

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Thursday, March 25, 2010 — 1:00 p.m.**

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order. At this time, we will proceed with prayers.

*Prayers*

### DAILY ROUTINE

**Speaker:** Members, it gives me great pleasure to announce the following students will be serving the House as Legislative Pages for the 2010 spring sitting.

They are Micah Copland, Linnea Eby, Isabelle Stephens, Aidan Sullivan, Sophie Topper and Lauren Webster from F.H. Collins Secondary School; and Heather Clarke and Rasheeda Slater from Vanier Catholic Secondary School.

Today we have with us Isabelle Stephens and Linnea Eby. I would ask the members to welcome them to the House at this time.

*Applause*

### Withdrawal of motions

**Speaker:** The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes that have been made to the Order Paper.

The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper because they are outdated: Motions No. 813, 814, 815, and 879, standing in the name of the Leader of the Official Opposition; Motions No. 350, 545, 721, 767, 860, 908 and 966, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; Motions No. 406, 433, 510, 910 and 919, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike; Motions No. 811, 820 and 943, standing in the name of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun; Motions No. 621, 780, 826, 914 and 927, standing in the name of the Member for Mount Lorne; Motions No. 803, 821, 822, 823, 824 and 930, standing in the name of the Member for Porter Creek South; Motions No. 816, 817, 818 and 956, standing in the name of the Member for Kluane; and Motion No. 819, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin.

Also, the following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as the action requested in the motion has been fulfilled in whole or in part: Motion No. 947, standing in the name of the Leader of the Official Opposition; Motions No. 769, 958 and 973, and Motion for the Production of Papers No. 16, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; Motion No. 745, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin; Motion No. 750, standing in the name of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun; Motion No. 873, standing in the name of the Member for Mount Lorne; and Motion No. 893, standing in the name of the Member for Kluane. Motion No. 53, standing in the name of the Member for Porter Creek South, has been removed from the Order Paper at the request of the member.

Finally, all motions and the written question standing in the name of the Member for McIntyre-Takhini as a private member have been removed from the Order Paper as the member is no longer a private member.

### DAILY ROUTINE

**Speaker:** We will proceed with the Order Paper. Tributes.

### TRIBUTES

#### In remembrance of Thérèse Lacroix

**Hon. Mr. Hart:** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today, on behalf of the House, to pay tribute to Thérèse Lacroix.

Thérèse est décédée à la fin de décembre 2009, et son décès est une grande perte pour sa famille, son mari, Bertrand, ses fils, Martin et Denis, sa fille, Katherine, et bien des amis et parents au Yukon et au Québec.

En juin 1986, le ministre ontarien de la Culture et de la Citoyenneté soulignait sa contribution au mouvement des Guides francophones, section régionale du nord-est de l'Ontario.

Elle a aussi été un des membres fondateurs de la section francophone des guides du Yukon.

Thérèse Lacroix passed away in late December 2009 and is deeply missed by her family, husband Bertrand, sons Martin and Denis, daughter Katherine and many other friends and relatives in both Yukon and Quebec.

Thérèse received recognition in June 1986 from the Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Culture for her contribution to the francophone Girl Guide chapter in northeastern Ontario. She was also a founding member of the francophone chapter of the Girl Guides in Yukon.

Thérèse was also the first francophone elected to the École Émilie-Tremblay school committee. Thérèse was one of the first five Yukon women to be honoured with the title "Yukon Women of the Year" in 1990. As such, she became the first franco-yukonnaise to receive this award.

Thérèse was the Whitehorse Parks and Recreation instructor for the French Fries program. For 18 years she provided French language instruction and activities to hundreds of three- to five-year-olds.

Thérèse will be remembered for all of the above and especially for the smile that was so uniquely hers.

Merci. Thank you.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues in the House to acknowledge Bertrand and Denis Lacroix, who are in the gallery today.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Are there any further tributes?  
Introduction of visitors.  
Returns or documents for tabling.

### TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Mr. Cardiff:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have for tabling correspondence between the Yukon Utilities Board and the Minister of Justice.

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

Bills to be introduced.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 18: Introduction and First Reading

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and welcome back.

I move that Bill No. 18, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, be now introduced and read a first time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 18, entitled *Third Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, be now introduced and read a first time.

*Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 18 agreed to*

### Bill No. 19: Introduction and First Reading

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I move that Bill No. 19, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now introduced and read a first time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 19, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now introduced and read a first time.

*Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 19 agreed to*

### Bill No. 20: Introduction and First Reading

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I move that Bill No. 20, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now introduced and read a first time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 20, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now introduced and read a first time.

*Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 20 agreed to*

**Speaker:** Are there further bills for introduction?  
Hearing none, are there notices of motion?

## NOTICES OF MOTION

**Mr. Mitchell:** I give notice today of the following motion:

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

I also give notice today of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to recognize the valuable service of social workers and the social service sector in our territory by ensuring that the resources they need to carry out their mandates are provided in a timely manner.

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

**Mr. Cardiff:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and welcome back everybody. It's a pleasure to be here. I'm happy to see everybody here today.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House recognizes the long-term intergenerational impact of residential schools in the Yukon by urging the Government of Canada to reinstate its funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to ensure that current local projects and services funded through the foundation can continue and that the funding is extended for at least 10 years.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to amend Yukon's *Quartz Mining Act* and the Yukon's *Placer Mining Act* to bring them into harmony with the values of today's society concerning the critical issues of:

- (1) conflicts inherent in surface rights versus mining rights within the mineral tenure system and security of investment, or free-entry staking, particularly within municipal boundaries;
- (2) prioritization of land claim settlements in disputes around mineral staking; and
- (3) maintenance of the mineral industry's contribution to Yukon's economy.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to confirm that the \$570,000 for intersection upgrades to improve safety on the Alaska and Klondike highways mentioned in its recent press release will be used to:

- (1) improve turning lanes at the intersection of the Alaska Highway and north Klondike Highway;
- (2) construct turning lanes at the Deep Creek Road and Shallow Bay Road where those two roads meet the north Klondike Highway; and
- (3) improve sightlines at the intersection of Boreal Road and the north Klondike Highway; and
- (4) assess the need for turning lanes at both entrances to Couch Road.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to confirm that the \$1.24 million to perform bridge inspections and minor upgrades on bridges throughout the territory mentioned in its recent press release includes funding to examine and report on options to improve safety at the Takhini River bridge on the north Klondike Highway, including improving the approach to the bridge, widening the bridge and adding a pedestrian walkway.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to implement the functional plan for upgrading the Hot Springs Road by moving forward with the planned widening of the road, creating cyclist lanes, and development of trails on both sides of the road in the 2010 construction season.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to complete the chipsealing of the Old Alaska Highway during the 2010 construction season.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to move forward with planning, design and consultation to develop a community well near the junction of the Hot Springs Road and the north Klondike Highway.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to confirm that plans to develop a public day-use site and swimming area at the Gunnar Nilsson and Mickey Lammers Research Forest remain a priority, and to ensure that the public day-use site and swimming area is developed during the 2010 construction season.

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

Hearing none, is there a statement by a minister?

Hearing none, that brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: McIntyre Creek protection

**Mr. Inverarity:** The new Environment minister had some strongly held views on environmental matters before he assumed his current portfolio. Like many Yukoners, I'm eager to hear what the new minister has to say about his new reality.

In August 2008, the minister declared that McIntyre Creek has significant wilderness and recreational values and should be protected for future generations to enjoy. I'm sure that commitment pleased many of the Whitehorse residents who supported the protection of McIntyre Creek. I imagine those residents were even more excited when he rose to the position of Environment minister. Does the minister still believe that McIntyre Creek should be protected for future generations or has he been given a new direction from his Yukon Party colleagues?

