day on just how we support rural Yukon. We don't support rural Yukon any differently than we support Whitehorse. We support all citizens of this territory equally. Yukon citizens, whether rural or urban, deserve the same quality of services. The Yukon Party government fulfills that with action, not just verbal comments without action. Thank you.

**Speaker:** If the Hon. Premier speaks he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, I first want to thank all members of the House for their input and comments on the *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10, Supplementary Estimates No. 3*, which will close out our year-end for fiscal year 2009-2010. An important point: we are now before the Auditor General with all the estimates and we await the Auditor General to conclude their work on our year-end for the fiscal year.

I think we have to reflect on the financial position the Yukon is in. It's a very healthy financial position. As always, there will be variances during the course of any fiscal year. The reason there are variances is for the unforeseen. One cannot predict to any definitive degree what health care costs may be, for example, so in this supplementary we've had to deal with extra expenses incurred because Yukoners had to access physicians and/or travel out of the community for further medical attention.

The important point, though, is that we are able to address those expenses during the course of a fiscal year because of the fiscal management we've provided and the savings account we've created.

Furthermore, one would not pre-empt and predetermine the outcome of collective bargaining agreements. These are very important processes that can never be compromised; therefore, past practice has always been, should a collective bargaining agreement be reached during the course of any fiscal year, we would then account for what the final outcome of

the collective bargaining process has determined. Once again, much of the variance we are dealing with includes our commitment to Yukon government employees. Of course, that's part of what fiscal management is truly all about.

In closing, we can say that Yukon continues to have a very healthy financial position. In our closeout for this fiscal year, we will have a further accumulated surplus of well in excess of half a billion dollars. We continue to earn monies from investments; we continue to invest significantly across the territory in infrastructure and programs and services for Yukoners.

I look forward to further debate for the fiscal year of 2010-11, because we are doing even more in this fiscal year, as we close out the last fiscal year, still maintaining a savings account.

**Speaker:** Are you prepared for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

### Division

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

### Bells

**Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Hart:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Kenyon:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. Horne:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Edzerza:** Agree.

**Mr. Nordick:** Agree.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Disagree.

**Mr. McRobb:** Disagree.

**Mr. Elias:** Disagree.

**Mr. Inverarity:** Disagree.

**Mr. Cardiff:** Disagree.

**Mr. Cathers:** Agree.

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker, the results are 10 yea, five nay.

**Speaker:** The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

*Motion for second reading of Bill No. 21 agreed to*

### Bill No. 22: *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11* — Second Reading — *continued*

**Clerk:** Second reading, Bill No. 22, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Fentie.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I move that Bill No. 22, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now read a second time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 22, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now read a second time.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** With great pleasure, the government side introduces Bill No. 22. These are the supplementary esti-

mates for the fiscal year 2010-11. These would include all decisions up to the period 5 variance.

The first supplementary estimates of a fiscal year provide us with two very important opportunities. First, this supplementary provides the Legislature and the general public, in the context of openness and being accountable, with an update on the financial position of government, and secondly, and more to the point, the seeking required for spending authorities.

These first supplementary estimates detail the proposed expenditure changes that require legislative appropriation authority, in addition to the spending authorities previously granted by the Legislature when the main estimates were approved.

Before I move on to some of the details underlying the proposed spending limits being sought from this Assembly, I want to comment on some of the macro elements identified in this *Second Appropriation Act, 2010-11* and the accompanying supplementary estimates.

First, this supplementary provides an additional \$65.3 million, increasing total projected spending for 2010-11 to \$1,141,000,000. Of the total, \$297 million is directed toward capital investment. That's an astounding threshold to have achieved and reached in this territory, considering where we were a few short years ago and, in the context of all that, we still maintain a savings account.

Secondly, of the \$65.3 million in increased spending, \$31.5 million is related to O&M increases and \$33.8 million is related to capital increases. These increases are inclusive of the approximately \$9.9 million related to wage adjustments following ratification of our new collective bargaining agreements with both the Yukon Employees Union and the Yukon Teachers Association, once again honouring our commitments to employees.

Thirdly, the additional expenditures and investments that are detailed in the estimates result in an increase in expenses over revenues of approximately \$2.4 million. Notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, because this is merely a period 5 variance, we continue to maintain a very healthy financial position. The first supplementary estimates reflect a net financial position of just over \$33 million, which is our savings account, and an accumulated surplus of some \$519 million.

I want to emphasize the importance of having net financial resources as opposed to net debt. This is a very significant indicator of the Yukon's financial health, as it means the government is not relying on future revenues to provide current services. Herein lies another problem with the Official Opposition's argument about mortgaging the future. Let me repeat: our financial health means that the government is not relying on future revenues to provide current services. Very few governments are in this position, Mr. Speaker. The majority of Canadian governments are in a net debt position, with Yukon being one of only two jurisdictions in the country to have a positive net financial resource position. This, indeed, is something to be very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to reiterate that the supplementary estimates include \$65.3 million additional expenditure authority for 2010-11 in several key areas of importance to

Yukoners. I'm sure members can appreciate the significance of the following. While ministers will be pleased to provide members of the Assembly with the complete details of their respective portfolios during Committee debate, I will take a brief opportunity to provide some of the highlights.

When it comes to infrastructure investment — as I mentioned, when *Supplementary Estimates No. 3* for 2009-10 was introduced, the Yukon government continues to follow its tried-and-true practice of revoting funds to ensure that capital projects continue to move forward as appropriate. Accordingly, significant components of the requested expenditure authority in the first supplementary estimates come about because departments are seeking capital and operation and maintenance revote authority for lapses in the previous year. It's not new money; it's revoting already existing expenditure. The gross revotes in operation and maintenance and capital are approximately \$39.5 million of the budgetary authority sought. Much of this represents funding required to continue our investment in important infrastructure projects.

Examples are as follows: \$1.132 million for the Whitehorse waterfront and \$669,000 for the Carcross waterfront, bringing the 2010-11 revised budgets under the Canada strategic infrastructure fund to \$3.132 million for both Whitehorse and Carcross — sorry, \$2.269 million for Carcross.

This is an investment in Yukon's infrastructure; this is an investment opposed by and criticized by the Official Opposition, the Liberals in this House. Mr. Speaker, under the Canada strategic infrastructure fund, we are partners with the federal government at a rate of 50 percent.

A further \$1.7 million for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport expansion, parking lot improvements, for a total 2010-11 revised budget of approximately \$2.1 million. The Leader of the Liberal Party has put on the public record that this is a waste of money. The Yukon Party government disagrees with that. This is an investment in needed infrastructure here in Whitehorse to maintain our international standard. The member would think we did this for one airline? Hardly. This is for Yukoners and for our air access. I would hope the member comes to his senses regarding what air access for Whitehorse and the Yukon means. We are a member of the global community and this investment is much about that.

\$3.229 million is for Dawson City sewage treatment and district heating, bringing that revised budget under the Building Canada fund to just over \$20 million — another investment in rural Yukon opposed by the Liberals in this House, even though that was a court-ordered requirement of dealing with Dawson sewage. They oppose it. Instead of saying to Yukoners what they would do, they just simply criticize.

\$2.2 million is to continue software development and testing for our new mobile radio system — once again opposed. There is \$686,000 to complete the Dawson City cellphone site — again opposed by the Liberals. That's rural Yukon again receiving some infrastructure that only makes sense, but the Liberals don't believe in rural Yukon.

There is \$566,000 under the municipal rural infrastructure fund for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations cultural centre, resulting in a revised budget of just under \$7.2 million

— criticism and opposition to this investment. This is in another rural Yukon community; it is a partnership with the federal government and the First Nation.

It's an investment in First Nation culture and heritage and it puts into the community of Haines Junction a facility that will even enhance our tourism capacity, given that our tourist information centre will be housed in this facility, providing input for tourists and travellers. Of course, much of that is about the beauty of the Yukon as a destination — opposed by the Liberals.

There is \$301,000 under the knowledge and infrastructure program which is going to Dawson City and Pelly Crossing college campuses, enhancing and furthering our education capacity by building facilities in rural Yukon — once again, opposed by Liberals. This is a significant investment for rural Yukon. One cannot diminish the importance of education. Here again is an example of our verbal commitment to the Yukon and its people backed up with action.

There is \$2.9 million under the Shawkak agreement for Slims River bridge, dealing with permafrost rehabilitation on the north Alaska Highway.

There is \$118,000 to complete the Tombstone visitor reception centre. In addition to this, revote funding in this supplementary includes \$508,000 under the community adjustment fund to provide for landscaping and trail development, further enhancing the visitor experience. And, of course, this has been opposed by the Liberals.

There is \$6 million under the economic stimulus initiative for affordable housing for a number of projects, including the family-focused housing project, the seniors building at 22 Waterfront Place, the seniors facilities in Watson Lake and Faro — all opposed by the Liberals, Mr. Speaker. Investments in Yukon, its infrastructure and its people — opposed by the Liberals. This is shocking.

Mr. Speaker, this supplementary also is not just about providing authority for revotes on prior-year lapses. Additional infrastructure investments will become obvious as we go through the highlights and the detail of our first supplementary for 2010-11.

On health care, Mr. Speaker, there is \$17.5 million of O&M and capital identified in this supplementary for the Department of Health and Social Services. Our government, once again, is demonstrating through action its commitment to ensuring quality health care access for Yukoners. The minister will be pleased, of course, to enter into detail. I think, Mr. Speaker, we must comment just briefly on the territorial health system sustainability initiative.

Through negotiations and discussions with Canada, Yukon was successful in securing a two-year extension of this initiative, which will bring a further \$15.86 million here to the territory over the next two years, further enhancing our ability to provide quality health care access for Yukoners. Of the total \$15.86 million, this includes just over \$8.5 million under this initiative, while the balance of \$7.3 million will be identified in the coming fiscal year. Members and indeed Yukoners are well aware that we face unique challenges in the delivery of health

care in the north. This initiative provides Yukon additional capacity to be responsive to the needs of Yukoners.

Our commitment to opening beds at the Thomson Centre is one example of how we're striving to be responsive to those needs. We are working in cooperation with the Yukon Hospital Corporation and its very hard-working, committed board of trustees to reopen Thomson Centre as a continuing care facility. It was once a continuing care facility, but a past Liberal government decided to end that practice and move everybody to another facility.

The Liberals have opposed this investment, and this investment will once again respond to the needs of the Yukon public. The supplementary includes \$1.9 million for the Department of Health and Social Services to support the opening of beds at the Thomson Centre and, of course, I don't think we have to debate in great detail why we're doing that and where the demonstrated need exists. These represent two areas where our government is making significant investment in the health and well-being of Yukoners.

On the environmental front, the environment remains a significant concern for all Yukoners and our Yukon Party government remains responsive to Yukoners' concerns. We have adopted the *Climate Change Action Plan* and we are actively involved in a number of initiatives. A key strategic step of our government was the creation of the Climate Change Secretariat. The secretariat plays a key role in guiding our government in the implementation of the *Climate Change Action Plan*. In addition, the secretariat has partnered with other organizations and governments to undertake cooperative initiatives. This supplementary includes \$405,000 for three climate change initiatives, and I will leave the detail to the minister responsible who heads up a very important component of this Yukon Party government.

I would also like to make an observation of the Department of Community Services in regard to environment. There's a relocation of budget dollars for the recycling fund so that it is all housed under the umbrella of our solid-waste action plan. Yukoners have told us the environment is a priority; our government has invested heavily in our environment and, once again, this has been opposed by the Liberals here in this Assembly.

Let us talk briefly about investing in Yukoners. A consistent theme underlying the expenditure measures highlighted so far is that our Yukon Party government is committed to investing in the Yukon and in its people. I'm very proud of these initiatives and projects. I'm also proud of our government's efforts in the face of global economic uncertainty to continue delivering the programs and services Yukoners have come to expect, while maintaining a very healthy net financial position.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I ask your indulgence as I summarize a few additional priority initiatives and expenditures supported by our government and probably opposed by the Liberals.

The interim electrical rate rebate is extended, effective October 1, 2010. This will continue on as we work with the Yukon Utilities Board in its review and cost-of-service analysis and general rate applications. For the benefit of all Yukoners,

our government has introduced tax amendments in support of our ongoing efforts to reduce the tax burden, putting more money in Yukoners' pockets. Even with the significant investment we're making, even with keeping a savings account, we are still finding ways to put money back into Yukoners' pockets through our tax regime.

Municipalities play a significant role in the Yukon economy. They face many challenges in delivering the variety of programs and services expected by community residents. This supplementary includes \$250,000 in support of a Community Services ministerial committee, and the minister responsible will delve into the detail on that initiative because, once again, it's a demonstration of this government's willingness to work with other levels of government and with Yukoners in doing the best we can to provide the best quality of life we can for all Yukon citizens.

As I mentioned, the collective bargaining process is working very effectively. We have once again reached another agreement with our employees. We're extremely pleased with that. Of course, this supplementary honours our commitment to our employees.

