

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, September 23, 2010— 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes which have been made to the Order Paper. Motions No. 862, 1049 and 1130, standing in the name of the Member for Lake Laberge, and Motions No. 1036 and 1119, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike, have been removed from the Order Paper as they are outdated.

We'll proceed at this time with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Day

Hon. Ms. Horne: I rise today to pay tribute to National Peace Officers Memorial Day. This Sunday, September 26, flags at the Andrew A. Philipsen Law Centre, the main administration building, the Tourism and Culture Centre, and the Education building will be flown at half-mast in memory of the police officers who have given their lives in the line of duty here in Yukon and across Canada, from the officers of the Lost Patrol to the Yukon's most recent loss, Constable Michael Potvin, who died in August in the Stewart River.

All Yukon has felt grief for this fallen officer. He is remembered as a loving husband, son, brother, and a devoted police officer and, most bittersweet, now a father.

Allison, his wife, should be commended for the grace and dignity she has shown through this sad time for her and her family. She is truly an inspiration for us all. She and their son, Jack Michael Potvin, can be ever proud of the legacy that Michael has left us.

All fallen officers cared enough about their neighbours and their communities that they gave their lives for their ideals. Our police officers are an integral part of our peaceful society, and we support them in the often difficult task of keeping our families and communities safe.

I urge all Yukoners to be ever aware, especially this Sunday. Take a moment. Stop and reflect on the effort of these courageous individuals and many other men and women who serve for M Division here in Yukon, who put their lives on the line on a daily basis so that we Yukoners can live in a society that is safe, peaceful and secure. They do this on a daily basis as a matter of course without the expectation of a thank you. We do thank you. Thank you for being there for our safety. Günilschish.

Mr. Inverarity: I rise today on behalf of the Official Opposition and the Third Party to pay tribute to the national Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Day. The murder of Ottawa rookie David Kirkwood on July 11, 1977, launched a re-

sponse that today has become a nationally recognized ceremony honouring police and peace officers killed in the line of duty.

Following Kirkwood's senseless death, Ottawa police officers vowed to keep his memory alive and ensure that others like him would not be forgotten by Canadians.

On Sunday, September 24, 1978, a special service and a tribute were held. The site selected was Parliament Hill where laws are made that directly impact on police officers' safety and ultimately the quality of life for all of us.

The ceremony was expanded to honour all police officers killed in the line of duty, both current and in the past. The original ceremonies only included police and correctional officers killed in the line of duty, but in 1995, it was expanded to include all peace officers so that all areas of law enforcement are now honoured in one single ceremony.

These public servants — police, corrections, conservation, highway safety, youth corrections, sheriffs and security personnel — go to work every day out of a commitment to serve and to protect. A formal national memorial day gives Canadians an opportunity each year to formally express appreciation for the dedication of police and peace officers who make the ultimate, tragic sacrifice on their job to keep our community safe.

This day is important for highlighting the acts of bravery of police and peace officers and for honouring their colleagues who have died in the line of duty. Men and women being remembered on this day are all beloved family members and fellow officers. In the Yukon we have lost one of our own this year with the tragic drowning of RCMP Constable Michael Potvin of the Mayo detachment. Constable Potvin was highly thought of in the community and was very involved with the youth in Mayo. Our thoughts are with his wife, Allison, their newborn son, Jack Michael, his family and friends and the fellow officers on this Memorial Day. He will not be forgotten.

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

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I have for tabling today a letter sent to the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees.

Speaker: Reports of committees.
 Any petitions?
 Any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 93: Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Ms. Horne: I move that Bill No. 93, entitled *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 93, entitled *Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for the introduction and first reading of Bill No. 93 agreed to

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Nordick: I give notice of the following motion:
THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue listening to what Yukoners have stated is one of their top issues and practise good governance.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House recognizes the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to review the penalties for drivers in Yukon convicted of impaired driving and consider making changes to the penalties section of the *Motor Vehicles Act* and its regulations.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges Yukon's Member of Parliament Larry Bagnell, to return to Yukon and explain to his constituents why he chose to follow the dictates of the Liberal Party Leader, Michael Ignatieff, and breach his commitment with Yukoners by voting to save the long-gun registry when he knows the vast majority of his constituents are opposed to the long-gun registry and he has told Yukoners since being elected that he opposed the long-gun registry.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to stop delaying the legislative reform initiative supported by all parties in this House and immediately appoint its allotted number of members to the select committee and call a meeting so this committee could begin its important work to increase the productivity of members in this Assembly.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support changing the Standing Orders of this Assembly to prevent the government side from monopolizing the limited time available to all members of this Assembly on opposition private members' day as was unfortunately practised again yesterday by the Member for Porter Creek North in his more than three-hour filibuster.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to secure and enhance the Porter Creek Secondary School four-year drug dog pilot program by:

(1) housing the program within the Department of Education;

(2) granting the program permanent status and associated long-term funding;

(3) working with the program coordinator to include services and program location with Porter Creek Secondary School; and

(4) extending the program to other schools on request.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to implement a guaranteed minimum annual income allowance for all eligible Yukon citizens as recommended by Conservative Party Senator Hugh Segal, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, the Macdonald Commission, the National Council of Welfare, the Special Senate Committee on Poverty and the federal working paper on social security, which would:

(1) expand human dignity;

(2) end poverty;

(3) save on the costs of hospitals, prisons and police work;

(4) eliminate or significantly reduce the burden on the social assistance system;

(5) be recoverable through the personal income tax systems for those earning over a certain amount; and

(6) simplify administration and reduce administrative costs.

I also give notice of the following motion:

WHEREAS the current minimum wage of \$8.93 is not a living wage and is inadequate to meet even basic needs;

WHEREAS on April 1, 2010, the minimum wage was increased by \$0.04 an hour, as per the regulation tying it to the consumer price index;

WHEREAS the cost of living is far higher in the Yukon and the minimum wage should reflect this reality;

WHEREAS Yukon's minimum wage is the fifth lowest of Canadian provinces and territories; and

WHEREAS the minimum wage in Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan is higher than in the Yukon;

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to immediately raise the minimum wage to at least \$10 hour per hour.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to honour its commitment to the *Substance Abuse Action Plan* by immediately establishing the proposed community harm reduction fund and implementing policies of harm reduction for addictions programs which will:

(1) minimize harmful consequences for addictions;

(2) provide humane and practical help for addicted persons;

(3) reduce high risk behaviour;

(4) assist in reducing long-term costs of health care

(5) increase support for high-risk young women;

(6) improve alcohol and drug education in Yukon schools;

(7) increase counselling services for youth; and

(8) provide more resources to support communities to develop plans to identify and combat particular factors that contribute to substance abuse.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of:

(1) the operating plan for the new emergency youth shelter on Jeckell Street in Whitehorse;

(2) the intake procedure for the new emergency youth shelter on Jeckell Street in Whitehorse;

(3) the programs available at the new emergency youth shelter on Jeckell Street in Whitehorse;

(4) the staffing requirements at the new emergency youth shelter on Jeckell Street in Whitehorse;

(5) the operating budget at the new emergency youth shelter on Jeckell Street in Whitehorse; and

(6) a summary of the consultations prior to establishing the new emergency youth shelter on Jeckell Street in Whitehorse.

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to reinstate the practice of setting timelines for land planning and zoning initiatives and publicly disclosing those timelines upon request — a practice that was followed by his two immediate predecessors in that ministerial post, the Member for Porter Creek Centre and the Member for Lake Laberge.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motion?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Fiscal management

Mr. Mitchell: For many years, the Premier has stood in this Legislature and highlighted the fact that the Yukon Party has delivered surplus budgets. In March of last year, for example, the Premier told this House the 2009-10 budget will be our seventh consecutive year with a forecast surplus.

Eighteen months later, as we close the books on last year, we see a different picture being painted. Far from being the surplus the Premier predicted, the budget is in fact a deficit.

An important part of financial management is trust. People need to have faith that the statements coming from those who manage their money are reliable. Here's another example: the Premier states that the budget will be in surplus, but it's not. That is why people no longer trust this government. Will the Premier now correct the record and admit last year's budget is a deficit?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: It is all about trust. It is about the fact that trust is not a gift. It does not just happen. It is earned. One of the ways to earn trust is to back up verbal commitments with action. This government committed to the Yukon public to be sound fiscal managers, and we have been. Over the many years this government has been in office, our fiscal management has resulted in a better quality of life, has resulted in economic prosperity, has resulted in more parks and land under

protection than ever before, has resulted in one of the strongest social safety nets the Yukon has ever had.

It is all about trust. It is all about strong financial management. But for those who change their minds, for those who do not back up their verbal commitments to Yukoners and others with action, then there is a trust problem. It certainly doesn't exist on this side of the House.

Mr. Mitchell: Well, it was a nice election speech, but he didn't answer the question. Now, last year, the Premier told anyone who would listen that the budget we are tabling "will be our seventh consecutive year with a forecast surplus."

That commitment to the public is now broken, and it is time for the Premier to be accountable for the words he spoke in this Chamber. The Premier's promise has failed to materialize. A promised surplus budget is now a deficit budget. The government spent more than it took in. We know the government is reluctant to admit it when things go wrong. We saw that with the ATCO scandal and we are seeing it again today. The Premier is mortgaging the future with reckless spending.

Will the Premier be accountable for past statements he has made in this House and admit that the budget he promised was a surplus is in fact a deficit budget?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Scandals, is it? Mr. Speaker, we did table seven consecutive surplus budgets. In that time, Mr. Speaker, all we ever heard from the Official Opposition was demand after demand after demand to spend more money because we had that savings account. Let me add this, Mr. Speaker: who created the savings account? Who brought the hundreds of millions of dollars into this territory? It was the Yukon Party government, not the Liberals and the Official Opposition.

Mr. Mitchell: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is all about trust. Yukoners no longer trust this government and this is another reason why. Last spring, the Premier told Yukoners the budget would be balanced. As we close the books on last year, it is clear the Premier missed the mark.

Far from being a \$19-million surplus, as the Premier promised, it is now a \$25-million deficit. Where is the accountability? The government remains in denial and can't even bring itself to admit that the budget is a deficit. The Premier certainly hasn't learned any lessons from the energy scandal. He remains in denial, refusing to admit the obvious.

The deficit figure is on page S-1 in the budget book. It says \$25,675,000 annual deficit. It's there in black and white. It's in brackets, which means a deficit. Does the Premier agree?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I think the member opposite had better reflect on trust and the spoken word. It was not long ago that the Leader of the Liberal Party was touting the fact to all Yukoners that our economy was devastated because of an emerging global recession, demanding that the Yukon government do something about it. Well, as a participant in the nation, the Yukon made its contribution to managing Canada's and Yukon's way through the global recession.

What was the result of that? The one bright spot — one of the bright spots in North America — that actually had real economic growth was the Yukon.

Yes, it is about trust. We committed to this verbally and we backed it up with action. We don't change our mind, like the Liberals on the long-gun registry. We didn't hide from our verbal commitments to Yukoners. We backed it up with action. What they are doing is simply leading from behind.

Question re: Budget estimates and spending

Mr. Mitchell: Yesterday we brought forward a motion on the topic of good governance. Part of good governance is keeping one's word. It is also about admitting when you have made a mistake. The Minister of Economic Development had a lot to say on the motion yesterday, but was not allowed to speak to some of his comments not that long ago. It appears that the only one allowed to answer questions on the other side of the House is the Premier. I'm sure that Yukoners would like to hear more from the Minister of Economic Development on the deficit in last year's budget. He spoke for three hours and 10 minutes yesterday. Can the Minister of Economic Development confirm the 2009-10 budget is a \$25-million deficit budget?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: It's interesting that the member opposite again seems to be very confused. He claims on one side that as a minister I'm not allowed to speak and then, in the very next sentence, complains that I spoke for three hours. Obviously he wasn't listening very well.

I do notice that in Question Period yesterday, the Leader of the Official Opposition referred to our savings account twice — and of course now he likes to claim that we're in debt. We are not, with a savings account.

Once the Member for Kluane referred to the fact that the "piggy bank is empty." Tens of millions of dollars in that savings account and he considers that empty. What an amazing government that would be. Another member opposite referred to the fact that we had avoided calling an election for the longest time in Yukon history. I suggest that he read the *Yukon Act* of 2003. It's a five-year mandate. If the members opposite actually read what we provide to them, perhaps the level of questions would rise dramatically.

Mr. Mitchell: The minister clearly doesn't know the difference between Question Period and motion debate and certainly has confused the definitions of "deficit" and "debt".

Yesterday the Deputy Premier refused to answer direct questions to her and now the Minister of Economic Development is not answering the questions asked, but rather is picking on different issues to talk to. They're all in it together and they speak with one voice, Mr. Speaker — the Premier's voice, the voice of avoiding the answers.

In 2009, the Premier told all Yukoners last year's budget will be our seventh consecutive year with a forecast surplus. That fall the Premier said, in fact, we've tabled seven consecutive annual surpluses.

Given the documents tabled this week showing last year's budget is not a surplus but is in fact a deficit, will the Premier or the Minister of Economic Development now set the record straight and admit that last year's promises have not come to pass?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Again, the member opposite, the Leader of the Liberal Party, seems very confused over the dif-

ference between deficit and debt. The party that would like to run our budget doesn't know the difference between a deficit and a debt, and I find that frightening.

In terms of being able to speak, we had the opportunity to send a clear message to our Member of Parliament on the long-gun registry, and the members opposite, the Liberal Party of the Yukon, stood firmly with their federal leader, Michael Ignatieff, and muzzled their own members from allowing us to debate that issue in the House. What are they hiding from?

We are a very open government. I spent three hours yesterday explaining some of the things we've had. The members opposite won't even allow their own members to speak on one subject. Who's hiding?

Mr. Mitchell: I'll explain to the Minister of Economic Development the difference between deficit and debt. These two budget books in front of us both show deficits. As for the debt, it has been piled on to the backs of the Crown corporations.

This government promises surpluses but delivers deficits. They're called to account for it on the floor of the House and, instead of coming clean, they remain in denial. The Premier's statements about the budget being balanced are now indefensible, yet his Cabinet colleagues sit there either in silence or trying to mimic the same weak defences.

They refuse to admit the obvious; instead they back the Premier because they are all in it together. The Premier has had time to look over the budget documents in front of him. He can see the facts in black and white, but they should be coloured red.

Instead of skirting the issue, can the Premier answer a direct question? What is the deficit for last year's budget — the annual deficit?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Yes, we are all in it together, building a better Yukon and a brighter future for Yukoners and very proud to do so. But when it comes to financial management, the Yukon Party ensures that we do all calculations and makes sure that our accounting includes all factors relevant to the fiscal position of the Yukon. I wish the Liberals would figure that out. This is an important part of financial management. You can't just pick pieces of it and expect that to be your financial position. It takes a lot of work and that's why we have a Department of Finance with a lot of very good, professional people doing that work. And what the member is suggesting is that those individuals are cooking the books, and that's not the case. Now let's look at the real facts.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: The Member for Copperbelt, on a point of order.

Mr. Mitchell: According to Standing Order 19(g), I believe that the Premier has imputed a motive. No such motive should be imputed. We're not suggesting anything about members of the Department of Finance cooking anything, other than perhaps their dinner.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Although the Leader of the Official Opposition's comments made light of the issue, I agree — it's a serious issue. Honourable Premier, that terminology is not acceptable. You still have the floor.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The Department of Finance did produce a budget that estimated surpluses seven years in a row. Yes, they did. Let's look at what I'm talking about in terms of doing all calculations. The last time a budget — when the final balance was tabled — the last time there was an actual deficit was in 2003. That was the last Liberal budget. Since then, the Yukon Party government has produced a total of \$155 million in savings versus what we've expended.

Question re: Youth shelter

Mr. Cardiff: Yesterday I attempted to get answers to questions about a serious situation involving youth in our community. We were told by the Minister of Health and Social Services that moving the youth shelter from the Sarah Steele Building to a social housing unit was dealing with an overcrowding situation at Sarah Steele. That was the only information we were given. We hope he is better informed about the situation today of the homeless young people who are seeking help to find a bed overnight when they so desperately need it.

Can the minister tell us how youth at risk are being advised about the change and what the process is for them to find a bed overnight?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Unfortunately — and I would ask the House's patience and indulgence — the minister is feeling quite ill today, but doing his best to be here.

On the matter, I will quickly wrap up. The issue before us is always a challenging one. I know the members opposite can reflect on all that we've done when it comes to youth — in investing in our youth groups and working with Skookum Jim's in providing new facilities for our group home needs, and the list goes on and on.

I would also point out that the members opposite opposed all those things when it comes to helping our youth. One would hope now that the member of the Third Party recognizes that this is an issue and that the member from the Third Party, at least, will support the efforts of this government in what it's doing to address those issues and the challenges our youth face.

Mr. Cardiff: Three times yesterday the minister stated they're dealing with it. He also said that using the housing unit was a temporary solution. His reply begs the question of whether the homeless youth will be sent back to the detox centre when it's not overcrowded.

Dealing with a major social problem such as youth on the streets of Whitehorse when winter is fast approaching, as we witnessed this morning, should not be done in any kind of a temporary manner. It's time we stopped shuffling our youth from one place to another as if they are excess baggage that needs a temporary place to be dumped. I don't understand why the minister chose not to consult or inform stakeholders and how that can be called "social inclusion".

Will the minister commit that he will work with stakeholders like Angel's Nest to establish a permanent shelter for youth at risk?

Hon. Mr. Hart: I thank the member opposite for his question. As I stated yesterday and he also reaffirmed this afternoon, this is a temporary situation that we're dealing with regarding the youth shelter. We are utilizing a facility from Yukon Housing Corporation to temporarily house our homeless youth in this area. I might add that we don't have a large number of youth whom we're dealing with at the current time or over the past few months but, as the member indicated, the winter is fast approaching and our numbers generally go up during the cooler seasons of the year. We are in that process, as I indicated. We have moved the students out of the Sarah Steele Building but, as I stated yesterday, it's on a temporary basis. We look at repairing the facilities in the Sarah Steele to accommodate the youth on a much better basis in the future.