**Mr. Edzerza:** I thank the member opposite for that question. Quite frankly, when I raised those questions, I did it as an Independent member. I was aware of the fact that there were other levels of government involved with the decisions around McIntyre Creek and I never pushed the issue any further.

**Mr. Inverarity:** The minister has repeatedly proclaimed his commitment to the environment. It is fortunate for the environment that he is now in the position to carry out those commitments. The minister was very specific in his letter on the subject of McIntyre Creek when he said he was in full support of permanent protection for McIntyre Creek corridor running right through the heart of the city.

The minister's had some time to think about his new responsibilities and I'm sure that his first priority has been following up on his strongly held convictions and commitments.

Will the minister confirm that he and the Yukon government will ensure protection of McIntyre Creek?

**Mr. Edzerza:** The member opposite is very correct in one part of his statement in that, as the minister and as a human being, I am committed to the environment. Maybe that had something to do with my surprise appointment to this portfolio. However, I will say for the record again that there are three levels of government involved with the decisions around McIntyre Creek and as a member of this government, I will respect the opinions and works of other governments.

**Mr. Inverarity:** If the minister believes that McIntyre Creek has ecological, educational and recreational values and that it does deserve protection, there are a number of ways in which he can accomplish this. One option would be a territorial park; another way, which the member has suggested in the past, is that the government work with the Kwanlin Dun and other interested parties in setting up a special management area. He said to the Minister of Environment at the time: I would encourage the minister to jump on this right away. Now that he is the Minister of Environment, how high will he jump on this issue right away and, if so, how high?

**Mr. Edzerza:** I would first like to put on record that I will not jump to any song from the Official Opposition. I will state for the record that I did, as an MLA, do my job in bringing this issue forward at one time. I do understand that Kwanlin Dun is self-governing and, as we speak, they are in the process of developing a land use plan. I think it would be very immature for anyone to expect that Kwanlin Dun will drop everything and forget about all the economic development opportunities they have been negotiating for 30 years.

As citizens and as a government, we do owe the respect to the Kwanlin Dun First Nation to move at their own pace.

### Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

**Mr. Fairclough:** I also have questions for the Minister of Environment who, by the way, I would like to congratulate on his new responsibilities.

The last Minister of Environment was routinely overruled by the Premier when she tried to manage her department. The Premier gave orders directly to senior officials, bypassing the minister and sometimes not even bothering to inform her. Hopefully for this minister, his authority will match his responsibilities.

Last December the Peel land use planning commission issued a recommended plan. Before we get too deeply into the government's position on the Peel, I should ask if the minister has the authority to state a position, or is his department still being managed by the Premier's office?

Does the minister have the authority to make any decisions in respect to the Peel watershed?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** Energy, Mines and Resources is, of course, responsible for land use planning throughout the territory. This is a responsibility that we take very seriously and have worked very hard over the last number of years to make some significant progress. This includes releasing the first land use plan in Yukon's history for north Yukon. We have, of course, a very strong interest in providing land use planning policies and practices for the Peel area. We have recently worked very closely with the Peel Watershed Planning Commission. The report has been received by various orders of

government, and we're all taking a very careful and close look at this situation right now. The Government of Yukon has demonstrated its commitment and its responsibility to this issue and has withdrawn the area from staking.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue for the Government of Yukon, one that we're working very closely with other orders of government on addressing.

**Mr. Fairclough:** Well, it's the commission that released the plan, Mr. Speaker, not this government. As the Minister of Environment, it falls on the members opposite to tell Yukoners how this government intends to proceed with the Peel land use plan.

Now, years of effort have been spent in developing this plan. Along with other partners and parties, that plan now sits with the Yukon government, which holds title to a vast majority of land in this area. It's time for Yukoners to be given some information about what the government is doing in the Peel. I understand that the government is working with other parties on the recommended plan to determine a course of action.

I don't expect the Minister of Environment to be able to provide a percentage or blueprint for the protection and development. What position is the government taking in these discussions?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** I appreciate the comments from the member opposite, and especially his conclusion that it would be inappropriate to have a foregone conclusion about the outcomes of this process. We are certainly working with various orders of government that we have a responsibility to work through. There are obligations under the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, including sections under chapter 11 that do stipulate a process with which the Government of Yukon and the other affected First Nations will work together on addressing this.

We have demonstrated a significant commitment to this issue and have withdrawn the affected area from staking while this process continues. There is good work being done within the Government of Yukon right now. There is good work being done within other orders of government, and we will continue to work the process we are obligated to follow in order to find the appropriate solutions to this issue.

**Mr. Fairclough:** We would like to hear from the Minister of Environment. Last December, the Peel Watershed Planning Commission issued its recommended plan. The government had almost four months to review the plan and let Yukoners know its position on the recommendations. Instead, the government has done everything possible to avoid saying anything substantive about it.

It is obvious this government hopes to get all the way to an election before having to say anything one way or another on the Peel. It wouldn't be the first time they avoided hard decisions, Mr. Speaker.

Will this government commit to stating a position on the Peel recommended plan well in advance of the next election?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** Mr. Speaker, I do need to clear something up for the member opposite. It is the role and responsibility of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for land planning of this nature in the territory. That's where

the responsibility lies. Certainly we work with all other areas in government, including the Executive Council Office, Environment and Community Services. We approach these situations in a very inclusive nature.

I do not accept the conclusions that the member opposite is reaching and some of his rather inflammatory comments. It's unfortunate that suppositions like this are coming out here in this second question of Question Period. We have committed to a process to bring closure to the land planning exercise in the Peel area. We are committed to doing that. There is a timeline that has been put forward and the clock is certainly ticking on that. We all look forward to seeing this matter concluded so we can see the benefits that will be conveyed then to all Yukoners into the future from having a very progressive plan for the area.

#### Question re: Fiscal management

**Mr. Hardy:** It gives me great joy to be able to continue to represent people throughout the territory on their issues and offer advice to the government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for 11 years I have heard various premiers from all three parties read budgets. Budgets are about choices and they also should be about consultation and engagement.

Unfortunately, the choice this minister, the Premier, has made is to spend now and let future generations of Yukoners pay later. I'm talking about the debt that's being allowed to be incurred by the corporations. The people of this territory will be paying for this government's irresponsible, unsustainable spending and borrowing habits for decades to come. This is the first time in my memory that a Premier has allowed our territory to go into a debt that makes up over 16 percent of a \$1-billion budget, Mr. Speaker. So my question is, why is the Finance minister jeopardizing the future of Yukoners by running up a debt and running down the surplus?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of detail that we wouldn't have time to provide the member opposite during Question Period, but let me remind the member that mortgaging Yukon's future took place a long time ago.

What we're doing today — over the last seven years — is investing in Yukon to pay back that mortgaging of Yukon's future. These investments actually are building Yukon's future, unlike the past, which left deficits in infrastructure, health care facilities and the economy. There was an exodus of our population. That's no longer happening.

Furthermore, during that time of investment by past governments, there was indeed a deficit. Today the Yukon's investments also include, in its budgeting process, a surplus.

**Mr. Hardy:** This government has a deficit in accountability. It has a deficit in responsibility to the people of this territory not to run up debt, but this government is allowing corporations — our corporations — to basically mortgage the future, and that is exactly the road this Premier is directing corporations and, ultimately, the government to go down because there's only one taxpayer. We have to pay debt. Let's be honest about it.

Sooner or later — and I've seen this many times over the years, both here and at the national level — programs and services and even jobs will be cut to pay for all the spending and

borrowing. That's the reality; that's the history in this country; and we are repeating the same mistakes other provinces and territories have made and the federal government has made.

