



The Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 4

3rd Session

26th Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, March 19, 1986 — 1:30 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Sam Johnston

Yukon Legislative Assembly

SPEAKER — Honourable Sam Johnston, MLA, Campbell

DEPUTY SPEAKER — Art Webster, MLA, Klondike

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Tony Penkett	Whitehorse West	Government Leader. Minister responsible for: Executive Council Office; Finance; Economic Development; Mines and Small Business; Public Service Commission
Hon. Dave Porter	Watson Lake	Government House Leader. Minister responsible for: Tourism; Renewable Resources.
Hon. Roger Kimmerly	Whitehorse South Centre	Minister responsible for: Justice; Government Services.
Hon. Piers McDonald	Mayo	Minister responsible for: Education; Community and Transportation Services.
Hon. Margaret Joe	Whitehorse North Centre	Minister responsible for: Health and Human Resources; Women's Directorate.

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

New Democratic Party

Sam Johnston	Campbell
Norma Kassi	Old Crow
Art Webster	Klondike

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Progressive Conservative

Willard Phelps	Leader of the Official Opposition Hootalinqua
Bill Brewster	Kluane
Bea Firth	Whitehorse Riverdale South
Dan Lang	Whitehorse Porter Creek East
Alan Nordling	Whitehorse Porter Creek West
Doug Phillips	Whitehorse Riverdale North

Liberal

Roger Coles	Liberal Leader Tatchun
James McLachlan	Faro

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⁰¹ **Whitehorse, Yukon**
Wednesday, March 19, 1986 - 1:30 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
 Introduction of Visitors?

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Penikett: I have two introductions I would like to make. One is Jack Cable, who is a member of the NCPC Board of Governors, and Steve Eastonson, who is a representative of the employees of NCPC. I notice they are in the gallery today and should be made welcome.

Also, I am sure all Members would like to join me in congratulating Premier Pawley on his re-election yesterday, and the election of Mrs. Carstairs, who is — according to the CBC — the first Liberal Member of a western Canadian legislature. Apart from that oversight, I am sure we want to extend warm wishes to them and, as well, to Mr. Gary Filmon for his well-run campaign in Manitoba.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any Returns or Documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mrs. Joe: I have for tabling a document entitled the Community Consultations Meetings Report on Young Offenders in Yukon.

Speaker: Reports of Committees?
 Petitions?
 Introduction of bills?
 Notices of Motion for the Production of Papers?
 Notices of Motion?
 Statements by Ministers?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

⁰² *Young Offenders Act*

Hon. Mrs. Joe: During the consultation process on juvenile justice, most people were in agreement that the prevention of juvenile crime is one of a high priority and a responsibility shared by all of us. In those communities that have a variety of activities for youth it is clear that there is much less evidence of problems with youth. One of the most important groups that we try to reach are the youths themselves. The government staff have given talks on the *Young Offenders Act* to all grades seven, eight and nine in Whitehorse and will be arranging to do so in the other communities. We welcome requests for speakers or information, and staff are available to respond to those requests.

The establishment of the Diversion Committee, made up of local citizens who will deal with first time and less serious offenders, continues to be a priority. In the Yukon there are 85 young people on probation and approximately 11 in custody. Presently, there are no young offenders in secure custody and only six in open custody. Given such figures, we must make sure that planning for the few does not take away from the overall programs for the majority.

Regarding secure custody, our statistics indicate that the most youth sentenced to this at any one time have been five. Nevertheless, under the legislation we do have a responsibility for these youths. It is, however, my conclusion that there is no need to build a residential facility for young offenders at this time although, for open custody, we will continue to develop community options, and in Whitehorse there will be two group homes in operation.

In terms of secure custody, statistics indicate that a maximum of six beds are required for both offenders sentenced to secure custody and those on remand and detention. It is, therefore, my intention to limit the use of the current assessment centre now being used for detention and custody to six beds to be used for secure custody, remand and detention of youth. A wilderness component to the program will also be developed.

While it is my goal to use local facilities, it may still be necessary to send youths, who are extremely high risk or even with special needs, to outside facilities. However, this is not anticipated to be a high number and will only occur after careful assessment and consideration.

To improve efficiency in programs and make clear the distinction between the roles and philosophy of child welfare legislation and the *Young Offenders Act*, steps will be taken to separate administratively the Young Offenders Program from Community and Family Services to give the program an identity and leadership of its own. As an immediate initiative, my department will cease the practice of using residential facilities for both young offenders and child welfare youth. In an attempt to provide treatment locally and deliver young people from centres outside, I shall be advertising a pre-qualifications tender to establish a short list of acceptable proposals to develop a small treatment centre in the Yukon.

By stressing community involvement, prevention and constructive programming, it is my department's goal to ensure that we meet the requirements of the *Young Offenders Act* consistent with Yukon's needs and Yukon youth.

⁰³ **Mr. Coles:** I just want to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for allowing me to be on the Committee. I just wish I could have attended more meetings than I did, but the meetings that I did attend helped me understand better, I think, the needs of the communities when talking about young offenders.

I would just like to seek assurance from the Minister that if we are going to be sending more Yukon youth outside of the territory that, after touring a few of the facilities in Vancouver, none be sent to Willingdon.

Yukon Lands Program

Hon. Mr. McDonald: It gives me great pleasure to advise you that the Yukon government is undertaking an aggressive and structured program to achieve the overall objective of making all classes of land available to all Yukon people. I want to outline today the main elements of the lands program.

First, we announced in February, 1986, our policy to rationalize the sale price of developed land in our inventory. This policy makes land more affordable by removing artificial interest charges which have ballooned the price of over 400 lots.

Second, a more aggressive approach to marketing lots will be taken this year. This, along with the affordable lands policy, will help ensure all Yukoners better access to land.

Third, my department is developing policies and procedures to ensure the orderly development of lands. We are convinced that, as subdivisions are developed in an orderly manner, the myriad of problems which have arisen in the past, such as Willow Acres and Mary Lake, can be largely avoided. This orderly process involves advanced planning, proper soils testing, engineering and design. These important steps, and the necessary coordination with our municipalities, will save us money. Furthermore, this orderly process will ensure that high quality lots are available when and where they are needed.

Fourth, we will soon be releasing a discussion paper to facilitate public input into a squatter policy and homesteader policy. The aim of the squatter policy will be to provide fair and firm treatment of all squatters, whether on Yukon or federal government lands. The homesteader policy will provide an alternative to squatting to many Yukoners who wish rural residential land with minimal services.

Fifth is the land transfer question. Since the government took office after the May, 1985 election, application for transfers of federal lands have continued following the procedures put in place by previous governments. We have applied for the transfer of five agricultural parcels and succeeded in obtaining the transfer of four

of these lots. In nearly two years following the call for application on federal land until leaving office, the previous government requested the transfer of five agricultural lots and succeeded in obtaining one.

We have actively pursued land for lot enlargements near the Alaska Highway west of Whitehorse. Band consultation has been completed successfully and we are optimistic that the transfer will be made very soon.

⁰⁴ We have found the existing process for obtaining land transfers from the federal government to be unsatisfactory. In order to aggressively respond to the immediate land requirement of all Yukon people, we are initiating a special loan availability process. This planned, orderly process will deal with the key obstacles which have restricted past efforts over many years and many government administrations. Participating Indian bands will be involved in this process, and through it they will also have their immediate land requirements met.

Efforts will be focused on a limited number of blocks of land and all planning, consultations, testing and analysis, which is required before an application for a land transfer is acceptable to the federal government, will be done in an intensive manner. It is hoped that we will have one homesteader area available this fall and a rural-residential area of up to 40 lots within two years.

Sixth is community planning. In order to ensure less immediate but important needs for land are met in an orderly but expeditious manner over the longer term, we are launching various planning initiatives. Our regional plan in the Whitehorse area will begin soon. Later this year the Klondike Valley sub-regional Plan should begin. Plans for other critical areas will be initiated in 1987. Community planning will also be strongly encouraged and supported over the next one to two years.

Seventh, we must deal with outdated legislation. In order to develop a more appropriate legislation and regulatory framework for the establishment, planning, development and management of Yukon lands and quarry resources, and in order to regulate land use activities outside of municipalities, all lands legislation will be reviewed over the next two years. This review of outdated legislation will deal with many important land management issues identified by Yukoners over the past few years.

In order to accomplish all these tasks there will be a major restructuring of the Lands Branch to streamline its operations and make it much more effective. The Lands Branch must also be geared up for the increased land transfers from the federal government expected over the short term, and must be prepared to accept the devolution of various federal land programs. A restructured, lean and effective Lands Branch will be prepared for these major initiatives.

With these and many other initiatives I am confident that all classes of land will be managed more effectively and placed more efficiently into the hands of all Yukon people.

Mr. Lang: I have a number of comments to make with respect to the statement put forward by the Minister. We are pleased to see the policy as far as the cost of lots are concerned in the developed subdivisions. I think that people should not be misled by the statement that it was artificially inflated, but the reality of the situation was that it was similar to dollars gotten anywhere, interest was to be charged. But I think it was overdue, in some part, that that particular step be taken.

The other area that I want to comment on is the question of Willow Acres and Mary Lake. Unfortunately, the Minister has not included in his press release the statement that more engineering, more soil testing will require more cost to the individual who purchases the lot. I do not know if the Minister heard, on the Willow Acres subdivision in Haines Junction, that the people who wanted lots were being interviewed. They are already complaining about the cost of the lot, knowing full well that it was going to be on lenses of permafrost, knowing that Haines Junction is built, in good part, on permafrost, knowing that it is a challenge they will have to meet in any case and are prepared to confront it. And the other reality is that that is the only area that subdivision could be put in, because of the park, the river and the previous land claim

selections, if they were to be set aside.

⁰⁵ This does mean more cost to the purchaser of a lot, and I think that the Minister should come up front and say that accordingly. I want to beg of him to be very cautious with respect to what he is doing. He may put the price of lots in such a situation that people cannot afford them.

The squatters policy and homesteader policy is something that we will comment on at a later date. There seems to be a lot of discussion, but never any policy coming forward.

As far as the community planning is concerned, there is the question of the regional plan in the Whitehorse area beginning soon. That disturbs me a great deal. There is a plan for Whitehorse North and Whitehorse South that was completed; all that is required is a block land transfer. That is all that is required, and it has been applied for.