In closing, as Minister of Finance, I'm very pleased with this supplementary and, indeed, the financial position of the Yukon government. Ministers and their staff have worked very hard to ensure that we achieve sound fiscal management while at the same time still ensuring a prudent investment in the social and economic fabric of our territory, and the evidence of that is all around us — community by community, highway by highway, bridge by bridge, road by road, public facility by public facility and our ever-growing private sector economy. It's clear that these investments are, indeed, working in creating that better quality of life. The initiatives identified in this supplementary represents significant investment of the public's money on behalf of the Yukon and Yukoners. I will be pleased, of course, to discuss the supplementary budget in further detail when we reconvene to discuss it in general debate in Committee.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Well — “alarming, disconcerting, reckless, out-of-control, credit-card driven spending, mortgaging the future”. These are some of the words that first came into my head as we looked over the budget documents last Tuesday afternoon. A second consecutive deficit, Mr. Speaker, once again confirmed as recently as this morning by officials in Finance — even as the Premier refuses to listen to them or us. It is fascinating how the officials can refer to the deficit budget and the Premier — deny it, deny it, deny it. That's certainly an interesting approach that the Premier is taking. The Premier's legacy will be an unprecedented spending spree and mountains of debt for future Yukoners.

We'll get back to the particulars of the budget before us a little later today, but first of all I would like to take this opportunity — and it may well be the last opportunity, as the Premier muses publicly about whether to call a delayed by-election in Whitehorse Centre or a general election — as it may be the last time in this Assembly I get to thank the people of Copperbelt

for the honour and privilege they've given me to represent them in this House for nearly five years now.

All of us are very fortunate to have the opportunity to sit in this Assembly and bring forward issues on behalf of our fellow Yukoners. We must always remember that we serve at the pleasure of our constituents, and the issues we bring forward here are not the issues of party or person, but rather those of our neighbours, whom we have the privilege to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk for a moment in response to some of the Premier's comments just minutes ago, as well as his comments over the past week about voting against issues. First of all, I take issue with the Premier's assertions that we have opposed every measure for the citizens of Whitehorse Centre or, for that matter, for any other Yukoner. As a matter of fact, we voted for the safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation, which was important to Whitehorse Centre. We voted for the smoke-free places legislation, which was important to the citizens of Whitehorse Centre. We voted for much legislation.

Yes, we have voted against budgets. Not very long ago this afternoon, we voted against the final supplementary from 2009-2010. The Premier says that means we opposed everything in the budget. Well, nothing could be further from correct, Mr. Speaker. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The fact of the matter is — sorry, Mr. Speaker, may I correct myself? That is not the nature of why we vote against budgets. I would like to excuse myself for saying "further from the truth". It's incorrect; it's an incorrect assertion and it's an incorrect understanding.

But I would like to remind the Premier that he too sat in opposition. He sat on this side of the House. After he left the New Democrat Party, where he started his political career, he sat with the Yukon Party, eventually to lead it. He sat in opposition to the Liberal Party of the day. What did he do? He voted against all the budgets. He voted against the main estimates.

So by the Premier's logic, the Premier was against funding for Yukon College. He consistently voted against money for Yukon College because he voted against the budgets. The Premier didn't believe that Yukon College should be funded. Perhaps he felt it should be closed, because he voted against it.

The Premier voted against health care expenditures; the Premier voted against allocations to the Yukon Hospital Corporation; the Premier voted against funding to build a new Whitehorse Correctional Centre; the Premier voted against expenditures to safeguard the environment; the Premier voted against mining and mining investment; the Premier voted against road infrastructure; the Premier voted against pipeline studies; the Premier certainly voted against negotiating fair and just settlements with those First Nations that did not yet have their final agreements and their land claim agreements — shocking that an MLA who aspired to one day be Premier could vote against First Nations, educators, government employees, college students, prospectors, highway construction — absolutely shocking.

Why did he do it? Because he obviously disagreed with the priorities or the spending trajectory that he used to refer to of the government of the day. So when the Premier stands here

and claims that the Liberals are against everything because we vote against spending bills, he really should do his homework and remind himself of the time he spent in opposition and study the parliamentary system and remind himself of how that works — remind himself of how in Ottawa the Reform Party and Progressive Conservatives and eventually the combined new Conservative Party voted against so many things on behalf of Canadians.

They voted against money for our veterans, voted against money for the armed services, voted against money for health care. That's what happens when you disagree with the government's spending priorities or spending trajectory. I hope that the Premier will have a better understanding of how the parliamentary system works.

There are many things in the budget that we can support. We certainly can support the \$9.9 million going toward increased spending for the collective agreements with the YTA and the YEU. We are happy to see the Yukon College expansion going forward in Pelly. We're pleased that there is funding that goes toward the planning for a new F.H. Collins Secondary School. We certainly are supportive of the social housing projects throughout the Yukon that the minister and the Minister of Health and Social Services and the minister responsible for the Housing Corporation have talked about in recent days.

We would also like to thank Ottawa for providing us with millions and millions of dollars, tens of millions of dollars, and announcing and reannouncing it about 10 times so that this money could be spent. If we had all the money that had been announced, we'd probably have several hundred million dollars just for that one area, as frequently as it has been announced.

We are pleased to see the continued expenditures for the new children's receiving home in downtown Whitehorse. We're very pleased that funding has come forward to work with the Kwanlin Dun to build the Kwanlin Dun cultural centre on the waterfront and the new library. We're pleased that after promising and failing to deliver for several years in a row, and for several Health ministers in a row, it looks like we're finally going to get the Thomson Centre reopened for its original purpose as an extended care facility. I would remind the Premier, who cited that it was closed down under the Liberals, that the NDP built that structure — and unfortunately it was poorly designed and built — I've heard the Premier and his colleagues refer to it many times, that there were extensive problems with it that led to leaky roofs and mould and other issues that have had to be addressed.

We're pleased that there has been money in this budget — and continues to be, according to the Department of Health and Social Services — through THAF for the social inclusion symposium. There was one held last spring. We did look forward to the one this fall. We are disappointed that it has been postponed until January, but we are pleased that, if ever so slowly, we are moving forward to address issues for Yukon's least fortunate citizens. We would question why, as we approach the eighth anniversary of Yukon Party government, we're now just holding symposiums, because clearly the homelessness, the poverty, the people falling through the cracks has been well documented and certainly has been addressed by many non-

government organizations for many, many years — be it the Anti-Poverty Coalition, the Whitehorse Food Bank, its predecessors with food banks at the Salvation Army and Maryhouse. The need has been there all along. We're glad that perhaps we're getting closer to some solutions.

There are many things we are sorry to see are not in the budget, and one that has been discussed in recent days has been the fact that we still do not have a proper, permanent, dedicated facility for youth at risk, or homeless youth in downtown Whitehorse.

We have had a number of interim and temporary solutions that range from cellphone access to emergency care to the recent establishment of a new temporary facility, but no permanent solution.

Since the government enjoys a majority in this Assembly, we have no illusions about there being any likelihood of our effecting any changes to this budget. The government has demonstrated year after year that it is unwilling to work with the Official Opposition when it comes to making changes to the annual spending blueprint or subsequent supplementary budgets. For that matter, they've been unwilling to alter budgets based on the advice of the Third Party as well. We are left to judge the budget as it is, and our comments will reflect this.

One procedural note that I would like to address — and I did address it when the main estimates were tabled — falls under the category of respect, or the lack thereof, for this Assembly and the people we represent through it. The Premier has developed a habit in recent years of reading his budget speeches — certainly his main estimate spring budget speeches — first to the Chamber of Commerce and, a few days later, to elected members of this House and the rest of Yukon. Again, the Premier, when he does this, shows a lack of respect for this Chamber and its history. It goes against years of parliamentary tradition and convention.

The Premier's latest Environment minister — his current Environment minister, I should say, the Member from McIntyre-Takhini — used to think the same thing. Here's what he said just perhaps a year ago: "I have some issues when the Chamber of Commerce knows about the budget before the MLAs do. Why? Why doesn't the government sit down with the opposition members? We all represent a constituency. There are eight in opposition over here. The government should have been talking to us and asking us what things are most wanted in our ridings." That was the Member from McIntyre-Takhini on March 26, 2009.

Sadly, as we know, there are only seven in opposition now due to the sad event of the passing of the Member for Whitehorse Centre, and perhaps the sad event of the Member for McIntyre-Takhini crossing the floor yet again. And I guess those words don't have as much meaning now as they did when he said so with such passion in March of 2009.

This fall, at least, the Premier has delivered the budget here in the Legislature first, but perhaps he didn't think the chamber would be very pleased with an update that confirmed a second deficit two years in a row. The Liberal government would deliver the budget speech here in the Legislative Assembly where it belongs.

Let's look at overall spending in this budget. Once again, we're looking at a budget that spends more money than it takes in. That trend continues in the supplementary. The Premier outlined it a little while ago. We heard it in a briefing earlier this morning — the government has brought in \$24 million plus more revenue since April 1 and has spent an additional \$65 million over the same time period. Through the wonders of accounting, the budget, with all the adjustments, has now gone from a surplus in the spring to a deficit in the period of a few short months.

Regardless of whether it shows as surplus or deficit, in terms that the average Yukoner can certainly understand — anyone who runs a household — it is the Finance minister's fourth consecutive budget that anticipates spending more money than we will take in as revenue. That includes all transfers from Canada and other parties, as well as our own-source revenue. We have to ask: is this wise or sustainable? The answer we would state is, no, it's not. The pattern of overspending has finally caught up with the Premier and his colleagues. This go-for-broke approach to budgeting — this reckless approach to spending — has consequences, both long-term and short-term. There are consequences for both the public and this government.

The first consequence is a deficit for the year ending March 31, 2010 — the 2009-10 fiscal year. For a number of years, we've heard the Premier chastise previous governments that tabled budgets with annual deficits. He said he would never do it; only Liberals and New Democrats tabled those types of budgets, he said. The good fiscal managers in charge of the Yukon Party government would never do it.

Well, well, for the fiscal year 2009-10, the one that ended in March of this current year, the deficit is over \$25 million. The Premier may feel he has kept his promise because, when he tabled the budget, he didn't show that deficit, but the fact is he has now tabled the latest update, the update which, at this very moment, the Auditor General of Canada is surveying and checking — the public accounts for that year, which will be tabled in just a few weeks, or presented in some form, if we're not still sitting.

The Premier's streak is over; he has a deficit on his hands. The Premier's focus is now on the next election and any concern he had for the long-term finances of the Yukon have gone out the window. What is important now to the government is to spend as much as possible in the lead-up to the next election and leave the worrying about the consequences to others.

On this question, the Premier remains in total denial. He spent a good deal of time in the spring denying it, and he has already done it during Question Period and as recently as just a little while ago today. He denies it's a deficit. The officials don't deny it; they actually describe it in briefings as a deficit budget. Why the Premier is so stubborn on this point, only he will know.

The numbers tell the real story. The hard reality is the \$25-million deficit for the 2009-10 fiscal year. That number will be confirmed by the Auditor General in the annual public accounts in just over a month's time. Perhaps the Premier will just try to dismiss it as just her opinion, but Yukoners trust the Auditor

General and they don't trust the Premier's accounting of this, and with good reason. If she says it's a deficit, then it's a deficit.

This is, after all, the same Premier who denied he had plans to sell off the assets of the Yukon Energy Corporation to a private energy company from Alberta. Yukoners didn't believe him then and they don't believe him now, and why should they? It's all about trust, and that trust has been broken beyond repair, that's why.

Although he votes for the budgets, the Member for Lake Laberge sits on this side of the House. It's why he left the caucus — because he couldn't be party to that any longer. I'm sure it's very disappointing to many long-time Conservatives to see the Premier abandoning his long-held position on deficit spending. It's probably disappointing to some of his colleagues — not that they would mention it to him. As we learned from the energy scandal, the Premier calls the shots and everyone else simply falls into line. Much like his federal colleagues in Ottawa, the Premier is now an enthusiastic proponent of large deficits. He's a big spender, just like his mentor, Mr. Harper. And just like the Prime Minister, he has no plan to get us out of the deficit and debt he is piling up — a deficit that shows in the current budgets and the debt that shows in the consolidated statements of the public accounts that's being borne by two Crown corporations. Anyone who manages a household knows you can't spend more than you take in for too long before the bill comes due. The bill has now come due. The first deficit of the Yukon Party regime has been confirmed.

Moving on, back to the current budget in front of us with regard for 2010-11 to the bottom line for the current fiscal year — the Premier now pegs it as a deficit of over \$2.4 million. This is after projecting a surplus just a few months ago back in March. We said it was unrealistic then, and we were right. We said the Premier wasn't accounting for the fact that he knew that the government needed to settle with its employees and with its teachers. We said that the government wasn't budgeting for the necessary repairs to reopen the Thomson Centre despite the fact that they kept announcing that they were reopening the Thomson Centre — we were right. We said it left too small a margin for error. Imagine that; a billion dollar-plus budget that was tabled last spring with a projected surplus of less than \$3 million — less than three tenths of a percent of the total. The Premier talked about having doubled the fiscal capacity of Yukon. Well, we certainly are receiving hundreds of millions of dollars more in transfers from Canada than we were eight years ago, and yet the Premier was only able to table a budget with a \$2.9 million projected surplus. We predicted in the spring that by the time this fiscal year ends, the government will have recorded a second consecutive budget deficit, and we're well on our way to that reality now.

We said this spring that the budget for the Department of Health and Social Services didn't add up. Its expenditures were forecast to be \$18 million less than last year. This will simply not happen, we said. What a surprise — health care costs are up \$15 million over this spring's estimate and we're only a little over halfway through the year at this point.

As we said in the spring, the budget estimates the Premier and the Health minister presented were not realistic, and so we were not able to trust them.

