

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, September 29, 2010 – 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed with the Order Paper.
Tributes.
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Mr. Jud Deuling and his class from Vanier Catholic Secondary School. Welcome.

Speaker: Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Returns or documents for tabling.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Cardiff: As promised yesterday afternoon, I have for filing copies of a document from the Northwest Territories Department of Finance, entitled "Revenue Options October 2010".

Speaker: Thank you. Are there any further documents or return for tabling?

Any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Minister of Health and Social Services to confirm \$50 million is being borrowed to finance the building of the new emergency room and intensive care unit modifications at the Whitehorse General Hospital.

I also give notice today of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how leaving the seat for Whitehorse Centre vacant has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how an investment of \$36 million in asset-backed commercial paper that has now been frozen and cannot be accessed has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how delivering deficit spending over the past two years has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how announcing surplus budgets and then announcing deficits a few months later has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide the following information in regard to the unauthorized overpayments received by the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees, who is also the Yukon Party's campaign manager, in violation of existing regulations:

(1) the number of meetings billed for since the Hospital Corporation chair gave himself an unauthorized pay increase in December 2009;

(2) the total amount billed for by the chair since that point in time;

(3) the total extra amount he billed for since then; and

(4) this same information with respect to the rest of the board.

I also give notice to the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how mortgaging the future without asking Yukoners if they want to go into debt has improved the opportunity of life for Yukoners.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how piling on more than \$200 million in debt, debt that does not include operation and maintenance numbers for current capital projects underway, has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how cancelling the community tour has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how secret negotiations to privatize Yukoners' energy future has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how abandoning officials at a news conference to explain the Premier's actions has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how wasting this Legislature's time patting themselves on the back, instead of debating issues that are actually of concern to Yukoners has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how the Premier's suppressing of information that the Department of Environment officials were submitting to the Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Planning Commission and how the Environment minister of the day stood by and let it happen has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how failing to be open, accountable and fiscally responsible has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges to Government of Yukon to explain how not following the *Cooperation in Governance Act* and not holding a regularly scheduled Yukon Forum has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how failing to provide an adequate number of residential lots to the Yukon public in the past eight years has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explain how ignoring what Yukoners have stated is one of their top issues, good governance, has improved the quality of life for Yukoners.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to review our tax regime and begin a comprehensive discussion with all Yukoners on whether our current taxation rates and existing tax credits are achieving important goals such as:

- (1) stimulating key industries to create green jobs;
- (2) reducing carbon emissions linked to climate change;
- (3) reducing child poverty;
- (4) shrinking the gap between the rich and the poor; and
- (5) generating a greater share of own-source revenue.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to respond to the 2007 *Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada* by urging the Government of Canada to improve federal income programs for poor and working poor, by setting minimum targets of:

(1) a 25-percent reduction in the child poverty rate over the next five years; and

(2) a 50-percent reduction over 10 years, in order to:

(1) act on a unanimous House of Commons resolution in 1989 to reduce child poverty by the year 2000, which has consistently been ignored by both Liberal and Conservative governments; and

(2) lift thousands of children out of poverty, thereby benefiting our whole society.

Speaker: Any further notices of motion?

Is there a statement by a minister?

That then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Yukon College campus, Pelly Crossing

Mr. Mitchell: I have some questions for the Minister of Education about the cost overruns of the new Yukon College campus in Pelly Crossing. The government brags about having a savings account it can dip into for situations like this yet, in this case, the government didn't use its savings account. It couldn't use it, Mr. Speaker, because it's nearly empty.

The Premier and his free-spending ways have broken the bank. Without money available to cover the cost overruns, the Department of Education has been forced to cut \$150,000 from its operation and maintenance budget. Yukon College has been forced to kick in \$300,000 from their reserves to cover the shortfall.

If there were an adequate savings account, these cost overruns could have been covered.

Why is the college being forced to cover for the free-spending ways of this government?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I thank the member opposite for the opportunity to clear up some obvious confusion with this issue. The Yukon Party government has clearly demonstrated its support for Yukon College. While others have talked about building a Yukon university, this government has been amending the *College Act* to allow for university programs, investing in extensive expansion of programs at Yukon College and now, with the knowledge infrastructure fund from the federal government, Yukon College is expanding much-needed facilities throughout the territory, including the college campus in Dawson and the college campus in Pelly.

On this issue, Yukon College put together an estimate of what the cost would be. Yukon College made an application to the knowledge infrastructure funds that was approved. We've already passed the budget — which the opposition has voted against — to provide resources for that. Now, the Yukon College property management division is working on the construction of those very campuses. We look forward to seeing the positive impact that these new facilities will have for our students now and our children in the future.

Mr. Mitchell: If there's any confusion on what has happened here, I think it's on the part of the Education minister. I'll file some briefing notes that his department provided to clarify it for the minister. Now, just a couple of years ago, the

government had \$165 million in its savings account. Now, it's going for broke heading into the next election. It has spent all but \$33 million, and \$25 million of that is locked away in the Premier's bad investments. When you run down the surplus to almost nothing, there are consequences. The Minister of Education's department is finding that out. \$150,000 has been cut from the operations budget to cover some of the cost overruns. Yukon College has been forced to dip into its financial reserves and find \$300,000 to help, as well. The government can't help because it's broke. I guess these are the beginning of the cuts that we are hearing so much about from public servants.

Can the Minister of Education tell Yukoners what was cut from his department to cover this cost overrun?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, it's always interesting when members from the Liberal Party actually do attend briefings, but it would be beneficial if they actually listened to the information. We recognized that about \$150,000 in one department had lapsed. We recognized that the estimate that Yukon College had provided for the construction of the campuses was too low. We didn't force Yukon College to cover all the cost overruns. Indeed, the Government of Yukon came to the assistance of Yukon College and provided additional resources to complete construction of this.

We used lapsed funds in another branch within Education to cover these costs. Mr. Speaker, that is simply good, sound fiscal management. The NDP recognized that in the briefing yesterday.

Mr. Mitchell: I can't speak for the NDP, nor do I wish to. This kind of cost overrun is normally covered from the surplus, but that hasn't happened in Pelly. The Education department — this minister's department — has had to cut \$150,000 from its operation and maintenance budget. The college itself, as the minister admits, has to pick up another \$100,000.

Will this mean fewer teachers, fewer educational assistants or fewer educational psychologists? What is being cut from the minister's department?

Part of the funding for this project comes from the Government of Canada. It contributed 50 percent of the initial cost of the project but has been unwilling, apparently, to help out with the cost overruns — some partner.

Instead of cutting from O&M and forcing the college to come up with additional cash, the Government of Yukon should be encouraging its Conservative partner in Ottawa to help out. This government says they have a good relationship with the federal government. Why hasn't Ottawa helped cover the cost overruns, or have they even been asked?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Yukoners have grown very weary of the opposition's assertion about cuts, especially where no cuts exist. One simply has to look at the number of teachers who were employed under the previous Liberal government and look at the number employed now. We'll see that that number has grown.

I don't know why the Liberal Party would like to create an impression that it's otherwise; perhaps it's politically motivated — I don't know.

What I do know is that this government is committed to continuing education here in the territory. We've made significant advances in programming at Yukon College with a Masters of Education program, a bachelor of science and environmental studies, and we're investing in additional campuses throughout the territory — not only in Yukon Party ridings, but in ridings throughout the territory.

It's a good investment. It's one that's worth that dipping into a savings account to pay for. I would appreciate that recognition from the member opposite. We know we have established a savings account.

It's funny. One day they complain that there's no savings account; today they're complaining that we're dipping into the savings account. It's that dual comment from the Liberals that's creating more confusion.

We're going to continue to build Yukon's education infrastructure with or without the help of the Liberal Party.

Question re: Yukon College, university accreditation

Mr. Inverarity: An issue that has been talked about for some time is expanding Yukon College's educational role to that of a university. This is something that we, the Official Opposition, support. We know that there would be lots of social and economic benefits to this. As Yukoners, we have come to the point where we can move beyond talking about this and let's get working on it. Over the years, the college has introduced degree programs in partnership with universities from southern jurisdictions. That's all well and fine, Mr. Speaker, but it's not a Yukon solution, it has not been made in the Yukon. We would like to see something in the Yukon.

We know this is going to cost money and we are hoping that there is some federal support for this initiative. Will the Minister of Education take the necessary steps to actually establish the University of Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I would encourage the members to remember what they've debated and what they've voted on. It was a couple of years ago that this Yukon Party government passed the legislation necessary to confer the degree-granting capacity on Yukon College. It's this government that has increased the capacity of Yukon College to deliver post-secondary education opportunities throughout the territory. We have an increasing number of Yukoners attending Yukon College now. Many of them are taking university courses. Individuals can do the first two years of an arts or science degree here at Yukon College and then transfer that to other institutions. As well, we've expanded other university-level programs. In addition to the bachelor of social work and the bachelor of education program, there's now a bachelor of science program in cooperation with the University of Alberta. We currently have a Master of Education program underway right now.

As well, this government has established the Yukon College Research Centre of Excellence, working to build our research capacity, and as well launched the Northern Institute of Social Justice. Indeed, we're increasing post-secondary education opportunities for Yukoners, and we're preparing Yukoners for Yukon opportunities.

Mr. Inverarity: Well, Yukoners still have to go Outside to get their degree and the minister has acknowledged that this afternoon. A Yukon education for Yukoners is the minister's responsibility and, aside from a few staffing changes in our public schools, we have not seen much progress from the Department of Education, other than some issues around New Horizons.

If this government is serious about a university right here, right now, the minister would be at least talking about potential partners like the federal government. If the government is serious about this, we could get answers to some basic questions: what's it going to cost; what are the timelines going to be; and is there going to be some federal funding? Does the Minister of Education have any answers to any of these basic questions as to when this university is going to be actually in place?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: When the member opposite talks about partners, he should look at some of the partners that have been established with Yukon College — partners like the University of Alberta, the University of Northern British Columbia whose president was here yesterday. The University of the Arctic that we work with; the University of Regina, which we work with on the bachelor of social work and bachelor of education degrees; Royal Roads University; I should mention the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. The list of post-secondary institutions that Yukon College and Yukoners are working with goes on and on. We've increased the educational opportunities for Yukon, and that's across the board, whether it's a university degree, a trade or apprentice, or other programs, whether it's survey technicians, licensed practical nurses, home-heating maintainers. The list goes on and on.

I'm also reminded of the Yukon School of Visual Arts — another example of education opportunities here for Yukon, for Yukoners. This is another example of how this government is preparing Yukoners for Yukon opportunities.

Mr. Inverarity: Yet they still have to leave the Yukon. This is not a new issue and it's not a simple question. Yukon lags behind all other circumpolar nations on this critical issue. Canada's north is now coming of age and the Yukon needs a university. The time has come for Yukon to move beyond correspondence courses with southern universities and establish a university of its own. It will cost money and take time, and we can't do it alone. We need lots of help.

It's worth it. The possibilities for research are enormous, and we believe it has become vital that Yukon students get the chance to earn their degree without leaving the Yukon. If the minister is truly interested in taking this next step, he would have a plan in place now.

Will the Minister of Education commit to establishing a Yukon university?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: We're seeing the growth in the territory; we're seeing the optimism in the territory; we're seeing the economic future in the territory; we're seeing Yukon students, Yukon kids, returning to the territory to work. In addition to that, we're seeing an expansion — not just of university programs, but of post-secondary education opportunities for all Yukoners here in the territory. We're seeing an expansion of programming at Yukon College. We're seeing an expansion of

college facilities throughout the territory. We've seen the establishment of the Research Centre of Excellence, where students are doing their masters and PhD right now. We've seen the establishment of the Northern Institute of Social Justice, where Yukoners are continuing their education in order to gain the skills and capacities that we need here in the territory. We've seen the partnerships established between Yukon College and other institutions, whether it's the University of Alberta, the University of Northern British Columbia, Royal Roads University, University of Alaska Fairbanks and the University of Regina. These partnerships are important and we're continuing our relationship with the University of the Arctic and our circumpolar brothers and sisters on this issue.

The Yukon Party government has responded to the post-secondary needs of Yukoners, and we're seeing the results. We're seeing Yukon students taking advantage of Yukon training opportunities and coming back and going to work here in the territory.

Question re: Housing for abused women

Mr. Cardiff: Back in June of 2008, I attended the annual general meeting of the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society and I believe the Minister of Justice was there. So, can the Minister of Justice tell us what progress has been made on the proposal given to her back in June 2008 for second-stage housing for abused women trying to escape violence?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I'm pleased to inform the member opposite that the Women's Directorate, along with Yukon Housing Corporation, Health and Social Services and Kaushee's Place, have been working together to build a new second-stage housing project. It is coming along. We have a few sites in line, and we are working on this very actively.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, it's taking a long time. The number of battered and abused women across the territory in the shelters is shocking. It's totally unacceptable and should be an embarrassment to this government.

Currently Kaushee's shelter in Whitehorse is full and overflowing. They have a wait-list of six for one unit in second-stage housing. For years they have been working on expanding that essential service.

The minister is proud of all the work that's being done by the Women's Directorate on violence against women. Here's her chance to do something tangible. Will the minister agree to use her influence with her colleagues and actually begin the process of building that second-stage housing accommodation now?

Hon. Ms. Horne: Let's give our head a shake here. We want to make sure that this project is done properly and that it is meeting the needs of the women. We had a survey in the Yukon a few years ago and we are meeting the largest gap in women's needs, and that is the affordable family housing unit. We have built 32 units to house women in need. We have financed the Kaushee's Place, Help and Hope in Watson Lake, the second-stage housing in Dawson City. We are very proud of our track record.

Mr. Cardiff: I want to tell the minister and members in the Legislative Assembly about only one situation that we know of. This woman has a very young child. She has been in

and out of the shelter at least twice because of physical abuse from her partner. She's ready for second-stage housing and is on the wait-list at both Kaushee's and the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Whitehorse Housing Authority. In the next few days, she's likely to find out that there's no place to go. Now, she's not the only woman using the shelter who is facing homelessness momentarily. This is the reality of violence against women, and it's the minister who needs to give her head a shake.