Once again, I say to the Minister, here we go planning, consulting, and what happens to the individual who wants land, he is waiting for Mr. McDonald to plan and make up his mind. I think that is a tragedy.

That leads me to the point that I wanted to make on the agricultural parcels of lots that the Minister claims that he received over the course of this past year. I should point out that there are people in our offices every day asking for land. They do not belong to an organization. They do not happen to belong to a lobby group. They do not happen to belong to a political party. They are individuals; the working man who wants a piece of land for the purpose of agriculture or rural lifestyle. And, what do we have? We have the Minister of Community Affairs standing up in this House and saying that he is so pleased that he got four lot transfers in 10 months. That is quite a record, a real record. On top of that, in the same statement, he goes so far as to put an untruth — some people may even refer to it as lying — where he says that the previous government did not get any land transfers.

I am going to table here a press release, dated April 25, 1985, and maybe the Minister will stand up in the House and, if this is a lie, stand up and say it, because it is not. The fact is, 71 lots, agriculture parcels, were transferred. Further to that, as far back as 1984, and 1976, Whitehorse North and Whitehorse South was applied for by the "previous" governments of the Yukon Territory. I think that he is misleading the House when he stands up and says that. I want to table this and I will ask the page to take it up to the media so they can deal with it accordingly. When the Minister stands up in this House to give a ministerial statement he has a responsibility to tell the truth and not mislead anyone in this House, nor the public.

Mr. McLachlan: We in the Liberal Party were very pleased to see this government adopt our direction regarding artificial application of interest charges to unsold residential land. The awkwardness of the previous policy was apparent to all. The unsold lots, prior to the introduction of the interest charges, should have been enough for commonsense to prevail. Unfortunately, greed often overcomes commonsense, no matter who ends up getting hurt.

The off again-on again, off again-on again, introduction of a squatters policy has, in fact, worn itself out. The public is not amused and, in fact, they are irritated, as we all are, with the lack of action on this subject. The NDP government has been critiquing the former government since 1980 regarding the lack of a squatters policy. They have led this House, time and again, to believe that they had all the answers, all the solutions. Credibility is indeed at stake here; put up or shut up, because we want the policy now. They have let these self-imposed deadlines go by, and must realize that they cannot please everybody. Please get on with the subject.

⁰⁶ **Hon. Mr. McDonald:** There are a few points that I would like to respond to. I am not sure that I will respond to the Member for Faro's points. Perhaps, when I understand them, I will.

The Member for Porter Creek East raised a few points. First of all, the question of land affordability, the question of the artificial raising of the cost of lands, the adding of interest charges to lands, artificially raising the price of lands to individual Yukoners. Clearly, the reason for the accumulation of interest charges initially

resulted from the fact that the government borrowed money to develop the land. In the last few years the government has not been borrowing money, but has been developing the lands out of the capital expenditures, and for that reason the increase in lots was artificially raised and was not for the purpose of debt servicing.

With respect to Willow Acres and Mary Lake, and the mistakes that have been made in the past with respect to land development, it is obviously our intention to keep lot prices as affordable and low as possible. We have decided that mistakes such as Willow Acres, Mary Lake and Bear Creek have created such high costs to the purchasers of those lands that we felt that the increased testing that we might consider appropriate in the future for land development would pay off in the long run, and probably would even pay off in the short run. It is a much more intelligent policy than that promoted by the previous administration. I am happy to be promoting it now.

With respect to the squatter policy, I would be happy to debate this at greater length with the Member. I recall being in the House for three years waiting for a squatter policy, and no policy emanated from that discussion. There was an issue taken by our administration with respect to developing a squatter policy. In those deliberations it became clear that we would want to develop a policy in common with the federal government. That has taken more time than we had considered was necessary. The preconsultation stage of the policy development . . .

Mr. Lang: A point of order. It is very clear in the rules that the Minister give a very short reply to statements that are made. I would like to ask the Minister to observe that rule. He has gone five minutes.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I have not completed my allotment, and I am not happy about the Member's intrusion into my speech.

Speaker: Would the Member wish to conclude his statement?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Yes.

I will be more than happy to debate any of these things at length. With respect to the transfers of lands, I will be able to prove, of course, that the 71 lots that the Member was referring to were transfers of federal leases that did not amount to any new land for Yukoners. The ones that we promoted were new lots, new land. Therefore, our policy is more appropriate for the times.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period. Are there any questions?

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Carcross-Skagway Road

Mr. Phelps: The Minister of Transportation was displeased with the remarks made by Mr. Lang and his intrusion into his speaking ability, let us see if we can displease him a little more. Yesterday, in response to a question that I raised, the Minister stated that a truck would be going over the Carcross-Skagway Road every twenty minutes and I take it that is one-way. So, you have got one every ten minutes. It would have to come back, too. In addition, we learned that there is going to be a lot of construction work on that road. That, in addition to all the buses and all the recreational vehicles that go back and forth everyday and provide such a needed stimulus to the economy in general, and Carcross in particular. Has this government made any arrangements with the federal government with regard to providing for the safety of vehicles in conjunction with the construction that is going to take place?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: If we as a government undertake the construction activity ourselves, then we will have very much of a hands-on ability to control construction scheduling and ensure that we minimize the impact of construction activity on the travelling public. Should the federal government undertake construction activity, we will ensure that the construction activity, to the fullest extent possible, will not interfere or impinge in any way the safety of the travelling public.

Mr. Phelps: Can the Minister tell us exactly what the plans are then and, if they are in writing, if they have reached that stage,

which presumably they must have, could he table it?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: There is a methodology of undertaking construction works in the territory along our highways, both on federal and territorial roads, which could be put into writing if the Member wishes, and could be tabled if the Member wishes. It is the same methodology that we use for construction activity on the Alaska highway or on the Klondike highway. It is the same methodology that is always used in order to ensure the safety of the travelling public and to ensure they enjoy their trip through construction works.

Mr. Phelps: Being a resident of Carcross, I have not really enjoyed any of the trips I have taken through the construction works when the road was being rebuilt to Carcross. I suspect that there will be very little pleasure taken by any tourist travelling over the road this summer with all these ore trucks and with all this construction going on. I mean, that is a nonsensical statement for the Minister to make, with respect. Can the government tell us who it is going to consult in the tourist industry and when, with regard to safety and procedures on that road?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: The implication of the Member's question seems to suggest that he is not only opposed to ore traffic along the road but is also unhappy with the procedures put in place by the Member to his left, who was the Minister of the day, while the construction activity was being undertaken on the Carcross Road, so perhaps he could take it up with the Member on his left.

With respect to the tourist operators, we will ensure that the discussions take place with the full range of tourists operators who plan to use the road and the umbrella tourist organizations, such as the YVA and the organization in Skagway, to ensure that all information is passed to them and that their concerns are met.

Question re: Carcross-Skagway Road

Mr. Phelps: This is very interesting to me and I presume that the government, at least, is getting ready to consult on the issue of safety on the road and that being the case, could the Minister please advise the House whether they have a list of people whom they are going to correspond with and consult, and is that list prepared yet?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: We know with whom we would like the trucking company to consult. We will ensure that all these people are contacted. Should they wish to meet with the transportation companies, and with the government, over the issue of safety on the road, we will encourage them to do so. That is as much as we can do. We are going to assure the safety of the travelling public on that road. That is our top priority.

Mr. Phelps: It would appear from the answer that this government is not doing anything about safety, they are waiting for the trucking company to do it for them. Shirking a responsibility.

Let us move on to the next question and it has to do with the agreement that was tabled yesterday and the issue of safety and with the issue of capping, capping the cost to Yukon on the Skagway side.

Will the Minister of Transportation please provide us with specifics with regard to the quality of the surface on the Alaska portion of the road, and any specifications, plans and opinions as to the cost of maintaining the capital costs on the Alaskan side for trucking.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: We are not waiting for the trucking companies to resolve the question of safety on the Carcross-Skagway Road. We have already told the member — who is not listening to me in this House — that we are organizing and are calling the governments together, the tourism industry together, the trucking companies together, to resolve the question of safety to the satisfaction of the travelling public. We are not waiting for it to happen. We are doing it ourselves. It is our priority.

With respect to the capping of capital costs, I am not in a position, of course, to provide an engineering analysis of the road because I am not an engineer. This is Question Period. Would the member like me to provide more technical information? I remember the member from Porter Creek East suggesting, when I was asking questions about chipseal, if he could provide me with engineering textbooks on the subject which he unfortunately never gave me. It would have been interesting reading.

With respect to the capping of capital costs, there is a 50/50 percent cost sharing agreement, which is a dis-incentive for both sides, obviously, to engage in unwarranted capital expenditures. There is also the stipulation in the agreement, which I am sure the members have read now — which, in the interests of open government, I have provided the members with — that any objective analysis has to determine that the expenditures have to be related to safety. We have to agree and they have to agree on the expenditure before it is made.

Mr. Phelps: Would the Minister of Transportation please tell this House whether or not they have any idea of the cost — the capital 50/50 cost — on the Alaskan side, what it is going to cost this government. Any idea?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Yes, we do have an idea of what the costs are going to be on the Alaskan side. I made those costs known last October. The projection of costs has not changed. I am surprised that the Members have decided to choose the issue as being an issue now. We have projected what we can anticipate to be the costs, and I have made those public.

Question re: Yukon Indian Development Corporation

Mr. Coles: In Question Period yesterday, I questioned the Government Leader on the funding for the Yukon Indian Development Corporation, at which time he said to me, "I am sure that I will prove and be able to demonstrate quite forcibly that I have been a much more energetic advocate than he has. So far the Member opposite has spoken mainly to the media."

For the Government Leader's information, through telephone, through correspondence, through whatever means, I have attempted to communicate with the Prime Minister, with our MP, Mr. Nielsen, Mr. Bissonnette, Mr. Crombie, eight opposition members, two of whom belong to the Government Leader's party in Ottawa — who have not returned my calls yet — seven of the Indian chiefs in this territory, the Chairman of the CYI, the Vice Chairman of Economic Development of the CYI, and the President of the Yukon Indian Development Corporation. I am not attempting to get into a contest with the Government Leader on how many Ministers we can talk to or how many Members we can talk to. I want to know what results the Government Leader has had from his conversations with Ministers.