As I've said, the budget that was presented in the spring made no provision for wage increases that were due to public servants and teachers, and these increases alone drove up the amount the government will spend by close to \$10 million this year. There were also the announced but unfunded upgrades to the Thomson Centre I just mentioned. Apparently, some of those are now being funded by the Hospital Corporation itself. However, there are now \$940,000 in operational equipment expenditures in the document before us and another \$960,000 in O&M transfers to operate the centre.

It's hard to follow; it's like a game of hide the pea, only in this game the pea — the expenses — are popping up under every shell.

Here's a quote from the throne speech in 2006: "It also remains committed to practising open, accountable, fiscally responsible government through legislative renewal and the provision of balanced budgets as the way of the future." That was a very high-profile promise that has been broken. We don't have balanced budgets this year; we didn't have a balanced budget last year. As for legislative renewal, the regular standing committee — SCREP — that would deal with that hasn't met in two and a half or three years, and the special committee, the select committee that was struck, is not due to report back until the fall of 2011, which could well be after a general election or right as we go into one.

Moving away from the annual deficit, I'd like to move to the net financial position of the government. Again, as we head closer to an election, the Premier has drawn this number down to a dangerously low level. At the end of the 2007-08 fiscal year, our bank account — as the Premier often refers to it — stood at \$165 million. At the end of the 2008-09 fiscal year, our bank account — net financial resources — stood at \$135 million.

At budget time last year, that number had been whittled away to \$122 million. The latest projections show just \$33.36 million projected to be available by the end of 2010-11, come next March 31. This represents a rapid depletion in our savings — one caused by the Premier embracing his inner big spender. Of that \$33 million, some \$25 million is made up of what the government hopes to get back on its ABCP investment, but that money isn't available to Yukoners right now, and it won't be for another eight years, unless we go out to the marketplace and sell it at a loss. The loss may be even larger than the allowances that we've taken to date, if what has happened in the private sector is any example.

That means that the cash actually available to use is only some \$8 million. That small sum would operate the government for less than a week. It's again this go-for-broke approach that has left us in this position. Perhaps this Premier is spending this way because he knows he won't be dealing with the aftermath, even if the Yukon Party government wins the next election. Yukoners have also learned that the government plans to borrow more than \$215 million through its Crown corporations: over \$1 million through the Hospital Corporation for two

hospitals, a new residence and a new emergency room; and another \$100 million through the Yukon Development Corporation.

The Yukon Development Corporation issued a \$100-million bond offering last spring with a five-percent annual coupon rate. The interest alone on that bond will total \$150 million. That is the amount that Yukon taxpayers and Yukon electrical ratepayers will be repaying until the year 2040.

A child born this week at Whitehorse General Hospital will still be paying off loans when they hit their 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. The loan will be repaid just a few months before the Premier's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. In the fall of 2040, Yukoners can say "Happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, former Premier from Watson Lake. We've finally paid off your debt" — at least this one, Mr. Speaker. Of course, they are all in it together, as the Premier acknowledges. They all back the Premier, the colleagues on that side of the House, and his free-spending ways, and they will all have to answer for it on the campaign trail, whether that trail starts in October of this year or some time next year.

It's bad enough that the main books — the main estimates — now show annual deficits when the supplementary budgets are factored in, but the Premier has also resorted to moving expenditures off those books to make the situation appear better than it is. Before the Premier gets too excited about this, yes, these amounts will show up in the consolidated statements of the Government of Yukon, but they don't appear in the financial summary of the budget in front of us. Those hundreds of millions of dollars in borrowing in new debt don't appear anywhere in these statements, where it would be easier and more transparent for Yukoners to see what the true and total picture is.

If these amounts were included, the picture would not be very pretty, and that is why the Premier and his colleagues have made a political decision to move them off the main books and into the Crown corporations. Yukoners should not be fooled by the government's sleight of hand. We are now faced with borrowing our entire contribution to the Mayo B project because the government doesn't have the money to pay for it. The Minister of Economic Development said last week, "When you purchase something, you should make a reasonable down payment and then it is okay to mortgage the rest." Well, the down payment on Mayo B appears to be zero. It's all borrowed money — same for the new hospitals in Watson Lake and Dawson City — no down payment, all borrowed money, zero-down mortgages.

Recently we've seen housing markets get into trouble with that kind of budgeting; now we have it in this Assembly and this territory. Everyone on that side of the House, and probably on this side as well, will be long gone from this Assembly, but Yukoners will be paying the bills for this extraordinary spending spree for the next 30 years. This scale of borrowing has never been seen in the Yukon before. No government of any political stripe, including the Yukon Party, has mortgaged the future in such an irresponsible way. The interest on this debt will continue to be paid for decades to come.

Past governments have, for many years, acted responsibly with the public's money. They've recognized that you can't do

everything at once, because it's irresponsible to pile up more and more debt and expect future generations to pay the bill. That's the path this government is taking. The impacts of the borrowing decisions of this government will be millions of dollars paid in interest over the next 30 years.

But this is of course the same Premier who invested \$36 million in asset-backed commercial paper investments. It has been three years since that bad decision was made, and we still don't have most of our money returned to us. I doubt we ever will. What we have instead is an uncertain IOU. The Premier can carry on at length trying to spin this as just an extension of the term of the notes, an extension of the investment; he can talk about how much money has been made over the past eight years with the investment policy; he can talk about previous governments having invested in similar instruments; but the facts are that the Premier authorized a 30-day investment that turned into a nine-year misinvestment. The facts are that the Auditor General of Canada reported that the investment did not comply with the *Financial Administration Act*.

The Premier can say it has been done before — other Finance ministers made the same mistake. The facts are that none of them ever found themselves unable to get the investment back at the end of the term. No other Yukon Premier and Finance minister was ever cited in a special report by Canada's Auditor General as failing to comply with the *Financial Administration Act*. No other Finance minister has ever had to say, "We can't get our money back but trust us; we'll get it back in nine years. It's just an extension of term."

That money would have come in handy now, because it would have cut the amount we needed to borrow considerably. This government only has its eye on the next election. It's turning a blind eye to the long-term costs of this borrowing. It's all about trust and nobody trusts this tired government. It's spending more than it's taking in, year after year. The only reason the budget deficit isn't much larger than reported is because this government has shovelled so much debt on to two Crown corporations.

It has shuffled the cost of Mayo B, the two new hospitals and whatever improvements will be made at the request of the chair and the board of the Whitehorse General Hospital to the corporations.

It was interesting to hear the Premier tell the Chamber of Commerce last spring that, for the first time ever in Yukon history, the government was presenting a three-year capital plan. It outlined projects the Yukon Party government would work on through to 2013-14, should it be re-elected.

We hate to burst the Premier's bubble, but both the McDonald government and the Duncan government presented these types of plans to this Legislature and to the Yukon public on an annual basis. It was one of the first things cut by the Yukon Party when it came to office.

We share the Premier's support for this type of forecast and agree with the explanation that it provides the private sector a good idea of what is coming down the line in the coming few years.

Why it took the Premier eight years to figure out that this is something worth doing, however, does remain a mystery.



One of the things that jumps out at one when one examines the three-year capital plan is the fact that every year going forward the government is projecting to spend less than it is this year. That is the case, for example, when it comes to our highways. From a high of around \$38 million this year, the figure dips to just \$23 million by 2013. When you compare the entire transportation budget for this year to last, the news is not good either. The O&M budget is essentially flat, and on the capital side, spending is down \$7 million from last year's main estimates. This will obviously be a concern to our road builders and to drivers. One of the main reasons for the drop is the substantial cut in Shakwak funding that we receive from the United States. This year it will be around \$10 million, down from \$25 million last year, and almost \$30 million the year before, and that is a concern to those who drive the north Alaska Highway.

We've gone through the numbers for this year and they're not good. We're now expecting a deficit for the second year in a row.

I'd like to turn now from only looking at the numbers to looking at the government's priorities and lack of priorities. There are a few issues to be considered. In Education, we've had endless study and endless consultation — and I see the Education minister taking notes — but not enough action. We've had eight years of reviews, but the minister seems to have no idea where he wants to go, and that's why he can't get there. When the government came in, they were looking at reviewing the *Education Act*. That fell off the table. It hasn't happened. We went on to an education reform project that was championed by the former Minister of Education and now Minister of Environment. Then we went from there to New Horizons, which is supposed to implement the results of the education reform process. It would be nice to actually see it getting to the classrooms, because the studying has gone on for a long time. It would be nice to see the results so that we can get away from the abysmal, embarrassing graduation rates that the Auditor General of Canada cited for rural Yukon and First Nation Yukoners in her report to the Yukon Legislative Assembly a couple of years ago.

With regard to Education, there is another idea out there, and it seems to be one that the government hasn't even bothered to study. I'm referring to the idea and the value of moving toward a university of the north, or an Arctic university. I would be very interested in hearing — when the Education minister gives his budget reply speech — where we're at on that topic. It's one that has been gaining momentum in spite of this government's lack of attention to it. It's one that was championed by the former Member for Whitehorse Centre, and it is one that we believe is worthy of being looked at.

The Governor General of Canada has proclaimed her concern that Canada is the only northern country, the only country bordering on the Arctic, without an Arctic university. There have been articles about this in northern newspapers and magazines, including in *Up Here Business*. There will likely be only one bricks-and-mortar campus when that starts. Beyond the virtual campus, the first real bricks-and-mortar campus is going to exist somewhere. There will be some competition with the

other territories participating with distance education technology and our government should be advocating for this to start in Yukon.

We most recently saw the Yukon lose out on the new national arctic research station, and we shouldn't let it happen again. We saw CanNor not be centered in Yukon. This is something that we should have in Yukon. There are many things going for us in Yukon that would help to make this work well here. As the government cites, and as a continuing process that has gone through the NDP, the Liberal and now the Yukon Party government, we have the best Internet penetration of any jurisdiction in Canada, and a 100-percent fibre optic connection to the south. We have an international airport with daily jet service to Vancouver and frequent jet service to Alberta. We're the closest territory to the Pacific Rim, where many potential foreign students live. We have better road connections between our own communities and to the rest of Canada than do our sister territories. Our Yukon College is already providing more degree-granting programs than are the other northern colleges. We have the Yukon Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence already partnering with universities Outside.

We should work with the existing college and other partners to make a northern university, a university in the Yukon, a reality. This should be a centre of higher education where our own Yukon students would be excited to study and where other Canadians and foreign students would be eager to attend. This university should be in addition to many important programs that should continue to be provided, perhaps through Yukon College or some other vehicle, not instead of it. This would be a priority of a Liberal government.

I'd like to move on to the environment. This is an area that has always been low on the priority list of this government. We've watched as it has failed to produce state of the environment reports on time, as required by legislation. We've watched as it became the last jurisdiction in Canada to develop a climate change action plan. We watched the previous Minister of Environment attend major climate change conferences and focus on meeting celebrities instead of informing the world about the challenges we face.

We've already seen the new minister back away from commitments he made on protecting the core of McIntyre Creek and, when we ask questions about the Peel watershed, the Environment minister remains silent.

The previous minister ignored advice from the Fish and Wildlife Management Board about the proper levels for sheep hunting and ignored a recommendation to close the current landfill in Old Crow, and the list goes on.

Last spring we tabled a motion regarding the Peel watershed, which said that this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the four affected First Nation governments and all stakeholders to develop a land use plan for the Peel watershed, prior to the next Yukon territorial election, that respects the principles set out by the Peel Watershed Planning Commission in its recommended plan.

When that was debated, the government used its majority to change the wording of the motion. That didn't surprise us. There wasn't much we could do about it. But the Government

of Yukon has a choice to make here. It can be bold and lead, or it can keep its head down, refuse to take a public position and try to get through the next election by saying, "We're looking at it."

It appears by this government's refusal to state its position on the Peel that it has chosen the latter. We've heard from many Yukoners on this issue and we've taken what we've heard into account and we're telling Yukoners about it well in advance of the next election. We would encourage the Premier and the Minister of Environment to do the same instead of stalling on this major issue. Let Yukoners know what position the government will take into discussions with other governments.

The First Nation governments, particularly the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government, have been very clear. They want protection of the Peel, and so do the Tetlit Gwich'in. That has also been clear. The Vuntut Gwitchin have supported neighbouring First Nations in wanting to protect this watershed.

Yukoners know the Premier worked hard behind the scenes to try and shape the contents of the commission's report a certain way by directing the Department of the Environment on what it could and couldn't provide to the commission and politically interfered in the middle of the drafting process and tried to steer the commission in a certain direction. And we also know that the then Minister of the Environment, the Deputy Premier, sat back silently and let that happen.

We've talked to hundreds of Yukoners over the last few years about the Peel. We've met with interest groups, with First Nation governments and leaders, with constituents and many individual Yukoners and we listened carefully to their input on what the land use plan should look like. After all this, we're stating we support in principle the findings of the commission. They have recommended that large parts of the area be preserved and be kept intact as a wilderness. We support that finding in principle, but nothing can happen until the Yukon government stops stalling and lets the public know where they stand on the Peel. So we're urging the Minister of the Environment to let Yukoners know what the government's position is on this issue. Let's not let them drag this out until after Yukoners have gone to the polls. That's an easy way out, but it's certainly not leadership.

I look forward to the Environment minister standing in his budget reply and stating Environment's perspective on the Peel. We know we'll hear from the Energy, Mines and Resources minister. He's happy to talk about the mining issues that are involved. Who is standing up for the environment? That's what we want to know.