The reality is that housing is a huge problem for those women courageous enough to try and get out of those violent relationships. Now I made this offer to the minister last spring: will she agree to come out with me, to search out possible building sites and even maybe housing that's already in place to serve as second-stage housing?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I just said, we are working with Kaushee's Place. It's not an easy project to select a site for a second-stage housing unit. We are working actively with Kaushee's Place, and I am very pleased to announce, as the members opposite know, that Yukon Housing Corporation provides for women who are fleeing from violent situations. We are taking care of the women in the Yukon. We know there is a need. I'd like to reiterate what the Premier said just last week — that this government abhors any type of violence against women.

Question re: Territorial health access fund

Mr. Cathers: The territorial health access fund, or THAF, spending plan ended when the original agreement expired earlier this year. This spring, I commended the Minister of Health and Social Services and staff for the success they had in negotiating an extension to that federal funding. When I last asked, the minister assured me bursaries for doctors, nurses, and other health professionals would continue to be supported, but told me that other details of the successor agreement were still being worked out.

When I was Minister of Health, THAF funding was used to increase assistance for Yukoners receiving treatment outside the territory, from \$30 per day, starting on the fourth day, to a new level of \$75 per day, starting on day 2.

Now that the new agreement has been signed and is part of the fall supplementary budget, will the minister please tell me whether those increases to the medical travel subsidy that were made with THAF funding in 2006 will continue to be in place?

Hon. Mr. Hart: The THSSI funding was extended for an additional two years. The territorial health access fund operational secretariat was also extended, along with the medical travel. Funding is going to be maintained at the same level as it has been in the past years and THSSI will fund activities such as HealthLine, mentorship, mental health, and major strategies including wellness, healthy aging and social inclusion and poverty.

I also would like to indicate that I'll be getting together with my sister territories in the middle of next month with the federal Minister of Health on this issue and dealing with how the department is going to work with Health Canada on the continuation of this program.

Mr. Cathers: I think that was a yes to my question, but if the minister could confirm this in his next response that the per diems put in place were being maintained, I would appreciate that.

When I last asked the minister about whether programs funded under THAF would be continuing, at that point in time the agreement had not been concluded, which of course it has now. Will the minister please tell me whether the diabetes collaborative and the chronic disease collaborative will continue to be funded under the successor agreement, whether they will be funded through other means, or if the programs will be discontinued?

Hon. Mr. Hart: We will continue to work with the department on many of the projects that were identified previously under the THAF program. Again, as I stated, we'll be working with the Department of Health of the federal government — Health Canada — to ensure that we're not covering programs in the THAF funding that we shouldn't be.

I will advise the member opposite that the diabetes collaborative program has been expanded into the chronic disease and collaborative care and work continues to be supported through THAF funding.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for that response, and I am pleased to hear that's the case.

Other program funding under the THAF spending plan included the palliative care program and mental health initiatives. I believe the minister already indicated in his first response that mental health initiatives will continue to be funded, but will the minister please tell me whether the mental health programs and the palliative care program that were funded by the territorial health access fund will continue to be funded under the successor agreement, whether they will be funded through other means, or if the programs will be discontinued?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As with many issues that were previously covered under THAF, our department, as I've indicated, is working closely with the Health Canada in Ottawa on many of our programs to ensure that they fit the federal programs for funding under THAF, and they follow through the process. I'm pleased to announce to not only the member across but to all Members of the Legislative Assembly that the palliative care services will continue to be funded under THAF, and we'll be in the process of looking at putting palliative care under base funding once the expiration of the program takes place. In addition, as I mentioned previously, mental health services are being provided to rural communities and will continue to be funded under THAF.

We're also working with the physicians' agreement and hope to have some information available later on this year to follow up with many of the other programs that were previously under THAF. We look forward to finalizing those issues, carrying on with those programs, either through THAF or through looking at other funding sources to ensure the programs being provided provide the greatest amount of health service for all Yukoners —

Speaker: Thank you.

Question re: FASD diagnoses

Mr. Mitchell: FASD is a major issue in the Yukon and it's not going away. It's not going away in part because we don't understand or track the problem properly. It's difficult and haphazard to have someone diagnosed with FASD in the Yukon. Even for those diagnosed, they aren't tracked throughout their lives. That means we don't know how many people have FASD, and we don't provide them the lifelong support and assistance they need.

The minister told us yesterday the government is supportive of people with FASD. How can he say this when the government hasn't even identified them?

Hon. Mr. Hart: FASD has been around for approximately 20 years. It has been in the last 10 years that we've addressed the situation.

I might add that the Yukon has been the leader in identifying FASD, especially in children. This government, along with the other territories, along with three western provinces, are in a research program on FASD to determine just exactly what methods and what types of FASD there are and how we can treat them and how we can diagnose which individual has which form of FASD. Of course, we just can't go and pluck people out of the process. No jurisdiction in Canada has a value and can go out and say they can address each and every person who has FASD — no jurisdiction.

Mr. Mitchell: I'm not sure what the minister means when he says FASD has been around for 20 years. It has been around for as long as pregnant women have been ingesting alcohol. Yesterday, the keynote speaker for the FASD symposium commented on how our neighbours in Alaska are handling the problem. He said their programs are meeting with substantial success in reducing the disorder's incidence in both aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations. They have tracked the drop in new cases. In the Yukon, we don't even know how many people have FASD. According to Health and Social Services cost and logistical issues mean only 10 people are diagnosed each year.

What steps is the minister taking to accurately diagnose Yukoners with FASD, and how does the minister propose to reduce FASD when he can't even say how many Yukoners are affected by it?

Hon. Mr. Hart: I tell you — I think the member opposite is having a bit of a blockage in his side, but anyway, I think it is this government that, as I stated previously, has stepped up and provided funding for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon when the previous federal government — the previous Liberal federal government, I might add — cut off the funding for FASSY and this government had to step up and provide that funding to assist the local chapter in assisting the local individuals with FASD. It's this government that did this. There's the previous Minister of Health and Social Services who came through that process and provided that assistance to ensure that the citizens of Whitehorse and the Yukon were receiving assistance where required to ensure that we could help those with FASD in the best way that we could and given the circumstances that we're in.

We'll continue to do that. We are working with many programs throughout the Government of Yukon, through social assistance, through our wellness program, through our alcohol and drugs programs — through all our programs — many, many programs throughout this — through our group homes. Through all these issues they provide us with assistance, and many of those individuals have some sort of affliction with FASD. We are spending millions of dollars to assist individuals with FASD.

Question re: Employee overpayment policy

Mr. McRobb: We need to get to the bottom of what appears to be a very troubling situation about use of the public purse for purely partisan reasons. Yesterday we heard how government employees are required to repay funds in the event of an overpayment, yet this government not only overlooked a specific situation, it went the extra mile to change the rules which allowed its campaign manager to keep his overpayment. To further demonstrate this unfairness, the Yukon Party government falsely accused our campaign manager of collecting an overpayment as the government's workers' advocate and promptly fired him. Three years later, that accusation was proven wrong, and the Yukon Party's bad judgement cost Yukon taxpayers more than \$100,000 plus an unknown amount of court costs. How is such special treatment being fair to everyone?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I'm not sure who the question was directed to. The Member for Kluane has mixed personnel matters with hardworking Yukoners who choose to serve on boards and committees. The member referenced "getting to the bottom". I think we've been at the bottom on this issue for a number of days now.

We fully apologized to the board of trustees for being subjected to this. The Member for Kluane seems to want to single out one individual. I would remind him there are many Yukoners on the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees. They do make decisions, as they are required to do, and the government has tabled in writing and put our name to the situation. The member's references and inferences of favouritism and all these other so-called sinister plots are simply the member's imagination.

Mr. McRobb: It's this Yukon Party government that has singled out a particular individual. The evidence demonstrates how this Yukon Party government has used the public purse to reward its political friends and punish its political foes. The evidence presents an excellent case example of how this government treats people differently based on their political beliefs. This is not good governance. This is not being fair to everyone —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Order. On a point of order.

Point of order

Hon. Ms. Horne: Standing Order 19(g) imputes false unavowed motives to another member; (h) uttering a deliberate falsehood, which is this case.

Mr. McRobb: On the point of order, I agree with the clause cited, but it simply does not apply in this case, because it

pertains only to such citation against a member. I'm speaking about a principle against a government, which is entirely different; therefore, there is no point of order.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: Well, actually, I think that the Chair gets to decide whether there's a point of order or not. What I depend on from each member is advice. In this case, I believe that there is no point of order. However, each side of this House is coming perilously close to accusing other people of either (a) breaking the law, or (b) favouritism with government money — both of which are illegal. So, members, I would urge you to control yourselves. If you don't want the Chair to enter into the debate, control yourselves.

You have the floor, Member for Kluane.

Mr. McRobb: Now, the Premier has claimed that he has put detailed information on the record, yet the public still doesn't know certain key information, such as the amount of the overpayment he allowed his campaign manager to keep.

Earlier this afternoon I specified that information on the record through a notice of motion. Will the Premier now commit to ensuring that key information is provided to us by the end of this week?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The information, quite frankly, is very public; the information and detail we provided this House is also important information to try to help the Member for Kluane.

Let me try to rationalize what the Member for Kluane is suggesting here in the House. In his analogy, he's suggesting that this government — in particular as it had to do with a former Liberal campaign manager — went to the Public Service Commission and demanded that the Public Service Commission go after this individual. I challenge the Member for Kluane to stand up in this House and provide the evidence that is so. That is really how ridiculous this question is.

Mr. McRobb: I challenge the Premier to finally answer one of our questions. These are simple and clear questions and all we get is diversions. So much for the Yukon Party's grand pronouncement that it's fully open, accountable and fiscally responsible. So much for the Premier's rhetoric: he has already provided all the detail on this matter. The public deserves to know and indeed wants to know.

We are advocating on behalf of the public in requesting this key information, yet the government is denying this formal request. This is a government in denial — hard denial, Mr. Speaker. The hard evidence before us testifies to this government's record of partisan spending.

What's the Premier hiding? Again, will he ensure that key information is provided to us by the end of this week?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Well, this is an interesting concept of advocacy. If this is the Member for Kluane's version of being an advocate, I shudder at the thought. To all Yukoners — beware. If you choose to serve, if you choose to dedicate your time and your efforts on behalf of Yukoners, beware. Beware because you may get Googled, or you may get followed into a local establishment.

This is truly unfortunate. We apologize to the board of trustees. We apologize to all Yukoners for the Member for Kluane's misunderstanding of what an advocate is all about.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 1138

Clerk: Motion No. 1138, standing in the name of Mr. Nordick.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Klondike THAT this House recognizes the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the quality of life for Yukoners.

Mr. Nordick: It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak to this motion today, the motion that urges this House to recognize the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the life of Yukoners. Improving the life of Yukoners is exactly what we have done and will continue to do.

We started this off in 2002 and are continuing. Our election platform in 2006 was: *Building Yukon's Future Together: A Clear Vision for a Bright Future*. Mr. Speaker, we've accomplished that and will continue to accomplish that. In meeting our election platform commitments, we've established a solid foundation, upon which we can continue to build Yukon's future even during these troubled economic times.

Our Yukon Party's election platform has four major pillars: achieving a better quality of life for Yukoners; protecting and preserving our environment and wildlife while studying, mitigating and adapting to climate change; promoting a strong, diverse private sector economy; and practising good, cooperative governance with strong fiscal management.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to list a few of our accomplishments, which, I have to remind Yukoners, the Official Opposition voted against and opposed. Even in a couple of debates on education in the past, when we posed a question to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun about his vision for education, he had none. They didn't have a vision. They just opposed. But I will go back to the debate on the motion at hand, Mr. Speaker.

The territory has advanced on all fronts since our government took office in 2002 and was re-elected in 2006. In 2002, there was no agreement on how to proceed with the development of Yukon's education system, involving all stakeholders and especially Yukon First Nations. Our government, in cooperation with Yukon First Nations, undertook a major education reform process. That process has been completed and our government is now implementing a new education strategy, entitled "New Horizons: Honouring Our Commitment to the Future". It was evident at that time that the territory suffered from a lack of skilled labour. Mr. Speaker, in 2003 and 2007 our

government increased the number of apprentices at Yukon College by 90 percent.

Corrections consultation was another major initiative undertaken by our government. This led to the development of the corrections action plan which, in turn, is leading to the preparation of a new, modernized Yukon corrections act.

A Community Wellness Court has also been established in keeping with the corrections action plan and the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan* to integrate a therapeutic problem-solving court into the Yukon justice system.

Drug abuse and other illegal activities are a problem in many communities and, as a consequence of the unanimous vote of all members of the Assembly, the *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* was passed. Then the opposition will go out into the public and oppose that, even though it was unanimously passed in this House — both sides of the fence. The *Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods Act* was passed to deal with these problems, in addition to the establishment of the RCMP street crime reduction team.

Once again, our government took action to increase the number of physicians and health care professionals by establishing a comprehensive health human resource strategy and establishing a new nurses' mentoring program and a licensed practical nursing program at Yukon College.

The health human resource strategy also provides bursaries to Yukoners being educated as health care professionals and implements a family physician incentive program. In 2006, our government provided \$5 million for the next five years for childcare to improve wages for childcare workers and decrease the cost of childcare for low-income families. Our government implemented the most comprehensive review of social assistance since the inception of the program by increasing the rates, providing an incentive to encourage recipients to enter the workforce and to provide enhanced services for persons with severe disabilities.

Social assistance rates for items of basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, incidentals and utilities were increased by 25 percent in July of 2008, and these items are now indexed to the Canadian consumer price index. We established a new service — the children with disabilities program and increased home repair funding for disabled homeowners. We constructed a new seniors residence at Yukon College in Whitehorse as a legacy of the 2000 Canada Winter Games, as well as senior facilities in Haines Junction. New senior facilities are currently in Watson Lake, Teslin, Faro and Dawson City.

We are partnering with the federal government in providing affordable housing in our communities. All of the foregoing initiatives have improved the quality of life and represent just a few of the many initiatives we have already implemented. Our government is also very proud of its many initiatives to protect and preserve the Yukon's environment and wildlife. The development of the climate change strategy and subsequent *Climate Change Action Plan* were major undertakings that will serve Yukoners well in addressing climate change impacts through mitigation, adaptation, in addition to recognizing new economic opportunities presented.