Hon. Mr. Penikett: Clearly, I was wrong. I have not contacted as many people as the Member opposite. Clearly, we have had the same success, with my few calls and his many calls. A couple of days ago — I am not sure if it was Monday, I think it must have been Monday — the Member asked me if I would make a representation to the Deputy Prime Minister again on the subject, which is something I am doing. I have instructed that it be done in consultation with the Member or the Member's staff. I will report back to him and to the House as soon as I have some response to that submission.

Mr. Coles: I would like to thank the Government Leader for taking action in that direction. Has the Government Leader at this time had any correspondence or any telephone calls that he could relate to the House with our Member of Parliament on this issue since the cancellation?

Hon. Mr. Penikett: No. The one letter which I had had from Mr. Nielsen on this subject heretofore preceded the decision. I do not have it in front of me, but, if my memory serves me correctly, it seemed to indicate that he was favourably disposed towards the application.

Mr. Coles: Has the Government Leader had correspondence at all from any federal Minister relating to this issue since the cancellation?

Hon. Mr. Penikett: We have been in communication, I believe, with Mr. Bissonnette's ministry, but not in the form of a letter.

Question re: Carcross-Skagway Road

Mr. Lang: An outstanding issue, as far as the opening of the Carcross-Skagway year-round road is concerned, is the question of viability. Is the Government of Yukon going to be responsible for any public liability claims that result because of accidents on the

Alaskan portion of the Carcross-Skagway highway because of the agreement that he wants to enter into with the State of Alaska?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: With respect to the question the Member has asked, it is a legal opinion he is seeking and I will certainly try to provide the Member with as full an answer as possible.

Mr. Lang: Did the Minister responsible receive the legal opinion on this matter prior to coming to the culmination of the discussions with the State of Alaska, because this is a very important issue. It could mean millions of dollars to the public treasury here. Does he have that legal opinion and, if so, could he provide it to the House?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: My hesitancy in answering the question was again that I get as full a position as possible for the Member, but the information from our department is no, we are not liable for liability on the American portion of the road.

Mr. Lang: My information is that the agreement that is being entered into could conceivably put us into a position of liability. The possibility is there. I would ask the Minister: did he ask the State of Alaska for a letter of understanding to make sure, and absolve the Government of the Yukon Territory and the taxpayers from any possibility of liability as far as accidents resulting on the Alaska portion of the Skagway-Carcross Road are concerned, if they were unfortunate to happen? And, is he prepared to pursue it if he has not asked for it?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Clearly, the two legal opinions from the people expressing these legal opinions seem to differ here. Perhaps they might want to get together to resolve the situation. As far as we are concerned, the letter of understanding was not necessary as our legal liability on the question was clear. I can always undertake to double, triple and quadruple check the matter and, if the Member wishes, I will do that.

Question re: Carcross-Skagway Road

Mr. Phillips: Yesterday, I asked a question to the Minister of Transportation regarding the U.S./Canada Customs on the Skagway Road. After reading the information that was provided, I still feel there are several unanswered questions. I was just wondering if the Minister could tell me what the estimated costs would be on the American side as we, under this agreement that I read yesterday, are to pick up 50 percent of those costs. Can he tell us what those costs are anticipated to be?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I do not have a breakdown of the costs. I can give the Member a general overall O&M responsibility we might be faced with on the American side. But, clearly, because the Canadian side of the customs do not feel it necessary to have a 24-hour operation, probably the American side will equally not consider it necessary, and that may reduce our liability in what we have already projected to be the costs.

Mr. Phillips: I am very surprised at the Minister's answer. I think if he read the letter that was sent to him by the federal officials, he would see that it states that because of commercial vehicles going to the United States, Canada would not have much of a problem, but it would be a US problem, and they would have to have more people on that border. I would suggest to the Minister, and I wonder if I could get his feelings on this, as the Canadian costs are estimated, if they have to put someone on the border year round and 24 hours-a-day, at \$1.5 million. I think we could assume that the cost would be similar in the US. Can the Minister tell the House if he feels that \$750,000 would be a fair estimate?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: No, that would not be a fair estimate.

Mr. Phillips: Could the Minister then indicate what would be a fair cost seeing that he must have read his letter and he must understand the letter and I do not accept his first answer to my question. Could he tell me now what he thinks a fair cost will be?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I am sorry if the Member does not accept my first answer to the question which was that I would come back and provide a break-down of the costs. I do not have the information in front of me. I am sorry if the Member will not accept that but I cannot do anything more than simply promise to get back to him with specifics.

Question re: Carcross-Skagway Road

Mr. Nordling: My question is to the Minister of Transportation Services. In Question Period yesterday, in reply to a question regarding the safety on the Carcross-Skagway Road, the Minister stated that the idea is "simply to bring the operators together", and went on to say that if we have to we will designate the road for tourist traffic only at certain times of the day. When will the operators be brought together to settle the issue of 24-hour truck traffic?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: It is our intention to bring all the players together in the near future, probably within the next few weeks.

Mr. Nordling: Paragraph five of the technical addendum to the Agreement states that the hours will be established by the Southeast Region Deputy Commissioner on the part of Alaska and the Deputy Minister of the Department of Community and Transportation Services on the part of the Yukon. Has there been a meeting set up between these two parties as yet?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: These two parties have been very helpful in negotiating the Agreement themselves. They have been meeting on a regular basis during a period of negotiation. This matter has been approached between the two jurisdictions and they have agreed that a cooperative approach has to be taken. They have also agreed that the operators, both the operators of the ore transport and the tourist operators, must get together to review this situation to ensure the safety of the travelling public.

Mr. Nordling: As the tourist season begins early in June, and there may be ore trucks on the road at that time, can the Minister assure us that these matters will be worked out by the first of June?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Yes.

Question re: Curragh Resources

Mr. McLachlan: I have a question to the Government Leader. An unfortunate situation occurred yesterday afternoon in Faro where four of the mining companies units were cut-off their power for supposed problems in paying the invoicing. Without taking any sides in that matter in determining the whys and the wherefors, I want to remind the House that that particular company has no cash flow whatsoever and will not have any until late fall. Often, they must rely upon the payments of the loan guarantees between this government and Curragh to have a cash flow. I want to ask the Government Leader: will he undertake to check with the two government departments for which he is responsible — Finance and Economic Development — to ensure that Curragh Resources are getting regular weekly, bi-weekly, monthly advances under their Loan Proceeds Program so that they may pay the invoices in question, and any other invoices to Yukon businesses?

Hon. Mr. Penikett: I am as close to absolutely certain that I could possibly be that any delay in getting cash to Curragh is not residing with this government. There is only one undertaking remaining, as far as I know, that remains to be completed, of any consequence in terms of the company's cash-flow, and that is the Contribution Agreement of \$3 million, which is not due to be executed until the end of next month. That requires the signing of a Contribution Agreement, which has been the subject of some question the other day between the Member for Porter Creek East and I, and we are trying to expedite those discussions as quickly as we can. But, again, there are three parties involved in that particular agreement: the federal government, us and the company.

Question re: Northern Canada Power Commission

Mr. McLachlan: Yesterday, during questioning in the House, the Minister of Government Services indicated that he, meaning through the Government of Yukon, did not have the technical expertise and knowledge present in the Yukon to get involved in the transfer of the operation of the power company to this government. Could he please indicate what skills Yukon Electric possesses here in the territory to do just that, that the Northern Canada Power Commission does not already have here?

Hon. Mr. Kimmerly: I am confused by the question, and I will ask for clarification in the answer. The answer I gave yesterday said, or I hope it said, that there is not expertise within the government, that is, the Yukon territorial government, to run the power company. The Member spoke about "in the Yukon," which

is a different thing. There obviously is now expertise within Northern Canada Power Commission, some of whom reside in Yukon, some of whom, that is the individual experts or the managers, reside in Edmonton. It is our hope and intention that the Yukon-based employees stay employed in generating power. They may have a new boss, or a new owner, but it is our hope that the technical expertise that now resides here will remain here, but that the ownership of the assets will be changed from NCPC to the YTG. The importance of that is the overall direction will be, as far as government is concerned, with the territorial government and not the federal government.

Mr. McLachlan: In the letter of understanding between the Cabinet and Yukon Electric, what is the effective date at which Yukon Electric is to take over the management of NCPC?

Hon. Mr. Kimmerly: When the assets are actually transferred. That date is not finally established, but the limit should be April 1, 1987. It should be some time before that.

Question re: Dawson airport

Mr. Webster: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Transportation Services concerning the Dawson airport. It is a well-known fact that the existing airport, due to its unfavorable location, is totally inadequate to satisfy the needs of Dawson City. What is the Government of Yukon doing to assist this community in identifying a new site for its airport?

Applause

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I would like to thank the member for asking his first question of me in this House. I have met with the Mayor of Dawson and city council to discuss the city's desire to find an alternative site for the airport. A meeting has been scheduled with Transport Canada, with YTG and the City of Dawson to discuss such a venture to relocate the airport. Further to that, we already have a terms of reference for our consultant to perform a site search, and we would hope that that consultant will assist us in the relocation venture.

Mr. Webster: Can you indicate whether or not it is government policy, in matters such as this, where there is a general agreement among all parties that a new facility must be build, that expenditure on improvements — and in this case we are talking about almost \$500,000 — if these expenditures could be deferred and applied to the costs to construct a new airport?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: Clearly, as a matter of government policy, we would not want to encourage our government or any other government to spend money needlessly. We would have to consider the situation in terms of how long we realistically believe the project can be expected to come on stream. If we perceive the project will take some time to come on stream, we may ask for safety-related funding to be expended and that other funding not related to safety be deferred to the relocation project.

Question re: Carcross-Skagway Road

Mrs. Firth: I am pleased to see the Minister of Education read so well.

Has the Minister of Tourism met with the Board of Directors of the YVA to discuss the potential impact on tourism that the opening of the Skagway Road will have with the increased truck traffic?

Hon. Mr. Porter: No, I personally have not met with them on that subject.

Mrs. Firth: Why not?

Hon. Mr. Porter: With respect to the question of the opening of the Skagway Road, as everyone in the room knows the handling of that issue is one that is being handled by the Minister of Community and Transportation Services. That particular department is coordinating all the efforts related to the road, including the meetings with respect to the question of safety and vehicular traffic as it relates to tourism. What is occurring is that they are the lead department on that issue. The Department of Tourism is available to consult with the Department of Community and Transportation Services. As a matter of fact, my Deputy Minister of Tourism was meeting with the department specifically on that question as early as this morning.