There was an important conference held in Yukon two weeks ago: the Building on Success Conference of the Assembly of First Nations Yukon Region. Regional Assembly of First Nations Chief Eric Morris hosted a very successful conference and it was very well-attended by many Yukoners. I'd like to congratulate Chief Morris, Chief Atleo and the Assembly of First Nations on a truly interesting and groundbreaking conference. I had the opportunity to attend much of the first two days of the conference and I certainly appreciated hearing from so

many leaders, starting with National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo on how we can continue to build on success working cooperatively together — First Nations, public government and the private sector. It was inspiring to hear from many leaders who played a role in the Yukon's land claims process — from Dave Joe, Richard Sydney and Albert Peter.

We also heard from representatives of the Yukon government and Canada, who were principals in the negotiating process, including from former DIAND minister Tom Siddon. It was disappointing that there were no Yukon Party MLAs attending over the first days, but I know the Premier gave a keynote address on the final day and perhaps he had the support of his ministers coming forward to listen to his address on that day. I was unable to attend, due to another commitment.

This conference was a reminder of how much we can achieve when we're all pulling in the same direction together. It was a reminder that successive Yukon governments of all political persuasions — Yukon Progressive Conservative Party governments, Yukon New Democrats, Yukon Party and Yukon Liberal governments — all rose above partisan politics to work toward a successful outcome with our First Nations in the land claims process.

Similarly, successive Canadian Prime Ministers and DIAND ministers of all governing parties negotiated in good faith with First Nations. It was a reminder of how much we can achieve through negotiation and of how little we gain from ending up in court. The current Yukon Party government has ended up in court all too often with First Nations.

Regardless of the eventual outcome of these cases, there is always a winner and a loser. With negotiations, it is possible to have only winners. The Premier always explains his government ending up in court as a due process and as providing clarity. We encourage him to seek clarity at the negotiating tables, clarity at the discussion tables, rather than in the courthouse.

A week and a half ago, the City of Whitehorse hosted a national conference on public transportation. There were guest speakers who talked about the challenges and the opportunities in communities of all sizes, including smaller communities, of providing public transportation. There are many advantages to be had, from sustainability to accessibility for seniors and people with economic or mobility challenges, to environmental benefits of having a good public transportation system.

In the past, we proposed implementing a free busing plan in partnership with the City of Whitehorse. The current territorial government poured cold water on that idea and said, "not interested" and "laughable". We remain interested in this concept and would work with the city to improve bus service, even if that started with a period of free service, to the chagrin of the Premier, in order to gain ridership.

This would be a positive step forward for our environment and it would be a positive step for those who can't afford to maintain their own individual vehicles. It's a priority for the city and it is and will be for us.

During the last election campaign, our party committed to developing a knowledge worker strategy, identifying where the Yukon can differentiate itself from other jurisdictions. An example to consider would be building on the success of Yukon

lawyers serving Outside clients. We are pleased the government has finally tabled long-promised amendments to the *Business Corporations Act* that will assist Yukoners in generating more business and contributing more to our economy.

A knowledge strategy and a knowledge economy goes well beyond changes to one piece of legislation. It is something the current government has demonstrated little interest in exploring in the past.

Another issue I referred to earlier that needs some attention from this government is legislative reform, or fixing how this Chamber works. Last week during private members' day, we saw another example of how much we need to reform our own practices. I introduced a motion on good governance and spoke to it for 30 minutes.

The Economic Development minister chose to speak for the remainder of the day, which prevented all other members from entering into the debate. This is not how the system was intended to operate, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If we cannot depend on the good faith of members to allow for free and open debate, then we need to reform the system. The government finally, after seven years of refusing to touch it, has agreed to engage on this issue. Our Assembly has a committee that could resolve many of the concerns that have been raised — concerns about the time allotted for debate, the time allotted for members responding to speeches in debate, how Question Period works. There is a myriad of things we could address.

Under previous governments, both Liberal and NDP, that committee met regularly. It's called SCREP, Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges. Under the current government, it has not met for several years. Instead of having this committee do its job, the government has now set up yet another committee, but it has failed to nominate a member to serve on it or call a meeting; however, any proposals from the public will not be implemented until after the next election. For sure, they won't even be presented to this Assembly until next fall — a year from now.

This government will have succeeded in serving two full terms without making any improvements in the way of legislative reform — a dubious honour, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It has been established by many social agencies and non-governmental organizations, including the members of the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, that affordable and healthy and safe housing is a primary social determinant of health. While the government has worked to address this issue through a number of new initiatives in Whitehorse and in some rural communities, there is still a demonstrated need for additional affordable housing units.

One new initiative that has come forward from the non-governmental organization sector is the need for supported housing that has been recently proposed by the Northern City Supportive Housing Coalition. They want to see some of the federal funding that has been provided to Yukon put toward building a 20-unit housing development with 24-hour support personnel for people who need various supports to succeed in living independently. This is a good idea and we encourage the government, we encourage the Health minister and the housing

minister to work cooperatively to find a positive response to this request.

Carrying on with health care, the Premier has said that Yukoners want to see more collaborative health care options. We promised to work toward making this possible in the last election. The Yukon Party promised the same. Unfortunately, we have seen little progress on this commitment, some four years from the anniversary of the last election.

Another commitment we have been quite clear about is the need for a permanent youth shelter. A Liberal government would ensure that this happens. This is an idea the current government has gone back and forth on. Various candidates for the Yukon Party promised it in the last election, but it has never made it to the top of this government's priority list. It was also a promise from the two Yukon Party MLAs in Riverdale to move ahead with the youth centre in Riverdale. This has never gotten off the ground either.

We've seen a lot of temporary solutions; we've seen young people directed to phone a cellphone number when they're in trouble, which first of all would require them to have a phone to call from when they're in trouble, and second of all, that they would have to know the number. I don't know whether youth at risk are supposed to carry a wallet card around saying, "When in trouble, call this number." Now we have a temporary youth shelter that wasn't even announced by the government. When do we get a permanent solution? It's something that was promised going into the last election, but not delivered.

We've covered some ground here today and we've provided the government with several suggestions on how spending priorities could be improved — something we've done every year. The Premier has talked about cooperating with the opposition and we'll get another indication of just how serious he is about that by how he treats the proposals we put forward.

We have serious reservations about the go-for-broke approach the Yukon Party government has adopted, as its mandate winds down. We do not support the Premier's plan to mortgage the future in such an irresponsible way. These two supplementary budgets might be the last budgets this government will table, and that's a good thing, because the long-term financial health of the Yukon could not stand many more like them.

Yukoners no longer trust this government, and with good reason. Last year's plan to privatize our energy future has poisoned the waters for many voters who are eager to go to the polls and vote for a government they can trust. We've laid out several areas that need improvement and several areas where a Liberal government would use a different approach. How government treats the least fortunate in our society is one area where we definitely have different views from the current administration. We've been raising the issue of poverty and the need to fight it for years.

The social inclusion strategy is a good place to start. It could be the basis for change and for putting the money into making new inroads against poverty — affordable housing, additional support for the working poor, additional mental health resources and substance abuse treatment to deal with issues that

add to the burden on many of society's least fortunate; addressing hunger — these are all part of that long list.

We are disappointed that this fall's follow-up symposium to last spring's conference has been postponed until the new year. We recently observed the Health minister's sidewalk awareness campaign on social inclusion. We think it might have been done better; there could have been better clarity as to the messaging — some of which said, "You don't belong here". We will, however, acknowledge that it did get people talking about the issue, so we won't criticize the minister for the wording. We will take it in good faith that the objective was to raise awareness, and it certainly did that.

Now we must move beyond talking and into taking action. This government has had eight years to take action on the issues of poverty and social inclusion and is only now getting started. How we look after our environment is another. We believe in a balanced approach, one that creates jobs and protects our wilderness, and that is sadly lacking in today's Yukon.

In closing, I want to thank officials across the government for their work in preparing the documents we're discussing today. It is one of the largest tasks of the year, between spring and fall, and we appreciate their hard work — particularly those in the Department of Finance. While we are disappointed that the Yukon Party government started the year with a projected surplus and could not operate within those projections and now predicts a deficit, we know that the departmental officials are always doing their best to provide government with the tools and information to do its job.

While we fault the political side of government, we do appreciate the work of the dedicated officials. The Premier, no doubt, will try to say otherwise. He will say we are criticizing the officials, but we believe the officials understand the difference, even if the Premier and his colleagues do not.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, last week Yukoners were treated or subjected — depending upon your perspective — to a three and a half hour speech from the Minister of Economic Development, and he asked repeatedly, "What would the Liberals cut?" Well, we would not cut wages to public sector employees, unlike Yukon Party governments. The Yukon Party is the only party in Yukon history to go down that road. But we do have a suggestion for the Economic Development minister so he can pass it on to his leader: call an election. If the Yukon Party wants to see how a Liberal government would construct a budget, they should call an election and see if voters elect a Liberal government. If so, they would get to see a Liberal budget.

The Premier and his colleagues are lashing out and attacking the opposition for pointing out the obvious: poor financial management over the last two years is breaking the bank. The government can't defend their spending decisions, so they're going on the offensive. Call an election. Yukoners deserve a good government and they're not getting it from the Yukon Party.

**Hon. Ms. Horne:** In 2006 we campaigned on a commitment to provide Yukoners with a clear vision for a bright future. We committed to help Yukoners achieve a better quality

of life. We committed to protect and manage Yukon's environment. We committed to continue to grow and build our economy. We committed to practise good governance. We committed and we are delivering. The budget before us is only one more example of how our government is delivering on our commitments.

I'd like to talk about how this budget fits in with and supports our mains. When I think about where we were in 2002 and where we are today, I am pleased with the progress we have made. We have doubled our fiscal capacity in the territory.

We have come through one of the most difficult economic periods in recent history with flying colours. We have managed to create an investment context in which people feel comfortable investing in Yukon. I compare that to the Liberal years where U-Hauls going through Teslin were the most popular vehicle accessory. Our budget for this year is \$1,141,000,000. Let me just mention a few of the highlights.

We have \$1.7 million for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport expansion. I sure appreciate the great contribution that Mr. Nielsen made to Yukon. He was a powerful voice in standing up for what Yukon wanted in Ottawa. Those days are gone. As I think about the last few days, I am reminded of how much we need a strong, forceful, principled voice representing us in the nation's capital.

There is \$6 million through the economic stimulus initiative for affordable housing for a number of projects, including the family-focused housing project, the seniors building on the waterfront, and seniors facilities in Watson Lake and Faro. I'm going to come back to Faro in a few minutes.

This budget has money for the Thomson Centre of about 1.9 million. As a member representing a rural riding, I am very pleased with the progress that our government is making in getting more services for Yukoners living outside Whitehorse. We are investing over \$2 million for teleradiology in 13 community health centres. We have \$120,000 to expand telehealth video conferencing equipment into First Nations' offices. We have funded a 24-hour crisis information line through the alcohol and drug information referral service, which offers the public access to addiction support workers at all times.

As an MLA who represents two incorporated municipalities in Faro and Teslin, as well as the unincorporated community of Ross River, I am profoundly interested in our support for municipal and local governments. In our budget for this year is \$808,000 dollars for an increase to the comprehensive municipal grant. As well, there is a \$121,000 increase for community operations in unincorporated communities.

If you look at the commitments I made during the campaign of 2006, you will see that I pledged to continue to ensure that seniors and elders are able to remain in their home for as long as possible by increasing home care and other services. We are spending over \$500,000 to enhance and support the Yukon home care program to provide services to all Yukoners, but particularly for those who require home care outside of Whitehorse.

We are doing more, though, to keep seniors in their home communities. For example, in Faro, we have \$250,000 in this

year's budget of a \$1-million investment to build housing for seniors. As I mentioned previously, this is one of the areas covered by this supplementary budget. This is part of an investment in Faro, Teslin and Watson Lake. I was so pleased to recently open the six-unit seniors housing project in Faro. As a frequent traveller of our highways, I am always keenly interested to see that we invest in our highways, including over \$15.25 million as part of a three-year program for the Robert Campbell Highway.

We are investing \$1,125,000 for bridge work at Deadman Creek. The Morley River bridge redecking project is receiving some \$500,000. We have a budget of \$1 million for culvert replacement at Quiet Lake. I was just down that road a few weeks ago. I actually travelled over that road a few times this summer and I saw the work first-hand.

Our government has worked hard to make Yukon attractive to investors, once again. Our budgets support that goal. Nowhere is that clearer than in my riding. I thank my colleagues for the teamwork we have enjoyed in working together for the benefit of Yukon.

I would now like to turn my attention to the Department of Justice. By far, the largest driver of crime in Yukon is substance abuse. If we are going to create a better quality of life, we simply must address substance abuse, and the substance most abused is alcohol.

Four years ago we committed to Yukoners to implement the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan* through initiatives relating to four strategic directions: (1) harm reduction; (2) prevention and education; (3) treatment; and (4) enforcement. I'll go through the items related to my departments in more detail as we get to the Committee of the Whole discussion. I just want to highlight a few of those items.

The Department of Justice has approval for a project funding agreement with Justice Canada for \$60,000 to fund the incidence of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder project. The purpose of this project is to identify the partners and work on the methodology and projected plan to carry out the research. This cost is 100-percent recoverable from Justice Canada.

We have a revote of \$66,000 for the *Human Rights Act* modernization project to continue the research component, analysis and consultation leading to revisions to the *Human Rights Act*. We have a revote of \$41,000 for the needs and services gap study to complete consultation work. This is a northern strategy trust funded project. \$130,000 for this project was allocated to the Department of Justice budget in the 2010-11 mains estimates. Expenditures for the current fiscal year totalled \$10,000, which will remain in the Department of Justice budget.