How does this minister reconcile this spend-big/borrow-big approach with what he said a year ago about being fiscally responsible and prudent? This is not prudent.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** That's exactly the point. The member refers to cuts to programs, and the fiscal approach this government is taking ensures there are no cuts to programs. In fact, I ask this question: why should the taxpayers of today pay for facilities and assets that will be used by Yukoners long into the future?

What we are doing is fairly and in a balanced manner ensuring that all contribute to that asset and that facility and, at the same time, maintaining our fiscal capacity here and now and into the future to deliver those programs and services that Yukoners need and value. That's our fiscal approach, unlike the member opposite.

**Mr. Hardy:** I'm here on behalf of people to ask these questions. It's not "unlike the member opposite". I don't even know what that comment means. I don't know why a personal attack when asked very simple questions that people on the street are asking.

I would like the minister to explain that last comment — a personal attack on me. I really would like that, because that's the attitude that we're witnessing from this government when we raise any question whatsoever around the financial responsibility of this government. It is our job and the people's job to ask these questions of the government that they elect, and they get this thrown back in their face? That they get accused of something that's not explained?

Simple question: why is this government, why is this Finance minister, why is this Premier allowing corporations to run up over \$160 million in debt when we don't have the money to pay for it?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, I am compelled to respond to the member in this regard. If the member has drawn a conclusion that this is a personal attack, I duly apologize because that was never the intent. What I was explaining to the member is that his assertions of cuts to programs and services are indeed incorrect and one can only draw the conclusion, given the position the member is taking, that the member opposite — and probably the other members in the opposition — would not do this. They would not invest in hospital facilities. They would not invest in hydro. They would allow Yukoners to continue with the deficit that existed from the past. They would allow Yukoners to pay more for diesel costs to produce the same electricity we will be producing in a green, environmentally friendly and more affordable manner. Furthermore, those members opposite who take issue with what the government is doing fiscally in the service of the Yukon public would have Yukoners travelling to all points in the country to receive the health services we will be providing right here on the ground in the Yukon because of our fiscal management.

#### **Question re: Fiscal management**

**Mr. Cardiff:** Mr. Speaker, our economy has never been more dependent on transfers from Ottawa. We've become

conditioned to see healthy increases in those transfers just about every year, but we're fooling ourselves if we think that this is going to go on indefinitely. Transfer payments and funding agreements from Ottawa are stable right now but even the federal Finance minister has hinted that may not go on forever, that there may be cuts coming to those transfers, that there may be cuts to programs and services and even to federal government jobs.

This is what the Premier told the Chamber of Commerce the other day: "The last time the federal government dealt with the deficit in the 1990s, they off-loaded it to the territorial and provincial governments." Then he went on to say, "I can say today that that's not what's happening."

Will the Premier fill us in on any discussions he's had with either the federal Finance minister or the Prime Minister that leads him to make such a bold statement?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I can fill the member opposite in, of course, but I would hope the member opposite has been listening to statements by the Prime Minister of Canada, statements by the Finance minister of Canada, that he has looked thoroughly into the federal budget. Surely from all those areas of information and detail, the member would clearly understand that there are no cuts to provincial transfers. There are no cuts to equalization and there are no reductions in the territorial funding formula. That is what's happening today.

Yes, it is correct: past Liberal governments chose to deal with the federal deficit by off-loading it to the provinces and territories. I think this government in power today in Ottawa, Prime Minister Harper's government and Minister Flaherty, have been clear in that regard. They have no intention of off-loading the deficit on to the provincial and territorial governments.

**Mr. Cardiff:** That may be the case today, but yesterday, or just a few days ago, the Premier contradicted himself and sowed seeds of doubt when he released his budget to the Whitehorse business community. He said, and I quote: "I can't speak to what may happen in the future." And I'm sure he can't speak to what happens in the future with the Minister of Finance or with the present federal government, but I can tell you one thing: I can tell you what's happening today.

Our surplus is shrinking and our deficit is growing. This government is taking us down a road full of blind corners, potholes and sharp turns to the right. This is serious. What is the Premier's plan if federal transfers are frozen or cut? Will he protect programs, services and, indeed, jobs?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Now the member has stated categorically on the floor of this House that we are in deficit. Not only have we tabled successive budgets — this is our eighth one — but in every one of them we have not been in deficit. I would encourage the member to look thoroughly at that.

I'm sure the members in budget lock-up must have asked these questions of officials and I'm sure the officials would have told them, no, we are not in deficit.

Furthermore, if the members would take time to look at the long-term fiscal framework of the territory, the members would clearly see that we're not in deficit, unlike other jurisdictions that are. So the fiscal management that we have provided the

territory — now our eighth consecutive budget — has brought this territory into surplus and has taken this territory out of deficit into that very important and positive fiscal capacity we have today.

That's why we're doing well; that's why there's an economy growing in the Yukon; that's why we're addressing the infrastructure deficit; that's why we're investing in health care and education — we have the fiscal capacity to do so.

**Mr. Cardiff:** I would encourage the Finance minister to read the supplementary that he tabled today. It shows a \$23-million deficit. The Premier promised voters an open and accountable, fiscally responsible government, but the choices he has made have limited options for future governments to respond to future needs. This is neither fiscally responsible nor socially responsible. Who will pay for the choices that the Finance minister is making today? Will public servants pay through cuts to their wages, benefits, pension plans or even their jobs? Will communities pay through cuts to programs and services? Will the public pay through the sell-off of infrastructure? What's going to be the cost to the environment?

Will the Premier tell us which programs will be cut? Which assets will be sold and which promises will be broken when the future catches up with his unsustainable, irresponsible spending and borrowing habits?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, the short answer is: none, none, none, none, and none, Mr. Speaker. No such thing would be taking place, unless by some quirky and unrealistic outcome of a general election some time in the future, and the members opposite somehow got into office. The point we're making is the position the member is taking and the opposition benches are taking is what the past was all about in the Yukon. There were deficits. There was debt. There was no economy. There was a lack of resources available to invest in education, in health care, in infrastructure. Today that's not the case. The member stated clearly that we've tabled a budget that shows the Yukon government is in deficit for the year-end 2009-10.

Would the member please look at the document? The net financial resource position at the end of the year, for that very same fiscal year, 2009-10, shows a \$69.4-million surplus. I rest my case.

#### **Question re: Peel watershed land use plan**

**Mr. Fairclough:** The Minister of Environment won't stand up to answer any questions about the Peel. Now I want to be sure that the department's decisions are in fact the minister's and not just the Premier's coming via another voice. Based on past experience, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has not only directed the department, but also hasn't always bothered to inform the minister of his undertakings. The last Minister of Environment didn't seem to mind that the Premier took control of her department. Let's hope things are different with the new minister.

Assuming he has the authority, what is the Minister of Environment's position on the Peel?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** Is it time to go over the *Corporate Governance Act* and look at which ministries and which departments have which responsibilities for what issues? I've been on the floor of the Assembly earlier in Question Period trying to respond to the questions regarding the land use plan-

ning process in the Peel region, the project and responsibilities within the domain of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. I tried to answer the member opposite's questions.

I do appreciate, too, that the script the member opposite has includes all kinds of aspersions cast upon others and all kinds of politically motivated statements, but if the member has another question regarding the Peel land use planning process, I would be pleased to answer it.

**Mr. Fairclough:** The Minister of Environment should be able to answer this. It's like déjà vu.

The government has had the Peel commission's recommended plan for months. In that time, and even before then, they have not succeeded in saying anything substantive about protection or development in the Peel. I hope to hear a lot about the Peel plan in the budget speech here today.