Mrs. Firth: I find it highly irregular and unusual that the

Minster of Tourism, who is responsible to see that tourism is maintained in this territory and is not threatened — as he so forcefully pointed out to me in the last session when it came to the wolf program when I was the Minister of Tourism — I find it unbelievable that he would not take into consideration that he should be sitting down and meeting with the YVA. This side of the Legislature urges that the Minister of Tourism immediately meet with the YVA to discuss their concerns and, perhaps, help them with the direction that his government is going to take when it comes to the impact that it could have on their businesses and on the economy of the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Porter: I thank the Member for her representation. With respect to the question of the necessity of me meeting with the Board of Directors of the YVA, it has clearly been articulated to the Member opposite that the lead role, with respect to the ministry, is one assumed by the Minister of Community and Transportation Services. He has told the House that the meetings will be held, which will include the Yukon Visitors Association. If the Yukon Visitors Association have some difficulty with respect to technical expertise, or otherwise, that they may need from the government, we have no problem in accommodating those wishes and requests. I suspect that, being the well-organized association that they are, if they felt that there was a need on their part to seek assistance from the government, they would have articulated such requests to the government to date, which I have not received.

Question re: Group home

Mr. Phillips: I have a question for the Minister of Health and Human Resources regarding a group home at 501 Taylor Street in Whitehorse. Yesterday, the Minister told us that they had purchased this house for \$187,000. I have learned that from the Minister of Government Services, and I thank him for it, on February 28. Can the Minister now tell us if this home will be used as an open custody facility for young offenders?

Hon. Mrs. Joe: Yes, it will.

Mr. Phillips: Can the Minister tell this House, then, if she or her department obtained the two-thirds support of the homeowners in the area, as required by the City's zoning laws?

Hon. Mrs. Joe: Yes, we did. Not only did we do that, but we also obtained the approval of those people who are renting in that area, which we were not required to do. We did more than we were required to do at that time.

Mr. Phillips: First of all, I would like to read out some wording in a petition into the record. I think it is very important, and it leads up to my next question. This petition reads, "When I was solicited to sign a petition agreeing to the establishment of a group home at that location, I was not advised by the petitioner that the purpose of the group home was to house young offenders. If I had known this fact, I would not have signed this petition as I object to the establishment of a group home for young offenders at 501 Taylor Street and, accordingly, I would like my name withdrawn from the December 85th petition." Can the Minister tell the House who took the government petition, asking it to be a group home for youths, to the people and what they told the people when they took the petition around?

Hon. Mrs. Joe: That petition was taken around by the Member for Whitehorse South Centre. At that time, there were the required amount of people who signed it and approved it. It was unfortunate that, after lobbying from people who did not live in that area, a number of people have changed their minds.

Question re: Northern Canada Power Commission

Mr. McLachlan: My question is to the Government Leader. I was somewhat dismayed by answers given yesterday in this House in questions directed to Government Services on the part of the Government Leader, where he used the power of his office or, at least, the power of this Legislative Assembly, in attributing information to someone who, perhaps, has no retribution within this House. Is the Government Leader suggesting that this Caucus has obtained public information about the operations of the Northern Canada Power Commission from any source that have not been available to us or to the Conservative Party, or to his Ministers, or

to the Deputy Ministers, or to any other member of the civil service, who may be investigating the takeover of the assets of the Commission by this government?

Hon. Mr. Penikett: To state the obvious, I do not know what information the Member has obtained from where. I made a reasonable supposition, based on a meeting I know that he had, following which he made some public statements containing some information that I do not see how he could have gotten otherwise than internally from NCPC. I would expect, as a matter of proper conduct, that officers of the Northern Canada Power Commission are servants of the federal government and the federal Minister, Mr. Crombie, and will be representing his wishes and his views on a subject such as the NCPC transfer, and not either overtly or in some other way be lobbying against the transfer.

Mr. McLachlan: To the Government Leader or Minister of Government Services, whomever feels most able to answer, information from Tagak Curley and Mr. Sibbeston in the Northwest Territories has indicated that, in that jurisdiction, that government made representation to the Northern Canada Power Commission for them to submit a proposal allowing them to conduct the operations once the takeover had taken place. Why was no such offer made in this territory to the Commission, along with the other four offers?

Hon. Mr. Penikett: I do not know at what point the Member opposite was talking to Mr. Tagak Curley, with whom I have had many pleasant conversations, including some on this subject, but the Northern Canada Power Commission, as the Member may know, is a federally-incorporated Crown corporation. The purpose of the transfer is to take control away from the federally-owned Crown corporation and put it into the hands of a territorial Crown corporation. There would be no point in taking it away from the NCPC to give it to the NCPC.

Mr. McLachlan: In the true spirit of open and direct government, will the Government Leader or the Minister of Government Services table the letter of understanding that has been signed between the Cabinet and Yukon Electrical, which would then detail a complete release of all relevant, pertinent data on this subject?

Hon. Mr. Kimmerly: I will take that question under advisement, as I did the similar question about the proposals by the various hydro companies for management, and the reason I am being cautious is that I will consult with the YESCL and departmental officials before making a commitment. I would expect we will be ready to answer sometime next week.

Question re: Municipal Finance Act

Mr. Lang: A question to the Minister for Community Affairs. I noticed in the Speech from the Throne that there was no indication that there was going to be any amendments to the *Municipal Finance Act*. Is it the intention of the government to bring in amendments to the *Municipal Finance Act*, which basically outlines the procedure for the allocation of unconditional grants to the municipalities? Is there going to be any major changes this session to that particular act?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: No, that is not the intention of the government at this time. We have made numerous representations to the Association of Yukon Communities to come up with possible solutions to the problems expressed by such communities as Dawson, Mayo and Watson Lake with respect to their concern over the funding formula under the act. The Association of Yukon Communities has, to date, not made any such representations and in fact at a recent meeting of the Association, they turned down a proposal to review the formula made by a member of the Association. I can only presume that their position as an Association is that no changes should be made.

Mr. Lang: Does he believe that the present formula that is now in place is fair and equitable to all the communities of the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: There is some remedial action that can be taken by this government with respect to the provision of the unconditional operating grants. One such action, which we are seriously investigating, is to review land assessments in the communities on an annual basis rather than on a four-year basis. The suggestion simply is that we collect a representative group of lots, properties in a community, annually, in agreement with the

local community, and from that assessment determine what the overall assessment would be for the community. From there we would be then able to more accurately determine what the operating deficit grant would be in a given year, and certainly the shocks to the system experienced by some communities would not be so great.

Mr. Lang: Then do I take it from the Minister the fact that Dawson City will be \$80,000 light, as far as transfers is concerned; the community of Mayo will be \$20,000 light; the town of Watson Lake will be \$50,000 light, in order to balance their budget? Do I take it that this government is not going to take any action to correct that situation which faces property owners in those particular communities. Is that the present policy of the government?

Hon. Mr. McDonald: I am not quite sure that the Member's figures are correct. I will certainly undertake to look at those particular figures. Our position is that we have approached the Association of Yukon Communities and asked whether or not the formula should be changed, given the representations made to us by various communities. Now, it is not true that the reason for deficit necessarily falls upon the inadequacy of that formula. We, as I say, have decided that we can take remedial action outside of changing the *Municipal Finance Act*, and we are intending to do that. Clearly, if the Association of Yukon Communities and its members wish us to change the Act to make it, in their opinion and in our opinion, more sensitive to the individual communities' needs and desires, then we will undertake to do that.

Mr. Lang: I just want to say to the Member opposite that, just for his information, Mayo is not a member of the Association of Yukon Communities. What remedial action outside . . .

Speaker: Order. Time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed with Orders of the Day: Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Clerk: Motion moved for address by the Member for Old Crow; adjourned debate, the hon. Mr. McDonald.

Hon. Mr. McDonald: It is my distinct pleasure to offer some remarks in debate today concerning the government's performance over its first eight-and-a-half months in office. In that time, the government has brought down two Operation & Maintenance Budgets, one Capital Budget, and introduced major new policy directions, including efforts to decentralize government activity and to diversify into more economic activities.

There were a number of themes promoted by the government during that period that have been reflected in various policy directions, both in my departments and in the departments of other Ministers. Those themes include the maximization of local employment, economic recovery in communities, the maximization of use of local materials, the belief that people affected by decisions should be involved in the decision-making process, an effort to decentralize government, and the desire to improve the quality of life and the standard of living of Yukon residents.

¹⁷ There have been a number of replies to the Speech from the Throne in the last couple of days in which there has been some criticism leveled at the government for doing nothing. I think, in one Member's opinion, the government was either stalled, in neutral or in reverse. Clearly, the government has been taking some major initiatives and has been changing the direction of the previous government in some rather dramatic ways.

Over past years, the government has attempted in a variety of ways to resolve the high unemployment rate in many of Yukon's communities. They have attempted, through various Manpower programs, to provide for useful activities, for jobs for people who are unemployed and, by any objective analysis, those efforts and initiatives have not been entirely successful.

We have engaged and are currently participating in something called the Local Employment Opportunities Program which has met with massive success in nearly all Yukon communities. Those

communities which have not participated in the program were those communities that either did not submit an application for funding or communities for which the application for funding did not fit guidelines. In all other communities, major capital works, meaningful work, work beneficial to communities was undertaken under this program. Whether it be work in Dawson, Watson Lake, Stewart Crossing, Whitehorse, or Carcross, this program provided funding for economic activity to promote jobs in an environment where there were federal cut-backs and no other federal programs to supplement the opportunities for people to work in those communities. I think that, by any objective analysis, this local employment opportunity program, which Opposition Members have failed to mention in their replies to the Speech from the Throne, has proven to be quite a success.

Over the past six, seven, eight months, the government, my department and I have participated in the negotiation of the Skagway Road Agreement. The negotiations to open that road, to say the least, were tough. The negotiations were protracted much longer than I had expected. We got an Agreement recently on the principles originally established, principles that had been tabled in the Legislature last October containing no major reversals, as the Member for Porter Creek East had announced. In fact, dare I say, the Member's petulant tirades, if they were not so incredibly entertaining in a perverse sort of way, would be quite disturbing given the facts of the occasion.