Mr. Cardiff: It was nice to have the Premier engaged in the conversation as well. He should pay attention to this, because they're not doing enough for youth. It's about priorities.

Now the minister and the Premier are some of the few people in this territory who can actually do something about improving this situation. Right next door to the new location, there are 10 licensed beds available at Angel's Nest. If the government chose to work with non-government organizations that provide services to youth at risk, we could find a solution to the issue at hand. But it appears that neither he nor the Premier is willing to do that. I'm afraid neither of them is really well-informed about the realities of youth homelessness in Whitehorse.

Yesterday I asked the minister to arrange a tour of the new facility. My question for the minister is this: will the minister agree to come with me to tour the new youth shelter and the Angel's Nest shelter right beside it before Monday?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite, I thank him for his question. I thank him for also providing the fact that we are aware of the situation.

I will state to him that I've already had a couple of visits to Angel's Nest with regard to that facility, and I'm well aware of the facility where we are putting our youth currently, so it's not necessary for us to make a visit there prior to Monday.

I will state though, for the member opposite, with regard to Angel's Nest — we have doubled the contribution agreement to that facility, or to those people, to assist in dealing with youth at risk. That money has been doubled by this government to address the situation as identified by those non-profit organizations, and we look forward to the work that they do.

Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation funding

Mr. McRobb: At the Yukon Hospital Corporation's annual general meeting last night a number of concerns were expressed about issues affecting the provision of health care services to Yukoners. The previous chair of the Hospital Corporation raised a valid issue in that her pleas to this Premier for more funding were repeatedly rejected outright, yet how everything changed once the Yukon Party appointed its election campaign organizer as her successor. This Premier has often

stated he's fair to everyone and spends the public's money based on fairness and demonstrated need. How can he reconcile that rhetoric with what has happened here?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I'm glad to hear that the Member for Kluane was out engaging with the public yesterday evening — that's a good sign. Secondly, we put great value into all those hardworking Yukoners who choose to serve, whether it be on a committee or a board or on our Crown corporations. These are all very difficult, important jobs and undertakings and we give full support to all of them.

With respect to the member's question, I will bring the member back to a time when the Yukon Hospital Corporation had a tremendous problem with its pension fund for its employees. This government, in finding that out, stepped in, provided the necessary fiscal assistance to address that issue. From that point, all along, it has been investing further and further in our Hospital Corporation and our health care system, even to the point where we have multi-year contribution agreements now with the Hospital Corporation, allowing it to plan further into its future. The result of that, of course, is providing more consistent health care to Yukoners, because that is the Hospital Corporation's job.

Mr. McRobb: Another concern identified last night was the apparent overpayment of per diems to the corporation's chair and this government's lack of will to collect it. Now, I fully expect this Premier to mention his letter tabled earlier this afternoon — the Auditor General — and how this was simply a clerical error on his government's part. He might even resort to his old standby of accusing us of attacking officials or hardworking board members. But let's rise above the rhetoric. We're talking about this government's management of the public purse and how everything seemingly got smoothed over in this particular case. Can this Premier explain how the board chair refused to return the overpayment more than two weeks ago, when the Premier's letter is dated only two days ago?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Raising the bar, are we? I will not respond to what I believe to be content of the Member for Kluane's question. I can only say that it appears another sinister plot has been stumbled upon by the Member for Kluane, similar to the public servant who chose to express his democratic freedoms through freedom of speech. The list of these examples goes on and on and on.

There is no money owed by the Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees; that is a fact. The members opposite would probably have those members, because of whatever partisan political stripe they might have, do all this work without fair and equitable return. This government doesn't believe that. We believe those individuals who serve, who work hard on behalf of Yukoners, are entitled to a fair and equitable return. Therefore, the item in question was indeed a mistake by this government and we had the openness and the accountability factor and the ethical standard to admit that and ensure that those members of the board of trustees were not unduly burdened with something that was indeed not their fault.

Mr. McRobb: I want to speak in general ethical terms for the protection of the public. I believe that a fundamental part of good governance is fairness to everyone, regardless of

their political persuasion. I also believe the majority of Yukoners would agree with me in stating the principle that any Yukon government should never spend the public purse based on political alliances or favouritism to those who help them gain power to be in that position. All elected members of this Assembly are governed by the *Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act* with respect to their personal holdings, but there is nothing preventing a government from spending the public's money with respect to its political benefit.

Would this Premier support such changes to the conflict act — yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, I take full exception to the inferences. If the Member for Kluane is suggesting that for some partisan political reason monies are being paid to members of any board in this territory — get outside of this Assembly, stop hiding in here, make the formal accusation and put his name to it.

With respect to the issue of fairness and equality, the other day there was an opportunity for the Liberals to demonstrate that very important principle and standard in this House. They even disallowed their member from Old Crow to stand and send a clear message to our MP on a commitment he made to Yukoners when soliciting their votes, but obviously, once he's received the paycheque, has entirely changed his mind. They are following the dictates of the federal Liberal leader. That is not fairness for Yukoners; that's not equal treatment for Yukoners; that's a problem; that is a breach of trust.

Question re: Whitehorse Centre by-election

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, there is a seat empty in this House and that's because the Premier refuses to call a by-election for Whitehorse Centre.

All Yukoners have a right to choose their representative, and the Premier is denying downtown residents that fundamental right. He says that the downtown residents don't need their own representation right now and that the government will represent their interests. That's not good enough. That's not good enough for the Premier to stall the by-election for his own political purposes, and it's not good enough for the Whitehorse Centre residents who will be, at the beginning of this sitting and the end of this sitting, without any representation. Why won't the Premier call a by-election in Whitehorse Centre?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: You know, for the last couple of days, the government side has been forthcoming on what we're dealing with, but we also have to be in this House to do the public's business, as we're elected to do. I don't want to be repetitive on the matter, but we have not turned down the rights of the citizens of Whitehorse Centre to have representation, and we've never said that we are or will or would do such a thing at all. In fact, we've said we are deliberating, as we speak, on what would be in the best public interest in regard to dealing with a possible by-election, given the timing of the mandate before us, what that means to a general election. We're doing our work, but at the same time we have been very clear that this government has done a great deal for the riding of Whitehorse Centre — and other ridings, whether we hold them or not. Where a demonstrated need is presented, we act and act accordingly. The members opposite, the Liberals in this House,

opposed every initiative that is happening in today's downtown riding — every one of them. They can't stand in this House and have it both ways. They did not support the citizens of Whitehorse Centre; in fact, they turned their backs on them.

Mr. Inverarity: The Official Opposition has been calling on the government to let Whitehorse Centre choose its own democratic representative. The Third Party has been calling on the government to call that by-election. Now, this morning, Yukoners have heard from the Independent/Yukon Party Member for Lake Laberge counsel the Premier to call a by-election sooner rather than later. This is the kind of cooperation and unity we hope to see in this Legislative Assembly. Elected members of all three political parties are in agreement on this issue. Whitehorse Centre residents want to elect their own representative. Why won't the Premier call a by-election?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I would caution the Member for Porter Creek South on the issue of the three political parties across the floor being in agreement, because in a heartbeat from now they'll be in disagreement on some other matter. They change their minds all the time.

Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with this issue. We care deeply about the citizens of Whitehorse Centre. We are deeply saddened by the passing of their former MLA. We worked very closely. When it comes to cooperation, the demonstration of that is all through the riding of Whitehorse Centre. We worked very closely with the former MLA. We are doing our job as an elected government — the job we were elected to do. The members opposite and all Yukoners will know what our decisions are when we make them. We hope to be able to make decisions as quickly as we can.

Question re: Yukon Hospital Corporation building projects

Mr. Mitchell: I have another question for the Minister of Economic Development. The minister spoke yesterday of mortgages — specifically mortgages for the Watson Lake and Dawson hospitals. With any mortgage, as the minister pointed out, there is an expected "reasonable down payment". There is also an expected repayment plan, and that repayment plan is based on how much of a down payment was levied. I don't believe the government has ever told Yukoners what that down payment was. Well, here's an opportunity. Can the minister tell us what was the reasonable down payment for the Hospital Corporation's building projects?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Here we go again. Let me try to point out some very important facts to the Leader of the Official Opposition. When this government took office some years ago, the Yukon was in debt. Back in March 2002, the Yukon Territory had incurred some \$76 million of debt. Do you know where that debt came from? Paying for services for Yukoners. This Yukon Party government has cleaned that debt up considerably. We've paid that debt down by some 32 percent. So, this is not a new thing, except for this fact: this Yukon Party government is investing in hospitals and infrastructure that will benefit Yukoners today and long into the future. At the same time, we are paying for all our services required — our employees' wages and all programs that Yukoners receive. Through all of that, we still have a savings account. We are one

of only two jurisdictions in the country that are in a net financial resource position, versus net debt. Let us debate constructively the benefits of what we're doing. If the members opposite take issue with that, they can vote against the budgets — which they do — but they also could do the honourable thing and tell Yukoners what they'd cut.

Mr. Mitchell: The Premier didn't answer the question that was directed to the Economic Development minister, nor did the minister. I would point out to the Premier that I think if he would check the public finances from both 2002 and 2003, he'll find that the government was not in debt at year-end of either year.

The Minister of Economic Development and the Premier should learn that a mortgage is not a savings account or a grant, but an actual debt to be repaid. The Yukon Party government boasts about being, "... one of only two jurisdictions in Canada that today has a savings account." Yet the minister and the Premier would like to spend all the savings and more on certain capital projects. Mortgages come with responsibility to repay. If there's no money put aside to repay the mortgage, then even a reasonable down payment is not going to protect you from the mortgagee coming to collect on the debt. If we cannot pay then we lose our investments. Period.

Can the Minister of Economic Development tell us how much of a down payment has been paid out of the Yukon savings account to be placed on the Yukon Hospital Corporation's building projects?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The member, the Leader of the Liberals, just said that in past years the Government of Yukon was not in debt. How is it then — if the member has actually looked at the public accounts when they are tabled, duly audited, he should be able to decipher the fact that, since taking office, this government has paid down \$51.5 million worth of debt.

I think when you look at the matter the member opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition, does not support building hospitals in rural Yukon and I think that it's clear the member is on record for that.

So the member should stand up and, instead of nibbling around the edges, express to Yukoners that the Liberals would not build those hospitals in Dawson City and Watson Lake, but they would build them in Whitehorse. I ask the member opposite then, where's he going to get the down payment for that?

The Liberals can't have it both ways. It is about trust and they're all in it together.

Mr. Mitchell: The Premier is wrong. He's wrong on the facts and wrong on the record. We've repeatedly stated on this side of the House that the communities of Watson Lake and Dawson City did need new health care facilities. We've challenged the Premier, however, to show us any kind of study that was undertaken to determine the level of facility that should be built before the announcements were made, and he has never been able to deliver.

Apparently the down payment on these facilities is zero. There was no down payment. Neither the Premier nor the Economic Development minister can cite a down payment. They put no money down; it's all debt, all mortgage. This government had no money at all to put down as a down payment. The

burden of paying it back is all left to future governments and future Yukoners.

This Yukon Party government is mortgaging the future for short-term benefits today. Will the minister and the Premier admit there has been no down payment, that it's all being borrowed?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The Leader of the Liberal Party has just now categorically stated in this House that the Liberals would not allow for comparable services to be delivered to all Yukoners.

This is about health care, Mr. Speaker. This is not about the member's view of the Yukon's fiscal position; it's about our health care needs in this territory. Is the member suggesting that those individuals in the community of Watson Lake who need treatment should have to drive to Whitehorse, where the member lives? Does the member not care about rural Yukoners? Does the member not care about allowing those communities to have the amenities that allow growth and a quality of life? That's not what the Yukon Party government is about. We are about fair and equal treatment for all Yukoners. That includes health care. It is about trust and the Liberals are all in it together. Yukoners cannot trust them.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

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

Clerk: Second reading, Bill No. 21, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Fentie.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I move that Bill No. 21, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, be now read a second time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 21, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10*, be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I am indeed pleased to present the *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10* and the accompanying final supplementary estimates for 2009-10.

Occasions arise where year-end expenditures in excess of the voted authority are necessary. These are important points to be made because it does include program delivery to Yukoners, it includes wages to our public servants and other matters.

This *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10* fulfills the requirements of the *Financial Administration Act*, affording the Legislative Assembly the opportunity to debate and provide statutory authority for departmental expenditures.

This additional spending authority is provided to offset unanticipated costs related to physician and out-of-territory hospital claims. This *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10* provides the Department of Health and Social Services a final supplementary appropriation of \$3.7 million related to these costs. I'm sure the members can appreciate this government's commitment to ensuring Yukoners' access to quality health care.

We could only hope that the members opposite would do the same. One of these issues of expenditures, as just stated, is health care for Yukoners.

The audit of the Government of Yukon accounts for the 2009-10 fiscal year is underway. The figures summarized in the supplementary estimates reflect the financial results of the 2009-10 fiscal year, to be detailed in the 2009-10 public accounts.

It is noted that these figures are subject to audit. I will emphasize "subject to audit". This government addresses our financial position in all matters, including the most important, the year-end audited statements as presented in the public accounts. These figures indicate the expenses will exceed revenues by some \$25.6 million, leaving the government to a year-end accumulated surplus — year-end accumulated surplus — of some \$521.5 million. So, the net financial resource position remains very healthy at some \$67.4 million.

Now, members will recall that Yukon was required to undertake a change related to the accounting treatment of the Building Canada fund. This change was reflected at *Supplementary Estimates No. 2*, and contributed significantly to the increase and expenses at that time. The Liberals — the Member for Klwane and the Liberal leader — have stated that we're broke. The piggy bank's empty. Here's one factual example of accounting measures that changed the estimates. So, I would hope that the Liberals in this House start to address these matters accordingly so we can have a constructive debate and then we can differentiate between the two — this side of the House, the government side, and the Official Opposition — on what they would do to continue to build Yukon's future.

As noted earlier, expenses will exceed revenues by \$25.6 million. This is a change of approximately \$2.5 million from the forecasted *Supplementary Estimates No. 2* tabled in the spring legislative sitting. Now let me take this opportunity to quickly summarize the major items contributing to this change.

First, as noted, the Department of Health and Social Services incurred additional expenditures of \$3.7 million, related to physician and out-of-territory hospital claims. Now when we first tabled the estimates at the start of the year, we could not predict, speculate or anticipate any increased health care costs such as physician and out-of-territory hospital claims. You can't predict heart attacks; you can't predict other health care matters that arise during the course of the fiscal year. That is why this government has made great effort in its financial management to ensure that we have a savings account so that we can meet these ever-evolving demands and issues that occur during the course of any fiscal year.

Secondly, the collective agreements for the Yukon Government Employees Union and the Yukon Teachers Association were both ratified earlier in fiscal year 2010-11. Given the timing of the ratification — once again, this is a timing issue — the Auditor General has instructed that increments attributable to the 2009-10 fiscal year can and should be booked appropriately in the 2009-10 estimates. In total, approximately \$1.7 million was booked related to the retro amounts for both the teacher and employee collective agreements. Finally, increases in these two areas were offset by general departmental lapses

and other year-end accounting adjustments. So, as mentioned, departmental lapses are an important part of fiscal management and our accounting processes. As we have come to expect, departments have once again have made excellent — excellent — efforts to manage their budgets within their appropriations. Looking at total expenditures on the operation and maintenance side, we see that departments came approximately within 1.8 percent underbudget. That's another example of prudent, very solid, fiscal management, thanks to all the departments, their financial directors and managers and our Department of Finance. In our operation and maintenance budgeting, we have realized approximately a 1.8-percent expenditure underbudget.

This represents a modest lapse, but it's important because it shows that all departments, in following the direction of government in financial management, are looking at realistic budget plans and are very effective in delivering on their plans. Bravo to our public service.

On the capital side, departments lapsed approximately \$63 million, or 22.2 percent of total capital expenditures that were voted. Given the multi-year nature of major capital projects and the potential for delays, it is quite usual to experience lapses in the capital vote.

Although we did lapse \$63 million in the capital vote, members will indeed appreciate that \$220.6 million in capital investment was expended during the course of 2009-10.

Now, I want to make a point, Mr. Speaker. The Liberals continue to say we're spending wildly, we're going for broke, and we're breaking the bank. Let us look at this example: in 2009-10, creating jobs and benefits for Yukoners and putting infrastructure on the ground that is not only going to be used and will benefit Yukoners today, but Yukoners of tomorrow, long into our future — \$220.6 million of investment was expended during the course of that fiscal year. These are record levels of capital investment by the Yukon territorial government. They've created stimulus and benefit across this territory. Yet, we still maintain a savings account. What would Yukoners rather have? Those who suggest that the bank is empty against all the evidence, or the government that has created this very healthy fiscal position in the Yukon?

Mr. Speaker, the government continues to follow its tried and true practices and procedures to revote funds to ensure that capital projects continue to move forward as and where appropriate. Items lapsed in 2009-10 and approved for revote have been included in *Supplementary Estimates No. 1*, which is the other supplementary before the House, for 2010-11.

I know my colleagues are anticipating a very constructive debate with the members opposite as we get into all these expenditures and revotes, in terms of each of our line departments.

Let me reiterate: this government delivered \$220.6 million in capital investment during the course of 2009-10. The results are not insignificant, as we see progress on a number of substantial projects, which include — and I will list some examples — Kwanlin Dun cultural centre on the Whitehorse waterfront — the Liberals opposed that investment; family-focused housing units in Riverdale — we hear lots from the members opposite about the need for affordable housing. Here's an ex-

ample: family-focused housing units in Riverdale. I'm sure many have seen those units going up. It's all about affordable housing. The Liberals opposed that investment.