The remaining \$120,000, plus the revote of \$41,000 allocated to the project, will be transferred to the Department of Health and Social Services to better align the budget with project activities as an additional task force has been created to address the needs or gaps of the chronically intoxicated.

Total funding to be transferred to the Department of Health and Social Services is \$161,000. We approved a revote of \$18,000 to complete production of the principles of *Corrections Act* posters, national parole pamphlets, staff handbook,

and inmate handbook in order to meet statutory requirements of the new *Corrections Act* and regulations.

On a related matter, we approved a revote of \$134,000 as a revote to complete phase 2 of direct-supervision training. We have been and are continuing to work on increasing our support in communities for initiatives related to after-care treatment, harm reduction and prevention.

We have increased our training for staff who work with offenders in communities or at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. We provide counselling for children in homes where there have been incidents of violence. Our goal is to break the generational cycle of abuse so that children of abusive parents are shown a better way to resolve conflict. We are working with community partners in the area of addiction issues to provide counselling, support and after-care. Along with Health, we in the Department of Justice are working with First Nation governments to develop more land-based treatment centres and programs throughout the territory in order to support the operation of the community court. Mr. Speaker, my department has been very focused, and thus very effective as a result. First we did the consultation on corrections and we developed the new correctional philosophy and then the new *Corrections Act*.

Work is now underway to support the new philosophy and the new act in terms of a new correctional and treatment facility, as well as land-based treatment options. We have developed the Yukon Community Wellness Court to deal with offenders with drug or alcohol addictions, symptoms of FASD and mental health issues.

This court provides a therapeutic alternative that supports offenders so they don't reoffend. We will continue to ensure victims of abuse have access to a safe place and support services through the Victim Services/Family Violence Prevention Unit and other departments and agencies.

Our government will continue to implement the provisions of the safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation as per the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan*. I know the members opposite say they like this program; I just wish they would vote to fund it. Our budget for this year continues our commitment to the safer communities and neighbourhoods legislation implementation to improve community safety by targeting locations that are used for drug dealing, bootlegging and prostitution.

I think of my colleague from Whitehorse Centre and the very fruitful discussions we had regarding this file. I get frustrated when the Leader of the Official Opposition says he supports something but then votes against it. He did it again today. The Liberals are all in it together — love the SCAN unit, they say, but vote against funding it. He says he agrees that we need health care facilities in Watson Lake and Dawson, but votes against funding it.

Yukon's MP, "Long-gun Larry", by the way, was the supporting vote for the long-gun registry.

### Speaker's statement

**Speaker:** Order please. It's customary in this House that we don't use nicknames for any members of the House, and the Chair believes that we should extend that courtesy to

our Member of Parliament as well. So, honourable member, just temper your remarks. You still have the floor.

**Hon. Ms. Horne:** Yukon's MP was a deciding vote to keep the gun registry. Was that representing Yukoners? As a First Nation person, I am offended. Our First Nations do not agree with the long-gun registry. Are we recognized in our national capital by our MP? No, sadly we're not. We need someone who stands up for us — for our rights in the Yukon. But I guess that must be the Liberal way — say one thing but vote the opposite — flip-flop goes the old mop.

We have improved our information in the Justice department, especially regarding FASD. In the Women's Directorate, my vision for Yukon is for it to be a place that is free of sexual violence. That is our goal. That is my hope for a bright future for Yukon.

I would like to applaud the work of the different women's organizations that I have had the opportunity and pleasure to work with. As I reflected on this year's budget, I realized how much we have accomplished. The most significant accomplishment concerning the Women's Directorate by the Yukon Party is the re-creation of this entire unit, which occurred shortly after the Yukon Party was elected in 2002. The Liberals again say that they support women's equality, but shut down the Women's Directorate. Our government continues to fund this important unit within our organization. Although the Liberals vote against funding it, the budget before us demonstrates our commitment to the women of Yukon.

As someone who is a participant of the Yukon First Nations treaty, I would like to say that honouring the land claim treaties and the processes they contain is critical to good governance. I know the Leader of the Official Opposition likes to think and portray that he understands the treaties, but I have noticed that when it comes to following them, he is often confused.

First, the current Member for Copperbelt is sadly confused about the Peel planning process. The process our government is following is the process laid out in chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. I find it deeply disturbing and insulting when I hear the Leader of the Official Opposition suggest that we dispense with the processes enshrined in the final agreements. When I think of all the years that First Nations have put into negotiating and then implementing these documents, I find it so frustrating to hear the members opposite say we should throw that work away and make up a process on the spot.

Let's think about that for a few minutes. You would think the Liberal Party would have learned their lesson after the YPAS mess. Let's think about that for a few moments. The Liberals looked at a perfectly good process, negotiated and agreed to in the land claims treaties, and said, "No thanks; let's go with the badly flawed Yukon protected areas strategy." I did say "strategy" not "tragedy."

The budget before us is helping and assisting Yukoners. We are committed to our platform commitments. We are delivering on that.

**Mr. Elias:** It's always an honour and a privilege to rise in this House to speak about our *Supplementary Estimates No. 1* for 2010-11. I would like to begin by recognizing and providing a heartfelt thanks to the people of Old Crow for their incredible support they've always provided to me and to recognize their hard work. There are many success stories to report, no matter what the issues or concerns are. My constituents are always there participating and helping to solve problems and getting the job done. I really appreciate their roll-up-your-sleeves-and-get-to-work attitude that doesn't seem to diminish.

I am so proud of them for the hard work they've done, and it helps make my job that much easier.

I'm always honoured to represent and serve such a wonderful, engaged riding. As always, on behalf of my constituents, I want to thank some of my colleagues on the other side of this Legislature for finding ways to address some of the priorities in my riding that I speak about in this House.

When we talk about the budget, there was \$76,000 for Old Crow emergency response and search and rescue; there was \$250,000 allocated for the Old Crow roadways, which is the beginning of a phase 1-phase 2 project with a grant total of \$4 million.

There was \$67,000 transferred to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for youth programs. There was \$67,000 transferred to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for regional services. There was also a \$50,000 capital expenditure for the Fishing Branch Wilderness Reserve, as well as some additional money that was a \$1.15-million expenditure for airports in Beaver Creek, Burwash, Old Crow, Dawson City and Whitehorse.

One of the priorities that has been yet to be fulfilled is the upgrading of the water well in Old Crow. There hasn't been any physical work done and this is of concern to my constituents; however, there has been some money allocated in this year's supplementary budget. There has also been \$46,200 for Old Crow sports and recreation and another \$50,000 was transferred to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for the preservation and protection of the Porcupine Caribou herd.

Moving on, I — no, I'm not even going to go there. I was going to respond to some of the previous speaker's comments about disrespecting the final agreement, but I'll reserve those comments for a later date because I'll try to change the tone in the Legislature today.

Over the summer months, I've had many meetings with my constituents. There was an acknowledgment and recognition of many major accomplishments in our community that have been achieved over the last four decades and of how important it is to ensure that our youth recognize and understand the tremendous amount of work that has been done to date in Old Crow. I'm going to touch on some of these today. That includes the signing of the *Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement*, the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, the self-government agreement especially. The vision of our elders and selfless leadership from our chiefs and councils or MLAs, and the tireless dedication from our community members and friends have resulted in some incredible accomplishments in north Yukon.

They were guided by the virtues of hard work, fortitude and integrity, and our community is far down the path of self-determination, controlling our own destiny in this rapidly changing world. Together we celebrate and recognize our own community successes by now telling the world our own story.

I do recognize that there are many other community achievements and that the following list is not all-encompassing.

The following community accomplishments include a lot of sacrifice and hard work to bring them to fruition. However, I believe the following represent many significant milestones that show the creative problem-solving abilities of our leaders as a community and our ability to partner with others.

I also take this time to recognize the 1973 Chief and Council and delegates who signed *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* — the document — on our community's behalf to begin the Yukon land claim negotiation process that has now resulted in self-governance and our comprehensive land claim agreements.

As many of our community elders have said time and time again, "Don't worry. Just go." With that, I'll begin in 1973 in Ottawa, Ontario, where the document *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* was signed by 100 Yukon chiefs, councillors and delegates. On behalf of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the signatures were our chief, the late Charlie Abel, along with councillors John Kyikavichk, the late Grafton Njootli, the late Lazarus Charlie, the late John Kendi and delegates Stanley Njootli, Alfred Charlie and the late Moses Tizya.

In 1976, the Berger inquiry held hearings in Old Crow and received the testimony and submissions from many local residents. The Canadian Parliament established the Berger inquiry to review plans to build an oil and gas pipeline network across north Yukon and down the Mackenzie Valley. The commission recommended that no pipeline be built through the northern Yukon and that a pipeline through the Mackenzie should be delayed for 10 years to deal with many critical issues. The Berger report concluded that the northern Yukon was too susceptible to environmental harm and that the land claims must be concluded first and must include conservation areas to protect the Porcupine caribou herd.

These recommendations significantly reinforced the foundations necessary for the future establishment of the Vuntut and Ivvavik national parks and the creation of the Old Crow Flats special management area in north Yukon. In 1988, the mandate for the protection of the Porcupine caribou calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska was established in Arctic Village, Alaska, and was received by the first Gwich'in steering committee. Again, the leadership role was also taken by our community of Old Crow. They were simply to go and tell the United States government not to drill in the calving grounds. I was there when I was 16 years old and I witnessed what happened.

In 1991, prohibition took effect in Old Crow. It says under the *Liquor Act*, pursuant to subsection 105.1(2) of the *Liquor Act*, the Commissioner in Executive Council Office orders as follows: "(1) the annexed Old Crow Liquor Prohibition Regula-

tion is hereby established. Dated at Whitehorse, in the Yukon Territory, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1991."

Definitions — "(1) In this Act "band community" is called Old Crow and means the area within 100 kilometres ... of the Old Crow Community Centre. Prohibitions — (2) No person shall (a) possess liquor anywhere in Old Crow, (b) consume liquor anywhere in Old Crow, (c) sell liquor anywhere in Old Crow, (d) buy liquor anywhere in Old Crow, or (e) transport liquor anywhere in Old Crow." That was a significant turning point in our community as well, and I was in the community when that vote took place.

In 1993, on May 29, the *Umbrella Final Agreement* was signed in Whitehorse after 20 years of negotiating with the federal and territorial governments. Self-government agreements were signed that established our own lawmaking authority and abolished the implementation of the Government of Canada's *Indian Act* over Vuntut Gwitchin citizens. The implementation for the land claim was also signed in that year.

In 1995, two years later, on February 14 the *Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement* came into legal effect, securing ownership, aboriginal rights and title to 7,744 square kilometres of category A settlement lands and creating the Vuntut National Park, as envisioned some 20 years earlier, to create 4,345 square kilometres of Vuntut National Park for all time.

The Old Crow Flats special management area was also created, and that encompassed 19,000 square kilometres. It was recognized in chapter 10, and there were also 28 chapters that defined our relationship with the federal and territorial governments, and provided the tools for maintaining the healthy community that we use and fulfill today.

In 1997, dial-up Internet was established and [www.oldcrow.ca](http://www.oldcrow.ca) was launched. Also in 1997, the new Chief Zzeh Gittlit School opened on category A settlement land. In 1999, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens approved the creation of the Vuntut Development Corporation, a for-profit business venture. Also in 1999, in December, 6,700 square kilometres of Ni'inlii'Njik — also known as Fishing Branch territorial park — was established after 50 years of discussions. The Vuntut Gwitchin oral history project was launched that same year.

In 2000, a new Vuntut Gwitchin administration building, now known as the Sarah Abel-Chitze was opened, and as a strategic investment, the citizens of the Vuntut Gwitchin decided to purchase 49-percent ownership of Air North, Yukon's airline.

In 2001, our very first films were directed and produced by Vuntut Gwitchin citizens and launched worldwide.

In 2002, the financial statements of the Vuntut Gwitchin government were posted on the World Wide Web for the world to see. In 2003, [www.vgfn.ca](http://www.vgfn.ca) was launched. In 2004, the Vuntut Gwitchin government Department of Education takes over the administration of the post-secondary education program from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Also in 2004, the Vuntut Gwitchin Trust was created to provide a consistent and predictable income stream for current beneficiaries while preserving capital and protecting the purchasing power of the

compensation assets for future generations of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation citizens.

In 2005, the decision to develop the rock quarry on Crow Mountain was made after months of community consultation. Also in 2005, the Rampart House heritage site reconstruction commences. In 2006, the Old Crow Flats special management area plan is approved. The Old Crow Flats are recognized as an ecological site by the international biological program.

Just to provide a little bit of history, in 1982, Old Crow Flats were designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. Under the terms of the Vuntut Gwitchin final agreement, proclaimed by the Canadian government in February 1995, the northern portion of the Old Crow Flats became Vuntut National Park. Of the remainder part, the settlement land belonging to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the rest remains federal government land.

Despite these three different land tenures, the land claim agreement designates the entire area as the Old Crow Flats special management area. It stipulates that it may be managed to maintain the integrity of the area's one ecological unit with the conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats and the protection of the current and traditional use of the area by the Vuntut Gwitchin as guiding principles. Using these principles, a management plan has been prepared jointly by the government and the Vuntut Gwitchin, incorporating the management plan for Vuntut National Park.