¹⁸ Clearly, the Opposition does not like the agreement. Clearly, the Opposition has demonstrated a dislike of trucking activity on the Carcross-Skagway Road. Clearly, the Opposition has indicated its skepticism of the use of that particular transportation corridor. I am not surprised that they are unhappy about the agreement itself. They have to deal with certain inconsistencies in policy expressed over the last year. Of course, they were the ones who initiated the agreement largely on the principles for which the agreement was finally negotiated and, yet, shortly after initiating those negotiating principles, they changed their minds and decided that they would opt for a truck-rail bid or a rail opening and, I presume, would have to deal with the inconsistency associated with that and that must have caused some considerable discomfort.

Obviously they do not like the fact that the NDP has got Yukon business moving, has got the Faro mine opened. It is unfortunate that they have taken the position that they have. The Members have also criticized the fixed term of the agreement calling that a major reversal. The fact that we have negotiated a 10-year agreement with the State of Alaska gives Yukon businesses some measure of certainty that they can plan on this major transportation corridor being opened for a fixed period of time.

We entered negotiations with the entire territory in mind. It clearly was desirable to open the road for the benefit of further resources and for the mine operator at Faro, but it was not our only consideration. There have been major transportation studies which have indicated, over the last few years, that this corridor ought to be opened in order to reduce transportation costs to all Yukoners. It is unfortunate that the Conservative Opposition is opposed to that principle.

There was some criticism by both opposition parties about the length of time taken to negotiate the agreement. Clearly, this government, when contacted officially by an official of the Alaskan State government that an agreement was in fact in place last October, was led to believe that the agreement was, in fact, an agreement. We were surprised by their statements that the agreement had been negotiated, at a minimum, in principle were in fact reversed and that they had undertaken to not only protract negotiations but to add on extra bargaining demands.

The Member for Porter Creek East has criticized me personally, suggesting that the change in the agreement, which allows for the Americans to maintain their own road, was a major reversal of bargaining position after we had gotten some agreement from them that Yukon forces would maintain the first six kilometres of the American side.

This is not a major reversal. It is in concert with the bargaining principles established by the Member himself at a meeting with the Commissioner prior to the last election.

¹⁹ Far from being a major reversal it is, in fact, a consistent bargaining position that we have taken.

Clearly, as I have stated, this government is confident that this transportation corridor will be good for all Yukon, including the mine operators in Faro. We have indicated that the safety of the travelling public on that road is a major priority for us. It is the most significant aspect of the road opening for us, and we will make every effort to ensure the safety of the travelling public when the trucking concentrate is initiated, hopefully, in June.

Beyond that, of course, there are a number of other initiatives that we have taken as a government that, for some inexplicable reason, opposition Members have failed to take notice of. The Road to Resources program was something undertaken by this government, not undertaken by the previous government, not planned by the previous government, but undertaken, planned and delivered by this government. It is our intention that the Road to Resources program will provide new road access to mining ventures, forestry ventures, fishing ventures and to promote better access to tourism sites, to essentially provide road access to promote any kind of economic activity in the territory. That particular program has received support from all sectors of society. I am pleased to announce that things are proceeding smoothly with respect to the delivery of that program.

The Member for Klondike mentioned the creating of mining roads as being something significant for his community in the Klondike area. It is also of significance to my own riding, which has engaged in placer mining activity for decades. Clearly, that initiative, the initiative that we have taken as a government, will promote mining activity in both those mining districts. That, too, has received considerable support from the constituencies in which that activity will take place. Unfortunately, that, too, was not mentioned as being a significant step by the Members of the opposition, but then perhaps we have found a pattern: the good items are not mentioned, the items for which they think there is some controversy, they have mentioned.

The one issue which is of most significance, and which counts as being the most significant for rural communities and for Whitehorse city itself, has been the idea of promoting municipal block funding. I have not heard yet from anyone on the opposition side, and I invite the Member for Porter Creek East to comment, support either for the program or support for any other aspect of this program that we have undertaken ourselves. This is clearly a NDP government initiative. It is a government initiative which has been supported in principle by all the communities in the territory. For any Member with rural sensitivity, it is an initiative which the Members should clearly support themselves. It recognizes our belief in responsible government at the municipal level. It is our belief in democratic government at the municipal level.

We have also, to promote local responsible government, encouraged to the fullest extent possible the creation of hamlet advisory councils. Obviously, the first council being Elsa is a bit of an accomplishment which I am pleased to have participated in, given that Elsa is my home town.

²⁰ The Leader of the Government has also supported the Association for Yukon Communities in its efforts to represent its member constituents in the neighbourhood of \$50,000 to allow them to hire a director in order to respond to government initiatives and to take initiative themselves in making representations on behalf of their members to the government, and to each other. The government, through the Department of Community and Transportation Services, has also undertaken to fund community recreation directors in an effort to allow greater community recreation activity to take place in those communities where they have a desire for such a position. Clearly this, too, is an effort to promote community development in rural communities around the territory.

We have also undertaken to provide better service to what has been considered in the past, I suppose, to be native villages. In the past, the government has taken the position, in the main, that services to the villages ought to be provided by the Department of Indian Affairs. It is our position, in general principal, to provide the same sort of service, on the same basis, to native villages that we provide to every other community in the territory.

Further to that, we have undertaken a number of programs with respect to land development and land policy, which we believe are worthy of note. The squatter policy and the homesteader policy are both being furthered by this government. The previous government had developed the bones of a squatter policy, but it had not elaborated to any great extent on that policy. We have not only elaborated on the policy, we have also added what we will soon announce to be a homesteader policy to allow for the settlement of lands at the lowest possible cost. As I mentioned earlier this afternoon, it was our intention to release the squatter policy, actually at the end of the 1985 calendar year, but clearly the preconsultation stage signaled to the federal government and to interested parties that we were absolutely serious about releasing this policy and they have undertaken to show greater attention to ensuring that their interests are met in the development of the policy. Until such time as we can get agreement from the federal government on the joint policy, we will be waiting to release that policy. As I said, I anticipate that we can, in the very near future, release that policy to the public, as a discussion document.

We have already introduced an affordable lands policy that has reduced the artificial carrying costs which were added to lot prices around the territory. We have reduced those. We have eliminated those artificial carrying costs because they were not considered necessary. Artificial carrying costs were only supposed to be associated with land development, which was funded through loans taken by the government for that purpose.

²¹ Over the last few years, as Members may know, land development has been funded through the capital program. Land is not borrowed for that purpose and, therefore, we felt no need nor obligation to carry artificial charges with land. We have also undertaken to develop what might otherwise be termed as an orderly land development policy, which intends that, in the future, we will do proper testing of soils. We will undertake to communicate with the local community government to ensure that the facts, the circumstances surrounding land development in a particular area, are known to all concerned, up front. We have also undertaken the land transfer process which identifies immediate needs, identifies and resolves the federal concern with respect to land transfers that have taken place in the past, and we hope to be able to announce some significant progress on this matter in the very, very near future.

We are also undertaking to revise the *Yukon Housing Corporation Act* to resolve some of the problems that were, and are, associated with the amalgamation of the Housing Corporation with line government departments. It is our intention not only to resolve that situation but also to reword the Constitution to provide more responsibility for local housing authorities around the territory.

We are developing a social housing program. We have undertaken a needs analysis around the territory of all sorts of housing needs. We are intent to make better and more sensitive use of federal support programs for social housing. We are intent on upgrading the quality of housing in many rural Yukon communities and areas of Whitehorse.

Further to that, we are eager to see the devolution of Arctic "B" and "C" airports. We have gone some distance to taking responsibility for those airports, and I would hope to be able to report progress in the future on that matter.

We are also developing a Yukon Building Code which would take the better portions of the National Building Code and blend it with suggestions put forward by local builders to ensure that it is more Yukon sensitive.

We have also undertaken to develop policy in two major areas. The first is the transportation area and the second is the communications area. In one of my first meetings with the Yukon Transportation Association, I had the opportunity to discuss with them our intentions in this area and they were very pleased to see that, for the first time, a comprehensive Yukon transportation policy would be undertaken. I realize that the Members of the Opposition are not at all keen on this government developing policy now, but then this policy has never been developed and we feel that it is necessary to provide some direction in this regard and are intent on providing the leadership here.

With respect to communications policy, there was not communications policy under the previous administration. In fact, when I became Minister no one even knew where to send correspondence from the federal Minister of Communication. To that end, we are seriously undertaking a communications policy review and, hopefully, I can announce some resolution of that in the very near future, as well.

²² Going back to initiatives taken in education, the relocation of a rural superintendent to the northern Yukon region is something we are committed to and will have done this spring for the new fiscal year.

We have also undertaken to develop a training strategy paper of which the initiatives seemed to be well received by the Member for Riverdale South. I am sure that she will be intent on seeing the results of that training strategy paper when tabled, hopefully, in this Session.

In that effort, we will be assessing the private sector involvement and our connection to the private sector with respect to providing training programs. We will be announcing, within government, career path training programs. We will be announcing, as well, our intentions with respect to Yukon College, both in terms of governing it and also in terms of the physical relocation to another site. It will be our intention, as well, not only to announce the relocation of more community learning centres to other communities — Old Crow and Haines Junction — but also to devolve responsibilities from the college to those facilities. I am sure the member for Tatchun will be more than pleased to hear that initiative.

We have expanded the equivalency program. We have added, within our Yukon curriculum, communications and science technology courses. We have gone some distance to beefing up the development of local curriculum to make the BC curriculum more palatable to Yukon students. We have already developed a computer policy, which details the training of teachers, which details our expectations with respect to the student-computer ratio, which we would anticipate to be 8-1 at the completion of the endeavour, and we have made a major purchase of computer equipment to bring the student-computer ratio to a 12-1 ratio. The computer policy also details the development of software as a curriculum tool.

Further to that, our response to local communities that are taking on more responsibilities devolved from the Yukon government is that we are going to be delivering a community administration course through the Yukon College. In response to the anticipated devolution of responsibilities to the native Indian bands, we have undertaken to provide a band management course through Yukon College, and as a response to the expressions of concern by the tourism industry, we have undertaken to provide tourism hospitality courses to provide both management and service techniques.

Further to that, we have decided to implement an apprentice incentive marketing program, which is intended to broaden the private sector apprenticeship program.

²³ We have, as I believe I have announced already, added another mobile to offer better distance delivery by the college to Yukon communities. We have expanded French and native language programs to demonstrate our commitment to language training in the territory. I have undertaken, and I believe the Throne Speech announced, that changes, which I will not detail now, to the *Students Financial Assistance Act* will hopefully come down this session to improve the delivery of student financial assistance.