Seniors building: 22 Waterfront Place — this is the replacement for the Alexander Street apartments. This is seniors housing, taking care of our seniors. It is affordable — the Liberals voted against that investment. They opposed it.

Our government's capital investment in this territory is, of course, quite wide-ranging. Community campuses are underway in Dawson City and Pelly Crossing. There's a court-ordered sewage treatment in Dawson City — the Liberals even voted against that, which is really befuddling because it's a court-ordered requirement for the City of Dawson; and there's a new Carmacks sewage treatment facility.

So, Mr. Speaker, though there are so many examples, I'll leave that to my colleagues to address in debate and second reading speeches, but the territory, frankly — no matter how you want to address the fiscal position, from whatever discipline that you may have — the one argument that can never change is that the Yukon Territory has a very healthy financial position. It has invested heavily in today and our future. It is one of the bright spots in North America. It is leading the country to a large degree in economic growth. We have a healthy savings account. We have many options before us for the future. That is good fiscal management. That is practising good government. Thank you.

Mr. Mitchell: I'll thank the Premier for his Budget Address for the final supplementary from 2009-10.

I'm not going to speak to this at great length because we've spoken to this budget before and to the supplementary budgets that preceded it. There are just a few things that I'd like to get on the record.

First of all, for the Premier's frequent statements that the Liberals oppose this or oppose that, we voted against everything — the Premier knows full well that we only have one choice when it comes to a budget vote, which is that we are either going to vote for it or against it. We can't pick and choose items out of the budget and say we're for this or that, although we often cite things that we're glad to see and point out things that we wished we could see.

Near as I can tell, across the Commonwealth and beyond in every parliamentary system, opposition parties, when they don't have confidence in the government of the day, vote against money bills — against the budget — and we're no exception.

And the Premier was no exception when he sat in opposition. I don't recall the Premier or his predecessors as Yukon Party leaders voting for the budget of the day, but rather they voted no because they didn't agree with the priorities or the spending trajectories of those governments and that's what happens when one is in opposition. We have voted for numerous other bills — most of the bills that have been tabled here over the past eight years, in fact — and the ones we didn't vote for we generally tried to amend first so that we could support them, but not much opportunity for success there. So when the Premier says we're against the eight-person street crime unit,

for example, as he did the other day — not so. We think it's a good initiative. What we are against is the Premier's spending trajectory and piling debt on the backs of future Yukoners.

Let's take a look at this budget. A year and a half ago, when we first saw the main estimates for 2009-10, the surplus deficit for the year was projected at a little over \$19 million, by my recollection. Now when the year-end came and the beginning of the current fiscal year, that \$19-million surplus that was projected — which we challenged at the time — turned into a \$23-million deficit. Frankly, we thought that with all the talk we've heard about holding down spending across departments, and inability of departments to get spending requests approved, we thought that the Premier was going to try and table a budget that would be a little smaller deficit. But in fact, the surplus deficit position for the year on page S-1 in brackets is now a deficit of \$25,000,675.

The Premier talks about all kinds of requirements, things that the Auditor General has required, and changes in accounting standards. Well, those are the things that a government has to comply with. It's not like the Premier can say, "Oh, gee — not our fault." The fact is, it's a deficit and the deficit is actually bigger than the surplus that was ever projected. In all, it may not seem like much to the Premier to go from a \$19-million surplus to a \$25-million deficit, but we're what? One percent of the size of Ontario? Multiply those numbers by a hundredfold, and take a look what it would mean. It would mean going from a \$1.9-billion surplus to a \$2.5-billion deficit. It's a substantial miss.

Now, we're not going to have any argument with the fact that in the Department of Health there has been an increase in O&M. The Premier has explained, and I'm sure, when we get to it, the Health minister will explain in greater detail that it's largely due to out-of-territory travel and health claims, and so be it. That's not the issue at hand here.

We do know that coming to grips with ever-rising health care costs is a problem across this country and we've had good debate and discussion on that.

We know that it is going to be a continued challenge for the Government of Yukon and for all other jurisdictions, because even in the year budget that we're talking about here, the O&M and capital now come to \$257,271,000. It's over a quarter of a billion dollars, and that's a quarter of the budget for that year.

Now the Premier's coming close to talking about deficits when he says expenses will exceed revenues by \$25.2 million and he notes that net financial resources, at year-end — the so-called saving account — is a healthy \$67.4 million. He knows full well that in the other budget that he tabled — which we may get to later today or next week — that number is already down to \$33 million. It's the spending trajectory that worries us on this side of the House, and I believe that when the Premier was in opposition he used to express a very similar concern. He should just review his own words from eight or nine years ago, and he would see why we're worried.

The Premier said earlier today — incorrectly — that we are against new health care facilities for the communities of Watson Lake and Dawson City. We're not; we've said repeat-

edly that we support the need for new facilities; we know that the existing facilities were becoming outdated, outmoded and decrepit. We don't disagree on that. We disagreed on the process at arriving at what kind of facilities would be built.

I remember a day, just a year or two ago, when the Premier stood on the floor of this House and, in an answer on what would the cost be for facilities that were once envisioned at \$5 million — and we now know will cost some \$25 million apiece — the Premier said, "Don't know. It doesn't matter. We're going to build them whatever they cost." That's not good governance. That's not coming to a decision based on needs, but rather based on a desire to make a political promise.

The Premier says that we only care about residents in Whitehorse. That's not so. The fact is that the largest population centre in Yukon is in Whitehorse. The greatest concentration of health care professionals to serve the population of Yukon is in Whitehorse. In Yukon — like in every other jurisdiction in North America — the concept, the model, that exists is that you put the greater resources in the population centres, and then you try to build the necessary resources in smaller regions, in smaller communities — and yes, you do bring people to the population centre when necessary, just as all Yukoners go to Vancouver, Calgary or Edmonton right now if they need an MRI, if they need bone-density testing, if they need various forms of cancer treatment that we can't provide here; if they need expertise that doesn't exist anywhere in Yukon — the very reason for some of the increases in the expenditures in the Department of Health is for travel Outside. That's the way it's done.

Yes, if you live in Old Crow, you have to go outside of Old Crow to get certain health care treatments. If you live in Watson Lake or Dawson, you may have to come to Whitehorse. Yes, we need to have facilities in every community, but we can't replicate Whitehorse General Hospital in every community, any more than we would build an Erik Nielsen International Airport in Old Crow and Haines Junction and Teslin. It doesn't make any sense.

The Premier asserted that, because I happen to reside in Whitehorse, I only care about health care facilities in Whitehorse — nothing could be further from the truth. As a matter of fact, I lived for some 20 years in northern B.C. I see the Environment minister nodding, because he spent a lot of time living in the same community of Atlin. We had a Red Cross outpost nursing station there at the time. They gave us excellent care, but there were many things they couldn't do. As a result, we came to Whitehorse. Both of my children were born in Whitehorse because the hospital in Atlin wasn't capable of providing the necessary services for safe and healthy births. We didn't have our children at home in Atlin. That's just the way it works. You make certain decisions when you live in every community.

I recently had need, earlier this summer, for emergency medical care. I received excellent treatment, as always, at Whitehorse General Hospital. Let me tell you something, Mr. Speaker. While I was waiting to have the orthopedic surgeon come and deal with the accident that I'd had — along with another political leader — I had no less than two doctors and two

nurses take the opportunity to come up to me and ask that we continue to urge the government to put the necessary resources into Whitehorse General Hospital, to put the improvements in for the emergency room and the intensive care capability that they felt they need in Whitehorse to deal with all Yukoners — both Whitehorse residents and those from elsewhere who are driven or flown to Whitehorse for care. I had those four health care providers say to me, “Don’t overbuild the facilities in Watson and Dawson. We need to do something here. We need new facilities there, but not the ones that have been envisioned.” They didn’t say this because they were partisan Liberal supporters. I haven’t seen any of them at Liberal conventions. I don’t know what their political affiliations were. They had the courage to talk to a politician and say that the government is on the wrong track. I said, “Well, you’re preaching to the choir” to one of these doctors. I said, “I have been saying it,” and he said, “I know. Keep saying it.”

So I will, Mr. Speaker. I will keep saying it. The Premier can continue to try and represent that as being against the interest of citizens in rural Yukon, but it’s not the case. Health care providers say that it’s about service and it’s health care providers who provide the service, not buildings. They say, “Put the need where it’s greatest. Meet the need where it’s necessary.”

So I’m not going to go on to talk about this budget in a lot more detail. Yes, we did vote against this budget when it first arose under main estimates because it’s a confidence measure, and we don’t have confidence in this Premier and in this government. Yes, on money bills, that is how we have voted. And no, that doesn’t mean we’re against everything that’s done in here, and it certainly doesn’t mean that we lack confidence in the work of the officials, as the Premier tried to assert just a short while ago during Question Period. The Premier knows who it is we don’t have confidence in. We believe the public has also lost that confidence, so we will continue to say so.

One more thing I do want to mention: the Premier, in answering questions, likes to throw around a lot of different numbers, and it’s confusing for people. I won’t say it’s intentionally confusing, but it is confusing.

When the Premier talks about the accumulated surplus of \$521 million, let’s just be clear for anyone who might be listening today or anyone who may be reading *Hansard*. That surplus includes all assets of the Yukon government. It wasn’t always stated that way; it changed during the tenure of this government, based on advice from the Auditor General and changes in generally accepted public accounting standards. Once upon a time it wasn’t stated that way.

If we went back 10 or 15 years and restated the budgets of those days, that number would grow significantly because it includes this building, the Elijah Smith Elementary School, Whitehorse General Hospital, the existing health care facilities in every other community owned by the Government of Yukon, F.H. Collins school, the Whitehorse Correctional Centre — that’s all part of that \$521 million.

Those are not assets, and that is not money of some sort or a savings account that the government has access to. It’s simply a statement of the fact that there are many public assets that exist. Unlike General Motors, when they decide to downsize

and sell off a plant or two, the government is not going to sell off schools and health centres and raise capital or money from it. So that number is not the meaningful number when we talk about the money that’s available to spend and service debt. It’s that net financial resources, and it’s down to \$67 million in this budget. When we get to the next budget, we’ll see that it’s down to \$33 million, of which some \$24 million is remaining in the amount that’s left on the books of the repackaged notes of the asset-backed paper — money that cannot be spent, because we cannot get our hands on it for some seven and a half or eight more years. That’s the number that matters, and that’s the number the Premier should be looking at when we speak of the savings or the financial resources, just as the deficit number right here on page S-1, Surplus (Deficit) for the Year, increased another \$3,700,000 and is now a \$25,675,000 deficit. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: Mr. Speaker, reflecting on this budget, the appropriation act, there are some interesting comments coming forth that I just have to make comments on. I can’t let them go completely.

The Leader of the Official Opposition, the member of the Liberal Party, continues to look at health care, for instance. From his speech yesterday — and I quote directly from *Hansard* — “You don’t build the same hospital in Oliver, B.C. as you do in Penticton, and you don’t build the same hospital in Penticton as you do in Vancouver ...” I’m not sure that I would think that’s the most astute thing, but it’s a good analogy. It’s reasonable. I do appreciate his avuncular style, but the same thing is here: you don’t build the same facility in Watson Lake or Dawson City as you do in Whitehorse. There is an economy of scale, and that has been looked at extensively. But what I hear the member opposite saying is that we don’t have to provide the best of care for Dawson or Watson Lake. They can get by with a much lower level. People who might be injured on the highway or in any other kind of an accident — well, we’ll have the better facilities in Whitehorse so why get excited about bringing in the better facilities and better care out there?

I don’t agree with that and I don’t think our party agrees with that. We feel that all Yukoners should have available and are entitled to a full health care system and a full set of opportunities that anyone else in the territory or in Canada is entitled to. I do agree that, for instance, with serious health problems for something that far exceeds even Whitehorse capabilities, then maybe this isn’t the place to live. Maybe it’s time to move to another jurisdiction where that care is available. But again, even in that case, I do appreciate having a very advanced CAT scan unit here in Whitehorse. I do appreciate having good surgery, orthopedic surgery, knee replacements that are done here and cataract surgeries. These have all been provided by this government. These are not something that just appeared out of nowhere. They are something that was carefully planned and put in so that everything is on an equal basis.

I just find it difficult to believe that the Leader of the Liberal Party would not agree with that and say, “Well, we need some basic services there, but we should concentrate everything else in Whitehorse.” It’s like saying we should put every-

thing that really is necessary in Vancouver and just hope that our air ambulance can make it there in time. I think that's very short-sighted, and it just makes no sense.

Some of the other comments made by the Leader of the Official Opposition in terms of examining budgets and going over budgets — we do realize, of course, when you're voting on a complete budget, you do have to look at the overall structure. Much more comes out in the speeches, and it's always most interesting to go back into speeches and extract some of the comments that have been made. For instance, to continually refer to debt and then, in Question Period yesterday, the Liberals referred twice to our savings account. How can we be in debt with a savings account? That doesn't make an awful lot of sense. The Member for Kluane said, and I quote: "The piggy bank is empty." Well, if he considers \$30 million an empty piggy bank, he lives in a different economic zone than I do, that's for sure. It just makes no sense to not recognize those differences.

The one, I have to admit, that has been mentioned a couple of times now in today's debate, and certainly in yesterday's, is the fact of some of the challenges that this government and the Department of Finance have. I quote again from the Leader of the Liberal Party from yesterday: "We would regularly examine the investments in the investment portfolio of the Yukon to ensure compliance with the *Financial Administration Act* ..." That's nice; it sounds good; it makes sense; as the member opposite has referred to, it's a political speech or a campaign slogan, but unfortunately the type of investment that was done from 1991, was done by this government, by a previous Yukon Party government, by two New Democratic Party governments and in the very short-lived Liberal government of 22 months — the shortest lived majority government in the history of the Commonwealth of Nations — the same investments were made.

Given the global downturn and all the problems and the collapse of the real estate market and collapse of the economy, should I say, in the United States, suddenly those investments were in question.

Although the fact is that we've made a very large amount of profit and interest on those investments since, there were challenges, but the same investments were made since 1991 and no one, including the Liberals, noticed that. They would regularly examine the investments and the investment portfolio to ensure compliance with the *Financial Administration Act*. They didn't notice it either. So let's not point fingers on that. Let's recognize that there were problems, we are rebounding from that, we are making profits on that investment, and we're doing well now and we will do very well in the future.

When you start looking at the overall budget and what's accomplished in here — any budget, I don't care whether it is a government budget, a departmental budget, a family budget, a personal budget — you make your best estimates of what's going to happen. As I mentioned yesterday, although I'm suspicious that the Leader of the Liberal Party didn't listen to a lot of that, what happens when you have demonstrated need and things come up — no one predicted forest fire seasons up or down; no one predicted flooding; no one predicted changes

from the Auditor General's office — that budget has to be flexible. A savings account allows that flexibility.

We didn't have a lot of that flexibility in 2002 after the previous Liberal government estimated and budgeted — dare I say — some \$17 million for the expansion of the hydro grid into Carmacks. Now, in the final analysis, that \$17 million became \$42 million. They didn't do very well on that. It didn't really work out too well for them. But they're not going to mention that, of course. They're not going to mention that at this time.

Any budget can be worked on at the time. There really wasn't a savings account. The Liberal government was actually running a line of credit with the banks in order to pay their employees. They didn't have a savings account. They were in a lot of trouble and that's the legacy that was passed to us.

What did we do with it? We doubled the fiscal capacity of the Yukon. We did it while creating a very large savings account. We did it while we became the hottest economy in Canada, with the highest increase in GDP — one of only two in Canada in the positive range. Prince Edward Island was the other one and they are, I believe, less than half — actually, about one-third of what we had.

We did it while we accomplished all of these things. We have no net debt. The Premier has phrased that and the Minister of Finance has phrased that in so many different ways, but let's put it down to be blunt: we don't have any debt.

I don't know how that can be simpler for members opposite to understand. We are one of two jurisdictions in all of Canada that has no debt whatsoever. The other one is Alberta and, on a per capita basis, we beat them. We're actually doing much better.

So let's be realistic and let's deal with facts, although I did kind of enjoy the comment from the Member for Copperbelt, the Liberal Leader of the Official Opposition, when he basically implied — I'll have to go back and read *Hansard*. But, to me, the implication was that Question Period really wasn't about the facts. I have to agree with him on that, Mr. Speaker, and maybe Question Period should be about the facts.

On this side, we are very happy to openly answer any reasonable question, but so few reasonable questions come across this floor that it becomes very difficult to deal in an open and reasonable way.

I think the most important thing of all, when the Liberal Party looks at this and complains — and anyone can complain. It's really easy to complain. It's very easy to complain and make fun of and come up with outrageous things. They don't have to be responsible. We have to be responsible on this side of the floor. We have to be accountable for everything we say. That's just the way it works over here. Being in opposition is easy. It's very easy to do that, because you just don't have to back up anything that you claim. Sometimes it would be nice to be in that position. If the budget — and I go back to the Leader of the Liberal Party and his comments yesterday — and again, I quote from *Hansard* — "If a budget were presented showing a surplus and we were standing behind that budget, then we would do everything possible to ensure we came as close as possible to that surplus." "As close as possible..." — we would

do everything possible. So, let's look at some of the things that have been done over the last year or so — and yes, some of them made a bit of a challenge — ups and downs and the ebbs and flows of a budget — but which ones would the member opposite cut? He claims that he would be open and accountable — he claims that we're not. So, be honest with the public. Don't hide behind the fact that it's the opposition and no one on that side of the House has to be responsible what they say.