The territory is the largest landholder in the Peel, and Yukoners don't know if this government intends to protect it, mine it, use it for tourism purposes, or all or none of the above. It's time for this government to take a position and let people know where it stands on the Peel. It's not the time to stay silent in the hope of coasting into the next election without having to make any hard decisions.

Will the government finally release its position on the Peel?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** The Government of Yukon has a positive record of land use planning. We've completed the north Yukon land use plan. That was the first major land use plan in Yukon's history.

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** I appreciate the comment coming from the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin — yes.

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** It's always great to hear the contributions coming from the member opposite, and I am trying to acknowledge the contribution of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, which played a very important role in this process.

The Peel Watershed Planning Commission released its recommended plan in December 2009. Yukon government and four other parties — the First Nations of Na Cho Nyäk Dun and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Gwitchin Tribal Council and the Yukon government — signed a letter of understanding in January 2010 that describes how the parties will work together in the review of the plan and consultation process, to be concluded within the year.

The Yukon government also issued an interim one-year withdrawal from mineral staking in the Peel planning region in order to provide additional certainty during this process. Under chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* we have obligations to work with the affected First Nations. As the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin rightly acknowledged, we will certainly work with affected First Nations and seek their input in this very important planning process.

#### **Question re: Fiscal management**

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, as the Yukon Party's mandate winds down, the Premier and his team have decided to throw caution to the wind. They are going for broke, literally. Over the last two years, the Premier has emptied the taxpayers'

bank account. He has spent the surplus down to almost nothing and, since the last time this House has met, Yukoners have learned that the Premier has put plans in place to borrow \$100 million through the Yukon Energy Corporation. This is in addition to the \$67 million the Premier has authorized the Yukon Hospital Corporation to borrow.

This scale of borrowing has never been seen in the Yukon before. No government, of any political stripe, including the Yukon Party, has mortgaged the future in such an irresponsible way. The interest on this debt would continue to be paid for decades to come, long after this Premier has retired.

Why has this government been so reckless in its spending decisions?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, that's an interesting opinion. The member calls it "reckless". I think the member opposite should explain to Yukoners how he comes to that opinion. When the member looks at the last seven budgets we have presented to the Yukon Territory — and now our eighth one — it's clear that there has been no reckless spending, but an ever-increasing fiscal capacity for the Yukon Territory.

These are the results of a fiscal plan and well-thought-out, prudent fiscal management. That's why we are in surplus today, unlike the past, where we were in deficit. And indeed, we were in debt, but the member will conveniently ignore the fact that when we, the Yukon Party government, came into office, there was debt — millions of dollars of debt, which we have been paying down, by the way.

The member will not — will not — provide Yukoners with the facts that there was a deficit in our infrastructure, a deficit in our health care, a deficit in education, a deficit in the social safety net of the Yukon, and indeed a tremendous deficit, when we came into office, in the Yukon economy. All that has turned around because we are in surplus, because we've increased the fiscal capacity of the Yukon, not by recklessness, but by well-thought-out, prudent fiscal management.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Well, Mr. Speaker, where there's a deficit is in the final supplementary or the latest supplementary for the 2009-10 year. That's where there's a deficit. By the way, the Premier read the wrong lines out when he was answering the Member for Mount Lorne, because that deficit is \$23 million, according to his officials.

Past governments have, for many years, acted responsibly with the public's money. They've recognized that you can't do everything at once because it's irresponsible to pile up more and more debt and expect future generations to pay the bill, but that's the path this government is taking. The impacts of the borrowing decisions of this government will be millions of dollars paid in interest over the next 30 years. This is, of course, the same Premier who invested \$36 million in ABCP investments. It has been two and a half years since that bad decision was made and we still don't have all of our money returned to us. I doubt we ever will. That money would have come in handy now, because it would have cut the amount we needed to borrow considerably. This government only has its eye on the next election and it's turning a blind eye to the long-term costs of this borrowing.

Does the Premier think it's fair to saddle future generations of Yukoners with paying back this mountain of debt?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I don't think it's fair at all that the member opposite would not articulate the facts to Yukoners. Why doesn't the member stand on the floor and articulate the fact that in 2002, the Liberal government of the day here in the territory was actually paying debt service charges so that we could pay the wages of Yukon government employees?

Mr. Speaker, why doesn't the member articulate to the Yukon public that there was not one thin dime in the bank account? Why doesn't the member tell the Yukon public that today, there is almost \$200 million in the bank account? Why doesn't the member tell the Yukon public that, actually, Yukon government's investments are making millions of dollars for the Yukon public? Why doesn't the member tell the Yukon public how the member would deal with a \$20-million a year increase in diesel consumption at the Energy Corporation and how that would affect ratepayers, instead of doing what we're doing — building more hydro capacity, more affordable and greener energy? The member should tell Yukoners all these things in the question of fairness.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Let me tell Yukoners that a child — a girl or a boy born at Whitehorse General Hospital today — will be paying debt on behalf of this government on his or her 30<sup>th</sup> birthday — that's what I'll tell Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, it's all about trust and nobody trusts this tired government. It's spending more than it's taking in. The only reason the main budget shows a surplus is because the Premier has moved \$167 million in debt off of its main books.

He has shuffled the cost of Mayo B and all the new hospitals off the main ledgers. It's easy to make the numbers work when you simply take the bad stuff and pretend it doesn't exist.

Mr. Speaker, this is no way to run a household, it's no way to run a business and it's certainly no way to run a government. The Premier and his followers have set their sights on the next election. The plan is to spend as much money as possible and worry about the consequences another day. It's a reckless go-for-broke approach that will cost Yukoners dearly.

Why is the Premier putting the short-term goal of how his party does in the next election ahead of the long-term financial health of the Yukon? Why is he off-loading debt on to future generations of Yukoners?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Again, a very interesting opinion because now the member has stated that we're hiding the figures. So the member has now implicated the Auditor General, who has done our books for seven years in a row and has reported that we're not hiding any figures, including the consolidated statements that include the corporations here in the Yukon Territory.

Now the member has to explain that to the public. Why would the member imply the Auditor General is allowing the Yukon government to hide figures? This is getting ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.

The member doesn't even understand a financial statement. If the member cared to take time, even the most limited amount of time, to refer to the reporting of the government in its books, the member would see clearly that the Yukon gov-

ernment is not only in surplus at year-end, March 31, 2010, but we are projecting surpluses all the way out to the year 2014. How can the member explain that one to the public, considering the statements he has made here today?

I'm sure Yukoners would be interested to hear from him.

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

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT BILLS

#### Bill No. 20: Second Reading

**Clerk:** Second reading, Bill No. 20, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Fentie.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I move that Bill No. 20, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now read a second time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 20, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now read a second time.

#### Budget speech

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, honourable members, it indeed gives me great pleasure today to table the 2010-11 budget. This is our fourth budget of our second majority mandate and our eighth budget since taking office back in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is an investment in building Yukon's future. The Government of Yukon's budget for 2010-11 totals \$1 billion and \$75 million.

The operation and maintenance budget totals \$811.9 million, of which \$99.6 million is recoverable.

The capital budget total is \$263.5 million, of which \$143.9 million is recoverable. Like the 2009-10 budget, this budget exceeds the \$1-billion threshold. This budget, once again, is the largest budget in the history of Yukon. This budget presents Yukon's fiscal position in surplus.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin with the important part of governing, and that is practising good government. Since taking office in 2002, the Yukon Party government has undertaken a number of major initiatives that are changing the lives of Yukoners, and indeed changing the lives of Yukoners for the better, whether it be in relation to education, justice, the environment, energy, health and social services, or the economy, our actions speak louder than words.