We have already announced our intention to revise the *School Act*. We have announced our intention to provide a measure of autonomy in governance to the Yukon College. We have undertaken a Whitehorse facilities study. We have undertaken a study of student accommodation in response to the concerns of the public, and in response, directly, I suppose, as well, to the Indian Affairs branch of the DIAND, who have indicated an interest in removing themselves from that responsibility.

We have also, in our relations with the federal government, been attempting to negotiate an institutional training agreement, which will ensure the future of Yukon College. Currently, the federal government has indicated an interest in cutting back on institutional

training to the tune of 45 percent by the year 1988. This initiative has caused us considerable concern and in the interests of standing up for the college, we have engaged in lengthy, protracted negotiations to ensure that institutional purchases will not be jeopardized by federal cutbacks.

There are a number of initiatives that have been taken by this government, and ignored by the opposition, and I think that that is a reflection of the rather selective criticism that they have made of the significant initiatives that have been taken by this government.

The Member for Riverdale North, I believe, has said that the government is elected to lead on policies that their party has developed. When I came to office, as I have stated, there were a number of what we might call major policy gaps in the government. We are attempting to resolve those policy gaps. For years, the government has operated by the seat of its pants, and we are intent on rectifying that situation.

We have come under some criticism that the Opposition feels that we are studying the situation too much, that we are, on the one hand, expanding on our consultation with Yukon communities and Yukon people and, on the other hand, they are suggesting that perhaps in some areas we require more study, such as the Green Paper on Renewable Resources. I would suspect the Opposition Members are probably apprenticing too long with the journeyman of inconsistency on the Opposition side. This government is intent that it will talk to Yukon people in the development of policy. We are intent to always continue talking to Yukon people. We will always ask them for their input. We will not adopt the previous government's mentality of dictating to Yukon people, and then asking for a vote of confidence once every four years.

²⁴ We are intent on ongoing consultation in order to make this government as sensitive to Yukon peoples as possible.

Now, we are accused of not showing significant progress in a number of areas. We have provided, as I have said already, two O&M budgets to this Legislature. We have provided a capital budget, we have reopened the Faro mine, and we have undertaken a myriad of economic initiatives, which have been ignored by Opposition Members. The Opposition has suggested that government has only adopted their previous initiatives. Clearly, as I have stated in the numerous listing of initiatives and policy area development, this government has undertaken a good deal more than simply undertaking the initiatives started by the previous government. The members of the previous government would give us to believe that NCPC transfer had already been worked out, there was no problem. Clearly, when I received responsibility for the transfer of NCPC, the work had only just begun, and obviously the Member for Whitehorse South Centre has been able to indicate significant progress in that area.

Clearly, the situation is the same with respect to the reopening of the Cyprus Anvil Mine. It is truly unfortunate that, in response to the Throne Speech by the Member for Faro, hardly a mention was made of the significant efforts of this government to reopen the mine in Faro and to rejuvenate economic life in that community. It is as though that event in the life of the Member's community was not significant at all. It is certainly significant for this government. We have attended to every detail of the reopening that we possibly could. We responded to the Member's concerns and the community's concerns immediately. I would venture to say that we, as a government, in partnership with private interests and the federal government, saved the Member's community, and perhaps the Member might want to reflect on that at some future time.

The Member for Tatchun has suggested that perhaps we are perpetually in neutral gear and occasionally in reverse gear and, of course, the Member, representing a rural community, has decided to ignore, or disassociate himself, perhaps, with the efforts that the government has undertaken. These include capital block funding, decentralization, and much greater attention to detail in communities, such as the Member's own community. If the Member wishes to disassociate himself with those significant initiatives by this government, then he perhaps might want to say so.

²⁵ Far from closing the doors on small communities, in the Member's words — suggesting that things are getting worse and not better — perhaps another look at rural Yukon's aspirations and

desires might be ordered for that Member and others.

With respect to the development of the Yukon College board of governors, the Member for Tatchun asked where is the action. This initiative to establish a board of governors, or a measure of autonomy, for Yukon College is a major undertaking and requires attention to detail, considerable input from the users of the college and the people who work at the college and from all Yukon communities. It is not something we wish to dictate to any of the participants in that equation. In the eight-and-a-half months that we have been in office, we have undertaken considerable progress on this question. The issue has been discussed at some length by various groups in society and there are a variety of opinions as to how this issue should be handled. It is more complex than the Member might admit or, perhaps, even the Members' heckling me might admit — the Member for Hootalinqua, Porter Creek East, et cetera. For those people who are participating in this endeavour to provide a measure of autonomy to Yukon College this is an initiative which requires attention, work and sensitivity. We will not rush it, but we will, as I mentioned in the House, institute an Act to cement this new relationship between the college and a board of governors in the fall session of this House.

We have undertaken many new initiatives of which I am proud. I believe we have an excellent Caucus, which has been elected to spearhead many of those initiatives. I would venture to say that the Members for Dawson and Old Crow are perhaps the best whom I have seen coming from those communities in years. I am proud to be part of this caucus. I am proud to be associated with the many initiatives taken by this government and I am sure that not only will these initiatives be filled in good time but there will be many more.

Applause

Mr. Brewster: I welcome this chance to respond to another Speech from the Throne. I speak today with renewed vigor. Last Session, I was still recovering from the untimely death of my dear friend and colleague, Andy Philipson. Life, however must go on. The voters of Porter Creek West have elected a bright, new Member, Alan Nordling, to represent them. Alan will serve Yukoners well and is a credit to the Conservative Caucus.

²⁶ My faith in Yukoners as being strong and independent has been restored. The days of a technical majority government are over and, with the assistance of our new Member, we will be able to keep this minority government on track.

As a member of the Select Committee on Renewable Resources, I have had an opportunity to travel to several Yukon communities recently, and to meet and talk to rural Yukoners. Having spent so much time in Whitehorse over the last four years, I was beginning to feel that Yukoners had changed. Happily, I found that this is not the case outside of Whitehorse. Rural Yukoners are still rugged individuals who have their own ideas and want to go their own way with a minimum of government interference. They believe that Yukon can advance and improve itself without a big brother government telling them what to do and how to do it. The present government had better listen and listen hard. Yukoners do not want government politicians and bureaucrats interfering in their public and private lives. Their experience with the radical Human Rights legislation was a good lesson.

I commend the government in this regard for planning to come forward with a White Paper. This approach should have been adopted in the first place, but I remind them that they are going to have to change many of its provisions as well. You cannot disguise a skunk merely by painting off its stripes.

The Throne Speech was full of fancy words and promises of what the government is going to do for the people, to take care of us from the cradle to the grave. The Government Leader is beginning to sound like a preacher. He is under the firm belief that everyone wants to go to heaven. He does not appreciate the fact that one has to die first to get there, and who is anxious to do that.

Having read through and studied the Throne Speech, I am not sure we have not already gone to meet our maker. We are being presented with the government's version of heaven here on earth. The way the government has been spending money, however, we will all suffer a heart attack when we receive the bill for the last

supper. I have never seen a government that could squander so much money so fast. The ability of the government to manage taxpayers' money is becoming a matter of increasing public concern. The legislators voted millions of dollars to help reactivate the Cyprus Anvil mine in Faro, based on the new government's assurance that the Skagway Road issue was resolved, when, in fact, there was no concrete agreement at that time.

Similarly, the government has been awarding so many grants to communities, organizations, interest groups and individuals that it now finds itself in a deficit position. Some communities, I am sure, will find that they have facilities that they cannot really afford to maintain. Further, the Department of Government Services' action in awarding contracts, like the furniture contract for the Justice Centre, as well as spending \$200,000 to \$300,000 more on the government administration building, calls into question the government's ability to manage our money wisely.

The ability of this government to negotiate with Alaska is also a serious concern. Every time we sit down with the Americans to do some horse-trading, we end up with the tail and no means to wag it. We lost the Panhandle. We lost the railroad, and now we are taking a licking on the Skagway Road. To add insult to injury, the Yukon government is likely to go, cap in hand, to sign the agreement in Skagway. I do not want to sound anti-American, because I am not, but I do know a good horse-trader when I see one.

Frankly, I am tired of Yukoners always being on the losing side. For this reason I have introduced a motion for debate in the House urging the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia and the Government of Yukon to conduct a feasibility study of Tarr Inlet as a potential port with access through the Tatshenshini River corridor in order to possibly provide Yukon with an all-Canadian alternative to Skagway and Haines.

This alternative has never been properly examined. When I presented the brief in 1983 outlining this possible alternative to the Canadian Transport Commission that was supposed to be studying the short, medium and long term major Yukon service transportation, they did not listen. The total focus of the Commission was on the Skagway Road. Unfortunately, that focus has not changed, and Yukoners have had to pay the price for the short-sightedness of politicians and bureaucrats.

It is time we all woke up and started to do some long range planning, to think beyond the needs of Faro and Whitehorse. We need some bold, decisive leadership. We need a government that will not cower to environmentalists and other interest groups. It is obvious to me, and I am sure to most Yukoners, that we cannot get that kind of leadership out of this government.

²⁷ A port at Tarr Inlet may appear like a pipe dream to many Yukoners, but let me give you some facts about the Tatshenshini area. Approximately 30 miles from Tarr Inlet is the Windy Craggy deposit, one of the richest mineral deposits in North America containing copper, gold, silver, cobalt and zinc. It is the largest potential source of cobalt outside Syria and cobalt is a most important strategic metal. There are 100 years of ore reserves already identified. Once the mine is developed, it is anticipated that it will require a labour force of 1,200 people, and spinoff infrastructure and services will employ a further 4,000. The future development of the Windy Craggy deposit will make Tarr Inlet a viable port if Canadians can get their act together for a change and do some advance planning now.

The Government of British Columbia has already made the first move of providing funds to build an airstrip in the area last year. Other mining companies, such as Falconbridge, Noranda, St. Joe, Striker Resources and Kingcott have all been attracted to the region. The Government of the Yukon has a critical role to play but it must act now. First we must determine if a port at Tarr Inlet, with a suitable access corridor, is feasible. If it is not, there are other alternatives that should be explored such as a road to the Windy Craggy deposit connecting onto the Haines Road. The point I am making is that we have an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of this development instead of reacting to someone else's doing.