Yukon College has established a home for the Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence. Our government is proud of the fact that Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced by 24,000 tonnes per year by the extension of the Whitehorse-Aishihik-Faro electrical grid to Pelly Crossing and Minto mine, taking them both off diesel. There will be a further reduction of 3,800 tonnes a year when the third turbine is installed at the Aishihik dam. The Yukon government was the first government to take advantage of the federal government's \$1-billion green infrastructure fund.

The Government of Canada has agreed to pay up to \$71 million of the \$160 million projected to extend the Whitehorse-Aishihik-Faro grid from Pelly Crossing to Stewart Crossing and an upgrade to the Mayo B dam. One just has to travel up the north Klondike Highway to see the progress. One just needs to travel to Mayo and take a look at the Mayo B site.

I know that at least one opposition member has travelled to take a look at the Mayo B site, and I encourage the other opposition members to see the progress this government is making on that front.

Our government made major investments in inventory surveys, updating information regarding fish, wildlife and habitat areas to address key gaps in our knowledge of the impact climate change may have on biodiversity and species of concern. We're also working with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to utilize the forest in Kluane.

Our government increased financial support for community recycling depots and introduced a new program for recycling action and education in Yukon schools.

Yukon's economy has experienced significant growth since 2002, when our government first took office, due to two major industries: mining and tourism. We work cooperatively with those industries to help diversify our economy.

We have worked hard to develop and highlight Yukon's mineral potential, in Asia and China in particular, in order to support Yukon companies' efforts to secure investments. Today, all that hard work is paying off. We support the new placer regime and amended the new *Quartz Mining Act* to provide a competitive fiscal regime as well as reforming the *Miners Lien Act* to facilitate access to debt-financing to mine development while providing reasonable protection for suppliers and contractors.

With respect to tourism, we launched a multi-million dollar marketing campaign for the three territories in conjunction with the very successful 2007 Canada Winter Games. We focused on the marketing to realize the benefits from the 2010 Olympics, as well. Our national and international exposure was worth millions, but we are still seeing the benefits today. In addition, we are promoting Yukon's tourism through such initiatives as the "Destination: Yukon" campaign in Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Greater Toronto and Ottawa areas. On the other side, our government has developed a comprehensive energy strategy for Yukon to meet Yukon's current and future energy needs.

On the infrastructure side, our government has concluded an agreement with Canada — the Building Canada fund — to provide \$182.9 million to the Yukon over the next seven years.

Mr. Speaker, we are well into that process to help drive the economic growth and improve community infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, a collaborative partnership between the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse has resulted in a wide range of new building lots in the new Ingram subdivision. Yukon government has acted as a developer for Copper Ridge, Arkell, and Whitehorse Copper subdivisions. The next large development of residential lots in Whitehorse is Whistle Bend, another partnership with the City of Whitehorse. We have also worked with the City of Skagway to ensure the territory has an affordable port access to help sustain the Yukon's economic future. A hallmark of our government's administration has been cooperative governance with all levels of government — federal, provincial, pan-territorial, First Nation and municipal. Practising good governance and cooperative governance with strong fiscal management is a pillar of our 2006 election platform. We have had many successes in that regard. Our government has worked cooperatively with Yukon First Nation governments through the Yukon Forum and other partnerships on major federal initiatives such as the \$50-million northern housing trust, the \$40-million northern strategy and the \$27-million strategic infrastructure and northern economic development fund, as well as urging Canada to negotiate new self-government financial transfer agreements to support the implementation of the land claim settlements.

Further, our government met its commitment to help re-establish the intergovernmental forum with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the government and all 14 First Nation governments. Our government utilizes the pan-northern collaborative approach with the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to help achieve a new principle-based territorial form of financing agreement with Canada and to prepare a broad collective vision for the north. That was entitled *A Northern Vision: A Stronger North and Better Canada*.

At the legislative level, our government met its commitment to establish an all-party committee to oversee Yukon government appointments to major boards and committees. Today the Yukon economy remains robust; our population continues to grow. We believe we can continue to meet the new challenges if we work collaboratively with all levels of government. I am committed — the members of the Yukon Party government are committed — to continue with our 2006 election platform.

Mr. Speaker, I will summarize some more of the things we have accomplished in the last numbers of years. We have provided \$5 million in May 2007 for the next five years for childcare to improve wages for childcare workers and decrease costs of childcare for low-income families. We implemented the most comprehensive review of social assistance, as I mentioned before. We established a new service for children with disabilities program. We constructed seniors facilities. We doubled the benefit received by eligible local Yukon seniors to a maximum of \$200 a month, or, \$2,400 a year. We established a Yukon palliative care program to provide consulting services, and public and professional education and training to support the volunteers in communities. We established a Celebrating Yukon Parks initiative to recognize government's progress in survey-

ing and protecting Yukon's biodiversity, as well as increasing public awareness and support for parks. We've developed a climate change action plan to implement the climate change strategy. We established a Climate Change Research Centre of Excellence at Yukon College. We reduced Yukon's greenhouse gas emissions. We've invested \$160 million in Mayo B. We've had major investments in inventory surveys updating the information regarding fish, wildlife and habitat areas to address key gaps in our knowledge of the impacts of climate change.

We've improved the *Animal Protection Act* provided for welfare of domestic animals in Yukon. We've increased the financial support for community based organizations and municipalities involved in recycling.

Our Yukon economy has experienced significant growth since 2007. We've funded the support for a new placer regime. We worked extensively to develop and highlight the mineral potential of the Yukon. We established the Yukon mining incentive program. We amended the *Quartz Mining Act* and the *Miners Lien Act*. We launched a million dollar national marketing campaign. We supported the tourism campaign, "Larger than Life". We promoted Yukon through the gateway cities — Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver. We've developed the *Energy Strategy for Yukon*. We've worked with Canada to provide \$1.5 million for the municipal-rural infrastructure fund for community projects such as Hamilton Boulevard. We signed the Building Canada fund, which will provide \$182 million to Yukon. We worked with Skagway to ensure the territory had access to a port. We implemented a new fish habitat management system to support and sustain the placer mining industry while protecting fish habitat. We've worked with the City of Whitehorse to develop land. We've streamlined the management of land services. We've passed a new *Forest Resources Act*.

We've implemented cooperative governance through the Yukon Forum. We've met the commitment to help re-establish the inter-governmental forum. We've worked collaboratively with Yukon First Nations. We've utilized the pan-northern collaborative approach.

I could go on all day. We utilized Yukon government's budgets and policies to stimulate the private sector economy. We only need to walk outside to see what this territory is experiencing. We even established all-party committees, like the *Landlord and Tenant Act* committee, the Select Committee on Safe Operation and Use of Off-road Vehicles, a legislative reform committee, anti-smoking legislation committee, human rights committee, whistle-blower protection committee while working in partnership with the opposition members.

It comes down to quality of life — quality of life. I'm going to end my debate this afternoon by focusing on Dawson City. We've improved waste-water infrastructure. We've improved Front Street in Dawson City. We've built the School of Visual Arts in Dawson City. We're building a Yukon College expansion in Dawson City.

We're building a 20-unit affordable housing apartment building for Dawson City. We're improving the quality of life for its citizens. We're building a small hospital in Dawson City

and a future McDonald Lodge replacement in Dawson City, improving the quality of life for Dawson City.

I said I was going to speak shortly on this. I know the opposition members have criticized us for spending all day patting ourselves on the back for improving the lives of Yukoners, but when there are facts out there, it's obvious.

I look forward to unanimous support of this motion; I look forward to listening to what the Liberal opposition and the NDP have to say with regard to constructive criticism, constructive ideas, constructive alternatives, as opposed to just opposing. I encourage the members opposite to come up with ideas and strategies, explain their strategies of how they would improve the life of Yukoners, not just oppose the facts that are out there today: the facts that the lives of Yukoners have improved, the fact their children can now come back to the Yukon to work, the fact our population is growing, the fact there are jobs in the Yukon, the fact that our communities are growing, the fact that you can actually sell your house now in the Yukon and get a good market price for it.

We are building housing; we are building hospitals; we're building education facilities. Where's the Liberals' plan? I have yet to hear a single idea from the Liberal opposition.

I encourage the Leader of the Official Opposition to stand up and give alternatives; stand up and explain their alternatives to the Yukon Party government; explain how they would improve the lives of Yukoners, as opposed to just opposing the concrete steps we have taken to improve the lives of Yukoners.

Mr. Inverarity: I'd like to take this opportunity this afternoon to speak to Motion No. 1138: THAT this House recognizes the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the quality of life for Yukoners.

I think the tone was set by the opening remarks from the mover of the motion this afternoon. As I went about preparing for today's debate, I looked up the definition of a term that came to my mind when I read this. The term was "self-serving". When I looked up the definition and I tried to apply it to this debate this afternoon, clearly, if ever there was a definition for the term "self-serving" this motion is probably it. If I didn't know any better I would say that we were looking at an election to be called tomorrow or Thursday. I know that that's not going to be true because the earliest it would be called would be next Thursday.

This motion does nothing to advance the interests of Yukoners or deal with the business at hand. This motion is little more than a Yukon Party infomercial at Yukoners' expense, but then again, that's exactly what we've come to expect from this government. While the member opposite stood up and read off a lot of good things that the government has done, they failed in one area, and I'll be talking about it later in my speech. What they've done is lose the trust of Yukoners. All the good things that they talk about have gone for naught for that simple, simple reason — they've lost the trust of Yukoners.

We have already endured many years of Yukon Party government. For the government to now come forward with this kind of propaganda on private members' day is actually insult-

ing. We have watched this government get caught up in scandals, such as the privatization of the Yukon Energy Corporation, and waste our money on asset-backed commercial paper. Those investments have done nothing to improve the lives of Yukoners to this day. This government has refused to accept responsibility for these decisions. Yukoners are looking for good government, not a government that ducks out of its duties and then wastes time patting itself on the back.

The beginning of good government is being responsible for one's own actions. Yukoners have not seen this Yukon Party government do this. In fact, the opposite is true. We continue to witness these government ministers stand here and claim unparalleled accomplishments. The claim is that the Yukon Party government improves the quality of life for Yukoners. They claim themselves to be good government. Well, I'm not convinced. I don't believe that anyone else is convinced either, because they've lost the trust.

This government's deficit spending trajectory does not improve the quality of life for Yukoners. It will saddle Yukoners with debt for many years to come. If that's not bad enough, the government denies the reality of its actions. For example, on April 1 of this year, the Premier stood in this House and proclaimed the following: "Simply put, Mr. Speaker, we have the cash and the other financial assets to pay off all of our obligations. Now we can take great pride in the fact that we as Yukoners are living within our means — I stress that we are living within our means — and are not mortgaging our future. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the opposite is the case. Yukoners have net financial resources, which is a savings account for the future."

That was less than six months ago. The facts as they stand now tell a very different story. The budget that was released last week tells us we are living well beyond our means. This government is spending all the available money they have and more. The deficit budget this year and last year mean that we are not living within our means. Deficit budgets mean we are going in the wrong direction.

This government is moving Yukon down the wrong financial road and mortgaging our future in the process. Six months ago the Premier stood here and told us exactly the opposite.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this government denies its own reality, it denies deficit spending, it denies the debt taken on by the Crown corporations, the botched projects and the financial favouritism. That's why this government has lost the trust of the people. The Premier claims that he is not mortgaging our future, when that's exactly what he's doing. We didn't believe him then, and said so at the time. We most certainly don't believe him now. The facts are out, and the truth is clear.

If that's not bad enough, this government is also accumulating massive debt through Crown corporations. We're talking about significant debt in the amount of \$167 million. Yukoners should be prepared for the fact that this is not the end of it. The government still has one year left in its mandate, and Yukoners should be genuinely concerned. The government is on a spending trajectory that will leave the public coffers empty. Another year of this kind of spending, and who knows what the debt will be.

This government is not concerned about how this debt will be paid and why should it? The government won't be around when the bills come due. That's what credit is all about, Mr. Speaker. Yukoners know this, but the government doesn't. Debt has to be paid back. This government has no plans to pay the money back that they're spending now. Yukoners will have to pay it back at some point in the future. This is not good government. Good government is protecting our financial future, not mortgaging it. Good government is about balanced finances, not consecutive deficits. In spite of what the Premier might tell us, we are not seeing good government at all.

Improving the quality of life for Yukoners entails open communication with the public. Cancelling the annual community tour this year is the Yukon Party's idea of open communication and good government. The Yukon Party told Yukoners last year, the year before and the year before that, that they were there to listen. The annual community tours were an amazing initiative and an important opportunity to hear directly from Yukoners in their own communities. There is no place like home and the Yukon Party is staying home this year surrounded by their advisors and their security glass doors.

The Yukon Party doesn't want to hear directly from Yukoners any more. Maybe it's just that the government isn't in the mood to listen any more. Maybe it's because the Yukon Party has been in government too long and believe they don't have to listen to Yukoners any more. That might be what the Yukon Party is thinking and they simply don't have to listen to Yukoners any more. Whatever is the reason given by this government, Yukoners will have to believe it or not, as they choose, because we will never really know. Yukoners cannot expect to hear the real reason this government cancelled the community tour this year. Whatever the facts, this government will deny them, as they have done so many times in the past. That's what we've come to, Mr. Speaker. We must listen to this government tell us what they think is good for us. We don't get to provide any input. Good government is the other way around.

I'm sure the Yukon Party can come up with plenty of excuses to cancel the annual tour and silence Yukoners. There's one reason, however, that makes sense under the circumstances. What would Yukoners say to this government during a community tour? What would Yukoners tell this government if only the government were listening?

Yukoners would tell this government that they want an election. I know this to be true. I know that Yukoners would say this to the government if they have a chance, because Yukoners have been saying that to me all summer. I've listened. Yukoners have been telling me they don't trust this Yukon Party government. This government has cleaned out our savings with bad investments and deficit spending. The Yukon is more dependent on federal transfer payments than ever before. Our Crown corporation is taking on massive debt that our children will have to pay for — 89 cents for every dollar that comes into this government comes in the form of a transfer payment of some sort. That leaves 11 cents, and that's down from 20 cents of Yukon-generated wealth — a significant change in direction.

Every time we turn around, the Yukon Party is caught up in another scandal — to privatize or liquidate Yukon public assets in exchange for some short-term cash. The Yukon Party has lost the trust of Yukoners. This government claims that they have lots of money in the bank. What the government doesn't say is that this money can only be accessed by selling off a school or some other government-owned building.