Let's look at some of the strategic industries, for instance. I'll stay in my own department here. The economic development fund — since its inception in 2004, the fund has contributed more than \$5.2 million for 86 projects across the Yukon and the investments through that fund have contributed enormously to the development of major projects that have made significant contributions to Yukon's GDP — gross domestic product, the highest in Canada — and created several hundred new private sector Yukon jobs. Would he cut that? Would he cut that back and say that there are a couple projects in there we don't really need? Some of them are in Whitehorse; let's promote something for a cheaper amount in the community and let's cut them back in Whitehorse. Is that what he's saying? We don't know because he won't tell us, and they're all in it together. His phrase of that is always correct. We saw that yesterday when he muzzled his own party in the gun registry debate, and I hope that the member, particularly from Old Crow, will have some way to explain that to his constituents — that his leader was controlled by the federal Liberal Party and was not allowed to express the concerns of the residents of Old Crow, because that was muzzled. I think that's sad; let's be open and accountable. We agree. Don't hide and simply go along and complain. "Hey, we don't have to be responsible for that."

The Yukon Zinc's Wolverine project construction expenditures totalled \$180 million for 2009, and an additional \$100 million is anticipated for 2010. The Wolverine project was purchased by Jinduicheng Molybdenum Group Co. Ltd. and Northwest Nonferrous International Investment Company Ltd. for approximately \$87 million, and full production will hopefully start in the coming weeks.

We're very happy with that investment, and it has required investment on the part of the Yukon government. When you put all that together, you're in the \$350-million or \$400-million range. The number of jobs will be very significant. The members opposite, the Liberal Party, at one point last year complained about money going into the Robert Campbell Highway. I believe it was actually referred to as the "road to nowhere". I guess they didn't notice a \$400-million mine at the end of that road, that will have to extract ore and employ some 300 people. The spinoffs beyond those jobs come into Whitehorse for catering, air services, air support, trucking, gas in Watson Lake, on and on. All they could do was complain about an investment into the Robert Campbell Highway. Perhaps they should broaden their experience. They should get out more and actually look at some of the things that are happening in the Yukon.

The forums and such that we've done in terms of port access — we've contributed to the development of the Skagway port development plan by the Skagway Port Commission. We

continue to work with our partners, including the Municipality of Skagway, Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, state officials and the White Pass and Yukon Route to try to implement that port development plan.

I've also been in international meetings with officials of the Alaskan government as well as officials of Homeland Security from the United States and the U.S. Department of State to talk about the importance of Skagway, not only as its own community, but the importance of that to Yukon, the importance of that to our strategy of mining and of tourism. It's a very important investment, and we react to things that come up as they come up with that. But would the Leader of the Liberal Party say, "We're not going to do that. We've got a budget to meet. We're going to cut that part. It's not a demonstrated need. What the heck. We'll develop the mine the next year." It just simply doesn't make sense.

We have a small business investment tax credit that encourages Yukoners to invest in small Yukon companies. Since that inception, the program has assisted eight Yukon businesses to raise \$5.2 million. You could ask if we are putting the money out in that. Well, maybe not as much as that sounds, but we're foregoing the revenue to do that.

Unfortunately, for every cheque book, there are two columns in the cheque books. The members opposite seem to often forget that there are two sides to that cheque book. It's deductible — who cares that you don't have anything to deduct it from. The enterprise trade fund — we use that to support business development, market expansion, and enhancing revenues for Yukon businesses. Since its inception in 2004, a total of 473 projects for \$2.75 million have been approved. We continue to maintain ongoing consultations with key industry stakeholders to ensure that Yukon businesses achieve a competitive advantage in external markets. It's a fund that has worked out very, very well for us, for Yukon, for our population.

What would the Liberals do about this? Well, we know what they would do. When they held that short term before people started jumping ship from their own caucus and their own Cabinet, what happened was, of course, that they cancelled the Department of Economic Development — disbanded it — moved people into other departments and simply disbanded — that's a concept of economic development? To disband the department? It's a line of thinking that is just very, very strange.

I can remember knocking on doors during the 2002 election and having people — single moms, basically, because the husband was down in Alberta trying to make a living and support the family so they could stay here. It was a U-Haul economy and suddenly we've not only gained back that population, we've gained something like 15 percent back in the population. Is it four or five of the doctors currently working in the Yukon were born and raised in the Yukon? Statistics like this — that we're recruiting people and bringing people back that want to live here, want to enjoy this quality of life.

What was the Liberal solution? Set up a scenario where people were leaving in droves and, again, I'm not sure that this is what people want. I remember talking to one fellow who was

working on his car, and he figured he'd get the car working and as soon as he got it working — it would be just after the election — and if the Liberals won again, he was out of here. Well, the Liberals didn't win and guess what? He's still here and still living in Porter Creek.

So I think when we look at this budget and look at some of the criticism that's coming from the members opposite, they really do have to get out more and see what's going on in the Yukon and take a look at the economy and take a look at what people really want. And what they really want is a good quality of life here, not a 10-percent reduction in population and to cancel economic development activity in this territory. It makes no sense.

Mr. Cardiff: It's a pleasure today to rise to talk about and discuss the *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10*. There are some questions and I will save those questions for Committee of the Whole and, in particular, I look forward to getting some explanations for some of the changes in revenues and reductions in capital expenditures from the Premier.

Second reading speeches are typically philosophical in nature, and I think I'm going to use this opportunity to present more of a New Democrat perspective on this government's stewardship of the Yukon economy, as contained in this budget document. There are different philosophies for different parties. Otherwise, we would all be enjoying a group hug, probably. We do see things differently, and I believe we do have different priorities. And that's where the disagreement about how the taxpayers' money — Yukoners' money — is spent by the government.

Now much has been made in the past about the Yukon's dependence on federal funds. I think what we're seeing in Ottawa is that they've borrowed, invested a lot of money, ran deficits and currently there is a debt. It needs to be paid off and they're looking for ways to tighten their belt and reduce spending. We as a government here in the Yukon need to be cognizant of that fact because they're looking for ways to cut their costs and that could have impacts on some of the funding that has flowed to the territory. That money isn't going to be there for time immemorial.

The other thing I think that's important to note is now we're seeing the government has run two consecutive deficits. The figures in the budget document clearly show that the government has spent a little over \$25 million more than it took in last year. It is about priorities. The economy is booming and that has its good sides but it also has its bad sides.

Much of the Yukon's economic history, at least since the gold rush, is one of boom-and-bust cycles. Before that I don't think there were too many boom-and-bust cycles here in the Yukon, when it comes to the economy. Things were reasonably stable.

It's safe to say that it's probably much easier to govern during a boom cycle, which we're currently in. I think it's pretty safe to say that, with the economic stimulus the federal government has provided and the capital projects that have been undertaken in the territory, we are in that boom cycle. The indicators of that are relatively low unemployment, relatively

high average wages — we still have low minimum wages. We have an increase in corporate and personal income tax.

On the bright side, there's a reduction in tobacco tax, which means that people are getting it. They are quitting. Not everybody is quitting, but some people are — or reducing. So that's something that actually will help — hopefully down the road — our health care budget.

I have a few other things to say about that — maybe a little later.

However, there is an increase in liquor tax, which would lead me to believe that there is also an increase in liquor consumption, which is one of the downsides of a boom economy.

What are the reasons behind the boom? As I said, there is more mining. There are more exploration dollars. That's fuelled by high mineral prices — the government can't take credit for all of that. As I said earlier, it's fuelled by the infrastructure and construction dollars — the economic stimulus that has been provided from the federal government and administered by the current government.

So, there are challenges of maturing our economy, of stimulating sustainable economic development and mitigating those bust periods. How successful will this government be? Only time will tell. Remember what things looked like here after the gold rush, or when there were times of economic downturn? There's also a flip side to the boom cycle of economies.

When we're experiencing that boom cycle, there are some downsides to it. You can look at places like Fort McMurray. Some of this will sound familiar to the members opposite, and Alberta knows this situation well because, during the boom, they experienced a housing crisis; they experienced a housing crisis in Calgary and in Fort McMurray, with mobile homes going for close to \$400,000 — sound familiar?

There was an increase in substance abuse, alcoholism, prostitution and violence in Fort McMurray during the boom cycle. There was environmental degradation.

It was hard for regulatory agencies to keep up with what was going on and actually look after and ensure that regulations were being adhered to. Social service agencies were having a hard time dealing with crises around substance abuse, alcoholism and housing and violence.

The municipal government there couldn't cope with the growth. They went so far — because there was a drain on social services, there was a drain on the infrastructure — that they actually lobbied the government to not permit as many projects because the community couldn't deal with it. Unless we pay attention to the social side of the ledger, we're going to have to confront — and in some ways we are as we listened or heard in Question Period today — the dark side of an economic boom.

We listened yesterday to the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation, the Member for Porter Creek North. We listened to him again today spout the same statistics over and over and over again about the good things this government is doing. Some of them are good and we do support them,

But like I said at the beginning of my address, philosophies are different; priorities are different.

The Minister of Economic Development talked about the money that was spent — the \$37 million that has been committed over four or five years to the Robert Campbell Highway and the \$400-million mine at the end of the road. It's not that we don't support exploration and mining, but that money is a direct subsidy. There is a benefit to Yukoners and hopefully there will be Yukoners working on that — but that's one of the other downsides. I'll touch on that a little later.

\$37 million for the Robert Campbell Highway, Mr. Speaker; for a permanent youth shelter — a big zero; for second-stage housing for abused women who are looking for a place to live, to get away from violence, to restart their lives so they can reintegrate into society and get into some housing — they need that time. There's a waiting list. There's a waiting list for social housing units.

We have a social housing unit that's being used as a temporary youth shelter — excuse me? That's bad planning. Right next door, there are 10 licensed beds. This government chooses to ignore it — not work with NGOs. I talked to those NGOs. They never knew that the temporary youth shelter had moved. They had no idea. They weren't consulted. They weren't even informed. That's not good governance. That's getting your priorities wrong.

What are some of the other downsides to a boom economy? Growing the gaps between the rich and the poor, the least able. There was a motion in the Legislature today about minimum wage or a guaranteed minimum income and the concept there is to give Yukoners a little bit of dignity, to reduce poverty — end poverty — to save on the costs of hospitals, prisons and police work, to reduce the burden on the social assistance system — but that's not a priority for this government. Regardless of what they say, they don't take constructive ideas like those and run with them.

They're unwilling to implement all the changes to the *Substance Abuse Action Plan*, which would also reduce the cost. That's what is driving this supplementary budget — the cost of out-of-territory hospital claims and physician claims. Let's do something positive. Let's get youth off the street. Let's reduce the cost to the social service system. Let's give people a living wage. Let's make sure they can survive out there.

Instead, this government wants to spend \$37 million on a road to a \$400-million mine. How many of the people working in that mine are going to be Yukoners?

I'm going to touch on another piece of this, and that is the construction project up the road, which is the healing centre, a replacement for the Whitehorse correctional facility. There's a lot of money being spent there. A lot of people working on that project are coming from out of the territory. That's an overheated economy. When we're bringing people from down south to this territory to do the work that Yukoners should be doing, we've overheated the economy.

At the same time, if you look at the liquor tax, there's increased liquor consumption, more than likely. There is increased pressure on the services. There are increased services across at the hospital for those workers who are working on projects around the territory who have had to come from southern jurisdictions — are they paying taxes here in the territory?

Some of them are. Some of them aren't. I know — I've worked with some of those people in my previous occupation. A lot of them are filing their income tax returns in southern jurisdictions. It does create a cost on the social side of the ledger, and the government needs to recognize that — because they displace people. Those are the people we need to be looking after by ensuring that they do have a guaranteed annual income, ensuring that they do have a place to live — instead of housing homeless youth temporarily at a detox centre or in a social housing unit — especially when we have another facility right next door with 10 licensed beds, but the government chooses to ignore it and they choose not to work with the service agencies that are willing to provide that service.

The temporary youth shelter — I talked with people today and in the last little while about this, because this is an issue. I remember standing on the street, talking to a young man a number of years ago — four years ago this fall — in front of the Elijah Smith Building, because they wanted a permanent emergency youth shelter. They have a temporary youth shelter with a sign on the door that says, "Excuse me, we're not going to open the door. You have to phone this number, and then you have to go through some sort of an intake procedure and then you can come in and, at 8:00 in the morning, we're going to boot you out."

I talked to another person yesterday, when I explained that to somebody, and they said they'd rather spend the night at the Minister of Justice's healing centre, at the replacement for the correctional facility, because at least there you get three squares a day, there's some programming and you don't get booted out at 8:00 a.m. Those are the priorities that this government doesn't get. They don't understand that.

The Premier can stand there on his feet all day and talk about the money that he spends on the social side of the ledger — I don't buy it. I don't believe it. That's why we vote against budgets. I can vote for this \$3.7 million, but I want to see them do something real. They're willing to do things and spend money for corporations and give tax breaks to corporations — we're going to talk about that, believe me — but when it comes to the least advantaged people, the government turns their back on them. I don't care how much money — the minister said they doubled the funding to the Youth of Today Society; they doubled the funding to others, to BYTE and to the Boys and Girls Club. Fill your boots; doubling it is not enough. When you can afford to spend millions and millions of dollars and borrow money to build hospitals, hydro facilities, and then you turn your back on the most precious resource we've got. It's more valuable than any mineral we have, and that's our youth. I'm tired — I'm damn tired of having to bang my head with this government on this issue. The minister says he's seen Angel's Nest. The minister says he's seen the facility. I want him to come with me. I want to go over there. I want the Premier to explain to me why those kids have to go through that. That's not fair and this should be the number one priority of a government — to look after our young people and to make sure that they have a safe place to stay.

Now, I've obviously not been following my notes, because I got kind of wrapped up in it. There's a lot more to say about the priorities of this government, and that's just one of them.

The Minister of Education is sitting over there, and I can see that — and yesterday, instead of trying to get to a motion that was really substantial about literacy, the government chose to filibuster. Literacy is a very important part and it's a priority — and that's what leads to poverty. That's what leads to housing issues and — I know my time is up, but we'll talk about that later.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: It's my honour and pleasure to rise today in the Assembly to represent the constituents of the beautiful Southern Lakes and to speak to the budget bill that's before us.

I think that every MLA is passionate about their community, about their constituents and about the Yukon. This is the land that we love; this is the land that we represent. Mr. Speaker, you remind us of that on a daily basis through our opening prayers. We all have a responsibility to work in the best interest of the territory and the best interest of people in the community.

Now, Mr. Speaker, since we've taken office there has been a tremendous amount of hard work done by my colleagues here, by people in the opposition, people in the public service, people in the private sector, and by the volunteers in our community. I can't say it enough. The territory has really pulled together. We've seen some incredible improvements. We saw an economy that was not going in the right direction. We saw the population in the territory decreasing — really, on a daily basis. The whole sense of optimism certainly was not there.

Today, Mr. Speaker, when I walk down Main Street of whatever Yukon community, or talk to people in coffee shops or in gas stations, that sense of optimism is there; that sense of excitement is there; that sense of looking forward to the future is there; that sense of confidence is there.

We only need to take a look at some of the statistics about our territory, about the population and seeing the growth in the population. This growth is coming in a couple of different parts. It's people not leaving the territory; it's people who are making a commitment to the territory and staying here. It's people's children who have gone out to school and are coming back to the territory. That's a tremendously exciting thing.

We also have an influx of immigrants from Canada and around the world wanting to make Yukon home. Why? Because of the tremendous quality of life and the tremendous opportunities that we have here — from our beautiful environment to the economic opportunities to the social and cultural opportunities that are here in the territory. Yukon is a great place to live.

We campaigned on a platform of increasing quality of life, of protecting Yukon's pristine environment, of creating a diverse private sector economy, of practising good governance throughout the territory. We're delivering on those — on every aspect of that platform that was put together. We're seeing the changes in our community. I was talking to one fellow not too long ago, who said to me, "You know, we haven't seen it this

good since the seventies." He said, "Both my wife and I have good jobs. Our house is worth more and our three kids are back in the territory and working here." Now, that was a man walking around with a big smile on his face. Yukoners recognize that we have a great thing going here. We need to continue to work on that.

This budget certainly continues to build on that and to increase the opportunities and the responsiveness of the government to constituents' needs throughout the territory. I'm sure that ministers, through their different speeches, will talk about all aspects of their budget. As well, once we get into Committee of the Whole, we'll have an opportunity to go into some of the specific projects. For today I'll just touch on some of the opportunities, some of the projects going on in beautiful Southern Lakes and some of the highlights in my ministerial responsibility.

With investments of over \$1 billion in this budget, the Government of Yukon has demonstrated once again that it's undertaking initiatives that are changing the lives of Yukoners for the better. In the beautiful Southern Lakes we've seen investments in drinking water, solid waste, community infrastructure and impacts that will affect our tourism and economic potential and our cultural opportunities.

It has been another busy summer with some of the different facilities that have been opened this past summer. We've opened the second source of potable water in the community of Marsh Lake. This is a tremendous facility to provide access to public drinking water, access to bulk water for firefighting and access to water for bulk water haulers in the community of Marsh Lake. It has been a long time in coming, and I'd really like to thank the Minister of Community Services and his department for the tremendous amount of work that it took to put in this facility. It's great to see the clean drinking water flowing in the community of Marsh Lake. Also, we've made investments in Carcross' drinking water treatment plant in the design phase. That'll be another project that we'll be going forward with. Also, we've heard loud and clear from Yukoners about issues like solid waste. Through the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan*, we made a commitment to reduce the amount of burning going on in Yukon communities. In the communities of Carcross, Tagish and Marsh Lake, we now have solid-waste management facilities with an increased opportunity for recycling, ways of encouraging people to reduce their consumption and then, when they do have waste, ways of better dealing with it — more environmentally friendly ways of addressing our solid-waste issues.

These were significant issues of importance in the communities of Carcross and Tagish. We certainly heard from them doing community tours and through my meetings with constituents and discussions with constituents. I am pleased to say that's another issue. It wasn't in the original party platform; it was an issue that this government addressed. There are issues that develop throughout the years and throughout the time in office, and you have to be responsive to them.