Oftentimes governments conduct major studies that sit on the shelf and are never even implemented. This is not the case with the major Yukon Party government initiatives. One such initiative is the education reform project. This project's final report was released in February 2008. It was 30 months in the making and contains some 153 recommendations. The purpose of the reform project was to engage First Nation governments, citizens and other partners in education to effect positive, sustainable change in the education system here in Yukon for the expressed purpose of benefit for all Yukoners.

Under the leadership of our Minister of Education, the Department of Education is currently implementing its new vision for education, not letting that vision sit on the shelf. It is entitled "New Horizons: Honouring our Commitment to the Fu-

ture". New Horizons reflects the outcome of the education reform project consultations, prior consultations and current research and knowledge of best practices.

Mr. Speaker, we are creating an education system that will engage, evolve and transform in order to meet the expectations, the needs and the demands of the ever-changing world within which we live.

A second major initiative was the corrections consultation that commenced in November of 2004 and concluded in March of 2006. This 15-month, territorial-wide public consultation on the future direction of the correctional system in the Yukon was co-chaired by the Government of Yukon and the Council of Yukon First Nations. The corrections consultation revealed 20 major issues ranging from accountability, motivation, rehabilitation, and healing, to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and to programs at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

It resulted in a new philosophy of corrections that emphasizes the protection of the public, holds offenders accountable and provides appropriate opportunities for rehabilitation. This new philosophy is being reflected in the new *Corrections Act* and our new corrections facilities. Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of our Minister of Justice, these consultations have not been left on the shelf. It has also led to the development of the victims of crime strategy and the draft victims of crime act that is now being proposed.

We are working to ensure that victims of crime, especially women, have access to the services that they need. The Yukon *Substance Abuse Action Plan* was another major undertaking by our government that focused on four strategic directions: education and prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and of course, enforcement.

The safer communities and neighbourhoods office, known as SCAN, and the street crime reduction team are two very successful and effective initiatives emanating from the *Substance Abuse Action Plan*.

On the environmental front, our government addressed the global issue of climate change through the preparation of the Government of Yukon climate change strategy that was adopted on September 5, 2006. On February 12, 2009, after all that work with the public, our government released its climate change action plan. Once again, this plan is not on the shelf. Under the leadership of the current Minister of Environment and past ministers, we have recognized that many actions have already been taken and we will continue to work on and implement our plan to get a better understanding of climate change, to adapt to climate change and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That is leading Yukon's action in response to this global phenomenon.

One of the key actions was to establish the Yukon Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence at Yukon College. This is in keeping with the commitment outlined in our action plan. The doors to the Yukon Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence were officially opened on October 21, 2009. Again, this is not on the shelf, Mr. Speaker; this is now on the ground, working on behalf of Yukoners as part of Yukon's membership in the global community.



The *Climate Change Action Plan* is inextricably linked to another major government initiative, which is our energy strategy. In fact, both the *Climate Change Action Plan* and the *Energy Strategy for Yukon* were developed at the same time to help ensure they dealt with common issues in a consistent manner. The *Energy Strategy for Yukon* was released on January 23, 2009.

Mr. Speaker, energy is key to the Yukon's future and our government is wasting no time in following through implementing many of the priority actions outlined in the *Energy Strategy*. Once again, the *Energy Strategy* is not on the shelf, Mr. Speaker; we are out on the ground implementing that strategy, that plan. Under the leadership of our Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, that policy work is well underway.

In our 2006 election platform, commitments to work toward the development of a territorial-wide electrical grid were made, connecting the Whitehorse-Aishihik-Faro grid and the Mayo-Dawson grid by completing the Carmacks-Stewart transmission line. Upgrading the Mayo hydro facility is the first project, Mr. Speaker, that has been approved under the Government of Canada's green infrastructure fund. I am pleased to say that our efforts with Canada resulted in a partnership whereby Canada — after doing its due diligence — has committed \$71 million to this very important project for the Yukon.

Expanding hydro-generated power will reduce our current carbon footprint by 50 percent, displacing 50,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Forecasts indicate that, without this project, at least \$20 million of diesel will be needed annually by the year 2012 to meet the projected demand of our consumers. It is expected the project will reduce forecast diesel generation in 2012 by over 40 percent. That is a good investment for Yukoners; that is an investment in the future, not mortgaging the future.

Solid-waste management is another major environmental initiative that has been undertaken by our government. The Department of Community Services worked with EBA Engineering to conduct a comprehensive solid-waste study across the Yukon at all facilities. This was with an objective to identify ways to standardize and modernize Yukon's waste-management activities.

The Yukon solid-waste action plan was subsequently tabled in this House on November 5, 2009. Once again, through the leadership of our minister responsible, it now sets out how we can improve our infrastructure and services and take advantage of new opportunities for sustainable waste management. Again, this initiative is no longer on the shelf. It is being implemented throughout the territory.

In April 2008, our government commissioned another major review, the Yukon health care review, to examine the sustainability of Yukon's health care system over the next decade. The *Yukon Health Care Review Final Report* was completed in September 2008 and contained 43 recommendations under the heading of "actions for change".

Yukoners wanted to see a stronger emphasis on recruitment and retention of health care professionals, emphasis on an integration of prevention, education and wellness programs, better long-term care, home care and community-based op-

tions, more collaborative and alternative health care options, and some carefully planned private user fee health care services.

Under the leadership of our Minister of Health and Social Services, this is not on the shelf — it is being implemented in today's Yukon, serving Yukoners' health care needs.

On February 17, 2010, the health care review oversight committee met to discuss launching of a new initiative we call a wellness strategy for Yukon. The wellness strategy will be a broad, overarching framework within which there will be specific areas of focus; namely children and youth, healthy aging and social inclusion. It will include actions that support such things as physical activity, healthy eating, healthy body weights, and other action areas yet to be identified.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned social inclusion in relation to the wellness strategy. Social inclusion in itself is another major, new Yukon government strategy that is currently in the developmental stage. Quite possibly, it will be the most significant social policy initiative in the history of the Yukon government. Social inclusion does not just involve poverty; it includes access to housing, education, health and social services, and other required and appropriate services.

The strategy will be developed in collaboration and have specific and measurable goals and objectives, be evidence based, and be premised upon a commitment to constant improvement, accountability and renewal.

A social inclusion symposium will be held in Whitehorse, and interested parties can visit the website at [www.abetteryukon.ca](http://www.abetteryukon.ca) for more information or to register for the symposium.

During this period of global economic uncertainty, our government took action to meet this economic challenge by making strategic investments that provide economic stimulus both in the short term and in the long term.

We focused our efforts on diversification by promoting natural resource development, film and sound, research and development, information and technology, tourism, trade, arts and culture, agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, trapping and outfitting, and small business development — an impressive array of strategic targets.

There is economic strength in diversity. We made these strategic investments with the help of Yukoners through the good work of two deputy minister committees chaired by me in my capacity as Minister of Finance.

The oversight committee on the economy was mandated to monitor and assess economic trends, identify and analyze Yukon opportunities to address impacts and to identify key strategic options.

The committee on major capital projects provided advice on the implementation of our government's capital investment plan for the territory with the priority objective of ensuring maximum benefit to Yukon. These committees sought advice from a broad spectrum of economic stakeholders here in the territory and their advice informed, to a large degree, our 2009-10 budget and our 2010-11 budget tabled here today.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Minister Oversight Committee on Major Capital Projects working with the Department

of Finance has allowed us to table a budget that includes a multi-year capital plan. This plan provides a schedule of specific capital project priorities to which our government is committed. In addition, this plan identifies our commitment to stable, predictable investments in many key sectors of our economy.

We are committed to a three-year plan of annual core expenditures related to information and technology initiatives of some \$6.5 million; capital building maintenance projects, some \$12 million; and some \$15 million for land development throughout the territory. The plan also provides for a minimum of \$40 million for highways and airports, with the flexibility to adjust priorities in response to emerging challenges and other commitments.