It's like the asset-backed commercial paper investment we went through that this government made. Money is on the books, but the money is stuck in a lock box and cannot be accessed for years to come. This government is broke, all right, very broke, and everything that can be turned into cash is being considered. This does not fall into the definition of good government. A good government would know the value of a prudent reserve. That doesn't describe this government and it doesn't improve the quality of life for Yukoners.

In my mind, the single most important aspect of quality government and quality of life is trust — trust that what the government is telling Yukoners is reasonable, believable and supported by fact. That does not describe this government. In spite of the facts, this government still denies that it was working on privatizing the Yukon Energy Corporation. In spite of the facts, this government denies that it was running consecutive deficit budgets. That part is truly amazing. The budget is out and the numbers say that we are in a deficit financial position for the second year in a row. What's amazing is that the Premier stands up and denies this reality. This is the crux of trust.

Ask the Premier about recently tabled deficit budgets and his contribution to the quality of life for Yukoners, and the Premier will lapse into denial. This response is not responsible, believable or supported by fact.

The Premier was asked a simple question about the recently tabled budget. Is the budget a surplus budget or a deficit budget? It's a simple question, and the facts tell the real story. It would be nice if the Premier did. The fact of the matter is the Premier wouldn't say and he wouldn't even answer the question. The Premier has told Yukoners on many occasions that he would not do this; he would not run a deficit budget. The Premier has told us that he would not mortgage our futures and that he would not drive us into debt. The budget is out and that's exactly what's going on — the money is gone and Yukon is being driven into debt through unsustainable spending. This is now our reality.

Ask the Premier about it though and what do we get? Denial. The Premier is not concerned about the facts as stated in the budget that he tabled last week. The Premier is only concerned about maintaining his version of reality. In his version, the Yukon is not broke. The recently tabled budget contradicts this — Yukon's surplus is gone, and the remaining wealth that we have hung on to is tied up in frozen investments and government buildings. This wealth is on the books, but cannot be touched without either selling a school or a government building.

The Premier's response is not responsible. The Premier's response is not believable, and it's not supported by fact. It's about trust, and this government has lost it. This motion is sim-

ply an effort on the government's part to convince Yukoners that it's not as bad as it seems. Unfortunately, for this government, the effort is too little, too late. Yukoners have lost the trust in this government.

Hon. Mr. Hart: With regard to the last comments, I think I'll let the Premier respond directly to those, since many of those comments were directed at him.

I rise today in support of the motion in this House, recognizing the record of accomplishments by the Yukon government in improving the quality of life for all Yukoners.

A worthy goal for any government is to improve the quality of life of its citizens. How is the government to know whether the quality of life has improved or what the quality of life is? One approach is to use the quality-of-life indicators to assess what has been done, including measures of at least some of these dimensions — economic well-being, health, literacy, environmental quality, freedom, social participation and self-perceived well-being or satisfaction.

Yukoners understand the vast potential of our territory. This is a place where people can realize their dreams, where families can enjoy the quality of life that is second to none in Canada and where individuals, businesses and organizations can achieve excellence. All of us can be proud of Yukon's record on such things as the economy, social welfare arrangements for its vulnerable citizens, the implementation of land claims and the way in which our respective governments work together at an official level. We are a successful, well-managed jurisdiction that believes in individual responsibility and initiative, tolerance, justice and providing a helping hand to the less fortunate. As the world changes, all Yukoners need to continue to work together to make us all collectively even more prosperous and strong.

I would like to outline some of the things my department has done in furtherance of what I'm calling a "social inclusion agenda," as we continue to address our commitment to improving the quality of life for all.

Let me start by explaining what I mean by a social inclusion agenda. Initially, new ideas like a social inclusion are confusing, partly because they're used in different ways. Social policy language is imprecise and many leading-edge concepts lack precision. Part of the reason that new terms like "social inclusion" come along is because people are increasingly distrustful of ideology that can no longer provide reliable answers for a world that is increasingly complex, interdependent, rights-focused and process-driven. A world in which citizens have to do more and want to do more but are not sure about their objectives, or that the way to get there, requires some organizational principles.

From a policy perspective, inclusion is a useful term because it enables society to focus on what people share in common. It provides policy makers a powerful tool to understand the complexities of society and the logic of collective action. It focuses on the need to move obstacles and barriers to access and participation. It is a barometer that gauges the public's authority and commitment to access, participate, sharing and prioritization as public values.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it focuses on responsibility — personal, and community, as well as government — and the fact that exclusionary public policy choices are a shared objective.

I want to make a point from the outset that this government has not come upon these ideas recently. Almost from the time of our election, eight years ago, this government has been developing and implementing a social policy agenda designed to improve the lives of Yukoners, which we are now drawing together under an inclusive banner as we move forward. There is much yet to be done, both in the immediate term and in the next several years.

Developing a wellness strategy for Yukoners is one example that will take us well into the next decade, as will the development of social inclusion and aging strategies, and a strategy centered on the renewal of health care funding arrangements with Canada in 2014.

Our efforts to create a level playing field where all Yukoners, regardless of where they live or who they are, have increased opportunities and contributed to families and communities. These efforts come from throughout the government. The Women's Directorate has doubled the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund from \$100,000 to \$200,000 since 2004. The prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund has allocated \$100,000 yearly to projects designed and developed by aboriginal women for their communities.

In conjunction with Health and Social Services and Justice, the Women's Directorate has formed an interdepartmental working group to look at relevant issues for women in the Yukon and best practices in the area of women and substance abuse.

This government recognizes the stress and strain on families with children, so increased childcare contributions more than 100 percent in a single year. These funds not only increase wages for those who care for our younger citizens, but also go toward increasing parental subsidies to assist parents in finding suitable care while keeping more money in their own family budgets.

In addition, we have provided a contribution of \$300,000 to the Carcross-Tagish First Nation to assist with building a new childcare centre in Carcross, and an additional \$300,000 to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation to improve and expand childcare services in Dawson City.

Every year, we offer flu vaccination clinics in Whitehorse and our rural communities to prevent the spread of influenza. Last year approximately 18,400 Yukoners were vaccinated against H1N1 influenza in October 2009. The department held massive vaccination clinics in Whitehorse and rural communities. This was more than triple the number of flu vaccines given generally each year. This is in addition to our Yukon immunization program, where staff strive mightily to ensure that all citizens are protected as well as they can be. Education and awareness activities are undertaken to support these health campaigns, and none were more important than last year's campaign to create awareness around good cough and cold etiquette in the wake of the H1N1 pandemic. Yukon was the first territory to launch an immunization program for girls in

grades 5, 6 and 7 to protect against the human papilloma virus, or HPV, as it's called. This program continues and is available to young women up to the ages of 26.

Additional funding was invested in the Yukon's mammography program to protect the breast health of Yukon women. Efforts in this area have taken breast cancer from behind the curtain to where we openly talk about the fight against this disease that impacts one woman in nine. Our efforts support education and awareness, and increased and expanded services.

There has been much talk of the social inclusion strategy development currently underway but this work only builds on initiatives that have come before. Social assistance recipients received an increase in their food allowance in January of 2009. The food portion of the standard benefit increased to 15 percent for a single person, 10 percent for a family of two, and five percent for a family of three. In addition, the government committed to ensuring our social safety net is adequate to keeping people healthy by taking a look at how the "food basket" is calculated and examining how the food allowance can be linked to the consumer price index.

Now, with regard to social assistance, I know that members on the other side have indicated that we've got to do more, but it's this government — for the first time in over 20 years — that did a review of the SA accounts, and it's this government that increased those rates for the first time in over 20 years. It's not governments that were previously in power that brought any assistance to those under SA. It's this government that provided that. A substantial increase was provided in July 2008, and a mere six months later we increased the food allowance for those on social assistance, again based on a demonstrated need provided by those through the anti-poverty process, as well as working with our officials in Health and Social Services — so we could increase the food basket to ensure everyone could live on the assistance being provided.

Health and Social Services doubled the Yukon seniors income supplement for eligible low-income seniors and indexed it. It also increased and indexed the pioneer utility grant to help support eligible seniors to stay in their homes by assisting with the cost of home heating during the long winter months. This is something many seniors I'm aware of participate in and find valuable and that assists them to stay in their home for as long as they can prior to moving to any institution.

We began a palliative care program to provide consulting services, public and professional education and training, and support to volunteers in communities who are dealing with the end of life. This collaborative initiative is supported by an advisory committee made up of care providers from the Whitehorse General Hospital, Hospice Yukon, First Nation health programs, pharmacists, local physicians and continuing care staff, both long-term care and home care.

This government launched the Yukon HealthLine, 811, which provides Yukon residents with a new option for accessing health care information right in their own homes. The uptake continues to exceed the original expectations and was a great boon during the H1N1 pandemic.

To ensure the continuation of the quality of health care in rural Yukon, construction of a health care facility in Watson

Lake is underway and a second care facility is being built in Dawson City. These regional facilities will support the communities and the region within the area that they are located. The final 12 beds were opened at Copper Ridge Place, and work continues to open additional care beds at the Thomson Centre. Foster parents received an increase of 17 percent of the amount they receive when caring for children under the Yukon child welfare system.

The rates are now indexed to the consumer price index, and that commenced in 2010. I might add again, that was the first time in well over 15 years that any review of foster care rates or increases were provided. It's this government that took the action, reviewed it and provided the assistance to this very important issue and to these very important individuals who were providing care for our infants who are in great need of family care. Work continues by the Government of Yukon Health and Social Services department with McGill University and the Public Health Agency of Canada in its study to determine the prevalence and types of HPV that infect Yukon women and attempt to ascertain if life factors increase the chance of getting the infection.

New monies support increased services to children with special needs, an increase in funding of \$100,000 to the Child Development Centre, CDC. The centre provides speech and language services, social and emotional development and integrated therapeutic programming for children from birth to pre-school age.

The Child Development Centre will use the additional funding to hire a psychologist. I might add that I've toured this facility on several occasions. I'm more than blown away by the services provided by the staff and all the professionals in that facility, and I'm astounded by the number of individuals these individuals see on an annual basis. It's truly unusual, and it's amazing to see how excited these professionals are at assisting these individuals in their care.

Health and Social Services promoted healthy eating and active living to more than 700 students who participated in the 2010 Polar Games. The Eat Right, Play Hard initiative encouraged students to make healthier food choices during and after the games by providing each participant in the Polar Games with information on healthy eating and with healthy food options.

The telehomecare project to improve delivery of services in the Yukon — departmental home care staff now use a mobile data system they can bring to their clients' homes and access up-to-date electronic home care records.

Health and Social Services introduced a new format for "Drop the Pop", encouraging Yukon schools to undertake their own healthy drinking and eating initiatives during the month of February. The department funded the schools' projects. Twenty-six schools participated in this program. Another healthy eating initiative was the grade 5 cookbook project, a part of "Canada Gets Active" initiative. All Yukon grade 5 students received a cookbook and were encouraged to cook healthy foods. We produced a "healthy grocery shopping on a budget" pamphlet to guide healthy eating habits with money saving tips for grocery shopping. Yukon put monies into the

youth investment fund and contributed to 22 projects for youth, including youth camps, physical programs and cultural events. Many of the programs are designed to assist youth susceptible to at-risk behaviours or those who are considered to be at risk.

We have supported Yukon athletes who have participated in North American Indigenous Games and the Canada 55+ Games, as well as athletes attending Special Olympic events and Canada Games.

This government has changed the *Employment Standards Act* to assist people who need to provide compassionate care to family members. An affordable housing complex in Riverdale, Whitehorse, is close to completion, addressing the largest gap in housing that currently exists — secure affordable housing for lone-parent families, particularly households headed by single women. Again, this is an issue that was addressed by this government, identified by this government through consultation with stakeholders, and we have responded by building this facility, based on the fact that this was their number one concern.

Recognizing the need to serve all citizens, we've undertaken a number of initiatives to support individuals affected by fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, supporting participation in the Canada Northwest FASD partnership, funding to the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon, FASSY, for programming and diagnoses, and for hosting a number of national and international events for parents, caregivers and service providers.

So, Mr. Speaker, I see my time is coming up, I still have many pages to go through. I apologize for not being able to get through it all, but I look forward to adding to this list a later date, either through Question Period or motions, as we go on through this sitting.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I take great pleasure in speaking to this motion. I thank the Member for Klondike for bringing this motion forward.

Yukoners have asked for good governance. The other things that were top priorities were creating a better quality of life, managing and protecting Yukon's environment and wildlife, and continuing to implement a clear vision for a prosperous, diversified Yukon economy.

Let's see, Mr. Speaker, what have we done to deliver on that front? Our mandate this term is: to continue to achieve a better quality of life by building healthy, safe communities with skilled and adaptable people; to protect Yukon's pristine environment; to preserve our wildlife, and study and mitigate the impacts of climate change; to promote a strong, diversified private sector economy by developing Yukon's vast natural resources, wilderness tourism potential, agriculture, arts and culture, information technology and film and sound, as well as the traditional industries of outfitting and trapping; and to practise good governance with strong fiscal management and a climate of cooperation, collaboration and partnership with our First Nation governments, our two sister territories, our provincial counterparts and the federal government.

When I sat down to prepare for today's motion debate, I was almost overwhelmed with pride by how much we have done. Where should I start my comments? Should I begin by

contrasting how many more Yukoners there are today than there were eight years ago under the Liberal regime? Do I start by talking about how much we have accomplished in my riding? Do I start with what we've done in the Department of Justice? Should I start with the Women's Directorate or, I should say, our reinstatement of the Women's Directorate?

One of our biggest accomplishments was stabilizing, then growing, our population. Let's briefly look at this accomplishment. In 2001, there were 28,674 Yukoners, down about 2,100 people, or 6.8 percent, from the 30,766 who called Yukon home in 1996.

Ross River's population dropped to 337 in 2001 from 352 in 1996. This represents a decline of 4.3 percent. In Teslin, our population fell to 267 in 2001 from 309 in 1996, for a decrease of 13.6 percent. In Faro — this is astounding — our population went from 1,261 in 1996 to 313 in 2001. This is a drop of over 75 percent. All told, 1,005 left just in my riding, while 917 stayed. Think about that for a minute, Mr. Speaker. Now, that means that more people left than stayed in Yukon. It is wearisome to listen to the members opposite prattle on about what a wonderful job they would do if someone let them sit in the driver's seat. Mr. Speaker, when they were driving the bus, it not only broke down and ran out of gas on Campbell Highway, but they put it in the ditch. Or was it stuck in the mud behind the Koidern Lodge?