We've heard about some of the other approaches on budgeting and this is an important aspect. There are going to be things that will come up or concerns that need to be listened to

and need to be responded to responsibly. This was certainly an excellent example of that.

Also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Carcross, we've seen a number of different projects that have been opened in recent years regarding the Carcross waterfront. Those projects include the replacement of the walk bridge, the construction of a viewing platform and public washrooms, the carving shed that was done in cooperation with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation. It's not only creating cultural opportunities in that community, but also economic opportunities — building on the skills in the communities and building ways of creating more revenue and income for people into the future.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing other landscaping projects underway in Carcross and the *Tutshi* memorial project. The *Tutshi* memorial — I think that's a great symbol for the community, because for so long, it stood as — well, it wasn't too pretty to look at. We've certainly had a couple of different voices in the community — some that wanted to tear it down and some that wanted to build it back up. Well, the best way that we could come up to address this was to turn it into a memorial — to recognize the cultural significance of this, to create another tourist attraction, to give visitors another reason to stay longer in the community, to stay there and enjoy the beauty of Carcross. The polish is certainly being applied to that gem of a community. We'll continue to work with people in Carcross to address the needs, to increase economic opportunity — whether it's on things like the stacked-wood housing project, where we're working with community members on different kinds of construction methods and training programs in order to build more housing. We're building houses in communities but we're also teaching people how to build houses, and those will go a long way.

I'll speak more about the investments in education as we go deeper into my portfolio of Education, but that's one big area of investment where this Yukon Party government has made tremendous investments.

We come back to some of the other issues going on in the beautiful Southern Lakes, if I may: we've seen road upgrades to the areas of the Atlin Road and the Carcross Road. With those road upgrades, we've also put on training programs to prepare local people for those kinds of local opportunities. We're also seeing renovations to other facilities throughout the riding.

The positive economic opportunities that have been going on throughout the territory have affected the residents of Marsh Lake as well.

In the areas of education, we're again seeing tremendous investments. We've all heard the statistics about the decline in the number of students through Yukon's education system in recent years. We didn't follow the same path of previous governments and cut the number of teachers.

In fact, there is a tremendous increased number of teachers. We have more teachers in our school system now than we did in 2001 and 2002, when the Liberal Party was in power or the NDP was in power. There are more teachers in our school system now than then. We have fewer students, but we've recognized the importance in making investments in education.

Along those lines too, the number of educational assistants has gone up by a tremendous percentage. We're continuing to make investments, not only in staffing and in programming, but also in our physical education structures, whether it was the Tantalus School in Carmacks that was opened a couple of years ago or the new project, which is F.H. Collins, and the replacement there.

We've done that project in a manner that has involved the school, the school council, the broader community and indeed the whole territory, in identifying an incredible new plan as to how to go forward with replacing F.H. Collins. I'm very excited about this.

Additionally, we've seen other tremendous opportunities in educational infrastructure, whether it is things like the Yukon Research Centre of Excellence at Yukon College, or the housing at Yukon College for parents and small families or students and also the seniors facility at Yukon College. We've heard the comments from the opposition members in the past criticizing those investments, but they are certainly having huge paybacks now.

Also, this government has worked very closely with the Government of Canada. We've taken advantage of programs, such as Build Canada or the knowledge infrastructure fund. Yukon College put in an application to the federal government to access funds from the knowledge infrastructure fund and that was approved. The Government of Yukon has matched and has actually contributed more than our 50-percent share on those types of initiatives, and we're seeing new campuses now being built in Dawson and Pelly Crossing. I appreciate the Member for Mayo-Tatchun. While he's in opposition, he's seeing two new schools being built in his riding.

The member opposite says he is a good MLA working for it. I appreciate that and I look forward to his support when the budget comes before us, because that's how we pay for these things. We recognize that we have a responsibility to increase educational opportunities throughout the territory, and these educational investments are the best investments that I think we can make for the future. They are a tremendous investment.

I'm not the only one who thinks that. We're also seeing others contribute to early childhood education and education in the territory, and I expect we'll hear more announcements along those lines in the very near future.

We're seeing some of the investments in education for physical buildings, but we're also increasing investments in our training programs, the training trust funds, and those are having huge paybacks throughout the territory. The Government of Yukon is now implementing the labour market development agreement and the labour market agreement. Having Yukon in control of that means that we're able to be more responsive to the specific needs in all our communities, and we're putting in programs to prepare Yukoners for Yukon opportunities.

The Member for Mount Lorne talks about social ills. How do we treat them? How do we address them? Education is one of the key ways that we do that. Yes, it's not the only way. There are a tremendous number of other ways that we address it — whether it's the literally hundreds of social housing units that Yukon Housing has created. Mr. Speaker, look at the his-

tory of the previous governments. The previous two governments didn't build any social housing in the territory. This government has increased the inventory of social housing literally by hundreds of units.

I see the time is running short today, but I would like to mention Energy, Mines and Resources. It's another important driver in our economy. I said before the Department of Education helps to prepare Yukoners for Yukon opportunities. Well, Energy, Mines and Resources prepares opportunities for Yukoners, whether those are in the mining industry, the forestry industry, and agriculture industry. Really, it's having a significant effect on the whole territory.

Through responsible development and responding to the needs that we have throughout the planet, really, for our resources, we're now seeing over 600 Yukoners employed directly by hardrock mines in the territory. That's 600 more direct jobs that didn't exist under the previous political parties' regimes.

Now, we saw exploration going on in sister jurisdictions — in Alaska, in Northwest Territories — but because of the political climate created by the NDP and the Liberals, the exploration dollars didn't come here. We put in place responsible development regulations. We worked with industry. We've attracted them here. Yes, we have very strong regulatory processes. We need to have those to maintain our pristine environments, but we're certainly working with industry. That has impacted in over 600 specific hardrock mine jobs. We'll have to have the Minister of Economic Development look at the whole calculation of the number of spinoff jobs that that creates.

Again, we just need to look back to the population statistics. Before we took office, we had about 28,000 people in the territory. Now, it's 35,000 people. There's a tremendous amount of optimism and excitement in the territory. As well, we're making significant investments with the federal government on clean, renewable energy and increasing our hydro capacity, because that will be crucial to the future.

There's a tremendous amount to talk about. I look forward to budget debate, when we'll be able to go through the Department of Education's budget line by line and look at how the significant investments in education are creating paybacks for Yukon and increasing the opportunities for Yukon students.

We heard anecdotally that there are four or five Yukoners who are now doctors back in our community. Those are the stories I love to hear. Those are the stories of optimism; those are the stories of confidence; those are the stories of success. It's by implementing budgets like this that we'll continue to build on success and continue to build on a Yukon that's happy and healthy — an incredible place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Fairclough: I'll be brief in my remarks to the *Supplementary Estimates No. 3* for 2009-10. It will come as no surprise to the government members that we in the Official Opposition will not be in support of this supplementary budget, as we were not in support of the budget that was presented in that year.

It is a confidence vote, Mr. Speaker, not that we are in disagreement with many of the projects that are within the budget itself as we, on this side of the House, have mentioned that some of these projects should go ahead, and we do support it, and we do take that back to our constituents to ensure that we, on this side of the House, are in support of a lot of those projects that are within the budget. But this is a confidence vote, and I know we're dealing with one department here of \$3.7 million.

The supplementary budget is information that is tabled by the Finance minister for all to look at and, despite what the Minister of Finance says, this is a deficit budget. It is easy to read, a pretty simple form, S-1, if any one of the government members would like to look at it. They can see clearly the revenues versus the expenditures and the difference there is in there, which is over \$25 million — a deficit budget. You cannot deny that. The media, as they pick up the supplementary budget that has been tabled in this House, can read it. I know the Finance minister would like to spin it in a different way by saying that we have an accumulated surplus of over \$521 million, a lot of which are assets that we really can't do anything with, and we can't spend down or use. He knows that and the public knows that. The public will not be fooled.

I heard the previous speaker on this budget talk about a few things, and one was the Yukon Party's strong commitment to the environment. Well, those are just words that are being used by the Yukon Party members. Out there in the public? It is not the perception and the belief that people have. Although they would like to convince themselves, they're not going to convince the general public that they have a strong environmental agenda at all. When it comes to big issues like the Peel, no one on the government side shows up for these big meetings that were attended by over 170 people.

The previous speaker said, and I'm sure that everyone after on the government side is going to say, how much the Yukon has grown because the government is made up of Yukon Party members. They are leading and running this territory. But I would think that a lot of those who have worked year after year after year trying to get something better for the territory might take those words a little differently. I brought it up in this House before, and I'm going to say some of it again.

I haven't heard the Yukon Party members give a whole lot of credit to a lot of the hard work that has been done in the past. The past Liberal government and NDP government worked on the devolution of federal programs — lands and resources — to be controlled in the Yukon Territory. That move itself — we all know, the public knows, the business community knows — was a tremendous change in the territory, where we could start making decisions ourselves here in the territory versus others making the decisions for us. What it would mean is increased activity here in the territory.

We all saw that; previous parties and previous governments saw that and they worked toward it — the devolution of federal programs for lands and resources. But what Yukon Party members haven't said is how they weren't going to sign on to it unless they made improvements right off the bat. But somehow they covered their eyes and signed on the dotted line,

because they knew there were benefits to the Yukon Territory, and we see it here today.

The other thing that I don't hear a word from the Yukon Party members about is the effects of settling the land claims agreement here in the territory — financially and in the development community. I would say that's probably one of the biggest changes that the Yukon Territory has ever seen — maybe since the gold rush — it has ever seen. That's a huge impact. It changes the way in which the Yukon government deals with the general public forever because of those agreements. I think the Yukon Party must realize it, but they just don't say it.

When you look at the First Nations — they're in their infancy stage of growing as a government, but there are a lot of things that are taking place there and a lot of regulations that they need to meet, just like everybody else. They have to build their buildings to standards like everybody else. As these standards change, it'll probably mean an increase in cost and they have to abide by those rules.

One example would be the watershed that's being built in the community of Carmacks, where new regulations have come out. It's probably one of the first buildings to ensure that these regulations are met. That was a vision that other governments had and we see it today. We see the effects of those final agreements here today. They are working to develop their communities. They have corporations that are in business, big business, whether it's in the hotel business or the airline business. First Nations are definitely putting people to work and they're drawing in workers to the territory to work for them on their projects.

They are lobbyists. Like the Yukon government, they go out to the federal government and they lobby for money and they bring it back here. There are millions and millions of dollars that they bring into this territory, usually going to communities and, when they are spent in the communities, it has a huge effect in the amount of money that circulates in the communities. It's one of the best ways to grow communities and we see that today.

I don't see the Yukon Party giving a lot of credit to that and I'm hoping that perhaps the next speakers who speak to this supplementary budget would give credit where credit is due. In going into the communities and talking with First Nations and municipalities and so on, it's quite evident a lot of activity has taken place.

The devolution of lands and resources to the control of Yukon government: we're seeing the benefits of that now.

We had a motion on the floor yesterday, and I was hoping perhaps more people could have had the opportunity to speak to it, but the government decided that no one else should be talking to this and filibustered on that motion. What they didn't say, when it comes to good governance, is you don't announce this or brag about this or tell anybody about this, but one of the first orders of business of the day for the Yukon Party — does any one of the Yukon Party members know what that was? It was to repeal the accountability act — governments to be accountable for the spending decisions they make. They repealed the accountability act.

When you go out to the general public right now, people notice the kinds of decisions that have been made.

The Yukon Party has been granted another mandate, even after that, and should have looked carefully at the way in which they conducted themselves publicly and with the general public, whether it comes to local governments or NGOs.

Looking at it today? People are frustrated and they're fed up. Yes, our economy is doing well. I've been out quite a bit this summer. I've talked to quite a few placer miners right there on their claims. Some of them have been doing it for 20 years and some longer. They finally found a spot where they can make money. With the price of gold the way it is today, they're definitely working grounds that were poor as far as quality of gold in the past. They're working some of those grounds because of the price of gold and they're making money. They're doing repairs on their equipment, which in the past with the low gold prices — if they weren't making money, they would basically stop work for the year or walk away from it. They are making repairs and they are committed.

They would like the government to help on a lot of things. I've raised it in this House before. One of them is doing improvements to secondary roads. I hope government will take note of this. They actually did do some work on rural roads. I don't know where that program is any more, but there has been some work done on the Mount Nansen Road; there has been work done on the Freegold Road. I raised this with the Highways and Public Works minister about the bridge over Big Creek on the Casino Trail. It's too bad that was left alone, because now the other end is washed out and you've got a bridge sitting with no water under it, but around it. It makes it that much more difficult for people to get out and do more exploration work or whatnot in that area. It's an important area, because it's just up from the White Gold properties — it could be accessed from that route — and to Casino mines between northern Freegold and Prospector and Casino properties. I think what was a bit of surprise out there this year was the amount of staking that took place by some — I guess, surprisingly, people outside of the Yukon Territory. For example, Casino properties, Casino mines — it's Western Copper that owns that property — they wanted to build an airstrip just off the property down below a little bit but discovered that it was staked up by Chinese companies all over. It surprised them because it went right around their properties. I was out there this summer, and there were a lot of helicopters and aircraft flying fuel out to many of the exploration companies around. It is busy and people definitely want to do business here. A lot of the credit goes toward ensuring and following through with the hard work of previous governments that have worked on devolution and on the land claim agreements.

A prime example of direct benefits to the final agreements — you just need to look at Capstone, Minto mines and how the Selkirk First Nation is fully involved and benefiting directly from the revenues that are generated from that particular development. There are many, many more out there that could take place. It's not necessarily all the work of the Yukon Party. It was said to me over and over again that many of these have

been worked on for quite some time; for example, Western Copper, Capstone, Minto mines.

I remember even talking with the person who did the PR work for them at the time, Lutz Klingmann. I am not sure where he is right now; I haven't seen him for quite a few years, but that was a learning curve for him also at the time, because there was a lot of education that was given to him about the final agreements. That type of information, written agreements and so on, gets circulated in the mining community and gets passed on. First Nations are actually there to do business and also just on that, I don't really want to go on too much about mining, but in my riding there's a tremendous amount of development right from Keno to Carmacks, and it's impacting the community socially. There's a lot more money circulating in the communities and people are buying vehicles and so on.

I really don't want to go on too much more on mining, but I think it's important to ensure that those who have worked to ensure Yukon has a brighter future get recognized. I'm hoping the Yukon Party will do that.

It would be no surprise, as I said before, that we will be voting against this Yukon Party government budget, as it is a deficit budget, and it's a non-confidence vote. I just want to remind the members opposite that that is what the vote is. Members could say we're against all these projects, but no, of course not. Tremendous development has taken place in my riding, and I have to deal with that.

I have many communities; I have First Nation governments, municipalities; there's quite a large and vast array of issues that come up as a result of even putting in a road, for example, even if it is just a road to fight fires. We've seen a lot of impact like that.

I know my time is limited. I would like to be able to speak more on some of these issues — perhaps when we get into the *Supplementary Estimates No. 1*.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I'd like to thank all members for their contributions here today and during the sitting. I think, as has already been articulated here today, it is indeed an honour and privilege to serve as a representative of the public, for those who elected us and those who did not elect us. It has been a tremendous privilege to serve over the last number of years and to be able to see changes occur and take effect for the positive. A lot has been stated here on the floor of the Legislature, and there has been a lot of differing opinions as to how Government of Yukon could expend fiscal resources this way or that way. At the end of the day, decisions have been made and decisions will continue to be made by the government of the day.

I am very proud to be part of the Yukon Party government. I'm proud to have contributed to the evolution of our territory.

We certainly don't take 100-percent credit for all that has been achieved. As the previous speaker also referenced, there have been tremendous collective efforts on behalf of Yukon citizens, self-governing First Nations, in terms of the Government of Canada, our municipalities, duly-elected officials, to all our public servants.

It is we as the political and executive arm of government that is elected on a platform to make decisions, built on what

we were elected to do. At the end of the day, it is up to the individuals we work with, day in and day out, the public service. Those individuals work very hard on Yukon citizens' behalf delivering services and programs effecting that change. They're the ones who are working with the private sector and other governments.

There also has to be a tremendous amount of credit due to all of our volunteers, our community organizations, agencies, our non-government organizations, to all those who serve on our boards and councils and committees. There are many, and each and every individual contributes in their own way. We are so very fortunate to have such a wealthy and prosperous territory today. When I say "wealthy," I mean wealthy in terms of our human resources; our wealth in terms of our land around us, and the abundance of wilderness, wildlife, and areas that we deem very important to Yukon. The very fact that we have been able to grow our population significantly over the last number of years is testament that we are a destination of choice, not only for visitors, but more and more so for people across this country to call the Yukon their home. As a lifelong Yukoner, I couldn't be more proud to call myself a Yukoner. I couldn't be more proud of the individuals I do represent and I couldn't be more proud of the work of all of our respective governments and public service and all of the many entities that I just referenced in helping us make these changes.

Today we are here to talk about one of two supplementary budgets, as brought forth by the Minister of Finance, and the one that is before us today refers to a couple of significant items that have really contributed to a change over the last year and some. It has already been duly noted, but it's significant to include those changes that emanate from the Department of Health and Social Services, which include expenditures of \$3.7 million related to physician and out-of-territory hospital claims.

Second, the collective agreements for our public servants, for the YEU and the YTA — as members will recall, both of those agreements were ratified earlier this year and, given the timing of the ratification, the Auditor General has instructed that increments that have been attributable to the 2009-10 fiscal year should, in fact, be booked appropriately as such in 2009-10, which is what we are talking about closing out this particular fiscal year.

So, again, approximately just under \$2 million was booked that is related to these expenditures. This is really an item of being able to close out the fiscal year, being able to reflect expenditures that weren't foreseen at the time of tabling the budget. This is part of fiscal governance in the territory. It does reflect the very importance of expenditures in health care.