I would also like to read a short article from the BC Wilderness Advisory Committee. This is about the Tatshenshini. "The region was relatively unknown for recreation until 1970 when river rafting

expeditions were undertaken by outfitters from both the United States and Canada. Currently, the US Parks Authority limits use of the system to 18 guided trips per year by US-based outfitters and, by mutual consent, a similar number of trips by Canadian operators. Each trip may involve 16-20 people, charged roughly \$1,600-US for a 12 day excursion from Juneau by air and truck into the Alsek headwaters and then by air back to Juneau from its mouth. Probably 500 people use the river between June 15 and September 1 each year, somewhat less than the limit would allow, because the trips are scheduled to avoid conflict and because demand is currently insufficient for utilization."

I hope you notice there that the Americans control everything from Juneau.

"The Alsek and Tatshenshini Rivers are both important as migratory routes and spawning grounds for sockeye, coho and chinook salmon. In addition, the area contains populations of moose, goat and grizzly bear which are presently hunted to a limited extent by natives, residents and guided parties. Traplines are run as well. The river system is seen as a potential source of hydroelectric power, but it has not yet been seriously considered for development.

"Mineral deposits have been explored and there are some major faults that run parallel to the coast through the Alsek range. A group of mines is concentrated in the Windy Craggy deposit near a mountain ridge above the headwaters of Tats Creek, a western tributary to the Tatshenshini. Drilling has indicated a massive sulphide deposit, at least 350 million tons, and possibly as high as one billion tons containing significant amounts of gold, cobalt, silver and copper. The deposits are reported to be large by world standards.

"Eventual exploration of this potential could lead to the development of a townsite. Various schemes have been proposed for removing concentrate from a mining operation via the Cache Creek Valley to Tatshenshini, upstream along the Tatshenshini to the mouth of the O'Connor River and thence east to Highway 7, downstream along the Alsek; upstream to the Tatshenshini and east to Highway 7, downstream along Alsek, then southwest to the head of Tarr Inlet."

²⁸ I would now like to speak a little about Renewable Resources and the Green Paper. I mentioned earlier that I was a member of the Select Committee on Renewable Resources and had travelled to many Yukon communities to solicit public input into the development of a Renewable Resource policy. I wasted my time. The Select Committee was totally undermined by the Minister of Renewable Resources. Let me give you the facts. First, while we were meeting, the Minister held public meetings in Whitehorse and Ross River and also with the Wildlife Advisory. He made three decisions on matters that were supposed to be addressed by the Committee. We were not consulted.

Secondly, he had a report from the Committee to study livestock at large, another matter that was supposed to be under the view of the Select Committee. We never did see that report.

Thirdly, he set up a committee to study conflicts between agriculture and wild animals without reference to the Select Committee. The Select Committee has never seen that report.

Fourthly, he decided to cancel the predator control study in southwest Yukon, again without reference to the Select Committee.

Fifthly, he decided to carry on the Finlayson caribou herd study without confirmation of the Select Committee.

Six, he went on television and said that no wildlife fur animal should be exported for breeding purposes. He never consulted the Select Committee.

Why did the government establish the Select Committee in the first place? I can tell this House that I had one heck of a time just trying to read all the government news releases to find out what the Minister was doing next. The Minister had a bad habit of ignoring advice and making a decision based on purely political considerations. We saw this tendency in his previous dealings on the Frenchman/Tatchun Lake Road, where the Minister ignored the advice of his officials and ended up squandering Yukon taxpayers' money. We now have another example in his decision to stop the grizzly bear predator control. I cannot for the life of me see his

officials giving him that advice. I cannot see Yukon Indian elders giving him that advice. The Minister does not appear to appreciate the fact that he is pouring more of the taxpayers' money down the drain. The study has gone on for two years and now it is virtually worthless if it is not completed.

The Minister of Renewable Resources is making political decisions instead of good game management decisions. Let me give you some examples. I know that the Minister is an environmentalist at heart and, as such, he would have dearly loved to have cancelled the predator control program for wolves but he could not because of two reasons. First and foremost, he had a petition from the Ross River Band to continue the program. Secondly, of less importance, the program worked. To go against the wishes of the Band might cost him votes. He had made the right decision for the wrong reason. I am convinced that if there was not a petition he would have treated the wolf predator control program in the same way that he treated the grizzly bear program. With respect to the latter, he saw an opportunity to please his environmentalist friends. Once again, votes were the primary consideration. It is time the Minister accepted his responsibility and started looking after wildlife management.

I will just read you a few studies from all over North America. The first one is from Alaska. "Wolf predation was initiated in 1976 and wolf numbers were reduced by 61 percent. Calf and yearling survivorship increased two- to four-fold. Adult mortality was reduced from 20 percent to six, annually, and the moose population increased as a result of wolf control. The calf-cow ratio went from 15 per hundred prior to the wolf control in 1975 to 51 calves per hundred in 1976, following wolf control."

Number two, Alaska basin. "Between 1976 and 1978, wolves were reduced by 52 percent. Moose calf survival did not significantly increase in relation to non-reduction areas. Two reasons were given for this negative response. First, the wolf density also declined in the non-reduction areas and, secondly, grizzly bears were identified as the most significant source of calf fatality." I could go on with eight or ten of the same things.

We shall now go on to show you a few examples of people who are experts and a few of their remarks on the study.

²⁹ Mr. R. Golden, Director of Wildlife Branch, Manitoba, expressed satisfaction with the indepth proposal, however would like to see the effects of (inaudible) on calf survivorship addressed. As well he suggested that a longer time period may be required to address all potential limiting factors.

Dr. W. Gassaway, Game Biologist, Alaska Fish and Game, strongly supports the Purple Mountain block study design. The design will clearly provide the best insight for management of predator and prey system. The result would be of great value, not only to management in Yukon but also to managers across North America. There is page after page on the same theme.

In relation to the Green Paper and the select committee process I must express some reservations. The Green Paper was drafted in such a manner as to set interest group against interest group, wilderness guide against outfitter, conservationist against miner, agriculturist against others. Aside from a few vocal individuals, the majority of Yukoners who appeared before the committee were all ready to make the necessary accommodation to cooperate with each other.

Concerning the select committee itself, I feel that most Yukoners like being asked their opinion about the important renewable resource issues but the whole process would have been furthered best if the government had presented clear draft policy for consideration. There are some tough renewable resource management decisions that have to be made and the government is going to have to bite the bullet.

I also expressed my extreme disappointment about the lack of initiative by the Yukon government in assuming responsibility for freshwater fisheries from the federal government. I feel most Yukoners know that the fishery in the Yukon is not being properly managed. Rather than taking control of this valuable resource and developing it, the government leader stated he does not want to inherit a skeleton. Rather than confine the skeleton to the grave, I strongly believe it is the Yukon government's responsibility to put

fish back on the bones and bring the resource back to life.

Another renewable resources issue that is of concern to me is the government's Roads to Resources Program. Although these roads are necessary to open up new areas for mining exploration, it must be recognized these same roads open up new areas for hunters and good game laws and wildlife management practices are necessary. Similarly, there must be a realistic and commonsense approach to subsistence hunting to preserve Yukon's wildlife.

I would now like to leave renewable resources and deal with a justice matter that effects my constituency. The Minister of Justice already knows that I have a bone to pick with him and Parks Canada over the use of prisoners to do work in Kluane National Park. I am going to be scrutinizing the budget very closely, because I have heard rumours that the prison camp may cost as much as \$200,000. I certainly hope not. I forewarn the Minister that this had better not be the case, after he said there was no money to hire law-abiding citizens to do work in the Kluane Park.

I note the Minister was very selective in who he consulted with on this project. He did not talk to the Kluane Tribal Council, who have 15 to 20 members unemployed. He did not talk to me or invite me to his meetings after the first meeting. He did not invite me to go to the meeting with the Yukon Village counsellors of Haines Junction, because he knew I was opposed to his proposal. He obviously did not talk to the Outreach people who have a current list of 68 people unemployed, and this number is going to rise by 30 to 40 this summer. Kluane has an unemployment rate of 25 percent. I just do not buy the Minister's story that there is no money to hire local people to do the work in the Park. Where is the money coming from to provide for the prison work camp and the helicopters to transfer the prisoners and security guards?

I observed very little activity with regard to land claims and land transfers. Those two issues are also very important to my constituents. The Yukon government finally released its position paper on February 25, but it does not say anything. I have the sneaking suspicion the parties, instead of building on the existing agreement, which advocates a cooperative one-government system, are starting all over and are now advocating a different model for settlement based on the Indian reserve system. I certainly hope I am wrong.

³⁰ Similarly, I note that land transfers to Yukoners, both native and non-native, were almost nil. Yukoners need land for residential, recreational, business and agriculture purposes. A land working group has been set up in the land claims process to deal with this issue. That will probably mean we will not hear much more about land transfers. I noticed that whenever the government has to make a decision or do something, they immediately set up a working group, a task force, a committee or commission to study it. Nothing is ever actually done. The tourism studies of the Kluane area are still gathering dust on the shelves. These studies cost the taxpayers thousands of dollars to do, and the Yukon never sees any practical results.

For the last two sessions I have been telling the government to pull up its socks and get some work done. Perhaps I was too harsh in my criticism. I should have realized that they did not have time to pull up their socks when they were always getting caught with their pants down.

In closing, I would like to make it very clear to the government that this House has elected MLAs who have a right and a duty to question government in any tone of voice they choose. We are not here to play to the gallery or to the television. We are paid to keep the government in line. Thousands of women and men have died so that we could have this and, as long as I am alive, I will continue to turn around and have free speech in this House. I do not need any lectures from the Government Leader. If he cannot stand the heat in the kitchen, then he had better get out.

Applause

Hon. Mrs. Joe: I am pleased to have the opportunity again to speak to the Throne Speech as the Minister of Health and Human Resources, and the Minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, and as the representative of Whitehorse North Centre.

As the representative of my constituency, I am pleased to

congratulate my constituents of the Kwanlin Dun Band who now have signed a relocation agreement with this government and with the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I look forward to an improvement in the economic and social conditions for the people of the Kwanlin Dun Band.

I would also like to congratulate those groups in Whitehorse North Centre who have taken advantage of the Local Employment Opportunities Program that is sponsored by the Department of Community and Transportation Services of this government. These programs are created for people to use, and I am pleased to see my constituents taking advantage of them. My aim as MLA of Whitehorse North Centre is to improve the level of services to residents in that riding. As Minister of Health and Human Resources, my interest is, of course, in the whole Yukon, and to that end I have supported the establishment of a CPR-First Aid training facility funded under the local employment opportunities program, and located in downtown Whitehorse.