There are three other major initiatives involving relationships that our government has undertaken since we took office in 2002, and that is transforming our territory and improving the lives of all Yukoners. The first involves our government's relationship with Yukon First Nations. That relationship is defined by the treaties and by our partnership approach to the three First Nation governments that have not yet attained treaty settlements. We promote cooperative governance with Yukon First Nations based on mutual respect of each other's jurisdiction in order to ensure the better operation of all governments in the territory, with the objective of providing benefits, reducing barriers and providing more cost-effective services for all Yukon citizens.

Further, under our watch since 2002, three Yukon First Nations have reached final agreements: the Kluane First Nation, the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and the Carcross-Tagish First Nation.

This government-to-government relationship has produced a number of accomplishments. Some of these accomplishments are as follows: the establishment of the Yukon Forum involving the Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nation governments; re-establishing the intergovernmental forum involving the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, and all 14 Yukon First Nation governments; the allocation of funds under major federal initiatives, such as the \$50-million northern housing trust, the \$40-million northern strategy fund, and the \$27-million investment in strategic investments in northern economic development, called SINED; support for Yukon First Nations in negotiating new self-government financial transfer agreements with the Government of Canada to properly fund final agreement implementation plans; and we have showcased Yukon First Nation culture at both the 2007 Canada Winter Games and the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

These are just some of the many achievements the Government of Yukon and First Nation governments have attained by working together.

The second major initiative involving relationships concerns the development of a pan-northern approach with our two sister territories in dealing with the federal and provincial governments and in marketing the north.

Under this approach, Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut were successful in creating the five-year territorial

health access fund and its two-year extension. We were also successful in negotiating the retention of the extremely important territorial funding formula for the three territories, marketing the north at the 2007 Canada Winter Games and most recently again at the Olympics in Vancouver.

The third major relationship initiative involves the Assembly itself — the Yukon Legislative Assembly, that is. We made a commitment to make the Legislature work better and our government is following through on a number of initiatives to indeed make that happen. Examples include establishment of all-party committees of this Legislature to conduct public consultation on anti-smoking, human rights and whistle-blower protection.

The report of the Select Committee on Anti-Smoking Legislation led to the passage of the *Smoke-free Places Act* in 2008. Similarly, the Select Committee on Human Rights presented a report to the Assembly recommending changes that were included in the *Act to Amend the Human Rights Act* that passed in the 2009 spring sitting.

Currently, Mr. Speaker, three more select committees have been established to deal with matters of importance to Yukoners — namely, the Select Committee on the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, the Select Committee on Bill No. 108, which is a private member bill — *Legislative Renewal Act* — and the Select Committee on the Safe Operation and Use of Off-road Vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is important to note that the 31<sup>st</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> Legislative Assemblies have passed more unanimous motions than any previous Legislative Assembly since the inception of party politics in 1978 — an impressive record for the members of this House, an impressive record for this institution. I think all members of this House should take pride in this fact as it is a clear demonstration of the Assembly's will to make this place work better.

Mr. Speaker, practising good government also means meeting our government's obligations to Yukon's francophone community. The French Language Services Directorate, which in the short form is FLSD, is continuing to increase our government's capacity to deliver French language services. Under the leadership of the minister responsible, we continue to do so with the utmost commitment.

One of the most important priorities for all Yukoners is a strong and diversified private sector economy. One of our key election platform commitments was to continue to utilize government budgets and policies to stimulate the private sector economy and promote the development of a balanced budget for the future. That commitment is ongoing.

Capital spending in the Yukon for the 2010-11 fiscal year will be over \$600 million when the capital projects of the private sector and other governments and agencies are included. A good portion of this unprecedented level of capital investment is flowing from a variety of federal funding initiatives under Canada's economic action plan.

Our challenge as a government is to capitalize as much as possible on the Government of Canada's stimulus funds that expire March 31, 2011. It's a case of use it or lose it, and we

have every intention to use it all to obtain maximum benefits for Yukoners through the investments we can make.

The other major portion of this unprecedented \$600-million investment in 2010-11 is flowing from Yukon's rejuvenated mining sector with an estimated contribution of some \$229 million plus. That is private sector investment. The Yukon has a long history of mining, with the mineral industry forming the foundation of the territory's private sector economy for over a century. History is about to repeat itself.

The Yukon is expected to have three operating hardrock mines by this summer. This is a major achievement for the Yukon, with mining now fully back in the territory as one of our prime economic generators.

The three mines are the Minto mine, Wolverine and Bellekeno. The Wolverine mine is a \$250-million investment and the Bellekeno mine is a \$50-million investment. Both anticipate production later this year.

It was the year of the Yukon at the 2010 Mineral Exploration Roundup held in Vancouver in January, and Yukon established a considerable presence at the 2010 Prospectors and Developers Association mining convention, which was held in Toronto earlier this March, represented by our Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

It was clear that Yukon, in many respects, is leading the charge in Canada at bringing back mining investment and this very important industry to Canada and in this case, to Yukon.

This convention had some 22,000 delegates. Out of that 22,000, many are interested in what this territory has to offer in the way of potential and opportunity.

While it's still too early to predict the level of exploration this year, indications show that it's going to be another good year with expectations to exceed \$150 million in investment. Mr. Speaker, that is private sector investment.

The Department of Economic Development and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources have done a stellar job in marketing the Yukon both nationally and internationally. We really appreciate both ministers' efforts, for their efforts are bearing fruit. These two departments formed a mining investment promotion team and created a new mining web portal — [www.miningyukon.com](http://www.miningyukon.com) — that was launched in January. The portal focuses on attracting mining investment here to the territory and contains a wide range of information from community engagement to geological data to job training.

Our government's marketing initiatives in China over the years are paying off. The Yukon now has a sister province relationship with China's Shaanxi province, and two Chinese companies have purchased Yukon Zinc's Wolverine project. In addition, Selwyn Resources and a Chinese zinc and lead producer have established a new joint venture to advance Yukon's Selwyn project, one of the largest undeveloped zinc and lead deposits in the world, located in eastern Yukon, overlapping the Yukon-Northwest Territories border.

Further, the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games provided Yukon an opportunity to reach the worldwide markets, and we made the most of it. Our government sponsored several business and investment events, including a mining investment attraction called "A Mine Altering Experience";

the Yukon First Nations artisan market and business showcase, in partnership with the Yukon Indian Development Corporation and the Council of Yukon First Nations; and hosting international media and travel trade representatives in Yukon to experience iconic winter events centred on Yukon tourism, culture, sport and economic development.

Yukon visual artists and performers, Arctic Sport and Dene Games athletes, youth ambassadors, Yukon First Nation elders and cultural presentations entertained and educated southern audiences. Yukon's presence at Canada's Northern House and the Aboriginal Pavilion also provided golden opportunities to share our culture, sport and business sector with a world audience. Headed up by our Minister of Tourism and Culture, the Yukon contingent represented this territory very well. They were exemplary ambassadors for the Yukon and the results will certainly be positive.

We are making the most of opportunities by continuing to market Yukon, by providing incentives to business and industry, developing a trained and skilled workforce, promoting economic diversification, and investing in community, transportation and community infrastructure.

The Department of Tourism and Culture is investing \$750,000 in the Destination Yukon cooperative marketing campaign, designed to increase awareness of the Yukon as a travel destination from our key target markets of Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Toronto to attract more Canadian visitors to our territory.

The department is contributing \$700,000 to the tourism cooperative marketing fund to market trade-ready tourism business. First Nation governments, municipal governments, tourism organizations and other stakeholders will be exposed to prospective events, culture, beauty and history. This is for the visitors from around the world.