Giving the remote wilderness location, pristine conditions and strong conservation regime now in place in the Old Crow Flats, its future as a wetland of international significance seems politically assured. One potential threat is global climate change and we've seen that to be a more prevalent attack on the Old Crow Flats wetlands over the years. Old Crow residents seem to feel that lake levels have been dropping and are concerned that the flats are drying up in the warmer temperatures and earlier springs in recent years.

Also a significant event in 2006, the Vuntut Gwitchin government passed its first governance act and it came into effect. In 2007, Bear Cave Mountain Eco-Adventures was created by community, offering exclusive grizzly bear viewing for photographers, artists and wildlife enthusiasts. That's within the Fishing Branch ecological reserve and protected area.

Old Crow's International Polar Year projects begin. In 2008, the John Tizya Visitor Reception Centre opened its doors and was one of the last land claim obligations of chapter 10, the Vuntut National Park. I do believe the previous Environment minister was there in attendance and had a lot of good and kind words to say to the community at that time.

In 2009, the Vuntut Gwitchin integrated community sustainability plan was approved and included a 10-year capital plan. This document is an important one because it asks for partners in various levels of government; it has a plan that was discussed over many years, and it is one document. I refer to this document because it came in the priorities and issues of my constituents.

On June 29, 2009, there was a historic signing of the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*. Once again, it was a first in the Yukon under the *Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agree-*

*ment. Plunge into Vuntut Gwitchin waters* was also launched on the community of Old Crow's website, in partnership with the Department of Canadian Heritage. Also in 2009, we had the graduation of our first medical doctor, Alisa Kelly.

In 2010, a Boeing 737 jet landed at the Alfred Charlie Old Crow Airport. We had a celebration of the Olympic torch arriving in Old Crow. We've had five First Nations and three public governments sign the first Porcupine caribou harvest management plan. Let me see, how many years is it? Fifteen years after the oral history project was launched, the community published *People of the Lakes*, a book that has since received many awards and accolades from around our country and North America. Sorry, 11 years after the oral history project began.

We have the Old Crow experiential education project that was launched and which will provide a Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation experiential model for kindergarten to grade 9 that will be unique in Yukon, with the emphasis on Vuntut Gwitchin culture, while meeting specific educational needs.

Today, September 27, 2010, twenty-two years after the Arctic Village mandate to protect the Porcupine caribou calving grounds in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, that area remains free of industrial intrusion.

So you can see, when I speak about my community, my pride swells and it's because of the incredible accomplishments that have come from my community of north Yukon. I think that over the summer I've also been hearing some issues and concerns with regard to my community, and I'll just go over quickly some of the things I've been hearing.

For years now, parents and children from Old Crow have been dealing with having to leave the community in grade 9, and this year was no exception. There was a tremendous amount of emotion, and there still is with regard to children leaving Old Crow to get an education in the capital city. I've heard from many, many constituents — those whose kids have graduated and those who are in the system now — that maybe it's time that we again look at this issue and work toward having our first grade 12 graduate in the community of Old Crow. I've also heard from parents that if this can't be done, that we start looking for — actually there were a couple of ideas with regard to our own residents if our students are going to be continuing to come down here — a place for Vuntut Gwitchin students so that the parents can integrate culture and food and sports and recreation and a higher level of understanding of their cultural needs. That was one of the suggestions.

This next issue has been longstanding. It's in regard to an elders facility in Old Crow. We have talked about this for many years. I understand that this is not as easy as it seems, because of the different levels of care that are required in an isolated, remote community, but that doesn't mean we have to shy away from it. I think we should have a comprehensive and detailed analysis of this, because from what I understand of the numbers, there are going to be a lot of elders in Old Crow in the next generation, so the need for an elders facility in my community is important. Major issues are coming up with regard to food mail and the new Nutrition North program that don't seem to fit in the community right now. This is an ongoing matter, and I will continue to work on it.



Trapping and the fur industry is valuable to my constituents. I know we have a Vuntut Harvesters and Trappers Association that is trying to get itself off the ground. I've heard some excellent feedback with regard to the land-based experiential learning project, and the list goes on.

I understand that I am running out of time, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I will end with a quote from Mr. Goddard. He said, "Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant with the weak and the wrong. Sometime in your life, you would have been all of these." Thank you for your time, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Mr. Edzerza:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to this *Supplementary Estimate No. 1* for the Department of Environment. The department seeks the following adjustments: \$131,036,000 for operations and maintenance expenditures; \$649,000 for operation and maintenance recoveries; \$809,000 for capital expenditures and \$576,000 for capital recoveries. These adjustments net out to requests for an additional \$501,000 in all; \$342,000 for O&M and \$233,000 for capital for the fiscal year 2010-11.

There were two major O&M changes in recent months that prompt this request: salary increases due to the new collective agreement account for \$467,000 of the increase, and the permanent transfer of responsibilities for managing the recycling fund and its associated programs to the Department of Community Services, for a budget decrease \$432,000. This transfer will consolidate the responsibility for waste management with the Department of Community Services, as called for in the government's *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan*.

This supplementary operation and maintenance estimate includes three major climate change adaptation projects for which we will recover 100 percent of costs from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. There is \$100,000 for developing regional climate change scenarios; \$180,000 for a water adaptation project that will help water managers from all levels of government in Yukon with community planning and watershed management; and \$125,000 for assessing how vulnerable Yukon tree species and ecosystems are to climate change and their capacity to adapt. The operation and maintenance estimates also deal with projects the department is carrying out with financial support from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, or CanNor, including \$180,000 for surveys to enhance the wildlife key areas database and update the government's rare species inventory — information the government needs when developing habitat management guidelines and in their regulatory review and decision-making processes for proposed development projects; \$37,000 to enhance Yukon fish habitat model and monitoring system that assists with the regulation and monitoring of placer mining; and \$30,000 for a study of invasive aquatic species. Currently, little is known about these species, and this study will help us identify what species may be entering and where and how to detect them early and monitor them once we know they're here.

The capital supplementary estimates reflect three new projects to improve our territorial parks, for which CanNor is providing 100 percent of the fund — \$33,000 for a barrier-free

trail leading to the Beaver Pond wetlands in Tombstone Territorial Park; \$475,000 for landscaping and trail development adjacent to the new Tombstone Interpretive Centre; and \$68,000 for building renovations in the territorial park on Herschel Island.

The improvements to the community house on Herschel Island will help extend the scientific research season by several weeks. This building accommodates scientists and park interpreters.

Other capital projects addressed by this supplementary include a carry-over of \$140,000 from 2009-10 for database system projects such as administering environmental licences or tracking contaminated site assessments and remediation work. There is \$29,000 for equipment to support a new animal health program, such as hydro microscope hoist and equipment for surgery and necropsy.

I would also like to talk a little bit about some of the comments that were made earlier by the Leader of the Official Opposition with regard to the environment. I know there has been a lot of criticism from the opposition with regard to the Minister of Environment not addressing some of the questions asked by the opposition.

I believe wholeheartedly that the opposition really does understand the questions they direct at certain ministers should be answered by another department. However, I would like to talk a little bit about the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and that there appears to be a developing perception by the Leader of the Official Opposition. I have to ask: is the Leader of the Official Opposition saying that a Liberal government would not honour chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* with regard to land use planning in the Yukon, or is the leader saying he would disregard chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and do land use planning however he sees fit?

It sounds very risky and unpredictable — what the Liberals might or might not do, should the Yukon public ever give them an opportunity to govern the Yukon.

Comments made by the Leader of the Liberal Party would make one believe a Liberal government would put a halt to mining in the Yukon. So one has to ask: what would a Liberal government replace mining with? Mining supports a lot of the revenue coming into the Yukon and it's a good job support for Yukoners.

I would also like to touch a bit on some of the comments made from the opposition since the sitting started with regard to the Yukon Party government not really being in support of protected lands and parks. The fact is, with regard to a percentage of protected areas of the provinces and the territories of Canada, Yukon ranks second among British Columbia, Yukon, Alberta, Nunavut, Ontario, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The Yukon ranks second because the Yukon has 12.6 percent of the Yukon protected. The only one that ranks higher is British Columbia, which has 14.39 percent. I would have to believe that the Yukon is doing very well when it comes to really backing up their positions when they say that the Yukon Party does in fact honour protecting lands within the Yukon Territory.

I would also like to talk a little bit about some of the highlights that surface within the environment in the Yukon. The Yukon government is working with the Government of Canada on cleaning up the Marwell pit area — the largest hydrocarbon-contaminated site in the Yukon. This 10-year-long project will cost almost \$7 million, with the Yukon government leading the remediation work.

The Yukon government also provided \$1.8 million over three years to the Yukon Wildlife Preserve to help the organization expand its programs and seek other funding opportunities. The Yukon Party government also provided \$1.9 million over two years for the design and construction of an animal research and rehabilitation centre at the Yukon Wildlife Preserve — a critical step for obtaining accreditation with the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

The Yukon Party is now offering a second year of permit hunt for elk and continuing to implement other actions called for in the elk management strategy. The Yukon Party has also wrapped up the winter tick management program that began in 2008, with marked improvements found in the Takhini elk herd and some improvement in the Braeburn elk herd. Yukon government also revised the bison hunt areas and seasons in the fall of 2010, as recommended by the wood bison technical team.

More than 3,000 people attended the Swan Haven and various Celebration of Swans events in April 2010, including 21 school groups. About 800 people participated in other wildlife viewing programs delivered in the summer of 2010, such as elk bugling, mushrooms, bat night walk and migratory birds. There are also multi-year research projects underway on moose, caribou, grizzly bear and selected fish populations.

Information gathered informs the government's wildlife management and land use decisions. There has also been a continuation to work with the State of Alaska staff on efforts to accurately determine the population of the Porcupine caribou herd. It appears that this year the governments of Alaska and the Yukon will successfully get a count on this caribou herd, which should be made available later on this fall.

The government also budgeted \$550,000 for the remediation of three contaminated sites owned by the Yukon government, as part of the Yukon government's new approach to managing environmental liabilities. The government is also in the process of consulting on designating the old Yukon Pipeline Ltd. upper tank farm in Whitehorse as a contaminated site to ensure the safety of further development projects, current and future users of the site and the environment.

With federal help, it has invested \$600,000 in Tombstone Territorial Park in 2010 for new trails, interpretive panels, bridges, viewing platforms and boardwalks; restoration of disturbed landscape around the new interpretive centre; restoration of historic buildings in the territorial park on Herschel Island.

This government has and will continue to be very active with regard to working for the best interests of all Yukoners when it comes to looking after the environment.

I know there has also been a fair amount of criticism about the government not honouring agreements with First Nations. There have been several special management areas established

with First Nations, such as Tatlain Lake, which is 33.3 square kilometres. It was established through the *Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement*. We have Fishing Branch, which consists of 141 square kilometres of Vuntut Gwitchin settlement land, an ecological reserve of 169,000 square kilometres, a wilderness preserve of 5,213 square kilometres and a habitat protected area that is 978 square kilometres. This is all protected area.

We also have the Tombstone Park which is 2001 square kilometres, which was approved by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon government in a management plan in 2009. It is located north of Dawson City along the Dempster Highway.

There are several other examples of proposed parks that are being discussed, and some that have been developed as we speak today. The most recent one was the Nordenskiöld wetlands, which is south of Carmacks and is 778.5 square kilometres. This is habitat protection land. Again, the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation selected this area as settlement land in order to protect it. This initiative has now been completed and there will be a signing of this HPA somewhere toward the end of October.

We have Pickhandle Lakes — again, the *Kluane First Nation Final Agreement* called for a habitat protected area here. Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation and the Yukon government members will begin the management planning process for this 51 square kilometres of habitat protection area. We have another area — the Tagish Narrows. The *Carcross-Tagish First Nation Final Agreement* set out management objectives for this area of 4.5 square kilometres for habitat protection.

We have another area known as Devil's Elbow, Big Island in the Mayo district where the renewable resource council recommended that this 75 square kilometre area be designated as a habitat protection area. Final draft approval of the management plan is anticipated later this year. Representatives consist of the renewable resource council, the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun and the Yukon territorial government.

We have another place called Lewes Marsh, which is 20.3 square kilometres in size. Again, it is the final agreements of Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Carcross-Tagish that called for a management plan in this area.

It's quite obvious that the *Umbrella Final Agreement* sort of directs a lot of what First Nations can actually do within their settlement lands. A lot of these habitat protection areas are directly linked to First Nation final agreements. When I put all of this on record today, it's quite obvious that Yukon Party does respect the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and will work with First Nations with regard to habitat protection areas, and the proof is in the pudding. There are several that are on the go and a number of them that have been completed.

**Mr. McRobb:** In the last half hour, I managed to scribble together a few notes here. In reviewing the scribbling, I'd like to warn the Justice minister that she might be in for some more bitter-tasting wine this afternoon, because there are a few sour grapes here. One of the first things I want to point out is how the previous speaker started off by saying he's proud to be a member of the Yukon Party government. Well,

let's fast-rewind to the last election campaign. That very member who ran for the NDP, the Third Party, campaigned on being the worst enemy of the Yukon Party government — the worst enemy is what he declared he would be. Now look where he is today.

When you speak about flip-flops in here, as the Minister of Justice did, this has to be the biggest flip-flop by any member in this Assembly in Yukon history — to go from the worst enemy to a proud member, just like that. The other day, in response to last year's supplementary, I went on and explained about how it's the role of the Official Opposition to traditionally vote against the government-of-the-day's money bills, which are the budgets. I explained what the Yukon Party meant when it criticized us for not voting against certain projects.