We heard in the Throne Speech our government's continuing dedication to improving the quality of life for all Yukoners. I am delighted that the Department of Health and Human Resources, and I, will be working towards this ideal. The new home care program that I will introduce later in this session will certainly enhance the ability of our elderly, disabled and chronically ill to maintain more independent lives closer to their families. This program is based on a substantive policy and is not an initiative of the previous government. We all realize the importance of staying close to our families and friends for support, and combat problems that come from loneliness and isolation from our home community. This program of independent living will alleviate many of these additional problems.

Parents requiring daycare will be better serviced by the expansion of the daycare coordinator position. The coordinator will be able to offer expanded support services to existing daycares and to new daycare centres that will be starting in communities. We have increased daycare subsidies to \$300 per child, with a special rate of \$350 per month for children under two or handicapped children, including special attention. Further concessions to daycare are included in the departmental estimates.

Work is progressing well on the recommendation of the Task Force on Family Violence. I will be making a statement on the action that my department has taken, and will be taking, on those recommendations in the very near future.

One special item I would like to comment on with regard to the Task Force on Family Violence is the safe house program. Together with officials from my department, I will be evaluating the rural communities to select the location of the first rural safe house in Yukon. Selection of the community for this pilot project will depend on the greatest identified need and the community's wish to be part of such a program. The method of operation of the safe house program will be decided in consultation with departmental officials and community members. Problems of family violence cannot be successfully resolved without the support and encouragement of all members of the community. Therefore, it is extremely important that community representatives be involved in finding solutions of which the safe house program will be a part.

The community consultations with regard to the *Young Offenders Act* have been completed and I have today issued a Ministerial Statement on this plan. During the process, I met the residents in 13 communities and with 20 different agencies and groups. It was a very worthwhile experience for all concerned. The communities were pleased to be consulted, and I will be using this process of community consultation again.

One statement I can make at this time is that Yukoners feel that young offenders should be dealt with in their own communities. We will be exploring avenues to allow us to keep these young people closer to home.

The Department of Health and Human Resources will also be working to improve the opportunities of social assistance recipients to return to the workforce. This new initiative will be of particular help to persons who have been unemployed for extended periods of time and require some extra help to once again take their place in the workforce.

With regard to the Women's Directorate, a Cabinet subcommittee has been struck to coordinate the development of a government plan of action for women. I am pleased to announce a plan to create a talent bank of Yukon women to serve on the many boards and councils that provide advice to government and to play a role in Yukon's affairs. We also hope to have frequent forums that will allow women's groups to exchange ideas to discover issues that they have in common. Living today is a complex matter. To raise children, be employed, maintain a home and, as years pass, age with dignity, cannot be easily accomplished. We all require the support of families, friends and, from time to time, government programs to live successfully.

The new initiatives and continuing programs of this department will endeavour to increase the quality of life for all Yukoners.

Applause

Mrs. Firth: I would like to begin my response to the Throne Speech by extending, on behalf of the constituents of Riverdale South and all Yukoners, a warm and sincere thank you to retired Commissioner, Doug Bell, and his wife, Pearl.

To you, Doug, we thank you for your enthusiasm and ability, and your hours of dedication to the Yukon. To you, Pearl, we thank you for the many hours you spent alone, and for sharing part of your life with Yukoners.

I would also like to welcome a new colleague to the Legislative Assembly, the Member for Porter Creek West, Alan Nordling. The Conservative victory of the Porter Creek West by-election gave a needed lift to the Caucus and the party who were grieving the loss of another colleague. For Yukoners, it provided a safety net in their representation in the Legislature, because the NDP minority government no longer had a majority.

³² A thank you to the constituents of Porter Creek West. They saved us from the Human Rights Bill.

Now it is time to get down to the business of the Throne Speech. It has been nine months since this government has been in office and on first blush, when we heard the Throne Speech, we heard many positive things and it almost started sounding good to us. After talking to some people, they said that it was the same old stuff, there was nothing new in it, it was a typical government Throne Speech. Then, I decided that it was time to sit down and take a good look at the government and take a look at its performance and its track record and what direction the Yukon is heading under its administration. I would like to give the Legislature a few examples of what I am talking about.

Last summer, the government commissioned a task force on family violence who turned in a report in the fall. Approximately, four to five months later we finally hear something about the task force report. We hear that one of 200 recommendations is going to be implemented and it is going to be implemented as a pilot project. We also found out, after that task force report, that the Minister of Justice received the report on his desk and immediately dismissed some of the recommendations.

Also, the government decided to embark on a major review of the contract negotiations. They were reviewed and discontinued, and they were brought back as contract directives. There was some consultation with the private sector and the government demonstrated how inappropriate and inconsistent it could be when dealing with the private sector. There were delays and position reversals by the Minister, and the private sector still does not know where it stands when it comes to contract directives or regulations.

The Health and Human Resources Minister, the Member for Whitehorse North Centre, embarked on a consultative process to address the issue of the young offenders in the Yukon. This was a consultative process by invitation only. It was not advertised as an open meeting to the public. Some MLA's were invited and some were not. The Minister has just tabled this report today and I look forward reading the contents of it. All the time that this consultative process was going on, another Minister was going around his own riding seeking petitions to have homes purchased and homes turned into group homes for young offenders. As well, a decision was being made that we were not going to have a secure facility for young offenders. That was happening while the consultation

process was going on.

Another issue of great concern to all Yukoners is the the issue of land claims. It is very important to all of us as Yukoners, and we will be watching very closely, over the next few months, for some positive results. I say this very progressively and very sincerely; however, my concern is that we still do not know what this government's position is. I have concerns about the land claims education coordinator's position and what the objective of this position is.

On another issue, we hear on the radio, we see on television, and we read in the newspapers, almost daily, about events which demonstrate that the justice system is not working efficiently and in the best interest of Yukoners. We all know what happened in the Legislature the last session when the Opposition tabled their motion for a justice enquiry and we debated that motion and it was defeated. The Minister himself agreed that we should look into the justice system and only now, because the House is in Session, has made an announcement, which he hopes will get him off the hook.

Speaking of getting on the hook, this brings me to the Human Rights Bill. This has to be the social experiment of the century. ³³ As my colleague from Riverdale North refers to it, it is the Bill that is not gone and not forgotten.

For a government to try things that they do not even know will work, nor what the long term effects and costs could be, is not acceptable. Equal pay for work of equal value is one of those concepts. The Minister of Justice did not get bruised nearly as bad as the general public did with that Human Rights Bill.

This brings me to another issue, the Skagway Road Agreement, and the Minister of Community and Transportation Services, followed by the Government Leader. However, I understand from the Minister's comments today that he would like to take full credit for this agreement, so I will direct the comments in the context that he was totally responsible. I remember all too well the impatience and frustration that the Members opposite demonstrated at our questions last sitting, how they kept urging us on, how they were in a big hurry, how the agreement was tabled for acceptance by the Legislature and all its Members. We raised concerns about safety, about road costs, about jobs and contracts, and about the principles that were being set. I remember all too well the Government Leader talking about urgency and reassuring us of the soundness of the proposal because he had done his homework, and dealt with all of his responsibilities.

Now, here we are five months later, two agreements later, two news announcements about the deals later, and we are still faced with asking the same questions about safety, about road costs, and so on. The new deal that has been presented is a major reversal of the government's previous position that it presented in the Legislature five months ago. Even though the Minister of Community and Transportation Services does not see this and does not agree with it, it is a reversal of the position as the Member from Porter Creek East pointed out yesterday. As Members of the Legislative Assembly, we should all object to the incompetent and irresponsible way that this situation was handled.

I find it absolutely unbelievable that after this handling of the situation, the Minister of Community and Transportation Services wants us to trust him and raises the question of trust in this House — trust him after he committed us as Members to one agreement that was not signed, that did not have the i's dotted and the t's crossed, and then he comes in and changes a major principle of that agreement and he wants us to trust him. Well, to quote the Government Leader, "I would think that there is about as much chance of that as...perhaps I ought not say. It is a very small chance and almost none at all."

I wanted to be brief today, but I will not rest until I raise the issue of fiscal responsibility and financial management, because that is what the trust is all about: who is spending the money and how are they spending it? This is the first time in history that the Yukon will have a true deficit and Yukoners are going to find out about paying more taxes. This government is bringing us into the mainstream of the modern method of government faster than our wildest imaginations could anticipate. Any programs that we missed out on until now, we are going to get them whether we need them or not and we

are going to get them at a time when other governments are reassessing their programs and costs, and our government is running around madly spending money.

I see no proof of this government's consideration of the immediate long term implications of the new programs they have created. I have no difficulty with the concept of creating new businesses and encouraging new businesses. However, if in that creation of a new business you are going to put existing businesses out of business, and have people laid off, then I think the government has not done their homework and had better reassess what their priorities are.

In the long term the contrast between the objectives of the programs and the actual results remain to be seen. If government continues ad hoc to create programs, it will soon find itself in the same position as the federal government after years of Liberal mismanagement.

³⁴ Yukoners, like other Canadians, will face more tax increases, greater deficit budgets and a lower standard of living. Yukoners want to generate new wealth, not just participate in the redistribution of it. To sum up, we have a government that is mortgaging our future and our children's future. They are managing our finances irresponsibly. They are interfering inappropriately in the private sector and they are planning and creating programs ad hoc. We have a government with an impractical approach and without positions or policies on the critical issues that are faced by Yukoners today.

The New Democratic record speaks for itself. This government will be remembered for social experiments, a disregard for restraint and deficit financing. But mostly it will be remembered for missed opportunities, a lack of vision and a legacy of financial burdens. We feel that Yukoners deserve better. Thank you.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Porter: I move that debate be adjourned.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Renewable Resources that debate be now adjourned. Are you prepared for the question?

Some Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Mr. Porter: I move the House be now adjourned.

Speaker: It has been moved by the hon. Government House Leader that the House be now adjourned. Are you agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to

Speaker: This House now stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The following Sessional Paper was tabled March 19, 1986:

86-3-12

Report of the Community Consultation Meetings[†] on Young Offenders in the Yukon (Joe)

The following Document was filed March 19, 1986:

No. 1

News release dated April 25, 1985, "Federal Land Transferred"
(Lang)