Unparliamentary language

Speaker: Order please. The honourable member is forcing the Chair to intervene. Characterizing a member's statements as "prattle" in this House is not in order and I'd ask the honourable member not to do that.

The Minister of Justice has the floor. Please continue.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I did not mean that.

They put the bus in the ditch and they want the keys again? I think not, Mr. Speaker. You know, I wonder if they realize the tremendous impact that their policies had on constituents. Let me tell you, it had a huge impact in my riding. Because of the decisions they made, over 1,000 people in my riding alone left. Just imagine that.

Under our watch, we have been slowly rebuilding these communities. We now have 34,984 people who call Yukon home. That is an increase of 6,310 people or 22 percent. In my riding, some 1,249 people now call it home. Recall that in 2001, that number was only 917. This is an increase of 332 people, or just over 36 percent.

To recap, under the Liberal watch, more people left than stayed. Under our watch, people want to live here in my riding.

Let's talk about our accomplishments; let's recognize our accomplishments in my riding. In health and safety, we delivered a new state-of-the-art fire truck to Ross River. I want to thank the Minister of Community Services for driving 250 miles each way to come to Ross River to deliver that fire truck. I am deeply touched he would do that, especially considering he had a broken arm at the time. I would also like to thank his EA for her great assistance.

I again want to thank both the Minister of Community Services and Yukon's senator and you, Mr. Speaker, for coming to Faro to open the Faro seniors housing facility with six units. Let's acknowledge that accomplishment. As you heard first-hand, that building is deeply symbolic to the community as it represents the first time that someone had built a new building in Faro for years. By working with the town, we have pulled Faro back from the edge.

\$1,500,000 has been designated for Teslin seniors housing, for eight units; \$2,019,000 was designated for teleradiology in 13 community health centres.

I sat in a briefing the other day that described the advances in Yukon's health care. I was astonished to learn that diagnostic imaging, which used to take weeks, can now be done in about 15 minutes. That is a significant accomplishment. Is that good governance? You bet, Mr. Speaker.

And for more accomplishments: \$120,000 to expand telehealth videoconferencing equipment, into First Nations' offices; \$38,000 for public access to a 24-hour crisis line through the alcohol and drug information referral service; \$527,000 for the Yukon home care program; a task force on acutely intoxicated persons, co-chaired by Bruce Beaton and James Allen; the cancer care navigator program, to continue through Yukon government and hospital cooperation partnership; Kwanlin Dun First Nation land-based healing program for substance abuse; a new on-line resource for back-country users launched in cooperation with the RCMP; updated regulations so licensed practical nurses have the same as other Canadian LPNs.

We signed a memorandum of understanding with the Volunteer Ambulance Society to support emergency medical services Yukon-wide. How's that for a long list of significant accomplishments? Let's recognize that as good governance.

FireSmart 2010 projects: \$3,400 for the Town of Faro; \$25,000 for the Sportsman Association; \$25,000 for the Teslin Tlingit Council; \$25,000 for the Village of Teslin.

In Highways and Public Works: \$15,250,000 this year as part of a three-year program to upgrade the Robert Campbell Highway; \$775,000 to BST the Robert Campbell Highway; \$500,000 toward the Yukon-wide vegetation control program, including brushing, along the Robert Campbell Highway and Alaska Highway. Bridge and culvert work: \$1,125,000 for Deadman Creek bridge; \$500,000 for Morley River; \$1 million near Quiet Lake; \$450,000 for bridge rehabilitation on the North Canol Road.

In the municipalities: Yukon and the Association of Yukon Communities established the Municipal Fiscal Framework Review Committee, established the new Solid Waste Advisory Committee; \$90,000 was spent to construct an exercise room in Teslin's arena; \$20,000 to construct a secondary exit for the Teslin recreation complex exercise room. These are significant accomplishments.

In Tourism and Culture, the Dakká Kwáan Dancers were provided funding to attend the Vancouver 2010 Olympics; \$668,000 in support of literary, visual and performing arts; \$6,920 to the Village of Teslin for Teslin mind and body activity; \$6,000 to the Village of Teslin for a break-dance camp; \$95,930 for Teslin Tlingit Council's excellent seminars for

personal and career development; \$59,370 for Teslin Historical and Museum Society for the air-radio range repeater station; \$18,000 to Teslin Recreation Society for the concert in the park; \$19,200 to the Teslin Tlingit Heritage Centre to inventory and register the Teslin Tlingit permanent collection.

\$100,000 was given to the heritage centre for operation and maintenance; \$38,000 to George Johnston Museum in O&M funding; \$10,325 to George Johnston Museum to display Tlingit artifacts. That is a huge and significant accomplishment Mr. Speaker. Let's recognize that.

In Justice, we initiated a major review of the RCMP in Yukon. Mr. Speaker, this one really does mark the contrast between the Official Opposition and us. Rather than look at one specific incident, our government said, "Let's look at the whole model of policing in Yukon. Let's not review just one episode, but let's look at the entire system of policing in Yukon." What is working well and what is not working so well? I can tell you from first-hand experience — especially now that I'm the Minister of Justice, but even prior to that — that most Yukoners, especially those in rural communities, really appreciate the RCMP officers in our towns and villages. The biggest question I could ask is how can we get the RCMP more engaged in off-duty activities? Elders and community leaders recognize the men and women in uniform as solid community contributors.

When we undertook the review we wanted to hear about all areas. That is practising good governance. In fact, our review has been so successful that more people want to participate in it. We've extended the timelines so more Yukoners are given the opportunity to come forward and say, "Yes, this is an issue for me."

We've developed and implemented a new corrections philosophy and a new *Corrections Act*. We are constructing a new correctional treatment centre. I recall the not very charitable words the Member for Porter Creek South offered about the Yukon Party's commitment and ability to deliver a new correctional and treatment facility — talk about tired. It does get tiresome hearing the same old rhetoric — not spending enough, overspending, unsustainable spending, having too tight a rein on the savings account, not being open and accountable. The sad truth — it's the opposition that is tired. Their accusations are tired and simply not the truth. We piloted a land-based healing program —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: On a point of order, the Member for Copperbelt.

Mr. Mitchell: On a point of order. Accusing members of one side of making accusations that are not the truth is contrary to Standing Order 19 —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Mitchell: No, it's not (g). It's obviously out of order, Mr. Speaker. I can't remember which letter under Standing Order 19, but I know you will know it.

Speaker: In fact, I agree with you.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, the Standing Orders prohibit identifying a specific member as stating an untruth.

The Member for Pelly-Nisutlin certainly did not attribute that to a specific member in this Assembly.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: You know, members, I was going to give a ruling, but I'm going to have to read the Blues and do some thinking about this. If you'll allow me a day to review, I will get back to you tomorrow.

Thank you. Minister of Justice, you still have the floor.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Thinking about our new correctional philosophy, a new act, a new building, a new pilot project, a land-based treatment partnership with KDFN — we promised, and we certainly have delivered and are delivering. But let's talk about the multi-purpose correctional centre. The Liberals wanted us to build a newer, bigger box using the same tired and broken philosophy that just hadn't worked for 50 years.

They were convinced that if we just had a newer, bigger box that would hold more inmates, all would be tickety-boo in the Yukon in corrections. The Yukon Party said, "Why build something that isn't working? Let's look at the way we do corrections. Let's look at our philosophy in total." We did just that, Mr. Speaker. We developed and implemented a new corrections philosophy and a new *Corrections Act*. The old act was no longer appropriate. Where the Liberals were locked in, focused on making life better for offenders, we made sure we considered the needs of victims as well. We developed a strategy to address the needs of victims, which includes a new *Compensation for Victims of Crime Act*. We promised and we delivered. That is an accomplishment. That is Yukon Party's legacy to Yukon.

Let's contrast that with the performance of the Official Opposition and "Long-gun Larry"'s gun registration —

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order please.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Yes, I know. Honourable member, we discussed this yesterday — using nicknames for honourable members. At that point in time, the Chair suggested that we should also extend that privilege to our Member of Parliament, so honourable member, please don't use that terminology.

Minister of Justice has the floor, please.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Well, the problem is that we have a member who is supposed to represent Yukon. When push comes to shove, and the vote is on, are we represented? Were we represented fairly? No, we weren't. I commend Mr. Bevington for standing up for his constituents and voting against the gun registry. Good for you, Mr. Bevington. You represented your constituents. The Liberal leader in this House muzzled the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin on our long-gun motion. They are all in it together, Mr. Speaker — all in it together.

Of course, the big accomplishment here is that we reinstated the Women's Directorate.

There is so much more that I would like to say. We have so many accomplishments that we have done in the Yukon Party and I just don't have the time. The members of this Yukon Party government have done an excellent job of governing the Yukon and improving the quality of life in the Yukon. Our economy is up, our children have access to sports and recreation and they have career opportunities in rewarding arenas. The party with the proven track record of good governance and improving the quality of life in Yukon is the Yukon Party.

As the members opposite like to tout us for, we are the longest serving government in the history of Yukon. I wonder who is the shortest serving in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Cardiff: I'm looking forward to debating this motion and, to be honest with you, I'm hoping we actually get a chance to vote on this motion and we get to debate the second motion, because I have lots to say about that, as well as this.

First of all, recognizing the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the quality of life for Yukoners — just about any government and I've spoken about this. When members run for office, I believe their intentions are good. I don't question the intentions of any member of this Legislative Assembly when they ran for office. All of us ran for office to improve the quality of life for Yukoners and our constituents.

I have the pleasure of representing the constituency of Mount Lorne — beautiful Mount Lorne — it has been a pleasure to represent it for the last eight years, and I look forward to representing it up until the next election and into the future.

The government has recognized, to some extent, the riding of Mount Lorne, and they have provided some infrastructure improvements — provided funding for those improvements. I am actually going to touch on some of them, because I am appreciative of some of that work. There has been work done at the community centre through the CDF and other funds from both the territorial government and the federal government — improving the facilities there, providing a three-season facility and outdoor facility to host community gatherings, which is well-used. Currently under construction as well, with money from both governments, is an addition — a new Zamboni shed, which is a much-needed addition in that community.

It took a number of years — I heard the Member for Klondike talking about this yesterday — for a new fire hall facility at Golden Horn, which was much needed. It was about the health and safety of the volunteer firefighters. I was talking about volunteer firefighters yesterday, and one way the government could improve the quality of life for Yukoners would be to listen to what I was saying yesterday during debate on second reading of the *Act to Amend the Income Tax Act (2010)* and actually do something about tax credits and tax deductions for volunteer firefighters and their employers. While I recognize that some things have been done, the government has a long way to go and needs to recognize some of the other things that could be done.

Of course, there are lots of other things that are on the wish list. I know the hamlet council and the community association

—a committee was recently established to develop a community emergency preparedness planning document.

There has been a request for location signage to assist especially non-local emergency service providers like the police, ambulance services, Wildland Fire and other mutual aid volunteer fire departments with being able to quickly and accurately identify and locate individual residences within the hamlet. I would encourage the government to work with this group in order to do that. I know that has been an issue in other communities like Tagish and Marsh Lake. It's about being able to respond quickly and it's about the health and safety, not just of the community, but of the responders as well, so that they're not going down the wrong road and getting stuck or possibly being in an accident. The design of a street address numbering system for the hamlet is a priority for my community, and I would like the government to think about that when it thinks about improving the quality of life for Yukoners.

I know that another request from that community is — the hamlet safety committee has identified the community centre as the best facility in the event of an emergency evacuation, and to ensure that that emergency evacuation works during times of a power outage, that hamlet safety committee, the hamlet council and the community association are asking the government to help them secure funding for an emergency power supply hookup — possibly a generator similar to the one that's going to be provided at the fire hall. I'd like to, at that point, take note of the commitment of citizens of that community, because the president and the volunteers of the Mount Lorne volunteer fire department have been going around for the past couple of years asking residents to help support the volunteer fire department, as well, and have been raising money for things like emergency turnout gear so that the volunteers protecting our community are protected as well. The funds they raised this spring will go to assist in the purchase of the mobile standby generator. They raised \$3,000 to that end.

Another wish of the community is to have more resources put into the land planning process. The community has a land plan that I believe was approved in 1993. It took more than 10 years for the regulations — in fact, I think it took about 13 years — to finally be completed and approved. The plan is overdue for a review. There are land planning issues; the minister is aware of those. I would encourage him — because it's not just the community of Mount Lorne that has concerns about land planning issues. We hear it repeatedly from the Member for Lake Laberge about land planning in Fox Lake, Deep Creek, Ibex, changes to regulations. Land, land, land is a big issue here in the territory. It's the provision of land, of how we get along as neighbours and the land use planning process, and we could go on and on and on about that.

I have another example of something that the government did in response to a request from my community — and I appreciate the fact that economic stimulus funding was provided by the federal government economic stimulus funding, and the government chose to recognize my community with the work that was done on the Annie Lake Road. However, I've gotten absolutely nowhere — absolutely nowhere — when I've asked the Minister of Highways and Public Works to improve the

quality of life for my community on this project. The project was — I'm not sure exactly how it was done. The minister hasn't responded satisfactorily to any of the questions that I've asked about it. The fact of the matter is that they did do work to the road, but many residents felt that the road was better before they did the work. There was an issue when they first started the work about debris left on the road. Now they have the road capped and they've put gravel on it. Apparently they put more gravel on it just recently.

They did cap the road. They put calcium on it and they packed it, but it wasn't packed adequately and it became rutted. People were going in the ditch and were getting damage to their vehicles. The fact of the matter is that the road building season is quickly coming to a close and the minister has an opportunity to fix the problem. He has the opportunity to put calcium on the road and to put a packer back on the road so the road surface is stable, so that when the Department of Highways and Public Works does its first pass down that road with an underbody to remove the first significant snowfall — of which we've already had one — a quarter of a million dollars' of gravel doesn't get bladed into the ditches.

That would improve the quality of life for Yukoners and, in the words of the Minister of Justice, who was already on the second motion, that's not practising good governance. If they did that work, it would be practising good governance and it would be accountable and would be a good use of taxpayers' dollars. We need to finish the BST at the front of the road too.