It wasn't the first time I took the time to explain that; it's probably about the tenth time during this eight-year Yukon Party rule that I've done that. Did it do any good? No. It fell on deaf ears as far as people on the government benches go, because the very next speaker after me stuck with the written speech and went on about how the bad Liberals voted against all these projects that were in the budget.

That's politics, I guess, but I encourage everyone to try to rise above the rhetoric and debate the issues of the day. It's still happening.

Another thing I heard this afternoon about how the Official Opposition votes against the projects raises another question in my mind: why is the Yukon Party majority government so concerned? It has the votes needed to pass anything in this Legislature. We see it on all the budgets, legislation; we see how the Yukon Party has used its majority to pass motions that were voted against by every member on the opposition benches, yet it used its majority of votes to pass certain motions.

It has also used its majority of votes to suspend debate on opposition motions, to filibuster opposition bills that were brought forward. One comes to mind, the net metering bill. We brought it forward twice with the same result both times. The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources at the time talked out the clock, much the same way as the Minister of Economic Development did the other day.

So this government habitually uses its majority vote to its own advantage. So why the concern about members on this side of the House voting against budgets? The budgets will still pass. Do members across the way know something we don't? Is there another defection or two in the works perhaps? You know, because then the concern would suddenly become valid. Are we headed for a minority government here in the last possible year in this term? Well, I see some reaction from members across the way. Who knows?

The government also has a Yukon Party Independent member in this Assembly who is sitting on the opposition benches and the government can always count on him to support their budgets, their motions. In fact, just yesterday the Yukon Party Independent member was the only vote on the opposition side of this Assembly that voted for last year's supplementary budget. We all know the issues the Independent Yukon Party member has with the government, and maybe I'll still have time later to address some of those issues. The gov-

ernment also goes on challenging us about what projects we would cut from its budget. Well, the first thing that needs to be said is that no member on the opposition side of the Yukon Legislature is allowed to cut a budget that has been tabled and is up for debate. That is against the rules. We can either vote for or against the budget. We cannot cut projects from the budget. We can suggest projects be added but the government traditionally — at least this Yukon Party government — has always voted those requests down. It is against the laws of this Assembly to try to cut projects from the budget.

I see I have the ears of the Premier, and this is good, because we need to have him enter the debate. I'll be getting to more about the Premier and his style a little later.

There's also another aspect to this "what would the Liberals cut from the budget" that deserves to be said. Perhaps there's an unspoken option. What I'm suggesting is perhaps there's more opportunity to capitalize financially on funding sources from elsewhere. One of the things I picked up this summer is how there's a lot of federal money falling between the cracks with this Yukon Party government. I questioned this person and found out that it certainly sounds like there's a lot of substance to this concern in that a lot of federal partnership offerings have either been declined or the necessary work that was needed to bring them to fruition simply was not done. That is another aspect.

Again sticking with the bigger picture, one wouldn't have to watch the proceedings of this Assembly very long to come to the conclusion that the Yukon Party's single focus is to criticize only us. It does not criticize the Third Party or the Independent Yukon Party member; it focuses its attack on the Official Opposition, the Yukon Liberal Party. A lot could be said there, but I think Yukoners are smart enough to figure it out themselves. If I were to go about explaining it, I'm afraid some of my language could be unparliamentary, and we wouldn't want that to happen.

I will just sum it up by saying that I consider this sole focus on us by the government of the day to be our badge of honour.

Now the bill at hand is the supplementary budget for this year. It begs the question: who did the government talk to before it devised this budget? There was no community tour. Obviously the expenditures were decided in the corner office upstairs. Well, shame, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This government is truly in bunker mode. It's scared to face the public because it knows what it is going to hear. "We want an election," is the overwhelming concern from the Yukon public today.

Certainly, they are all in it together. The Premier has had his way on just about everything. There has been very little resistance put up by anybody else over there.

The only member from the government side who had the courage to speak out is the current Yukon Party Independent member. Documents that have been tabled in this House show he didn't get his courage until one year after the Premier wrote to the head of ATCO, saying this privatizing of Yukon's energy future had the full support of his caucus. This same member was privy to certain meetings in which these issues were raised starting in December 2008, which was about three-

quarters of a year before he had the sudden courage to break away from the Yukon Party government. One might ask: what took so long, and why did the others stay? That member has often said there were others who were supposed to join him. Nobody else came.

Certainly, those remaining on the Yukon Party side are all in it together. They're all in it together in losing the trust of the public. People no longer believe what this government says. Part of the reason is the people of the territory know this government will say whatever happens to be politically expedient.

What about fairness in spending the public purse? The last couple of Question Periods we heard one example that I've raised about questions of fairness and how this government treats campaign managers. We see how, when dealing with its campaign manager, this government scurried to find a way to smooth things over; yet, a year ago, on an issue with our campaign manager, it was a completely opposite situation. The government, through examination, was found to have acted wrongly in that case. There's a huge discrepancy in how this government treats people of different stripes over a very similar issue and the people of the territory have wised up. They know good governance means the government of the day should be fair in how it spends their money. The people of the territory know a good government should not filter how it spends money for political reasons. Yet the other day, when I asked the Premier if he would be willing to look at amendments to legislation to prevent this from happening, he chose not to even respond to it. Well, that says a lot, because quite often we hear from this government how we don't have constructive solutions. Well, there is an example right there. I proposed a constructive solution and the government ignored it. Instead of being open and accountable, the Premier adopted his usual approach of deny and attack. Well, we're used to it over here on this side of the House and Yukoners are tired of it. Yukoners want a government they can trust, a government they can feel proud of, a government that will spend the public's purse in a principled manner that demonstrates fairness to everybody regardless of how they vote in an election, regardless of which party they help in an election campaign.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it has often been said that we're all Yukoners here, we're a small territory — there are only 35,000 people here. Why can't we work together better for the benefit of the territory and put aside the politics and just strive to be the best we can be? What a unique vision that would be. To build a path toward that objective would require a foundation of fairness in spending and fairness in decision-making by the government of the day.

Again, the people do not see that happening and it's a lost opportunity and that's too bad, because the Yukon is suffering a setback as a result of this. At some point, let's hope that a government will be elected the people can trust and that government will start to repair some of the damage done with respect to the lost public trust in the territory today.

As mentioned, the big concern I hear from people out there is, when is the next election? Obviously this government has worn out its welcome; it's very unpopular with the people. I saw the latest DataPath poll and it's rather shocking to realize

this majority government is in third place in the polls and it's trailing the one-member NDP. That's unbelievable.

It makes me feel good to see a poll like that, because it pulls my heartstrings to know that Yukoners are smart enough not to buy the rhetoric they hear from the Yukon Party government and they have figured out what's going on. I say, good for them.

This government is hiding from the people. As mentioned, it's the longest ever government in Yukon history without an election. It's simply in bunker mode.

I recall the Premier, when he used to sit at my desk, going back about nine years ago. He used to accuse the previous Liberal government of being in bunker mode. They were only in government two and a half years; yet the Premier accused them of being in bunker mode, even though they went out for the people. His government has now been in power for eight years and it's in bunker mode. It's not talking to the people; it's very unpopular; it's denying everybody the opportunity to go to the polls and elect a government they can trust.

The government is running from the people. It didn't even call a by-election to fill the vacant seat for Whitehorse Centre before this sitting started. The government rushed to start the sitting so it would hopefully get away from that issue.

I see my time has elapsed, Mr. Speaker. Thank you — there's so much more that could be said.

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** It's my honour and pleasure to rise today as the representative for the beautiful Southern Lakes to support the budget bill that's before us.

Despite the inclement weather on the weekend, there were an awful lot of positive episodes or positive activities underway. The brunch season in Marsh Lake has once again started and about 100 Marsh Lakers came out to the new community centre to have a community brunch. At the brunch there was a lot of positive discussion about what people had accomplished over the summer, a lot of optimism in the room. I had an opportunity to talk to many people. A couple of folks asked me about the session; one person came up and said, "Well, it should be pretty quiet, there's not much to complain about out there, is there?"

Indeed, we look at the territory and we see the record numbers of people employed in the territory, the population growth, the optimism, the infrastructure being developed in our community that will serve us into the future, whether it is increased hydroelectric energy production, schools in communities throughout the territory, hospitals, road construction, or housing initiatives. People just look around and they're seeing cranes operating, they're seeing construction people working and they're seeing the public sector making a commitment to the territory and seeing a lot of optimism for the future.

The optimism in the room for brunch was very positive and people were recognizing that there wasn't much to complain about in Yukon's life.

It doesn't mean we don't have the responsibility to address many of the issues in the community, to address our concerns around education, land planning, justice, health and social ser-

vices — all of the responsibilities of government — but generally the mood was very optimistic and positive.

Also on the weekend I had the opportunity to visit in Tagish for the unveiling of the Tagish emergency plan. This is a plan where the community has come together, involving the volunteer fire department, EMS, the Tagish emergency measures coordinator, the Tagish fire dispatcher, the Tagish fire chief and volunteers, ambulance services, the Tagish advisory council, the Carcross community health centre, the Carcross fire and ambulance services, Marsh Lake fire and ambulance services, the Carcross-Tagish First Nation, RCMP and the Yukon Emergency Measures Organization.

These groups came together to create a community emergency plan. It's just one more example of a community pulling together to look at the needs in their community and to work together. As we sat there in the new wing of the fire hall in Tagish and had a great barbecue, there was a feeling of optimism and support and hope for the future.

I can't say enough about the good work that these volunteers do in our community, and the needs that they help to meet. The volunteers, whether they are with EMS or the fire department or ambulance services, certainly have my deepest respect. If there are other individuals out there in the community who have some time and would like to get involved, by all means I would encourage them to approach some of the worthwhile volunteer organizations that we have in our communities, because they really are the backbone of making the community a better place to live.

It was really positive seeing these communities coming together, with some support from government, and there was some assistance from Community Services and the EMS folks to help put this plan together, but really it was once again demonstrating the community pulling together to address a need.

Then on Saturday night I had the opportunity to attend an event held by the Yukon Tourism Education Council. This was a graduation. YTEC, the Yukon Tourism Education Council, runs a course called "Ready to Work". This is a program that provides valuable employment skills, career planning information and workplace essentials. It provides credits for high school, plus certification for CPR, first aid, WHMIS — the workplace hazardous materials information system — Food-Safe, Welcome Yukon, Passport to Safety, Be a Responsible Server, information regarding resume writing and interview skills, human rights information, employment standards and information regarding national occupation certification.

It's a very positive course that was put on for about 60 people who are newcomers to the territory. These are people who have come from the Philippines, from China, from Europe, and immigrated to Canada and to Yukon and are taking this course through YTEC. There were 60 different graduates of the program. These are people who came to the Yukon to make Yukon a better place to live for all of us. They're recognizing the tremendous assets and benefits of life in the Yukon.

With a growing population and growing opportunities, we need more people in the territory. As we've seen, the population declined significantly in the 1990s and the early part of

2000 and 2001. The population dipped down to about 28,000 and today it has rebounded to about 35,000. That's an influx of 7,000 people who have faith in the territory and are coming here because of the opportunities, the quality of life and all that Yukon has to offer.

I really congratulate the immigrants who are coming and taking programs, such as the one at YTEC, for their courage. To make this kind of commitment to a new land takes a lot of courage, and I support them in the decisions they've made and wish them all the best into the future. Again, this speaks to the optimism in the territory.

So those were just a couple of little anecdotes about this past weekend that paint a significantly different picture from the madness and misery we've so often heard from the opposition members. I recognize they have said on more than one occasion, "Don't worry, it's just politics." But people do actually listen to what they say.

I am a bit concerned about the confusing message being sent by the opposition. They seem to want to send a mixed message to Yukoners. We heard that mixed message earlier today. We heard phrases like "Just because we complain doesn't mean we don't agree." I have to wonder what kind of disingenuous rhetoric that is. What kind of —

### Unparliamentary language

**Speaker:** Order please. I believe the terminology "disingenuous" has been ruled out of order in the past, so if the honourable member would just refrain from using that terminology. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't attribute that to another member and I'll try to use more accurate words in my descriptions.

**Speaker:** An explanation is not necessary. Just carry on, please.

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** Today we heard that just because the opposition doesn't vote for something, doesn't mean that they don't support it. I think that's rhetoric. I think a statement like that is rhetoric. Just because people say things in the Assembly is just politics — I think we've all heard that; we've all talked to people who have talked to people in the Assembly and have been told, "Don't worry. That's just politics. That's just what we say in the Assembly." What kind of mixed message is that?

The other day I mentioned that the Yukon Party government was building another new school in an opposition member's riding. We had already built a K-to-12 school, and now we're working with Yukon College on another Yukon College campus. Across the floor, the member kibitzed and said, "That's because they have a good MLA."

Well, we hear this from the opposition day after day after day, how they want to take credit for something but they don't want to take the responsibility for it. Yukoners have to draw their conclusions on that. We even just heard in another speaker's comments today — and I'm paraphrasing: don't worry how we vote; it's just part of the politics.