In terms of the territory and how we have evolved, we have not only gone to work on the economy — we all know the story about how it wasn't long ago — a number of years back — where we did see an exodus of individuals, particularly young families, looking for prosperity elsewhere, looking to raise their family elsewhere because the work wasn't here.

We all know the story of housing prices — and the list goes on. Since that time, when we were elected, we made a commitment to Yukoners to build an investment climate that was conducive to the growth of the private sector. I believe that

we continue to work to do just that by investing in initiatives that will continue to see growth and which we have seen growth in.

We made a commitment to invest on the social side of the ledger. There has been a lot said on the floor of the Legislature in terms of what more could be done. There can always be more done and accomplished. There is always a never-ending list of priorities to address. But I believe that this government has worked hard to strike a balance between the economic side and the social side.

I am very proud of the investments that this government has made over the last number of years in terms of providing affordable housing of all kinds. Second-stage housing — I think it was earlier this summer that the ribbon was cut on the first second-stage housing initiative ever to be completed in rural Yukon in the Town of Watson Lake. The Help and Hope women's shelter deserve much credit for the work that they have done over the years, and the board of directors, in ensuring that there is a safe place for those fleeing abusive situations, both women and children.

To see a beautiful building that has a multitude of housing options for those seeking more stability — housing stability in the community of Watson Lake, for example — is very good to see and is much needed, unfortunately. We are very proud to invest in initiatives such as the family-focused housing initiative. Again, much credit is due to women's organizations that made that a priority to the Women's Directorate, which this government reinstated.

In terms of looking at getting at the root causes of poverty, crime, violence, and so forth, one of the most important initiatives that any government can work on is affordable housing — providing that secure housing for families — especially families. The initiative to go forward with 30 units plus with two bedrooms plus for each of the units, primarily for lone-parent families, is much needed. Again, this is a very creative, innovative project. It was a project that was identified as being needed the most. We have been able to meet that need.

So I'm very proud of the work that is going along in the Riverdale community. I think that the work by the contractors involved — they've been doing a great job through Yukon Housing Corporation, working with the community. The project is coming along, and it will be filled and well-utilized.

There are many other affordable housing initiatives throughout the territory in just about every other community, whether it's addressing seniors or elders housing, whether it is other family-based housing and so forth. These are all very important. Again, it's really important to note that since this government was elected in 2002, I believe that over 150 new housing units have been created. That's a lot more than the previous two governments successfully brought in — I believe the number was zero.

We have been able to invest in other initiatives: the Whole Child project; we have been able to invest in social workers, health care workers, addictions treatment, or land-based healing treatment programs, such as what was recently entered into with Kwanlin Dun First Nation. When we look at expanding mental health services available, when we look at the commu-

nity court, which is primarily for those with addictions and mental health-related problems — again, looking at an innovative way of addressing these issues through the courts and I believe it has been working.

Likewise, the domestic violence treatment option is another initiative that has been underway for some time and has evolved. It has been successful. These are the initiatives that we need to build on.

In terms of looking to expand continuing care, we're doing just that. We have been able to expand continuing care by making more services and programming available to those citizens here in the City of Whitehorse. We're looking to do more, not only within Copper Ridge Place, but now the Thomson Centre.

We are looking, of course, at the construction of a second ambulance station here in the City of Whitehorse, which has been very much demonstrated as a need that we need to fulfill. That work is underway, with a temporary facility already set up at the Yukon Protective Services building. Soon we will be going 24/7 in November. Again, that's another initiative that we've been very, very proud to be able to advance. There are a multitude of different initiatives that this government has invested in over the years.

The one thing that I did want to say is that Official Opposition members will come forward with suggestions. They will come forward with ideas and initiatives, but really, it has to be duly noted again that a vote against this budget is a vote against these very initiatives — the initiatives that I have just outlined — and there are many, many more. This government has been working to strike that fine balance between economic growth and addressing the social side of the equation, as well. We have been working toward the creation of more parks, more special management areas and habitat protection areas. We have been able to sign off a number of plans over the years, including Yukon's very first land use plan — the north Yukon plan — in collaboration with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. We have been able to invest in more parks, more wildlife habitat protection areas, and more inventories pertaining to fish and wildlife and land use planning than ever before.

We have had more investment on the social side of the ledger than any past government in history. We have invested in infrastructure that is sound and continues to contribute to the growth of our territory.

We have a better investment climate than ever before. We have a good economy. Our jobs are more than people. We have a very positive outlook, and we will continue to invest in areas where there is a demonstrated need, which will also create a return on investment, which is what we have seen.

I am very proud of the investments made by the Government of Yukon. I'm very proud of the work of the Department of Finance. I'm very proud of the work of the public service, which has enabled us to craft budget after budget that have included very strategic investments such as this and the work with all of our partners. Without our partners, we wouldn't be able to leverage that reach beyond what fiscal resources are made available here through Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, I would commend this supplementary budget to the Legislative Assembly. Unfortunately, it would appear

that the Official Opposition, at least, is not willing to support these investments. Again, I would like to thank all members for their contributions over the years and previous governments as well for their hard work and contributions. I would again endeavour to commend this budget to all members and urge them to reconsider their stand. Thank you.

Mr. Inverarity: I think I would like to just take this opportunity this afternoon to speak a little bit about the supplementary budget that is before us in this House. I'm not going to speak long on it this afternoon, but I would like to clear up a few issues that have cropped up in debate and in Question Period over the last couple of days.

Before I get into that, of course, I would like to thank my constituents for allowing me to represent them — the residents of Porter Creek South. I find it very reassuring that when I go knocking on the doors in the summertime and through the fall, my constituents continue to give me a vote of confidence in my ability to stand here and represent them. I shall look forward to the upcoming election within the next year. I am not sure when that will be, but whenever it is, I know that the residents will continue to support me in my endeavours to represent them and pass on their concerns to the government and this House. I know that it is not always received on the other side of the floor when I stand up here and bring issues to the House — or it takes a long time, it seems, to actually get through. I see we are going to get our drivers' licences sometime this fall. It has been three years for me trying to get that done. While the Minister of Economic Development continues to remind me that these things take time, unfortunately they had to acknowledge that there is a problem, and that took a full year before they were finally, dare I say, shamed into acknowledging that we did need new driver's licence.

There are other issues that came forward from within my riding and I'm going to try to talk about them a little bit this afternoon. First, I think I would like to correct a couple of things that the Minister of Economic Development had brought forward this afternoon. The first one is this notion that the asset-backed commercial paper has been and always was a vehicle that the Government of Yukon has used for something close to 20 years. While they may have been called asset-backed commercial paper and continue to be called that, it was a fundamental shift in the nature of what this particular vehicle was between around 1992 and 2002. Shortly after 2002 — it might have been 2003 — the banks decided that they were not going to guarantee these assets any more. Now that is a fundamental shift in the value and nature of how these particular assets or vehicles were being used. While, yes, all governments bought them prior to that, they had assurances that the principal value would be there and that we would continue to have secure funding. As we know, the banks stopped that. They changed the nature of the vehicle, and it appears that the Yukon Party government didn't read the fine print and therefore got caught, basically losing — or at least making somewhere close to \$36.5 million no longer available for use. It's an important structure because really, to stand up there and say that they were the same is not really correct. It would give us another \$36.5 mil-

lion to spend today if, in fact, the government had read the fine print and had paid attention to the dollars and cents.

I think this goes to an issue of trust, to some degree. I think that the Government of Yukon is starting to or has lost the faith of a lot of the people. I know when I went knocking on doors, the issue was basically not what's going to happen in the next election; it's when is it going to happen. They've committed to the fact that they have made a decision that the Yukon Party will not be elected. I see it every day, and they seem quite content with their life and they said we're going to move on, and that's what's going to happen.

Another thing that the Minister of Economic Development continues to talk about — and I know it's an issue for him that the previous Liberal government was perhaps a little short-lived. But in relative terms, I look back at what the history of the Yukon Party is, and I see that they're the only government in the history of the Yukon to have actually cut public sector wages, even when they didn't need to do that. So if the member is going to talk about the length of time, you should talk about the cutting of public sector wages done by the Yukon Party. I bring this point to fact because in the last couple of days I've been hearing the government turning around and asking, "What would the Liberal Party cut?" Nowhere in the discussion — what programs would we cut and what wages would we cut? That's what I constantly hear coming from the Premier, the Minister of Economic Development and virtually every member that has stood up since this sitting began, saying, "Tell us, what are you going to cut?" To be honest, I've never, ever heard our side talk about that, and it's a concern for me because the government obviously has some sort of agenda that they're trying to look at, that they're planning on doing some cuts. Why else would they bring it up constantly, other than to try and educate people that somewhere down the road we will have run out of money and you're going to have to do some cutting.

It's not that it's not within their history. It is. They've done it before, and so we see it again. They stand up and say that — and what are we talking about — out? We haven't even gone there. We're talking about trajectories. We see a \$200-million surplus approximately four years ago go down to what — \$30 million? Of that, \$24 million, approximately, isn't even usable. It's tied up until 2016. So that's a concern because that only leaves us around, I think, \$8 million — that's even barely one week of working capital for the Government of Yukon.

So we see this constant erosion of the bank surplus that we have had over the last four years being whittled down to the point where I can see that, by the next election, there will be no surplus, other than what's left in the asset-backed commercial paper — and we see it getting whittled away every, every day. So I ask the Government of Yukon: what's your motivation for putting these questions forward? Why are you asking us what we would cut? Are you going to cut? Is that what this is all about?

Are you going to cut? Is that what this is all about? Telling us to be prepared? You've done it before in the past. It sure sounds like you're going to be doing it again. Thank you very much.

I wasn't going to go into this too, too much. I think I'm going to move on to another issue. I know the Minister of Tourism and Culture talked about housing and the 150 lots they put into place over the last 10 years — 150 new lots and she thinks that that's great. Well, if I'm not mistaken, I recall that the goal of previous governments was to have 200 lots available every year, so in 10 years we get 150? Is that good planning that I see? I can tell you right now that my children have difficulty looking to move back to the Yukon because they can't find a place that's affordable that they can live in that's not social housing, and why? Because there was no planning over the last 10 years to put lots in place and what's happened? It has driven up the cost of houses. That may be good for homeowners; I don't disagree that they've seen the value of it go up, but is it a true value? Look at the land we have available in the Yukon.

We are looking at close to 3,500 lots available just below Porter Creek on the bench, the Whistle Bend project. Those should have been ready four or five years ago, if not in the last mandate. But no, it will come. I think it's now being pushed to 2013-14. That would continue to make housing available to young Yukoners who want to get into the housing market. So it's important that, yes, 150 lots might seem like a reasonable amount. The goal in 10 years would have been 2,000 lots. We haven't got them.

We have talked about debt. We have talked about how this debt is represented in the books. We know that the Crown corporations have borrowed somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$167 million. It is somewhere in that neighbourhood. It doesn't appear here anywhere in the financial statements that we have seen, because it has been off-loaded to corporations. I know that when someone comes up to me and says, "Well, we want to borrow \$167 million; would you co-sign that loan?", that debt certainly becomes part of my financial statement because it is a commitment that I have made to honour on behalf of someone else. What has the government done? They issued letters stating that they will cover the Yukon Hospital Corporation's borrowing, but we don't see any comments about that in the financial statements. It is something that needs to be addressed, because it is a commitment on the part of the government in terms of them being committed to pay back a debt to what really isn't a third party, but they consider it a third party. It's left out there hanging as a commitment on the part of the Yukon government, but the Yukon people are not aware of it. I think that is another issue that needs to be addressed within this Legislative Assembly.

Finally, I think what I would like to do, as we have all done here in the last two or three days, is stand up and say that the deficit for this fiscal year that we are debating today — this one, *Supplementary Estimates No. 3, 2009-10* — is minus \$25,675,000.

If you listen to the Minister of Economic Development, he talks about the budgetary processes as a flow — it goes up and down; it does things. Really, it's all within the realm of how budgets are done. But the reality of the situation is that the projection was for a \$19-million surplus. So an approximate \$40-million turnaround on the budgetary process is not insignificant. It's not something that you treat lightly and you shed and

say, "It's just within the normal operating realm of life." That's not correct. It's significant and any accountant and any auditor — even the Auditor General — would tell you that a \$40-million turnaround on a budget the size that we have is still significant.

So it's important that when we on this side of the House stand up and ask valid questions about the trajectory of this spending — the constant whittling away of the surplus from approximately \$200 million down to, well, as I've said, about \$7 million or \$8 million that's spendable — that's the concern that we express. It's a valid concern. I think all Yukoners express it. We all have budgets. We all have to balance our cheque books.

We can see that if we continue to spend more money than we bring in, that at some point it's going to be a problem. So I ask the government, is it a problem? Is there something here that you're not telling us about this budget, and certainly the next one, which shows a deficit also if this trend continues? Should we be concerned about what you're going to do in terms of cuts? Are you going to continue to look at this deficit and work with it? Are you going to cut programs? Are you going to cut salaries? Are you going to cut things? Tell us. We would like to know. We're here to help. We're here to give our constructive input on these things.

So, having said that, I think that I've made my points with this particular supplementary budget. I think that it's time we move on and get to the new one, recognizing that if there are issues out there with regard to the finances of the Yukon, that the government would come forward and be up front and tell us what the problems are so that we understand them, rather than laying accusations and asking us what we might do. We still are trying to understand the problem. All we really want to do is get answers, and we can't get those. When you criticize us about the things that we ask and why we continue to ask the same questions, it's because we don't get answers. Give us the answers to the questions we ask for, maybe we can help. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: I'd like to start today by thanking all the constituents of McIntyre-Takhini and for their support. I do recognize that within my riding I have one of the largest First Nations established right in the centre of the riding. I'm also a member of that First Nation. I'd like to start today by addressing some of the comments made by the Member for Mount Lorne. I have heard criticisms about a lack of social inclusion from the opposition, but especially from the NDP Member for Mount Lorne. I tend to disagree with a lot of the comments made by this member.

Since 2006, the Yukon government has embarked on the most ambitious social policy agenda since the 1972 creation of social assistance in the Yukon. For example, social assistance rates have been increased and indexed; the pioneer utility grant has been increased and indexed, as well as the Yukon seniors income supplement. The Yukon child benefit has been created and increased. Childcare subsidies have been increased. In fact, there have been more than 175 initiatives undertaken by this

government that have resulted in the reduction of poverty and increased social inclusion in Yukon.

Social inclusion is a new way to think about poverty, which is usually just about money. The Yukon government has joined five other Canadian jurisdictions in developing comprehensive poverty reduction and social inclusion strategies.

It is time for the Member for Mount Lorne to acknowledge the tremendous gains with regard to social inclusion that this government has made. I believe if you look back in history, you would find that there was no other government, including the NDP, that did as much when it came to addressing social inclusion. I would also like to now speak a little bit about some of the initiatives that this government has done with regard to working with the First Nation that is situated right in the heart of the City of Whitehorse: the Kwanlin Dun First Nation. This government entered into a Yukon asset construction agreement with Kwanlin Dun First Nation in recognition of the Whitehorse affordable family housing project that was to be constructed in the Kwanlin Dun First Nation traditional territory.

Today, construction is underway on the six-unit building in the Ingram subdivision, and completion is scheduled for this fall.

Another example is the Yukon government has entered into an asset construction agreement, again with Kwanlin Dun First Nation, on the construction of the new treatment-oriented correctional centre. It will include flexible programming, separate remand facilities and a healing environment, reflecting Yukon First Nation culture and values. The project is on time and on budget, and this project is valued at \$50 million plus.

Another example of working in collaboration with First Nations in partnership is that this government has provided financial support to Kwanlin Dun in excess of \$7 million in support of their new cultural centre. This government also committed the public library to occupy leased space. The new space will enable the library to meet the needs of Yukoners for years to come.

Those are just a few examples; there are several others. There's one, such as the partnership agreement for developing the Whistle Bend lots within the City of Whitehorse. This government has held up to its commitment with regard to the asset construction agreement section of Kwanlin Dun's land claims agreements.

I also heard several comments over the first two days of this sitting about a lack of interest by this government with regard to the environment. I would like to put on the record today that this government has, in fact, honoured chapter 11 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* with regard to establishing special management areas and parks and proposed parks. For example, there was a special management area established in Tatlain Lake.

It's 33.3 square kilometres, established through the *Selkirk First Nation Final Agreement*. Another one was the Fishing Branch, which consists of 141 square kilometres of Vuntut Gwitchin settlement land; ecological reserve — 169 square kilometres; wilderness preserve — 5,213 square kilometres; and habitat protected area of 978 square kilometres. This is protected area.

We also have the Tombstone Park, which is 2,100 square kilometres. It was approved by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and YTG and a management plan in 2009. This park is located north of Dawson City along the Dempster Highway. Again, there was also an agreement between YTG and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in to establish the interpretive centre, which ended up being a very beautiful centre and will serve that park very well.

There are other areas that should be noted, such as Agay Mene, which is 697 square kilometres, approximately 100 kilometres southeast of Whitehorse — Tarfu Lake and large portions of the Snafu Lake chain some 89 kilometres south of Whitehorse. There was a committee established in 2008, composed of representatives from Yukon government, B.C. government, Carcross and Tagish First Nations, Teslin Tlingit Council, and Taku River Tlingit — again, to establish a proposed park.

Asi Keyi, which is 3,000 square kilometres, covers much of the former Kluane Wildlife Sanctuary, and lies next to the north side of the Kluane National Park and Reserve of Canada near Beaver Creek and Burwash Landing. Until the park is created, the area is protected by a permanent oil, gas and mineral lands withdrawal order. We also have the Kusawa. There was a steering committee started for park management planning in September of 2008. It has representatives from the Yukon territorial government, Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. This proposed park is 3,000 square kilometres.