Now that I've finished giving the kudos and made my requests, I'd like to talk about some other things about improving the quality of life for Yukoners where the government needs to improve. I've got a long list, and I'm not sure how much time I have left.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Cardiff: Well, okay. I'm going to go through the list really quickly and I'm going to list these things. Literacy — adult literacy — the Minister of Education talks about literacy. The fact of the matter is that rural communities and First Nations communities, Yukon-born citizens have much lower literacy rates. It's about adults. When you look at the list that the minister provided, a lot of it is focused on the public education system. I'm not saying we don't need to improve that. We need better outcomes for our young people. But we need to deal with the problem of adult literacy, because it contributes to homelessness, it contributes to poverty, it contributes to unemployment and it contributes to social exclusion. Second-stage housing — I asked the minister this question during Question Period. The minister says she's working on it. She has been working on it for a long time. This is not something that we have got a lot of time to work on. This is a crisis situation.

I offered to go shopping for real estate with the minister, and what I'd like to do now is offer the minister my services in the sod-turning before the end of this sitting. Let's do it; let's do it now. We can't wait, okay? Emergency youth shelter — we've been talking about emergency youth shelters for years. Young people are in need. We need a supportive, welcoming place where young people can go, where they don't get kicked out on the street at 8:00 in the morning, where they get the ser-

vices that they need, where they get help finding a job, where they get help returning to the education system, where they get counselling to help resolve some of the family issues, where they get a warm bed and a meal, and where they get help finding a permanent solution to their housing situation.

A new minimum wage — the minimum wage, quite frankly, isn't enough. I tabled a motion in the Legislature the other day suggesting that it should be \$10 an hour, which is a dollar more than it is right now. Last spring, they raised it four cents, which is a pittance, Mr. Speaker. It should be \$12 an hour. I've recognized the folly of my ways and \$10 an hour isn't enough. A guaranteed annual income would address some of the issues of poverty, of homelessness, of people going without and having a hard time putting meals on the table. It might even do away with the need for things like a food bank.

I applaud the efforts of the people who work at the food bank, the soup kitchens and the Salvation Army. I applaud the front-line workers who are out there trying to make a difference in the lives of those people, but what they really need to improve the quality of life of Yukoners is support from this government.

Now, we need supportive housing. The Leader of the Official Opposition asked the question yesterday about a project here in the Yukon. I've indicated to the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation my support for that project. I'm hopeful, because basically, if you want unanimous consent, the government could bring in the motion and we could deal with it. You would probably have the unanimous consent of this Legislative Assembly to proceed with something like that — 20 units of supportive housing.

While NGOs are partially funded by this government, they are asking for a little bit more to house 20 people. It won't be 20 families, but it will be 20 individuals. I don't know if they will allow couples to stay there or not, but the reality of the matter is that these are people who are disadvantaged. Some of them have disabilities; some of them have mental disabilities; some of them have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder/fetal alcohol effects; some of them have health issues; some of them are discriminated against because they have HIV or AIDS or hepatitis C. Groups have come together for a project.

The government could improve the quality of life of those individuals if they would get behind and support the project. The individuals have worked on this project on their own time for quite some time. They've committed their individual time, outside of their work hours, to make this project happen because they believe in the need.

Another line that this government uses a lot is "demonstrated need". Well, there's a demonstrated need. We've heard about it — just like there's a demonstrated need for an emergency youth shelter, just like there's a demonstrated need for second-stage housing for battered women. We should have a shelter for men as well. There's a demonstrated need for improving the literacy of rural Yukoners, adults, just like there's a demonstrated need for improving childcare in the territory. It's not perfect. We can do a lot more, but it's about priorities and the government's priorities seem to be focused on bridges, highways and bricks and mortar and not on the social side of

the ledger as the Premier and Deputy Premier and many other members on that side of the House like to say they are. While there is an investment on the social side of the ledger, I think that it's not enough.

If the members on that side of the House — the Premier — would like to get up and respond to what I've said, I'd appreciate that.

He's obviously interested and a little shocked by what it is I had to say, but the reality of the matter is, it is about priorities; it is about different philosophies. Quite frankly, the government has a long way to go to improve the quality of life for Yukoners.

Point of personal privilege

Hon. Ms. Horne: On a point of personal privilege, Mr. Speaker. In my response to Motion No. 1138, I thanked you for attending the opening of the Faro senior housing facility in mid-August. I was not implying that you were there as Speaker of the House, but as the MLA for Riverdale North.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: It is a pleasure to say a few words on this issue today. The simple approach, of course, is to start going through the many things that this government has accomplished over the last eight years. We have invested a great deal in bridges and roads as the Member for Mount Lorne suggested, but without the bridges and roads and the infrastructure, we wouldn't have the economy. Without the economy and the flow of money, we wouldn't be able to address the social side of the ledger. No money, no environment. You have the same problem there.

Again, that's a different way to look at it. It's a bit of a red herring, but you do have to have both sides of that. You can't look at all the ways to spend money and not think somewhere you have to make it, too. As I've said before in the House, there might be cheques left in the chequebook, but that doesn't necessarily mean there's anything in the bank account to back that up. That has been a point of confusion with the Leader of the Official Opposition, who seems to think on one day we don't spend the money in the savings account, then the next day he complains that the savings account is being depleted, because we have spent something. Then another member from the Liberal Party will stand up and continue to say that there is no piggy bank, there is no savings account. They kind of miss the \$30 million or \$40 million that are in there.

This is a party that really is still on the fence on the application of leeches. They have to make up their mind; they have to come to some conclusions and tell us what they would do. It really is *Men with Brooms* part II. It's very frustrating on this side to try to deal with that when you have no idea where they're coming from or what their alternatives are.

You know, I think we do have to look in a number of different ways on that sort of a thing. When you go back into the records, you get some very interesting comments that come out and that's always the one thing in this business that you have to be very cautious of, because if you say something it tends to live for a long time — sort of like what we try to tell our kids with the Internet. Somehow a letter or e-mail can disappear, but

when you put it on Facebook it's there forever and you've got a big problem with that.

I can't say that the Liberal Party doesn't have good and original ideas from time to time. My problem is that the good ideas often aren't very original and the original ideas, for the most part, aren't very good. What would they do? What would the alternative be?

When you look back at some of the comments, the NDP member of the day from Kluane — and I quote from *Hansard* — “The Liberals say they will do one thing and end up doing nothing.” Well, I guess he did the research on that and decided that that was what he wanted to stand for, so he crossed the floor and he joined the Liberal Party. And that's his prerogative, but what would he do?

Another one on June 21, 2000: “It's becoming increasingly clear to Yukoners” — and I quote from *Hansard* — “that the Liberals don't do what they say they will do.” Does he still feel that way? Is he still saying something that he won't do, because he certainly won't say what he would do. It is frustrating to try to deal with that sort of an attitude. There's an old saying that we gain wisdom more readily through our failures than through our successes. I think that's quite true. At this point, I think that the Leader of the Liberal Party should certainly be a very wise man, because when we look back at what the Liberal government did — and I remind Yukoners that these are the people who want to drive the bus, and I'd kind of like to keep the bus between the ditches and on the road.

What happened in that short 22 months? The shortest lived majority government in the history of the entire Commonwealth of Nations worldwide. You've got to be really trying to accomplish that. What did they actually do? You can go through and look at some of the things that were accomplished. Again, if I go back to various things that were said over time — changing the name of Mount Logan.

I quote again from *Hansard* of October 25, 2000: “When it came to changing the name of Mount Logan, the Yukon Premier thought it was a great idea.” And I point out that that was the Liberal Premier of the day. It was a great idea, according to the Liberal Party. But here we have a Premier agreeing with the Prime Minister on that process, breaching land claims agreements, right off the bat — being driven by a federal Liberal leader. We very much on this side of the House like to look after Yukon's interests and Yukon's structures and Yukon's priorities, and not be driven by Ottawa. It is disappointing that when you look at the track record of something like the long-gun registry, and have a federal Member of Parliament repeatedly — over and over, in many forums — say he's against it and that he will support Yukoners; he will vote against that registry; he will help Yukoners and he will stand by Yukon. But when the federal Liberal Leader says, “No, can't do that. Nope, sorry,” he caves. It's not about the long-gun registry, it really isn't. It's about credibility and who is running the territory.

The *Yukon Act* of April 2003 was a very good move. It accomplished so much and gave us a great deal of autonomy in terms of how Yukon would run its own affairs and its own business. What I see is going back to being run by the federal

government. If you go back into debate on the *Third Appropriation Act, 2000-01*, Bill No. 3 — and that was the Liberal government bill — the Member for Kluane said postpone, review, delay, it's the Liberal way. He's very good at poetry. I wish he were better on coming up with some suggestions of what he would do differently. Is that the way he really felt at that point in time? I have some concerns on that.

The same member of the House on October 25, 2000, in an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, “He is waiting for the day the Liberal government says something intelligent even. He could be waiting a long time.” We're still waiting. We don't know what we're waiting for, because absolutely nothing is being said. We don't know where it's going and we don't know what the member opposite would do in any alternative.

Again, you can't say in one breath that there is no savings account and then turn around and say that you're not spending that savings account — there are so many ways that you can spend it. Get on with it — spend it.

But if we spend something out of that savings account, then it's oh, you shouldn't have — absolutely shouldn't have. What would he spend out of it? What would he do? What programs would he cut? Where would he suggest that we make those changes?

When you go through and you look at what we have done and what we have accomplished, a lot of it is small. It's small to us, but it's not small in the community — Whitehorse being the biggest, of course. But when you look at the smaller communities, small things are very important. I don't really care if that's a boat launch that was officially opened in Carcross. It was opened awhile ago in conjunction with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation and the local advisory council. It's a boat launch. In Whitehorse, it's very easy to say, “Well, it's not that important,” but if you live there, it's incredibly important.

We supported the participation of 112 members of Team Yukon in the 2010 Canada 55+ Games. The team consisted of participants from eight Yukon communities and they travelled to Brantford, Ontario and participated in 13 different events. We're very happy to get involved with that and to have these people participate and represent the Yukon. Really, a big part of that is showing the world what Yukon is all about and where we are — that we're not part of Alaska — and that it's a great place to live and raise a family.

Maybe that's something he would have cut. Maybe that's something to which the Liberal leader would have said, “No, no, we have got other priorities.” But we don't know what their priorities are. We do know that they wouldn't build a hospital in Dawson City. We've already been told that you would do different hospitals in Penticton than you would Chilliwack, than you would in Vancouver, but they will not really say what they would build there. We've already heard that he lived in Atlin, and Atlin is a marvellous community. I've been there many times; I've worked with so many people. He said he was quite used to driving and having to come to Whitehorse for services. Now that he's in Whitehorse, is he getting quite used to going to Vancouver for services, to Edmonton, Calgary for services? Or should those services be here? Now all services can't be here, obviously; I don't want to give anyone that im-

pression. Dialysis — we've had that debate in the House, is a lot more than simply buying the machine. You have to have people and personnel and backup for those personnel, because you can't say, "This is a holiday. Sorry, you have to come back in two weeks." There are certain medical conditions, as one of many examples, where you have to look to larger centres, but now you can have a 128-slice CAT scan in Whitehorse. I don't know if you can do that in Chilliwack. I'm not sure; maybe you can, but they're not looking at a two or two-and-a-half-hour flight to get to a larger centre.

The Liberal leader says, "No, we've gotten used to driving to larger centres. We got used to going somewhere else for these services." I find that rather strange as a blanket statement. It's very frustrating to deal with on that basis.

There are so many other things we can talk about on top of that. I know the Liberals spend so much time trying to think up questions for Question Period. They certainly leave no stump unturned, but often what you can do is look at the newspaper the night before or listen to the radio news, and you pretty well know exactly what questions you're going to be asked. There's very little creativity, and there's very little concern or development of what their position would be. We don't know. We just have no idea. Frankly, when it's 2010 on this side of the House, it's 1910 on the other.

You have to bring this into reality, and it would be much more evolved to have a good look at what the demonstrated need for Yukoners is, where their priorities are.

I think the priorities are to have that good social safety net. I think their priorities are to have a good economy that generates the money to have that good social safety net. I think they want to have their children educated. There was discussion today in Question Period that we should have a university in the Yukon. He ignores the fact that this government — two years ago, I think it was — passed legislation in this very House — and I think, on a rare occasion, that's actually something that the Liberals supported — that allows them to become a degree-granting institution and to make that development at their speed, the way they want to go. So, that process has already started. That was two years ago. You'd think they'd caught up in *Hansard*, reading some of the debate that occurred in the House, but obviously they just haven't made it that far. Very strange — would they simply put a couple more buildings up and hire more instructors and say, "We brought in more people." How are they going to pay for it? Will that occur? Will Yukon College become a university at some point? I have no doubt in my mind that it will. I watched the evolution in my time living in Toronto before I escaped during the Rae regime with Ryerson — a very good technical college, basically — Polytechnical Institute, which gradually got consent from the legislature to become a degree-granting institution, and now it is a full-blown university with a much wider spectrum of what they can do. It's natural; it's a good progression and I think that progression will happen here, but as we move along we can't wave that magic wand because we don't have one, but I think what the Leader of the Official Opposition, the Leader of the Liberal Party, has totally missed is that he doesn't have one either. This isn't somewhere that you can wave that magic

wand and say, "Well, we're going to put that in there and we're going to buy it. We're going to do this." Well, that's nice, but do we have that capability? In many cases we do, but the money has got to come from somewhere and it has got to come from the other side of the ledger.

What would he cut? I mean, we started a licensed practical nurse program at the college. The first group has graduated and the Yukon government has offered jobs to every single graduate. It's working out well for us. Is that a program that he would have cut? Or would he have changed that into a registered nursing program and have them go through for four years and work with a patient load that isn't large enough in the Yukon? Even if they were a student at Yukon College, they'd still have to go to a larger centre to be exposed to the patient load. We don't have a patient load with a 49-bed hospital; it doesn't work that way. After 20 years at a medical school, I can assure you it doesn't work that way.

It's LPNs we need. We need to give them the ability to do their work. We need the ability for them to function in a way they're trained for. You can't train them in something and then not allow them to do that work. We made those changes to the legislation; we made the changes that created the programs; we've employed those — I believe — 12 people. Is that something that would have been cut?