Tourism and Culture is providing \$170,000 for the purchase and development of displays to promote Yukon at various travel trade and consumer shows and events, as well as in the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport terminal.

A key attraction will be the Kwanlin Dun cultural centre. This centre will also include a new public library. The development is on the Whitehorse waterfront and there will be a \$10.3-million investment in this project in this budget.

The Department of Economic Development is playing its part through a \$250,000 contribution that starts in 2009-10 for the Yukon entrepreneur support program that targets start-up businesses, providing assistance and support similar to the Yukon business development program.

Energy, Mines and Resources is playing an important role by once again providing an investment of \$1.8 million to the Yukon mining incentive program to further attract Yukon exploration initiatives to this territory.

Core libraries support mineral exploration and provide valuable information to enable stewardship and sustainable development of our mineral wealth, energy and land resources. Work on the \$3.775 million Yukon core library will identify options for increased secure storage for current and future specimens as well as for the storage of equipment required for geological field research.

Our government is utilizing various funding programs to ensure Yukoners have the necessary training to take advantage of employment opportunities. Some examples are \$4.375 million invested in the labour market development agreement, a \$1.5 million community training fund another \$1.457 million under the labour market agreement.

This is targeting the unemployed and underemployed clients, including social assistance recipients, older workers, youth and persons with disabilities. The community development fund will continue in this budget with further investment in this area. The Department of Economic Development, through its funding programs, is continuing to work hard to diversify the Yukon economy by supporting industries in addition to mining and tourism. For example, the Yukon Film and Sound Commission will create 13 one-minute webisode commercials advertising Yukon as the premier wilderness and snow filming location. The project was approved for \$535,000. This funding from the community adjustment fund of CanNor for 2010-11 will be a very important investment in collaboration with the Government of Yukon, who will invest a further \$90,000.

The Yukon sound recording program will receive \$50,000, once again providing Yukon artists with the ability to expand and enhance their talents.

Our government continues to invest heavily in transportation infrastructure — in highways, in roads, in bridges and in airports. The Department of Highways and Public Works will be providing some \$40 million plus in this budget for highway reconstruction and upgrades, resurfacing and erosion control.

Our government will be investing \$15.25 million this year as part of our three-year program to upgrade the Robert Campbell Highway, which will open up this highway corridor further for resource exploration, development and indeed tourism potential. A further \$775,000 is being provided for resurfacing this very highway, in preparation for the Yukon Zinc bulk ore haul.

Investment for the Shakwak project this year totals another \$10 million. The Pelly River bridge on the Klondike Highway will receive \$2.5 million. A further \$2.6 million on the Norden-skiold bridge will be invested this year.

Two major bridge rehabilitation projects on the Alaska Highway at Albert Creek and Deadman Creek will receive another \$2.4 million in investment, and several other smaller bridge rehabilitation projects will receive just over \$1 million in investment.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that our Minister of Highways and Public Works and the department he heads up will be very, very busy in the coming year.

We're also committing to the safety and integrity of Yukon's airport infrastructure. Accordingly, we are investing another \$4.8 million for airport infrastructure in Whitehorse, Dawson City, Faro, Mayo, Silver City, Burwash and Old Crow.

With Yukon's ever-growing population and burgeoning economy, land and lot development is critical. In this budget, we will be investing some \$15 million for land development projects in Dawson, Carmacks, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction, Mayo, Watson Lake and Whitehorse. Mr. Speaker, the

construction of the Whistle Bend development is beginning and lot supply is anticipated in the fall of 2012.

Mr. Speaker, another priority that the Yukon public holds dear is the environment and our wildlife. Just as the land claim settlements empowered Yukon First Nations, the devolution transfer agreement that our government implemented on April 1, 2003 — these agreements have made Yukoners masters in their own house.

Devolution gave Yukon control and management over land and resources. With control and management also came the responsibility and the obligation to manage Yukon resources in the interest of all Yukoners, and this presents challenges to government. That is why our election platform commits our government to protecting and preserving Yukon's environment and wildlife, while researching, mitigating and adapting to climate change as one of the four major pillars of our vision and plan for the future.

Now, I spoke of challenges, Mr. Speaker, and one of the largest environmental challenges facing Yukoners is the remediation of the Faro mine that is slated to last long, long into the future. So while the financial responsibility for this remediation rests with Ottawa, the Government of Yukon is responsible for carrying out the work. Our government's management of the care and maintenance of the Faro mine complex is proceeding with extensive site work of Denison Environmental Services, which is planned for 2010. This work will receive an investment totalling some \$33.9 million. This will reduce environmental risk, protect human health and safety and, while all this is happening, providing economic opportunities for Yukon First Nations and Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, our government is working in partnership with the Ross River Dena Council and the mining industry to develop a resource plan for the traditional use area of the Ross River Dena and enhance community capacity through an outdoor education program of environmental management and cultural awareness. The northern strategy is providing \$100,000 to implement this three-year initiative. There will be \$300,000 in total.

The Yukon Placer Secretariat is working with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government in another three-year, \$350,000 program to increase the ability of individual First Nation governments to participate in the fish habitat management system of Yukon placer mining.

Mr. Speaker, work is also underway to expand Yukon's forestry research infrastructure. In recent years, heightened interest in the forest industry expansion has coincided with a growing awareness of climate change impacts on Yukon forest ecosystems. These changes have triggered significant ecological response in Yukon forests, including a large-scale spruce bark beetle outbreak that has had a significant effect on many Yukon communities.

Further, the Arctic research infrastructure fund will invest \$1.052 million to expand Yukon's forestry research infrastructure. At the same time, the northern strategy is funding a spruce beetle impact mitigation project in the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations traditional territory. Further, the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations fuel abatement project will reduce

the threat of large wildfires and support the development of capacity for forest-based enterprises. Investment of \$115,000 in 2010-11 is being provided to implement this three-year project, and there will be a total investment of \$350,000.

Mr. Speaker, our government will also provide another \$1 million for the FireSmart program, which has been an ongoing program contributing to the reduction of fire risk near and around Yukon communities and, at the same time, creating employment for local residents in those communities.

The Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre, in conjunction with our research centre, is another important facility that our government is promoting through the contribution of another \$844,000 this fiscal year.

Another important election platform commitment was to ensure Yukoners access to safe drinking water. In that regard, we will be investing \$1.133 million under the municipal rural infrastructure fund to support improvements to the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation water supply and allow for more households in the community to switch to a more reliable, potable water source.

Another \$1.45 million has been designated to complete upgrades to the surface water treatment system in Carcross in order to meet newly revised guidelines for Canadian drinking water quality.

There is another \$3.41 million for arsenic treatment upgrades to meet guidelines for the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Carcross-Tagish First Nations, Haines Junction and Teslin.

There will be another \$1.1 million to treat the Ross River water supply for arsenic and manganese.

Similarly, our government is working with Canada and the communities to address waste-water treatment to meet regulatory requirements and the needs of all communities.

Projects include the following: \$1.521 million to complete the installation of a new mechanical waste-water treatment system in Carmacks; \$150,000 for investigation of sewage treatment options in Old Crow; and a further \$16.8 million for the new secondary waste-water treatment facility in Dawson City, which will include the construction of a district biomass heating system.

All this results in achieving a better quality of life for Yukoners. Most of our government's major initiatives since taking office in 2002 relate to improving Yukoners' quality of life. With this budget, we continue that trend. Education, of course, plays a key role in this regard and I already referred to the New Horizons strategic plan as one of our government's major reform initiatives.

So, too, the replacement of F.H. Collins Secondary School — this is another important investment for Yukon. This budget includes \$2.7 million for the design of a new F.H. Collins Secondary School.