I also want to mention something about habitat protection areas. The Ddhaw Ghro is 1,608 square kilometres and will be formally designated as a habitat protection area once the three governments involved approve the management plan. Devil's Elbow/Big Island: Mayo Renewable Resource Council recommended this 75 square kilometre area be designated as a habitat protection area. Final draft approval of the management plan is anticipated later this year. Representatives consisted of the renewable resource council, Na Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation and Yukon territorial government.

The Horseshoe Slough — this land is 77 square kilometres of habitat protection area. The First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun final agreement called for this area to be protected and the Yukon territorial government designated it as a habitat protection area.

Lewes Marsh, which is 28.3 square kilometres in size — the final agreements of Kwanlin Dun and Carcross-Tagish called for a management plan for this area. A habitat protection area wouldn't meet the objectives set out in the final agreements.

The Lhutsaw Wetland, south of Pelly Crossing — the government formally protected 32.3 square kilometres of the wetland in 2007. The Selkirk First Nations final agreement called for this area's protection.

The Nordenskiöld Wetland, south of Carmacks, is 78.5 square kilometres of habitat protection area. Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation final agreement selected this area as settlement land in order to protect it. This habitat protection area has been formally established and finalized, and I might

add that I've been invited to a signing ceremony with regard to this area.

Pickhandle Lakes — the Kluane First Nation final agreement called for a habitat protection area here. Kluane First Nation, White River First Nation and Yukon territorial government members will begin the management planning process for this 51 square kilometre habitat protection area in 2010.

Tagish Narrows — the *Carcross-Tagish First Nation Final Agreement* set out management objectives for this area for a 4.5 square kilometres of habitat protection area.

These are real prime examples of the seriousness with which this government addresses environmental protection. I might add that SMAs are one method of being able to set aside land that different interest groups would like to see protected, and that includes our First Nations. They have that option within their agreements to really go ahead and set aside some lands that they want to see protected.

I think those are the main topics I wanted to cover today. I must make some comment to comments made by the Member for Porter Creek South about cuts. I heard some comments thrown around that could raise speculation in the community, and I would like to correct the record by saying to the member opposite that when there are comments made on the floor of this Assembly by the Official Opposition that would lead one to believe that they would cover every request that someone asked for during an election campaign, for example, it is a legitimate question to ask the opposition what they would cut.

When you say you don't have the money to do something, you must find a way. So it is a legitimate question to ask the Official Opposition — what would you cut?

What would you drop from programs and services in the Yukon Territory to meet the budget that you put forward? This Yukon Party government has met the challenges very well. Of course, it's always a difficult task to find some balance between a lot of the different initiatives that are addressed within the Yukon Territory. It's critically important that jobs are available to people in this territory. It's important to have parks established. It's important to address the social agenda. This government has, in my opinion, done a very good job of meeting those requirements. I also want to put on the record that one of the most important things that has been on the minds of First Nations for many years here was a land-based treatment centre. Today, I do want to thank the Yukon Party government for making that become a reality.

The first group to go through the treatment were all women clients. The second group completing tomorrow, with closing ceremonies on Saturday, will be the men's group.

I might state for the record that there were a lot of people invited to the opening ceremonies. I was very disappointed that our MP, Larry Bagnell, was not there. He was in town, because he opened the mud bog races the next day. I did not see anyone from the Official Opposition there. There were some from the Third Party.

The importance of the land-based treatment centre should be paramount, I believe. It's a very critical component in addressing the very thing the opposition has criticized this government about, and that's the social inclusion part of being able

to address a lot of the issues within society that need to be addressed to improve the quality of life for a lot of people.

Mr. McRobb: I wasn't going to speak because usually my words fall on deaf ears on the government side, but I was goaded into it by Lois from *Hansard* — she wants me to speak for an entire 20 minutes, so here we go.

First of all, I'll be pleased to speak about some good stuff and start, once again, by saying that I'm proud as always to represent the people in the Kluane riding. This is my fourth term now; it's toward the end of the term. Pretty soon we'll be in our fifth year of this term and coincidentally at the end of this month it will mark 14 years for not only me, but the Premier and the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, since we were first elected.

I've travelled extensively in beautiful Kluane since the spring sitting and have visited all the communities, a number of people, have attended several events, right from the graduation at the St. Elias Community School, to a funeral that took place on opening day here, which was Tuesday — a very unfortunate funeral for a friend many of us knew well — and certainly a number of other events in-between.

One of the highlights of travelling in the riding occurred about a month ago when I went on a flightseeing trip — a glacier tour of Kluane National Park. It had been a number of years since I had done that — about 13 years. It reminded me of the majestic beauty of that region. I don't think there's another region or another riding in the entire Yukon that has the uniqueness in terms of the geography you can find in the Kluane region.

Of course, Canada's highest mountain is in the St. Elias Range — Mount Logan. Most of the glaciers in the Yukon are also in the Kluane National Park. The scenery was simply astounding. I'll put a suggestion out there for all Yukoners. If they have friends or relatives coming up to visit, seriously consider taking them on a glacier tour in Kluane. It will be an experience they will always remember.

In terms of the supplementary budget, I've heard a number of things said this afternoon. Some I agree with and some I don't. Most points have been hashed over several times before, especially the perennial issues. There's one that has been cropping up again quite frequently. We've been hearing it in Question Period all week and we heard it again in other speeches preceding mine, about how a vote against a budget means a vote against a project or initiative or some government spending.

How sad it is when we can't move beyond the simple rhetoric. It was explained quite succinctly by our leader, the Member for Copperbelt, earlier today and on several previous occasions, that it is the role of the Official Opposition to oppose the government's budgets.

If the opposition voted in favour of government budgets, then why are we all in here? Our role is to hold the government side accountable. But, as he explained, there is a paramount issue as well. We on this side of the House simply do not have the confidence in this government's fiscal management. For that reason alone, we cannot vote for the budgets. This is some-

thing the Yukon Party members on that side of the House should not take personally. The only Yukon Party member on that side of the House who previously served from this side of the House, who happens to be the Premier, did exactly the same thing. It doesn't stop with him. This goes back to the first days of responsible — that would be a word within quotation marks — “responsible” Government of Yukon.

It's accepted practice throughout the western world, and indeed, the whole Commonwealth. It's the role of the Official Opposition to oppose what the government is doing. This is one way we can introduce the proper checks and balances into our democratic system.

I would hope everybody would realize that and put aside the rationale they may have for saying something otherwise because what I've said this afternoon, we all realize, deep down, is the truth.

One of the areas that I feel compelled to mention that I'm particularly concerned about, and I've heard it from plenty of Yukoners and I'm representing a lot of them in saying this, is the lack of true public consultation by this Yukon Party government. We've heard the Premier especially get up and praise his government's public consultation on various things, but when you examine what the government has consulted on in terms of the major issues of importance to Yukoners, there's a huge gap. One of the items at the top of that gap is the fact Yukoners were not asked if they wanted their future mortgaged.

The government has asked all kinds of other questions, some of them quite menial questions that are not even comparable in terms of importance as putting future taxpayers of the territory in debt for decades. But were people asked if they wanted their government to put them in debt for decades? The answer is no.

Now let's back up, because just prior to the point we found out the Premier mortgaged our future, I distinctly recall him in this House and in the media declaring, “I will not mortgage Yukon's future,” and there were headlines in the papers. Well, what happened within months? We found out he mortgaged the Yukon's future. I would call upon the media itself to pull up its socks and hold the government accountable when the reality is different from the rhetoric.

That's not the only example in terms of something the Premier might say his government is doing, which after a short period of time, we find the opposite is the reality.

We all should recall the big pronouncement when the Premier said he had wrestled down the trajectory. That bad old trajectory — he was going to wrestle it down. Well, what has happened since then? The reality is, the trajectory has never been more out of control and steeper than what it is now. When we ask about it, how does he respond? He responds by, number one, denying and number two, attacking — attacking the messenger, attacking us for being against the projects that are paid for or started out of the budget that has contributed to the out-of-control trajectory. Well, is that being open and accountable? Is that being fair? Not a chance. I really think there should be some mechanism for greater accountability introduced somewhere, somehow, to apply more back pressure to instances like

this when a Premier declares something to the people of the territory and then turns around and does the opposite.

The Premier often says his government is fully open, transparent and accountable. Well, again, the reality is that the opposite is true. Just look at possible initiatives this government could have taken — as have been taken in other jurisdictions — about how governments elsewhere have moved their government to being more open and accessible to the public and the opposition members, especially with respect to providing information. Well, I haven't looked at statistics from the access to information bureau, but I'm certain it's probably at record levels and if not, it's because a lot of people have given up even trying to acquire information, especially with the expense involved. This government has done nothing to try to alleviate the expense of getting to the bottom of information. It has never been harder to get information than it is today out of this Yukon Party government.

Look at Question Period; lots of good questions are asked. How are they responded to? It's the typical deny and attack approach. It's not just the Premier. They're all in it together; they're all nodding their heads; they all agree with this style of government, obviously. I really say that there's a whole lot of room for improvement in terms of making government open and accountable.

Whatever happened to the legislative reform initiative? That was in the last Yukon Party campaign document. It used that to try to get elected. That should be part of its mandate, to do something. All it has done is agree to work with the other parties and strike a select committee.

Nothing has been done since then — nothing. There hasn't been a meeting. The Yukon Party hasn't even identified which of its members will sit on this important committee. I want to back up and go to one instance in particular. Just prior to the commencement of the spring sitting, the Premier had his photo in the *Whitehorse Star* and a story, chastising the Official Opposition — which is the Yukon Liberal Party — for not identifying a member to sit on that committee.

The truth was we were in the process of identifying a member. I agreed to sit on that committee. We made that known through the proper channels. Was there ever any follow-up on that in the media? The answer is no. Has the Yukon Party named its members? The answer is no. What's the public left with?

They're left with the perception that the Yukon Party is all in favour, but it's somehow we who are dragging our heels. But the reality is the opposite.

I see the Premier finds this amusing. I could think of lots of Yukoners who don't think this is funny. They think this is a very serious matter because they realize they elect us to be present in here, to represent their concerns and try to work as productively as possible. As indicated in a motion I put on the record today, we need legislative reform in order to improve our productivity in here.

Another motion I put on the record: one of the rule changes that should be necessary is avoiding these three-hour plus filibusters by the Minister of Economic Development. I know he has done it at least three times in this session. The last

time — I recall it was on an NDP — a Third Party — motion. They were quite upset.

Well, the minister obviously has a real desire to want to speak for hours and hours and not give any other member in here an opportunity to talk. That certainly isn't fair, nor is it right.

On his filibuster yesterday, where he filled dozens of pages of *Hansard*, by the way —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. McRobb: More than two dozen, I'm told — he raised a number of issues but, in my view, he only touched on issues and gave the Yukon Party view on those issues. As we all know, that is not a very fair approach. A lot of people call a technique like that just putting spin on the issues. We need to be more fair when reflecting on the issues and what they mean to the people of the territory. I sincerely think that's part of what legislative reform can help address.

Well, the Premier has already had his speech and I see he takes exception to mine. He will get an opportunity for closing remarks soon and hopefully that will be enough to satisfy his desire to go on the record. Other members have spoken for 20 minutes and, as mentioned at the outset, it was requested of me, so we're not quite there yet and I'm continuing on for three more minutes.

Now, one of the main themes of this government's character is the lack of trust the public has in it. We see the Premier constantly fielding questions that are given to other ministers, and the government is obviously a one-man band. We don't see any dissension among the other members. They've decided they're all in it together. That's fine; the voters will remember that if there is an election, and there shall be an election sometime in the next 13 months or so. Already this government has escaped an election for the longest period of any previous Yukon government. No previous Yukon government has ever gone without an election this long and the Yukon Party is hiding from the voters. They are scared to go to an election. We've been calling on them to give voters an opportunity to elect a government they can trust since June of 2009, after it was revealed the Premier tried to sell off Yukon's future energy assets.

I'm probably down to my last minute here. I'll just go back to this because, earlier today, the Premier challenged me to go outside the Legislature and put my words out there. Of course, what he was meaning was, when members speak in this House, they have a level of immunity where they can't be sued.

So I know he'll be pleased to hear that I took him up on his challenge and I spoke to one reporter anyway and said exactly the same thing. This isn't the first time this has happened. I think the same thing happened in the spring sitting, where I was challenged by the Premier to step outside and say it out there. Well, I did it then too. I'm finding there are no repercussions. I'm led to believe that the real reason for the whole thing is because he's stuck for an answer at the time, and challenging me or others to step outside sounds like a powerful thing at the time, but really it's hollow because, when it's done, nothing happens.

Anyway, one might conclude that perhaps I have a mean streak because I've said all these bad things, but really I am a happy person. I'm just trying to do my job here in the Official Opposition, and part of my job is bringing flame to the toes of the members of the government side. Today wasn't really a blowtorch — although I think that is what's needed. Certainly, if I brought enough heat that they start taking off their socks, that might be a good thing for some of them.

Hon. Ms. Horne: That reminds me that sour grapes make a bitter drink.

Let me begin by saying I campaigned on a commitment to provide my riding with a clear vision for a bright future. When I think about where we are today, and where we were when the Yukon was under the Liberal regime, I'm very pleased and I'm proud of the progress made, not only in my riding, but throughout the Yukon.

I'm extremely proud to represent the Pelly-Nisutlin riding. I care about the well-being of my constituents and I call most of them friends. This makes me work all the harder.

The facts speak for themselves. This government practises good, responsible governance. The members of this Yukon Party, of which I am very proud to be part, have done an excellent job of governing the Yukon. Our economy is up. Our children have access to sports and recreation facilities. They have career opportunities in meaningful, well-paying and rewarding fields.

My riding's seniors now have access to high-quality housing in their home communities that wasn't there before. We are continually building and improving our highway and transportation network. We have delivered cell service to all Yukon communities, which is a major accomplishment for improving our communications network — and there is much, much more.

Let me begin by saying what we are doing in the Women's Directorate. In violence prevention, we have the *Victims of Crime Strategy*, which was launched in August 2009 by the Department of Justice. The Women's Directorate provided gender-inclusive analysis and advice in the development of the *Victims of Crime Strategy* and will work with the Department of Justice on the implementation of same.

The Women's Directorate will work with key partners on a social marketing campaign to support the prevention of violence against women. I must say that this is an issue that resonates very deeply with me personally. I have seen so much violence against women. I recently went to a CPA meeting and there we discussed violence around the world, which is of a horrendous proportion that we must not accept in society. We have to stop the violence. We have to stop accepting it as an everyday occurrence. When someone is injured, that we say, "Oh well, they must have deserved it." They don't deserve it. They deserve a healthy, happy life. Their children deserve protection from violence.

In the Circles of Respect and Equality — the CORE campaign — the three-year public education campaign produced a series of materials including public posters, a Web site, radio advertisements, a youth photojournalism campaign, two Yukon-

relevant, locally produced videos, which were amazing, and an accompanying manual to inform and support front-line work and violence prevention.

The "Getting Real" materials were designed to support violence prevention work. The Women's Directorate and the Department of Justice co-hosted two train-the-trainer sessions with the use of the "Getting Real" videos. Public education initiatives: the Women's Directorate continues to promote the 24-hour referral and support line, "VictimLink", through the CORE campaign and other violence prevention initiatives. We published and distributed the 2007 edition of the Yukon family violence resource directory in English. A French edition of the directory was published in spring 2008.

We have the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund. In 2009, the Women's Directorate doubled the prevention of violence against aboriginal women. Since 2004, the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund has provided a cumulative total of approximately \$900,000 in funding. In 2008-09, six community-based projects received support from this fund.

Other violence prevention initiatives are the Protect Yourself, Protect Your Drink campaign, also known as the coaster campaign. It is a public awareness campaign that highlights the dangers of date rape drugs, which can be placed into victims' drinks. This campaign was launched again in the spring of 2009. The Bare Essentials campaign runs annually from mid-November to early December and directly benefits Yukon women's and children's shelters. It will run for the eighth consecutive year in 2009.

There is funding to aboriginal women's organizations: in 2009 the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund has doubled. Since 2004, the fund has supported projects designed and developed by and for aboriginal women, with \$900,000 of support. We created the women's equality fund in 2006-07. Approximately \$500,000 over three years was provided to women's organizations throughout the Yukon to enhance women's equality.

The Women's Directorate, in conjunction with Health and Social Services and Justice, formed an interdepartmental working group to look at addiction and substance abuse issues for women in the Yukon and best practices to improve policies, programs and services to women in this area. The Women's Directorate has commissioned and released a report on the issue and also sponsored a training plan for workers in this area. The Women's Directorate published the report *Improving Treatment and Support for Yukon Girls and Women with Substance Abuse Problems and Addictions*. The report provided 12 recommendations to enhance women-centred care in Yukon, including to improve the responsiveness of the continuum of care, support the development and implementation of clear policies in and across departments to provide direction and support for girl- and women-centred programs, and improve collaborative mechanisms. In response to the recommendations, the Women's Directorate, with Health and Social Services and the Department of Justice, has offered three training opportunities for front-line workers with an internationally renowned researcher and educator.

In economic security, the Government of Yukon participated in the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues. From this forum, the informal women's business network has been reactivated, providing linkages, support and information to women business owners throughout the Yukon.

We have the Young Women Exploring Trades. This is an annual, day-long forum, where grade 8 and 9 girls from all Yukon communities participate in a full-day workshop creating things that teach them skills in up to nine different trade areas. I know that the member from the Third Party has been present at these meetings and has participated actively in them, and I thank him for taking the interest in the equality of women, which I know he is also very passionate about.

We have the trades exploration and preparation for women, which is a 16-week introduction to trades at Yukon College, which gives women practical skills toward trades careers and also provides opportunities for women interested in career development.

The federal-provincial-territorial ministers responsible for the status of women are undertaking a detailed financial analysis of possible improvements to the current maternity and parental benefit program under employment insurance with the goal of enhancing eligibility for the program to self-employed workers and non-standard workers. This has been ongoing for some years now and will hopefully come to fruition.