We've done a marvellous coordination of the Yukon government pandemic coordination plan to respond to serious health problems. We saw that activated and a response with the H1N1 flu problems when that season came through. It was a good response. Of course, the opposite side said it never really occurred so we were okay. I suppose that's one way to look at it, but we had to have that capability there should it happen.

I was talking with someone awhile ago about insurance, who said that when he bought insurance for his car, he didn't get the "all-in" insurance. He got liability and collision, but the all-peril type of insurance he didn't think was necessary because he had never needed it. My instant reaction was: do you have any life insurance, because you haven't needed that yet either. You've got to be prepared.

Would a Liberal government say, "Well, no. We're not going to go that route. We haven't used it before on that, so we'll bypass that."? Again, if you go back into *Hansard* and look at some of the things that have been said over time against the Liberals by the then members of the NDP — and the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin certainly has made some comments, and I've got to insert those in there before my time runs out. He has made the comment that he wasn't part of the government when that happened and he won't take responsibility and he's so happy over there, pounding the desk.

But I have to point out that when he first had — or when any of them had an interest in politics, they researched what happened. They researched the 10 to 15 percent loss of jobs, the massive downturn in population, and the massive collapse of what happened during the shortest lived majority government in the history of the Commonwealth, and they decided that that's what they wanted to do, and they joined the Liberals. So, no, he wasn't a part of it when it occurred, but he very consciously did join it. That's frightening to me. I'd like to see

something different happen. As I go through *Hansard* here, it's really quite frustrating. Comments by the Member of Kluane again, and I quote from *Hansard* on November 5, 2001:

"...I want to bring some fire to the feet of the Liberals for slashing the training trust funds. No longer will Yukoners and community organizations be able to access this important funding as in the past... Look at what it has done to the community development fund. It was slashed in half this year and half again next year."

They looked at that and made a conscious decision that that's what they wanted to do. We have a problem with that. We'd like to continue to provide good governance and to continue the economic prosperity —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: On a point of order.

Mr. Mitchell: I don't know if we can do this, but we would like to yield some of our time to the member opposite to continue this positive message on behalf of all Yukoners. We would give —

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: There is no point of order. The honourable member has about one minute left.

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I will comment on that. Some of our frustration on this side regards the same member that just rose on a point of order, or a motion, or whatever that might morph into being. This is the same gentlemen who said, a few days ago, that I was being muzzled by the Premier and then in the next sentence — I believe in the same interview — claimed that I had talked for three and a half hours. I'd love to talk for another three and a half hours — love to, Mr. Speaker. But I'd kind of like to hear what they have to say and what they would do should they come into power because I don't see them doing an awful lot.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I appreciate recognizing the dual roles of helping to develop the mines and minds of Yukon. It's an honour today to rise in support of this motion that this House recognizes the record of accomplishments by the Yukon government in improving the quality of life of Yukoners.

Often as politicians, we're being accused of being the negative or angry voice. We've often heard that quote, I believe it was from Kissinger, about the negative nabobs of negativism — I'm not quite doing justice to that quote. This is an opportunity today to actually speak positively about the accomplishments of the government and to recognize the important impact the Yukon Party government has had on the territory and the people in the community in the last eight years — in the two mandates.

There have been significant, positive outcomes and certainly Yukoners have reminded me on a regular basis that their quality of life is being increased. When I just take a look at my riding of the beautiful Southern Lakes and take a look at some of the initiatives that this government has undertaken, they certainly haven't been undertaken alone. They've happened with

the involvement of the community, with local advisory councils, with First Nations — whether it's Kwanlin Dun, Carcross-Tagish, Ta'an Kwäch'än or others — and other orders of government. This government certainly can't and doesn't take responsibility for all of the positive aspects out there, but there are certain initiatives undertaken by this government that have created a positive atmosphere, a positive climate, and positive expenditures that have helped out Yukoners and citizens in the beautiful Southern Lakes — the people that live in Carcross, Tagish, Marsh Lake, the Atlin Road, M'Clintock Valley Road and others throughout the territory.

One of the key accomplishments that was opened up earlier this summer was a new water treatment centre in Marsh Lake. The provision of potable water or the access to potable water or drinking water has been called fundamental by many. This was an important step in providing a second source of potable water in the community and of providing another point where commercial water haulers can fill up and then deliver to Marsh Lake residents — and another point where fire trucks can access water. That might not be as important in the summer months when the lake is not frozen as in the wintertime when the lake is frozen and we can't access it as a point of water for firefighting.

This is an important step, an important accomplishment of the government. As well, there have been access to water issues addressed in Tagish and plans are well underway on enhancing the water system in Carcross.

We've seen changes to solid waste management in the last year with the expansion of transfer stations, so now garbage is not being burned on a regular basis in Tagish and Carcross. Instead, measures have been put in place to encourage recycling, reduction and re-use, and then to dispose of the material in a safe and appropriate way. That has been an important step. People in the Southern Lakes breathe easier without having to breathe the smoke of the burning dumps.

We've seen increased support for our emergency response folks. I can't say enough about the work that all these volunteers do in all of our communities — whether it's in emergency services, the Volunteer Fire Department, EMO or the ambulance folks — they all do a great job in helping people in our community. I'm proud to say that we have been able to support them through initiatives like training, or uniforms and with additional equipment, whether it's trucks or ambulances, or expansion of buildings, or buildings, as the Member for Mount Lorne indicated, like the Golden Horn fire hall.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a lot of community development going on throughout the Southern Lakes with waterfront development in Carcross, the replacement of the walk bridge. I can't tell you what kind of impact that has had on the community to make such a visible statement of replacing the decrepit and potentially dangerous walk bridge that was there with a brand new one that is designed to serve generations to come. That was a demonstrated, visible commitment to the community that we were there for the long haul, that we wanted to see the community flourish, with the addition of other aspects of the waterfront development project, whether

it's the beach viewing platform, or the carving shed or the *SS Tutshi* memorial.

There are other factors going on in that community all the time. With the street realignment program, we're still making additional improvements that will benefit the community of Carcross for years to come.

I should also mention the \$300,000 contribution from this government to the Carcross-Tagish First Nation daycare that was constructed a couple of years ago. It's important to see these types of initiatives in our communities helping to increase the quality of life.

Along this line, too, this is the government that was responsible for working with the federal government and the municipal rural infrastructure fund to put a community centre in Marsh Lake. Marsh Lake, as one of the largest communities outside of Whitehorse until the community centre was created was without a place where the community could congregate, have discussions, share a meal, share a celebration. Now with the creation of the community centre, I'm proud to report that it's a much-used, important component of the community, with activities going on almost on a daily basis.

Last weekend saw the launch of the brunch season; again, there were over 100 people there, sharing a meal and their community, and increasing the quality of life.

We've also seen significant changes to road improvements, whether it's the expansion of the rural road upgrading program on some of our side streets, to the paving — or I should say the chipsealing — of the Tagish Road, to the realignment of bridges. I was reminded on the weekend that, for years and years and years, people knew about the challenges of the McClinton River bridge. The curved nature of that narrow bridge contributed to some challenges in driving, especially in inclement weather. This government responded to that, took action and widened the bridge. It has made an impact. It has made it a safer drive home or a safer drive to town. It's initiatives like this that are, again, increasing the quality of life for the people of the beautiful Southern Lakes, increasing safety.

I should also note FireSmart, which this government reinstated, which works with people in the local communities to identify the areas that need to be addressed with FireSmart. We were able to reduce the risk of wildfire in our communities. Many of these things combined to increase the quality of life for people in the Southern Lakes.

One issue that was made very clear to me while talking with constituents before previous elections was the need to increase the economy. In fact, in the 2002 election, the number one issue of the day was the economy. I'm glad to see that that's no longer the issue of number one importance to Yukoners. There will always be an issue of number one importance — that's the nature of putting a list together — but this government has worked strongly with others to encourage responsible resource development, to encourage the federal government to live up to its fiduciary responsibility to Yukoners, to allow us to provide a quality level of service comparable to that in other jurisdictions.

We've seen a turnaround in the economy, despite a world economic downturn. In the last years, other jurisdictions in

Canada and North America were seeing terrible declines in the performance of their economy — not here in the Yukon. The Yukon actually saw an increase in the GDP; in fact, it led the nation. There were only two jurisdictions in Canada that showed a positive growth, and those were the Yukon and P.E.I. This wasn't done with a magic wand. This was done with prudent fiscal policies, with making tough decisions, with recognizing that through our previous decisions we had put money in the bank for a rainy day.

We had opportunities, especially with the matching resources from the federal government, to respond to the needs of the community. Yes, when you're faced with a rainy day, it is time to dip into the rainy day fund, but especially when you can leverage that with additional resources from the federal government. Whether it was from the stimulus project, or from the knowledge infrastructure project, we're glad to see that we had this opportunity to make these kinds of improvements in Yukon. I should add, Mr. Speaker, these aren't short lived improvements. These are instead legacy investments that will continue to provide benefits and increase the quality of life for Yukoners to come.

We'll see educational institutions, like the new Pelly campus or the Dawson campus, serve Yukoners for years and years to come. We'll see the hospitals going into Watson Lake and Dawson serve Yukoners for years and years to come. Member opposite have talked about the challenges that people born in those hospitals might face, but by that recognition that they actually have a place to be born, they've actually justified the argument.

We've had hospitals in these jurisdictions in the past, but for some reason — lack of attention, change of policies, what have you — they haven't been able to provide the service needed in those communities. Now we'll see places where people can go in and have a bone set. I believe it was the Member for Klondike that gave a whole list of all of the attributes and services that will be provided in some of these smaller hospitals in the territory. We're glad to see that these projects will continue to have an impact for decades to come. Additionally, investments into green hydro energy — we'll see this pretty much immediately displace the burning of diesel fuel for electricity. That's a good thing. This isn't a dam that's going to last for a year and then expire. No, this is a piece of concrete infrastructure that's going to provide additional energy resources to Yukon to help power the Yukon for decades to come. This wasn't a short-term stimulus type of idea, where it was invested in a gas station or other short-lived type of venture. These were investments in concrete assets that will provide benefit for Yukoners for decades to come.

We're not only increasing the quality of life for Yukoners today, but also into the future. We haven't done this with a wild abandonment of environmental safeguards; indeed, just the opposite. When you look at this government's record on land planning, working with Yukon First Nations, living up to the obligations under the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and under the self-government agreements — we're there. We're there with land planning. When you look at the percentage of protected areas in the territory, Yukon is only second to British Columbia

in the percentage of land mass under protection. We currently have 12.7 percent or so of the land mass under protection. I should also add that doesn't mean the remaining land mass is left unprotected. I don't think Yukoners are caught up in that misperception, but I want to make sure the opposition isn't caught up in that too.

There is a strong protection through our environmental regulations and through our legislation that does prevent unprotected or irresponsible development. Through our Yukon environmental socio-economic assessment process or through the legislation — whether it's the *Lands Act*, or the court's acts, or the *Waters Act*, or the *Environment Act*; whether it's the additional regulations that we have that are imposed by different departments, such as my Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, or Environment, or Highways and Public Works or Community Services. We do have protections in place to ensure that we have responsible development in our territory, and that's a key thing.

We certainly want to see an increase in quality of life for Yukoners today and into the future. We want to encourage and allow responsible development throughout the territory, not just in Whitehorse. It would seem that some people, or some parties, are very Whitehorse-centric or Whitehorse-focused, but we need to see the economy grow and opportunities grow from one end of the territory to the other.

We're seeing that with opportunities growing from Old Crow to Beaver Creek, from Watson Lake to Haines Junction — and all points in between. If we continue to see increased economic opportunities, that's having a direct impact on the quality of life of Yukoners. I remember seeing people on the doorsteps a couple of years ago, in the 2002 election, where it was really just one parent staying in Yukon, in the Southern Lakes, while their kids were in school, and the other parent was away working Outside. I'm proud to see that now both people — both parents — have employment here in the territory. Also, their kids are educated and now they have come back to the territory in order to continue a healthy and productive life here. Yes, the kids have become educated.

We've seen the expansion of educational opportunities here in the territory. The Department of Education certainly contributes to Yukoners' quality of life by increasing the number of educational opportunities we have in the territory, whether it's with the student grant to provide assistance for students to study at universities or college, whether it's the training trust funds, which I'm reminded that a previous government had cut, or whether it's the investment into apprenticeships or lifelong learning or now, with some of our other programming, expansions for programs for other people in our community.

We're seeing program changes, like full-day kindergarten, the impacts of New Horizons, of involving the community in our school growth plans, changing curriculum, supporting innovation of the secondary program review, and building a new F.H. Collins — these are all things that are increasing the quality of life for Yukoners.

As a representative of the beautiful Southern Lakes, I've been proud of the accomplishments this government has made.

I look forward to continuing with those. It's unfortunate that this Assembly often focuses on the negatives in our territory. I would encourage all members of this Assembly to recognize this opportunity to talk about the positive things that happen in our community. Maybe then we can send a message to our constituents that this isn't just a forum where we shout and disagree and argue with each other, but one where we do recognize the opportunities we have in the territory and the significant increase in the quality of life we have all enjoyed in the last eight years.

Mr. McRobb: I'll start by asking the rhetorical question: if that's indeed what the Yukon Party wanted to achieve this afternoon, then why did they bring forward this motion, which is merely an extension of the three hours and 10 minutes filibuster from the Minister of Economic Development last Wednesday? Instead, this government had an option. It could have brought forward constructive motions to get all-party support to effect change to improve the lives of Yukoners and respond to the many outstanding needs that still exist in today's Yukon. But what do we get? Another back-patting motion from this Yukon Party government. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder the fortunes of the Yukon Party have dropped as much as they have of late.

Now, I've heard some rather startling comments this afternoon. One of them has come from at least one Yukon Party Cabinet minister, which confused good governance with a significant list of accomplishments.

That's where I would like to focus what I have to say. I believe Yukoners see the difference between good governance and simply an examination of the list of items paid for by their own money. There's a huge difference.

The Yukon Party obviously needs to learn it can't buy trust with how it has spent taxpayers' money, but it seems that misunderstanding still prevails today, as I just demonstrated. Obviously the message hasn't sunk in. Let's examine a few of the relevant circumstances.