And we continue to focus on literacy. This budget, with another \$126,000 toward the Four Winds project, promotes a culturally inclusive family literacy centre that helps to meet family, community and workplace literacy needs across the Yukon.

Our government is also supporting Yukon College with investments for research over and above the Yukon Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence. Some \$950,000 will enable Yukon College to develop a research and commercialization facility. Further, the Government of Yukon, in partnership with Industry Canada, is providing funding for two new community campuses. The first involves a \$1.4-million contribution over the next two years to construct a new campus in Pelly Crossing and the second involves \$2.6 million over two years — both are commencing in 2009-10 — for Yukon College to construct a two-floor addition to the existing School of Visual Arts in Dawson City.

Mr. Speaker, our government is a strong supporter of non-government organizations serving Yukon youth. Three such organizations — Bringing Youth Towards Equality, Youth of Today Society, and the Boys and Girls Club of Whitehorse, will receive an additional \$110,000 each in annual funding to support programming costs.

Further, our government is signing a three-year agreement with each NGO, as mentioned above, for the 2010-11 through to 2012-13 fiscal years.

A total of \$924,000 has been allocated over the next three years to implement the victims of crime strategy, with \$312,000 being provided in this fiscal year. Under the victims of crime strategy, \$185,207 will fund year 1 of a three-year social marketing and public education campaign focusing on violence against women.

Mr. Speaker, our minister responsible for the Women's Directorate has been working diligently with many others in this area. Moreover, the northern strategy will provide \$215,420 to conduct a three-year project implementing recommendations from the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit, and the prevention of violence against aboriginal women initiative has doubled to \$200,000 annually for programs and events designed and developed by aboriginal women for their communities and themselves. Mr. Speaker, the women's equality fund has been enhanced to provide another \$300,000 for each of the next three years. Women are very important to this government.

One of our government's largest projects is the construction of a new Whitehorse Correctional Centre. This is currently on time and on budget. This project is a cornerstone of an overall redevelopment of the correctional system that will change the way we do corrections in the territory and provide a new regulatory model for operations. The budget allocation for this year for the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre is \$28 million.

The Yukon Housing Corporation also plays a key role in improving the quality of life for Yukoners, especially in relation to the provision of social and seniors housing. There are a considerable number of housing projects currently underway.

Approximately \$50 million in new building construction projects have been initiated and will continue in 2010-11 with a budget of \$36 million to complete projects started last year. Social housing projects include: \$7 million for the replacement of Korbo Apartments in Dawson City; \$3.3 million for the construction of a 30-unit Whitehorse affordable family housing complex for single-parent families; \$2.682 million to replace

obsolete double-wide trailers in Carmacks, Ross River and Dawson City with new units built to SuperGreen energy standards; \$2.2 million for six housing units in Whitehorse that will provide additional multi-bedroom units for the social housing portfolio; and \$3.7 million for the upgrade of existing social housing Yukon-wide.

Seniors housing projects include: \$1.64 million to build an Abbeyfield seniors housing building that promotes independent and communal living including meal services; \$11.25 million to replace the 207 Alexander Street seniors housing complex in Whitehorse with a new SuperGreen energy efficient building; and \$3.25 million for seniors buildings in Faro, Teslin and Watson Lake.

Our government is allocating \$520,000 to enhance and support the Yukon home care program to provide services to all Yukoners, particularly those who require home care outside Whitehorse. The new children's receiving home for boys is being constructed by the Department of Health and Social Services on the site of the former home in Whitehorse. A six-bed facility is on target for completion in June with a budget allocation of some \$122,000.

We are also utilizing modern technology to improve health care services for Yukoners. Examples include a \$2.019-million investment for teleradiology to provide computer radiology in 13 community health centres, and another \$120,000 of allocation to expand telehealth video conferencing equipment capabilities into First Nation offices.

Alcohol and drug abuse is a perennial Yukon problem. Our government, through the alcohol and drug information referral service, is providing a further \$38,000 to establish a 24-hour crisis information line that offers public access to addiction support workers at all times.

We are also investing \$444,000 for the Yukon addiction services system standards and evaluation project that will enhance, create and document systems that standardize detox and treatment practices. In addition, we will allocate \$90,200 to provide an alcohol and drug services addictions counsellor for the Community Wellness Court.

Mr. Speaker, our Minister of Health and Social Services bears a tremendous challenge. That is why this budget will see a significant, well over \$200-million investment in health care for Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, municipalities make a major contribution to providing a better quality of life for Yukoners, and our government indeed recognizes that fact. We are currently in year 3 of a five-year commitment to increase the comprehensive municipal grants and the community operations budget for provision of municipal-type services in unincorporated communities.

The increase in this budget is \$808,000 for the grants to municipalities and \$121,000 for unincorporated communities. The Department of Community Services has a role to play in delivering medical care as well. Community Services is investing \$357,000 for the planning and design of a new integrated emergency response facility here in Whitehorse that will house the new primary emergency medical services ambulance station and ensure quick EMS response times to serve a growing community that includes new neighbourhoods along Hamilton

Boulevard and the Alaska Highway. The secondary EMS ambulance station will remain at the Whitehorse General Hospital.

Sport and recreation are essential in improving the quality of life in Yukon. Yukon is indeed fortunate in having sport and recreational facilities in every community. We are even more fortunate to have the recreational infrastructure program, or RinC program, that is providing another \$823,000 to maintain, improve and upgrade recreation facilities in seven Yukon communities.

The decade of sport and culture initiative that was planned by our government as far back as 2003, together with its ancillary programs of Culture Quest, the Best Ever program, and Yukon Sport for Life, have been tremendously successful and have produced a truly wonderful, growing legacy that now includes the 2007 Canada Winter Games and the 2010 Olympics and Paralympics and beyond. This legacy is going to continue with Yukon participation in the 2011 North American Indigenous Games, the 2011 Halifax Canada Winter Games and the 2012 Arctic Winter Games, which will be hosted by the City of Whitehorse.

The Department of Community Services is committing another \$150,000 over two years for the 2011 North American Indigenous Games, \$120,000 for the Canada Winter Games in Halifax, and another million dollars for the 2012 Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse.

So, in conclusion, Yukoners have much to be proud of. We are an independent, energetic people, rich in history and cultural diversity. We live in a beautiful, bountiful land that is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and we have a quality of life in Yukon second to none in Canada, if not the world.

Despite the global economic times, we in Yukon have a growing and diversified private sector economy that year-by-year is supplanting the old economy dependent upon federal transfer payments and government spending of the past. Clearly, the Yukon is on the pathway to prosperity.

This budget invests in Yukon today, tomorrow and long into the future. This is by no means a budget that will reduce Yukoners' ability in the future. It is a budget to build the future. The 2010-11 budget is indeed a budget for tomorrow. It is a budget that provides certainty and direction over the next three years. We, the Yukon Party government, are indeed proud of this budget and all the good work that it will do.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the 2010-11 budget to all members of this House. Thank you.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, I move that debate be now adjourned.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition that debate be now adjourned.

*Motion to adjourn debate on second reading of Bill No. 20 agreed to*

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I move that the House do now adjourn.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

*Motion agreed to*

**Speaker:** This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. Monday.

*The House adjourned at 2:49 p.m.*

**The following document was filed March 25, 2010:**

10-1-137

Mayo Hydro Enhancement Project (Mayo B), Proposed; Application by Yukon Energy Corporation for an Energy Project Certificate and an Energy Operation Certificate: letters (dated February 15, 17 & 19, 2010) between Mr. Bruce McLennan, Chair, Yukon Utilities Board, and the Hon. Marian Horne, Minister of Justice (Cardiff)