We have the aboriginal women's equality. On September 22, 2009, the Women's Directorate received notice of approval of funds from the northern strategy trust and Yukon Forum in the amount of \$450,000 to implement some of the recommendations from the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits. This approved northern strategy funding for the YAWS implementation projects began in 2010-11. The northern strategy trust monies will flow through the Women's Directorate directly to the Yukon aboriginal women's organizations. The YAWS implementation projects funded through the northern strategy included seven projects in the areas of public education and leadership development.

In partnership with aboriginal women's groups, the Women's Directorate is working on other community-based projects in this fiscal year that will lead to the YAWS implementation projects in the 2010-11 fiscal year, such as the Women's History Month campaign that celebrated Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council's 35th anniversary in October 2009.

The Women's Directorate has doubled their prevention of violence against aboriginal women's fund. The Women's Directorate is part of the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun's intergovernmental relations accord health and social issues working group and has been collaborating with NND and other Yukon government departments to issue responses to NND community health and social needs. In 2008, eight Yukon First Nation women, including two chiefs from self-governing First Nations, accompanied the former Women's Directorate minister to the second National Aboriginal Women's Summit in Yellowknife. In 2009, the Women's Directorate assisted in developing a Yukon grassroots response to the NAWS 1 and 2 recommendations. I know just recently we were discussing having

another national forum to meet on women's issues. Hopefully this will happen within the next year.

In 2007, the Women's Directorate and the Yukon Advisory Council on Women's Issues hosted two Yukon aboriginal women's summits. Through the women's equality fund, the Women's Directorate provided Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle with \$104,000 of funding. The women's equality fund also provided funding to the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society in the amount of \$104,000. In women's and girls' equality, the Women's Directorate takes a leadership role in training and educating policy, program and communication officers in gender and diversity analysis. The Women's Directorate gender-inclusive analysis courses have been offered regularly since 2004 and will be offered again in 2009. Women's Directorate offers an introduction to the department and its role regularly to new employees through staff development's orientation to the Government of Yukon.

Women's Directorate is working in collaboration with other departments to develop a response to the SEDAR recommendations in preparation of Canada's report on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In Justice — I know I'm running out of time — our top accomplishments are that we developed and implemented the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan*. We developed the safer communities and neighbourhoods implementation; the street crime reduction team; consultation on corrections; the *Corrections Act* implementation; the consulting, design and the construction of the new correctional facility; and the women's annex — designed, constructed and occupied. I'm very proud of the women's annex and the living conditions for the women, which is now a new residence which was constructed at a cost of \$1.6 million for low- to medium-risk female offenders on the grounds of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Female offenders currently residing in the women's annex will migrate to the new facility and the building will be used for other purposes.

We have therapeutic courts; we have the Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court; the Community Wellness Court.

It's interesting to note that, as of September 13, 2010, 88 clients have been through the Community Wellness Court. There are currently 18 active clients.

We have FASD-related initiatives. The Yukon is one of the leaders in Canada in addressing FASD and the related problems that go with it. Victims of crime — as part of the consultation on corrections, we are moving to address the needs of victims. While alleged offenders have rights enumerated and enshrined in the Constitution of Canada, the Constitution is silent on the rights of victims, and this is not right. Therefore, we are addressing the rights of the victims. We are ensuring that the victims of crime are formally recognized. Work to date includes the development of a strategy to address those needs, including access to more information and more counselling services, as well as the creation of a new victims of crime act.

I recently announced an additional nearly \$1.5 million over the next three years to increase services to victims of crime and to create a campaign for preventing domestic violence. Victims

of crime, especially domestic abuse, will be interested in this initiative.

We've directed the Yukon Utilities Board to review the Carmacks to Stewart Crossing transmission project and issued related energy certificates. We have the police review — the list goes on. I can say that the party with the demonstrated track record of good governance — good responsible governance — is the Yukon Party. We have a clear vision for a bright future. Imagine tomorrow.

Hon. Mr. Lang: I'd like to thank the last speaker on her overview of the department and the work that her department has done under her watch. I'd like to also open by thanking Porter Creek Centre for all the support they have given me over the last eight or nine years. Being able to represent them has been a pleasure for me, and certainly working with my colleagues here in the House and moving the Yukon from where it was to where it is today.

It's interesting when we listen this afternoon to the Official Opposition, who continually has their side of the argument or discussion on how the Yukon is doing.

The general public only has to walk through the territory to see what is going on in the territory today, and what was going on in the territory eight years ago. I have lived in the territory all my life. I have to say that the government of the day and the government officials and the bureaucracy have never worked harder for Yukon and never produced more product than today.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to work in partnership with the Department of Community Services and the Department of Highways and Public Works. As you know, good governance is a good overview of what's happening in the government. Part of that is the resources that we work together to acquire so that we can put the investment on the ground for the benefit of Yukoners in the future. When you go into the outlying areas, whether it is to Watson Lake with the investment there — the Member for Mount Lorne was saying that the investment on the Campbell Highway wasn't necessary and the money could have been spent more wisely somewhere else. We wouldn't have to make those investments if other governments had maintained the Campbell Highway to a standard it should have been at to maintain it as a main corridor for the territory.

We certainly welcome economic development in the form of mines and other creative ways of putting the general public to work, but we also understand that the roads are used by the general public. The Robert Campbell Highway is used by individuals between Watson Lake, Ross River and Faro. The Cantung mine is there. So to put on the floor that it's somehow a subsidy for a mining company is not correct.

What is the real story about the accomplishments of this government? I would say that if you were to look at five points here, Mr. Speaker, there is certainly a better investment climate than ever before. You see that in the investment on the ground, whether it is in mining or the companies that are coming up to do contract work and work in our communities. The infrastructure that we are building today is not just for today; it is for the future. Mr. Speaker, you only have to go to the City of Dawson and see the investment that is there and the investments we

make in the community of Old Crow, the Dempster Highway investment, Mayo, Pelly — and we have talked at great length, and the Minister of Environment made it very clear what we have done as a government over the last eight years for the environment.

There are more parks today, wildlife habitat protection areas and land use planning than ever before. You only have to look at the Environment brochure handed out to see the number of projects on the board right now that will enhance the environment and put a bigger percentage of our land base into environmentally protected areas.

The Minister of Justice was just talking about the investment on the social side of the ledger. This government has done more than any past government in the history of the Yukon. How do we do that? I guess the first thing you need are the resources. The resources are very important because, without resources, we couldn't do a touch of what we're doing today.

When this government assumed government in December 2002, the first thing that was very apparent was the resources weren't available to government at that time to run the projected costs of the government into the future. So the first job was to go to work with our partners in Canada and put together a financial plan that would work for the territory and, of course, was acceptable to Canada. Certainly, we have done that. We have doubled the budgets here in the territory over the last eight years, and certainly if you were to look at the balance of where those resources went, we only have to look into our individual departments to see the investments on the ground.

One of the responsibilities I have is working for Community Services. It's a dynamic department that really touches every community in the territory. It's called Community Services for that reason. What have we done in the last year under infrastructure development in the territory? What kind of investments? Well, the investments are very clear.

The Member from Porter Creek South was complaining about a lot situation. I want to remind the members in the House how the process works in the City of Whitehorse. The municipality is the lead on lot development in the city. We work with the municipality to do the physical work. In other words, we bring the resources to the table and move forward with the wishes of the municipality.

The Whistle Bend subdivision is certainly — if you only have to drive by it — again, I think it is very important for the members here to go out into the community and see what's happening. You only have to drive by the Whistle Bend investment to see the investments on the ground there. We're looking at fall 2012 for the first phase coming out into the general public. So that again is an investment the government made but, of course, we're in partnership with the municipality, and we certainly don't take the lead on that; we work with the municipality.

We're also working with the municipality in Haines Junction on their rural lot situation. Those lots are coming on-line. We're putting a working group in Dawson City to work with their expanded potential for the City of Dawson. We've listened at great length about how the City of Dawson nursing station shouldn't be updated to a hospital because of the eco-

nomics of it, but this government has not taken away the fact that Dawson City and the surrounding areas have the potential of becoming a very, very important financial engine for the whole territory. Part of that is what kind of infrastructure is on the ground to entice people to move to Dawson — headquarters for their companies, whether it is a mining company or whether it is a service company. And why would people move to a community that didn't have facilities like hospitals and things like that?

The Leader of the Official Opposition obviously doesn't understand the geography of the territory when he talks about flying people into Whitehorse, being a centre. Certainly, it works in the Province of Alberta. You know, St. Albert uses Edmonton; Red Deer uses Calgary — all of these places are within 60 miles or 80 miles of each other and it doesn't make the sense to have a hospital in each community because of the cost. But we do have distance to take into consideration and also the community itself, and the community needs a hospital.

The Town of Watson Lake has had a hospital since 1978 — by the way, time-expired — physically, it's time-expired. Why would we deny the people in the surrounding area of Watson Lake the fact that they shouldn't have a hospital? They have a hospital. They have had a hospital since 1978. That hospital was run very efficiently for that number of years. All we're doing is replacing a situation that is already there. So it's not a new hospital; it's a replacement hospital for the physical plant that has been time-expired.

But if you look back in Community Services and what we've done as a department — you know, the hard-working department.

I look forward to debating this when we talk about it later on in this sitting. We're looking at the Ingram subdivision. The Member for Porter Creek South made light of the fact that those lots under the good leadership of the City of Whitehorse and Community Services were opened the other day. Access to those lots will be made available at the beginning of the month. It's a mix of lots. I look forward to those coming on.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is looking at rural residential lots, so we'll have those coming on-line. Those are very important to lifestyle in the territory. A lot of people lean toward rural residential more than an urban setting.

If you were to look at the investment we made with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and the cultural centre, another issue the opposition has voted against. How did we make that partnership work? We enhanced the dialogue by saying, why don't we put the new Whitehorse public library as an anchor tenant in that cultural centre and that gives the First Nation the resources to have a viable cultural centre on the waterfront.

You only have to walk by that to see how impressive that building is going to be. It certainly enhances the public library we have here today. It will be larger and it will be a modern facility for Whitehorse and the whole Yukon.

Now, if you were to look at other projects we're doing in the territory, I drive through these subdivisions that are out there — whether it's Sima, or whether it's a building in Porter Creek Centre — the investments on the ground. Those are made because people have optimism and they have confidence

in the territory. That confidence wasn't there eight years ago. It wasn't there. People who have invested in houses have seen their house values go up.

The Minister of Education was giving his little overview, talking about the situations in our school, the number of teachers we have, the number of EAs. Those are all made possible by us creating a budget, an investment, and having the resources to move forward on it.

So, as we look at this, this afternoon, and as I have an opportunity to talk, a bit of an overview of what my department does — or not my department, I'm just part of the Department of Community Services and Highways and Public Works — is the investment that this government is making in good governance and how we are investing.

If you were to go to any community road system in the territory, there are investments going in every part of the territory. There's a large investment going into Old Crow; Old Crow had a solid-waste issue of how to manage solid waste in the Village of Old Crow. That's being taken care of. That's another thing that this department is going to do.

Ross River fire department took delivery of a state-of-the-art pumper truck for that fire department. I hosted a meeting in Dawson City for the fire chiefs, and all 17 of our fire departments were represented at that meeting. Volunteers, by the way, and they were up representing; even some of the smaller communities have now fire departments up and running. I'd like to take my hat off to the department for the hard work they've done to get those fire departments up and running.

There are three new ambulances to replace aging equipment: again, moving on, modernizing our EMS department.

The investment we're making up the hill to put a new facility — a first-class ambulance facility at the top of the hill will be done over the next couple of years. The investment is already on the ground there.

Then, as we move forward, there are a couple of different ways to govern. I think if we were to take an example from the last government — which is what we do because that was the last government — when the Member for Porter Creek South talks about the employer-employee relationship, I remind him about the strike. The only strike we ever had in the territory by the Yukon Teachers Association was managed by the last Liberal government. They had a strike. The teachers were put out and on the street. They had to go to a striking situation to get their compensation that was due them. So that was under the leadership of the Liberal Party.

They eliminated the FireSmart program. The government took the FireSmart program and closed it down, as they did the Women's Directorate, and as they did the Department of Economic Development. They just ended the life of those departments. They didn't find it necessary to have a Women's Directorate.

The member here — the Minister of Justice — just read out the list of things that this government is doing under the direction of the Women's Directorate, and the last government saw fit to cancel it.

Also, the CDF funds were cancelled by the Liberal government. So those kinds of things that we did as a government

revitalized those things, brought them back into the government — stand alone — and put them to work. Certainly, the Department of Economic Development has made great inroads into the economics of the territory. Certainly, that in itself speaks for itself. The Minister of Justice just went through a long list of things in the Women's Directorate — another bad decision by the last government that we rectified by putting it back in place in the government and putting it to work for the territory.

A lot of the other things — if you were to look at Highways and Public Works — the investments — and they have voted against investments. There is the argument about why they vote against it, but the fact is, they do vote against it. Certainly, they will be voting against the Dawson City campus. That's a \$2.2-million investment in the City of Dawson.

There is that fabulous building that is being built to replace the Alexander Street seniors complex. I recommend individuals, if you can, get shown through that building. It is absolutely spectacular, the new seniors complex on the river by Earl's. I recommend everybody to take a tour. That's a modern facility that will serve the Yukon long into the future. They will vote against that and that is a \$12-million investment. Dawson City's Korbo Apartments — that's another large investment that we're making on the ground there because of the need to replace the existing Korbo Apartments. It's much like the Alexander Street building that is in existence today — it's time-expired and certainly has to be done.

Certainly there is the new court-driven waste-water treatment plant in Dawson, but the other concept that we added on was the district heating project and that is being put in place. Of course that will be voted against by the opposition — a \$4.6 million investment in the territory.

As I close this afternoon, I'd just like to remind people to walk around, take a look at our Yukon today and compare it to the Yukon that the Liberals had eight years ago. It's a vast difference.

There is a lot of opportunity out there. I went to see a medical physician the other day — a young guy who was born in Mayo, got his medical training and he's back working in the territory. You only have to look around at our youth and see where they're at today. They're coming back to the territory. They're coming back to the territory to work in the territory, raise families and be part of the Yukon fabric. That's what this government has done over the last eight years. So whatever the opposition says or whoever they vote for or don't vote for, at the end of the day, our record shows for itself. We have done a great job. The Yukon has done a great job. Again, I would like to thank the internal workers of this government — the bureaucracy and the work they've done, which is an excellent job. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Nordick: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak to the *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10*. But before I speak to that act, I would like to start off by saying thank you to the constituents of the Klondike, Dawson City, which is a rural community, just so the members opposite realize that. I would like to say thank you to my family, to my wife for the

work that she does on my behalf when I'm not in the community. Most of all, there are a lot of volunteer organizations in Dawson City, ranging from the volunteer fire department and the volunteer ambulance.

Volunteers in Dawson do such tremendous work. I would like to give my sincere gratitude and thanks to them for the work that they've done over the last number of years.

You know, the Minister of Community Services mentioned earlier that he was at a fire chiefs conference in Dawson City — the AGM of the volunteer fire chiefs. I'd like to thank them, territory-wide. The work that they do on behalf of citizens of the territory is commendable. Without them, our communities wouldn't be near as safe.

There are a number of issues that I'd like to start off with speaking about today. I'm going to speak a little generally with regard to the budget, and then I'm going to focus in on my riding.

This *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2009-10* provides the Department of Health and Social Services a final supplementary appropriation of \$3.7 million. Yet all through that, our net financial resources remains a very healthy \$67 million. Yesterday during a motion debate, the Leader of the Official Opposition mentioned that if we budgeted a surplus, we'd do everything in our power to keep that surplus.

I'll actually read the quote exactly. "If a budget were being presented showing a surplus and we were standing behind that budget, then we would do everything possible to ensure we came as close as possible to that surplus." I know the member opposite doesn't really think much of rural Yukon. How would he explain to citizens in Dawson City — Rock Creek, when it flooded and people's homes were being destroyed — that wasn't budgeted. Would you say, "Don't work about that, citizens of Rock Creek. You're rural Yukon. Don't worry about that. We'll get that next year. Meanwhile, just suffer."

I can't imagine why the Leader of the Official Opposition would say, "We'd deal with that next year," because they would not add money to a budget for unforeseen circumstances.

The Minister of Economic Development yesterday brought up a really good example — H1N1. Would you just say, let's not vaccinate citizens of the Yukon because it's not budgeted? I disagree with that theory or that perspective that the Liberal Party believes in.

Another statement that I completely disagree with is the Official Opposition's belief that major centres in the territory deserve better things, better services, better quality of life.

I'm going to quote the Leader of the Official Opposition, page 6476 in *Hansard*: "There is a model, a good governance model of health care delivery used across Canada and the United States, and that is to concentrate resources in the greater population centres..."

Mr. Speaker, with that logic, why even build trails in communities, because they can hike or take a bus to Whitehorse and walk on the Millennium Trail? The Liberal Party of this territory wants people to live in Whitehorse — Whitehorse only. I actually take offence to that. I take offence to the comments that my citizens in my community — the people whom I

represent — my family, my friends, my brothers and sisters, my daughter — don't deserve health care facilities and don't deserve hospitals. "Travel to Whitehorse" is what the Leader of the Official Opposition says.

I've got a lot more examples of the difference between the Liberal belief and the Yukon Party belief.

I'll just repeat again a quote from yesterday from the Liberal Party, "...concentrate resources in the greater population centres..." so, let's not build colleges; let's not build schools. Let's concentrate resources in the greater population centres. I would encourage the Leader of the Official Opposition to travel to rural Yukon and tell them that they should travel to Whitehorse because they chose to live in rural Yukon.

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

Second reading of Bill No. 21 accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following document was filed September 23, 2010:

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Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees, remuneration of members: letter (dated September 21, 2010) from Hon. Dennis Fentie, Premier of Yukon, to Craig Tuton, Chair, Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees (Fentie)