Wow — that's how we do things in our Assembly; that's how we provide for the financing, the vote to carry something

out. When we stand up and support a vote — whether it's to stand up in the last supplementary budget from the spring session, where we addressed the needs of the Auditor General where she told us to rebook items differently, where we put in funding for the experiential education program in Old Crow. These are good things. If members agree with following the direction of the Auditor General and making these kinds of investments, please take the responsibility and stand up and vote for it. But to hear some of the tired refrains that we've heard regarding this budget debate, it's really sending more than a confusing message to Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, we heard people stand up and complain that the budgets weren't sustainable. Then, later in the speech, we were criticized when temporary high departmental expenditures were not continued. The opposition members know that they can't have it both ways, so which message do they want to send to Yukoners? The "Yes, it's a worthwhile investment that they should continue"? Or "No, they should cut it"? We've heard a lot in the last couple days of debate, and unless the opposition can clear this up, Yukoners are forced to draw the conclusion that they wouldn't have upgraded the airport, that they wouldn't have built hundreds of Yukon Housing units, the family-friendly unit or the seniors housing. The opposition, if they were in power, wouldn't have invested in the Mayo B, wouldn't have met the very immediate needs of Yukoners for more clean hydroelectric energy. No, they wouldn't have done that.

We're forced to draw the conclusion that the opposition wouldn't have used money in the savings account to build new Yukon College campuses — our taking advantage of a federal stimulus program. The federal government has come to us and said, "Yes, we'll provide matching funding for many of the initiatives." We're accomplishing the objectives of the territory and taking advantage of significant contributions from the federal government and using the cash reserves, which are plentiful, in order to do these. The members opposite have commented about how the fiscal surplus — the cash surplus — had increased over the years. Yes, and they also need to recognize that it was the Yukon Party government that did that. Through appropriate fiscal management, through working with the federal government, with our other partners in governance we've managed to do that. Then, when there were worthwhile projects that required additional funding, of course we funded them. We were reminded not that long ago when we heard the sky-is-falling approach from members in the opposition that we needed to increase more stimulus in the territory. We did that in a responsible way. We did that with investing in necessary infrastructure for our community — with electrical hydro generation, with housing, with educational opportunities, building hospitals, working with other orders of governments to build daycares, to build cultural centres throughout the territory. No, Mr. Speaker, if the Yukon Party wasn't in power, Yukoners wouldn't expect — because of the statements that we've heard — that those projects would have been done.

That's what we've got to conclude, otherwise we have to conclude with that same old rhetoric, that same old comment

that we've heard in the past that, "Don't worry, we'd do it better, cheaper, faster and with a bigger smile on our faces."

Well, we all know what that and a couple of dollars at Tim Horton's will get you — a cup of coffee, I think. Really the proof is in the outcomes. Yukoners are seeing the proof when they're walking down the street. They're seeing the construction going on; they're seeing average weekly wages increasing; they're seeing employment rates increasing; they're seeing the number of people attending Yukon College — increases in full-time students — and an increased number of students accessing the Yukon student grant to attend post secondary institutions outside of Yukon or even Yukon College. Those are increasing.

Look at the number of apprentices. That has increased by hundredfold, by a factor of over 100 percent. We're seeing more apprentices now than we've ever seen in the territory, including increases in the number of women in non-traditional trades, and First Nations. That also includes the graduation rates.

Because of the economic opportunities we have, people are taking advantage of the educational opportunities we have here in the territory and making the investment in themselves and continuing their education. I've said it before that investing in your education is one of the best investments you can ever make. The payback, not only in monetary terms but also in terms of opportunities, is tremendous. We're opening the door to more opportunities for Yukoners.

The previous speaker was asking questions about what we're doing about a Yukon university, or what we're doing about a university in the north or Arctic. I have to caution members: the University of the Arctic is a concept of tying together different universities that have an interest in the Arctic. Yukon College is very involved in that. That is also another discussion happening throughout the territory and around the country about increasing post-secondary education opportunities for people in Canada's north.

Canada's north isn't one big homogenous area. We have Nunavut, Northwest Territories and the Yukon. Here in Yukon, we're already making some tremendous steps. It would seem like members have forgotten that we recently changed the *Yukon College Act*, which now empowers Yukon College to be a degree-granting institution.

We're seeing some tremendous opportunities with Yukon College, whether it's the bachelor of social work program, the bachelor of education program, the bachelor of science and environmental studies that's being done with the University of Alberta, the master of education program that's underway right now with the University of Northern British Columbia, with having Yukon College courses recognized at B.C. universities, where Yukon students can take courses at Yukon College and immediately transfer into a B.C. institution for their finishing work.

These are tremendous opportunities and I've only touched on a couple of them. We're working with Yukon College to increase the post-secondary opportunities, whether they're academic, technical or of a trades nature.

Also, we heard some questions from the Leader of the Liberal Party about the direction of education. I've tried this before. I've invited members opposite to briefings on what we're

doing with New Horizons, but I can only jump to the conclusion that if they keep their ears closed, they can continue to say that they don't know what's going on. I'd like to send this over — this is a draft of the strategic plan that has gone out to many Yukoners for consultation. I think it answers a lot of the questions. It clears up a lot of the confusion that the Liberal Party has.

Also, in Energy, Mines and Resources — there's a tremendous amount going on in there in the areas of mining, of forestry, of agriculture, land planning, energy. Right now we have over 600 Yukoners directly working in hard rock mining. Now, those are opportunities that we didn't have a short time ago. We're certainly encouraging responsible resource development in the territory. This year, we'll see over \$150 million from the latest estimates of work being done on mining exploration throughout the territory — it's certainly having spinoffs. There are a lot more good things to say about the territory.

The budget is one more step in taking the Yukon down a path of responsibility and a path of prosperity and living up to our responsibility to all Yukoners. I'd encourage members opposite to not only take credit for what's going on for it, but to take responsibility and to vote for this budget.

**Mr. Fairclough:** It's a pleasure to be able to respond and say a few words on the supplementary budget for 2010-11. I've heard a couple of speakers now speak this afternoon. I'm a bit surprised about the way in which they have chosen to pass their message on to the Yukon public, but it's also interesting.

I don't know if the previous speakers realize that the budget they put before us is a money bill and it will be voted on as such. It is a confidence bill, so whether or not the Yukon Party like it or dislike the fact that we vote against it, it's a money bill. Yukoners are telling us that they're tired of the Yukon Party — vote them out — “If there's a chance to do it, vote them out.” And that's what we're going to try to do and maybe we will get some support from the government side too because I think a few people over there are not that satisfied with the whole team approach on this matter, particularly when the Finance minister gets up and talks about no-deficit budgets under Yukon Party government. They produced one last year and ask us to vote again this year on what they feel is their priority.

We're not going to agree to this supplementary budget. I know the members opposite find it tough to take the fact that we on this side of the House can vote against a budget like this. We can express our views on projects and support a project in this budget and the previous budget, and we will do that, like other governments have, like other Yukon Party members have in this House. I don't know why the Yukon Party only goes back as far as 10 years ago and not to when the Yukon Party wasn't in government and show what projects they voted against, that they are now in support of. How interesting it is to see how this takes place. Yukon College is one of them. They are now wanting to improve programs when, at the time, they didn't agree with it at all.

The Yukon public is a lot smarter than this Yukon Party government thinks they are. They understand things better.

They know where government has gone in the past and what is being told to them now. When the Premier gets up and says, “This is not a deficit budget. Don't believe the stuff that we tabled in the House. You've got to see beyond that.” But those are numbers that we and the public have to work with. We have to work with those. The public — they're given these documents and they react to it.

Now, the previous speaker, the Minister of Education, went on about the hard work of New Horizons and how they've got a document going out for public consultation. You know, we've been asking questions on the amendments to the *Education Act* for quite some time. It's required — right in the act — that a review takes place every 10 years. But why isn't the minister reacting to that and following through with what he should be doing — following the act?

When the public spoke out during the education reform process, which was one before New Horizons, it seemed like we went from one to another to another; yet we can't get something produced by the Education minister at all.

They said they wanted to have a good public discussion on the whole issue of governance. What happened in that process? The Premier, the government leader, said no, governance is not on the table for discussion, end of story. So the Minister of Education accepts that. When we say they're all in it together, there's no argument for debate on governance. They were all in it together and they all agreed this should not be on the table. It's not being open to the public, which they campaigned on. They also campaigned on taking care of the issue of the whole government spending trajectory. Do you remember that? It was a big part of the Premier's speech one year that it can't be done, it's not sustainable and we have to make some changes. We've had more dependence on Ottawa, more Ottawa money coming forward to the Yukon government, and we've seen the spending trajectory go straight up.

This is on the minds of a lot of businesses in the territory and the general public. They see this Yukon Party government as tired, worn out. They can't even defend their budget in this House. They're talking about what the opposition is saying, what they would cut from it, without realizing we can't cut the budget, as was explained by the Member for Klwane.

That is a tired government. It's one that is hanging on by a thread right now. They know the writing is on the wall. They've heard what Yukoners have to say and not many people would say they believe what the results are of polls that are taken in the territory, but when they see the support slipping to behind the one member of this House, the Third Party, it has to be a concern to the Yukon Party members.

They hear it on the doorstep, no doubt about that. They hear it in their ridings and, by throwing a project here and a project there in the communities, they think they can get the public support in the next election.

It's going to be interesting, isn't it? We on this side of the House have mentioned, almost every time in a fall supplementary budget, projects that we would like to see take place in our communities, and sometimes they actually get in there. The public knows that it's supported by their MLAs; it's the same on the government side. They say the same thing, but no, this is

a tired government; it's one that I think the Premier is hanging on to and trying to keep together the best he can, but we all see how things are falling apart and so on.

This government said they are reacting to demonstrated needs out in the territory. I brought up one issue with the government where they could have reacted quickly and that was with safe drinking water in the community of Carmacks. It went so far that the community went out and looked for help elsewhere, and they found it with Canadian autoworkers. They came down. There was a demonstrated need, and this Yukon government hid.

It seems to me that when projects are on First Nation lands and all that, this government says, "Well, you have a different process. Go ask the federal government for money." At the same time, they say, "Oh, we speak for the greater public." Talk about mixed messages that this Yukon Party has given over the years, and we've seen a lot of that. Yes, it's in the budget, but that's not really the cost of this project. The project in Watson Lake, for example, and in Dawson, the hospital project in Watson Lake — \$5 million. Who really pushed for that on that side of the House? It turned into a \$25-million project. There wasn't any public consultation to this at all. Now the government says that people will be able to go to Watson Lake instead of Whitehorse at their choosing, without really giving any consideration to the rest of the communities that have to come to Whitehorse. I still believe that there will be a lot of patients in those communities who are coming to town, to Whitehorse, anyway or being sent Outside to see specialists, as we continue to do today.

The previous supplementary budget was all about the cost of medical travel. That should have opened some eyes on that side of the House. Did it?

When we look at major increases in the supplementary budget, it tells me one thing — that this Yukon Party government is a poor budgeter. The budget is put before the House and all of a sudden we see increased costs in projects — is that just making up the budget as we go? What are the Yukon Party members saying to the general public in regard to this?

I know they say they follow the rules in the bills that are produced here, the agreements that have been made. We on this side of the House don't believe that. They talked about reacting to demonstrated needs and accommodating the general public, but find themselves in court over and over again — particularly with First Nations — when they talk and are fighting the government when it comes to accommodating their interests. They're in court over that — Supreme Court, too — costing both governments all kinds of money. The Yukon Party government has lots of lawyers and a big pot of money and could go on for quite some time.

The Yukon public does not trust this government; they feel they are tired and they want a change. They want a government that is honest, open and accountable. So far, we have not seen that. If we've seen any openness at all, we would have heard reaction from the government side on the accountability motion that was put forward. But no, it was talked out to limit people's speech and say in this House, and that's what took place. The general public realizes that, so they draw a conclusion — the

fact that this Yukon Party government, is a tired government. They're worn out; they do not want to hear what we have to say in this House. Thank God we get enough time in budget response to bring out a few things like this.

When you see a government that is constantly pointing to the opposition, yes, they feel it. They feel it. The competition is there and it's all about who is in government the next time and how much mud you can put on them to try to save yourselves. That's what is taking place; we see that with the Yukon Party government over and over. Nobody is trying to make the improvements. They promised to make improvements to decorum in this House and it hasn't changed, and there's no willingness to have that change at all — none.

When we talk about demonstrated needs in Whitehorse here, we know there's a shortage in housing, for example, on many different levels — social housing units. I have seen in my own little community of Carmacks how the Yukon Housing Corporation has gotten rid of several of their units. They sold off some of them for a pretty low price of \$1,200 and nothing is being rebuilt there — nothing. There is a demonstrated need. This was an issue that was brought up by the Mayor of Carmacks, so it's not as if the government didn't hear about it. Why can't you build some buildings there? I talked with Yukon Housing Corporation about it because they were in the community meeting with the First Nation about how to combat the whole issue of mould in homes, about working with local carpenters and the First Nation and trying to do this as we approach the winter months, to keep people working all winter.

There is a demonstrated need that should have been reflected in this budget by having those units built by local people, but this has not taken place with the Yukon Party government. We know that the Premier's word is the way things go on that side of the House. When it came to the whole ATCO issue, for example — the ATCO scandal — the Premier denied actions in spite of facts and major resignations — and major resignations. It's hurting him now. Those resignations are hurting him now. We find that whole ATCO scandal has one member on the opposition side — the lone Yukon Party Independent member on this side of the House — because he disagreed with the Premier's action when it came to the ATCO scandal.

The denial of the Premier was something else. We had to bring out the facts and the evidence before this House to show the general public that this was not right and there's still denial today and that's why that single Independent/Yukon Party member is sitting in the opposition — still supporting the budget, mind you, but not the Premier. I would suspect that with the Yukon Party caucus, that is the case too — that there is not 100-percent support for the Premier.

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

*Debate on second reading of Bill No. 22 accordingly adjourned*

*The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.*