The Yukon Party government has spent more taxpayer dollars than any previous government of the Yukon. This Yukon Party government has also mortgaged taxpayers' future more than any previous Yukon government regime. So this Yukon Party government is a big spender. Is this spending sustainable? No, it is not. This overspending will handicap future Yukon government budgets for years. The spending simply is not sustainable.

Remember how the Premier and all the Yukon Party ministers went on and on about how they were going to wrestle down the spending trajectory. The spending trajectory has never been higher than what it is today. It's now out of control. What this government did was wrestle down the budget surplus, not the spending trajectory. It got confused. I think that in the beginning, it had the proper ideals. It was a fresh mandate. The public endorsed it to wrestle down the trajectory, but along the way, this government lost its way. Instead, today the trajectory is out of control. Instead, the government has wrestled down the surplus. So much for being financially accountable.

So much for being fiscally conservative. That's the Yukon Party.

Now, let's take a look at recent public opinion polls. DataPath Systems has conducted several polls. The last few have shown that the Yukon Party's fortunes have sunk rather badly. These polls have also shown that the public has identified a new top issue: good governance. There must be legitimate reasons for the public to feel this way. Could it be this government's secret negotiations with a private company from Alberta to privatize our energy future? Certainly that coincided with the change in Yukon Party fortunes with respect to how the public felt about it.

Look at what happened in New Brunswick this week. The government there was tossed out for something very similar and yes, this crosses party lines. We are talking about governments of all political stripes: whatever stripe a government may be, it had better heed warnings from the public that it cannot engage in privatizing government assets without a mandate from the public.

That is what happened a couple of years ago when this Yukon Party government launched an initiative to do just that with a private company from Alberta. We know that all of caucus approved of it, according to one document at least, signed by the Premier to the head of that private Alberta company.

Could the public's desire for good governance be a result of the Yukon Party government's lack of openness and accountability? It certainly could. At least that could play a part in it. Each and every day we sit in this House there are yet more examples to demonstrate this government's lack of openness and accountability. Just this afternoon, I asked for certain information and it was denied. The information does not exist in the public domain, despite what the Premier has said. We're getting used to it.

This government will say whatever is politically convenient, regardless of its association with reality or the facts. Could the public's quest for good governance be related to this Yukon Party government's partisan spending of Yukon tax dollars? Well, it certainly might be, but there has yet to be an opinion poll that has followed the latest example. The example, of course, is something topical in Question Period these days, about how this government overlooked a certain individual, who happened to be its campaign manager, in a case that involved a non-authorized overpayment. I don't need to go through that again, I'll just refer everybody to *Hansard*, but certainly, it's a cause for public concern. Again, it touches on the public's desire to have good governance in our territory. So, if we connect the dots, we see legitimate public concerns, that have led to a legitimate public desire for a thing that trumps everything else, and that is good governance.

We have seen a Yukon Party government in power now for eight years. They have spent probably in the neighbourhood of \$6 billion or \$7 billion of taxpayers' funds and has mortgaged our future and spent even more funds of future governments.

When you connect the dots, you see that, combined with the DataPath results, obviously spending the public's money does not buy trust; spending the public's money does not mean

good governance; yet that's what the Yukon Party side prefers to believe: big spending equals good governance. We've heard it from members already.

What about some more laudable virtues like openness, transparency, responsible spending, honesty? These are all values that are important to the people of the territory. Inclusion is another one. People want to be included on matters to them.

They don't want to find out about it like they did after the privatization of our energy company was discovered. They don't want to find out after learning that their future has been mortgaged. People want to be involved in those important decisions before they are made, and that is all part of good governance. So, connect the dots: money can't buy good governance. I think this is a major error in how this government views itself. Obviously, the public does not agree with that view as demonstrated in the polls. Now, one more thing I want to speak to in my remaining comments is, a little while ago we heard the Minister of Economic Development cite some old quotes that are no longer relevant. Well, Mr. Speaker, if we were to respond in kind, we'd bring in quotes from the now Premier about the Yukon Party from his early days in this Legislature.

Believe me, he didn't pull any punches about his view of the Yukon Party in those days, but we're not going to stoop to that level because it's no longer relevant. Those comments are no longer relevant and they only serve to lower the bar of this Assembly. Let's try to keep our discussions at least relevant — at least relevant along with a few other factors that are important to the public, and let us not forget why each one of us is here. We're not here to carry out the orders from our leader, despite how we may feel about them. That goes for any party. We're here to represent the people who elect us. We should always consider our actions in here in that light. Now, I really don't want to justify this motion by speaking any longer. I think it was a waste of time. I put a notice of motion to that effect on the record at the beginning of today's proceedings to that effect.

Obviously the Yukon Party felt it had political reasons for calling this particular motion today, which is essentially a back-patting motion, congratulating itself on its accomplishments and then wrongly drawing the conclusion that that is good governance.

I've spoken to that conclusion already. I would just simply return to my opening comment. There are much more important issues we could have been debating today to address the public need. I could name a few just off the top, but I think everyone in here knows of a few issues that could have been discussed today that could actually lead to something constructive and that could effect change to make the Yukon a better place, but instead here we are with some members dredging up quotes more than a decade old and reciting them here in the Legislature. I say that's just highly inappropriate. Thank you.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the Member for Klondike for the opportunity to say a few words in response to this motion he has brought forward. I would like to again thank my colleagues on the government side for all the work they and their respective departments and partners of the gov-

ernment have done to address many of the issues that have been facing the territory in the last number of years, both on the social and economic sides.

This motion is timely. I recognize that opinion is not shared by all members in this Legislature, and I respect that. I respect what each and every member provides because each and every member in this Legislature was elected by the people. Members opposite will hopefully respect members on this side of the Legislature, as well, for those individuals who have elected them.

There have been a lot of not-so-positive comments stated here on the floor of the Legislature.

But, again, I'm not going to lower the bar even farther, because I think that — and I'm often criticized for this, actually — for not getting into the bowels of the bowels. I choose to speak to what has been accomplished, what needs to be accomplished, and I think that's very important. I think it's very important to speak to the issues that are important to Yukoners today and to reflect upon the positive, as well as room for improvement.

This motion speaks to improving the quality of life of Yukoners. When I think back over the years — and I was born and raised in this territory — I have seen significant changes in the territory over the years. I've seen good changes overall. I have been able to raise my family, just as I was raised in this territory, and I have seen friends grow their families. I have seen new individuals move to the territory and call the Yukon their home. I view this as a very positive attribute for the territory. Whenever I go door-to-door, it never ceases to amaze me to hear from individuals about their passion for the Yukon. They may have only arrived maybe a month or maybe a year ago, but they are thrilled to be here. They feel it's a great privilege, and I couldn't concur more; it is a privilege to live here and to be able to represent my constituents of Whitehorse West.

There have been a lot of interesting comments made here on the floor of the Legislature. I do want to reflect on a number of the initiatives that have been undertaken by the government over the last number of years. Pertinent to my respective portfolio, when I think of quality of life, I look to the cultural community, for example, and the role that the arts and the cultural community play to the economic and the social well-being of our territory. They play a very important role. They contribute to our well-being and to every single community throughout the Yukon. We all benefit from the arts.

We have been very pleased to work with the community over the years. Again, it never ceases to amaze me just how much talent we have in the territory in every corner and how vibrant our cultural sector is. I'm very proud to be serving for a government that has worked with a whole host of stakeholders — organizations, individual stakeholders, and the list goes on.

One of the things we have been able to do is to work with them, providing funding to sustain operational requirements of many of the organizations throughout the territory. We've been able to enhance initiatives such as Artist in the School program. We have been able to establish a new touring fund for arts en-

terprises. These smaller initiatives have really had a great effect in this territory.

Again, I don't think there's one week that goes by that I'm not approached by an artist saying thank you, thank you for all the support that the department has provided over the years, as well as the technical expertise and experience of the department. I attribute that to our officials within the department. They are exemplary in what they do; they have corporate memory that has to be attributed to their many years of experience working with the communities. It is a privilege to work with the Department of Tourism and Culture. I have benefited from their great knowledge over the years and I have put that to great use in terms of being able to fulfill some of the needs as brought forward by the community.

We recognize that we have a very good climate that is conducive to the growth of the cultural sector here. Again, much of it has to be attributed to individuals who have called the Yukon their home. Cultural Centers, First Nation art and culture — I look back to the 2010 Winter Olympics, and I know there was some criticism at that time that the investment in the Olympics was perhaps too much.

It was too much money and we weren't sure if we were going to get a return on investment. Well, I say to any of those who did question that investment to talk to any one of the 150 individuals who actually showcased what makes us proud to call the Yukon their home. There could be no question that every dollar that was invested by not only the Government of Yukon, the Government of Canada, the Council of Yukon First Nations, self governing First Nations, individuals, communities, individual artists — the list goes on — was a very significant investment. This has brought legacies to the territory in terms of building capacity on the business front, tourism opportunities and cultural growth, and in terms of how we can further export our wares. These are all very good things, and they lend to added diversification of our territory. It does bring much health benefit to the health of our territory.

When we look to investments — Champagne and Aishihik First Nation cultural centre. Now, I was just drawing upon a news release from a Champagne and Aishihik First Nation's issue just recently, in which they announced the awarding of almost \$12 million toward the construction of their cultural centre. This has been an initiative that has been a long time coming. To the credit of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, they have done their due diligence; they have worked hard on behalf of their citizens; and I congratulate them for their great success in this regard.

This is not just simply a building; it's a cultural resource. It's for the citizens, for community members, for visitors. It will provide space for classrooms, a kitchen and a meeting space for citizens, a language lab, workshops and the list goes on. It will be a very great resource for visitors, as we're very pleased to partner with the First Nations in providing a visitor centre in that building.

Likewise the Kwanlin Dun First Nation cultural centre has been a long time coming. That will serve as a wonderful anchor on the Whitehorse waterfront. It will enable the telling of stories of the Kwanlin Dun First Nation; it will serve as another

community gathering space. It will serve as a wonderful attribute to our community, and we're very appreciative of their efforts. We're very pleased to be able to partner with them and the federal government to see their dreams come to fruition, and we congratulate them.

Likewise, we congratulate the Yukon Arts Centre, for example, and the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce in bringing the Old Fire Hall to life as a cultural venue as part of the revitalization of the downtown core. This has been an amazing initiative that has been very successful over the years. It has served as a multi-functional area for many organizations and individuals having meetings, events. In fact, I was at another event just a few days ago, and it was packed. There were over 100 individuals there and every night it's the same story.

Likewise, we were very proud to contribute to Arts Underground — another cultural venue — to enable them to provide educational opportunities for our children to learn about the arts. It has been a great showcase for promoting archival information in partnership with our museum community. It has been a great collaboration between the community, the government and the private sector.

We were also very pleased to recently announce dollars for the Guild Hall expansion. This has resulted in a tremendous makeover of the facility, which has been around for many years and is a real icon in the City of Whitehorse. It will prove to be energy efficient and more functional, providing more gathering space for the community.

All these things lend to a better quality of life in the territory. I refer to the investment in Tombstone Territorial Park and the visitor centre. It's another example of a piece of infrastructure that has helped and will continue to help tell the story of the Tombstone — the natural values, the habitat, the wildlife, why that area has been deemed to be a park. It tells the story of the people of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation. I'm reflecting on the management plan that was signed about a year ago.

Again, there has been much said about social housing, or about the social side of the ledger. I don't want to repeat what has already been cited, other than there has been a lot of criticism launched, for example, of whether or not investments in affordable housing, or childcare, seniors income supplement, the pioneer utility grant, all of these are called into question. These are all issues that aren't thought of just off the top of our heads. They're actually issues that have been brought forward by the public, by all Yukoners. These are issues. Enhancements to the social assistance rates, enhancements to the food basket allotment, these are issues that have been raised; issues such as affordable housing. One just has to look at the budget we tabled only days ago. There is a whole list of examples of affordable housing.

Again, whether it's the affordable family-focused housing unit which has received great debate — it's unfortunate because when we talk about addressing the root causes of crime and poverty — it is by providing housing — secure, stable housing — not interim housing. That is part of the mix of course. When you talk about housing, you talk about a contin-

uum of housing. Ultimately, the long-term housing that is provided — that is a solution.

I'm very proud to see great progress underway of the 30 units housed within the family-focused housing initiative. There's the Whitehorse Abbeyfield House, the Watson Lake seniors complex, the Faro seniors facility that was just recently opened, Ingram six-unit townhouse, and of course there are many other examples of affordable housing. I believe the minister responsible referred to over 160 units, to be exact. I'd say that that's a good investment. I don't think that that is a waste of time. I don't think that that's a bad investment or partisan spending. I think it's responding to issues of importance. Of course, there's always more work to be done.

Work is always underway when it comes to serving the public's interest. When we talk about, for example, other initiatives on the social front — one of the initiatives that has been very effective of course is the SCAN legislation that was raised in this House. Thanks to the former Member for Whitehorse Centre and the SCAN unit, which has made an incredible difference in the lives of many individuals. When we look at the street crime unit — the eight-member new initiative that was initiated by this government — it again builds upon those initiatives that have already been underway and continue to be underway in the *Substance Abuse Action Plan*.

Working with our organizations, working with other governments — and I've said many times that we can't do this on our own. We can't do it as individuals, but we can make effective and great changes by working together.

It's unfortunate that the Assembly can't work together more than I would very much like it to. Perhaps if it could, it would be able to attract more individuals to run for the Assembly. But that's for another day, Mr. Speaker.

I do commend this motion. I think it's important to reflect upon what has been accomplished. I think it's also very important to reflect upon what needs to be done. I appreciate the input by Yukoners and for giving us the opportunity to listen and to be able to work with them on advancing issues of importance to Yukoners. Thank you.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Mitchell: I would just ask all members in the House today to join me in issuing a warm welcome to Klondike and Dawson City resident, Roberta Humberstone, who is town this week attending the FASD conference.

Applause

Mr. Fairclough: I'd also like to rise and say a few things on this motion that was put forward by the Member for Klondike. It simply reads: "THAT this House recognize the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the quality of life of Yukoners."

I asked myself why the Yukon Party government would bring forward a motion such as this at this time. The previous speaker said that this was a timely time for this motion to be brought forward. Why? Why is the Government of Yukon bringing forward a motion like this to pat themselves on the

back, rather than addressing the public business? Why are they doing that? Maybe they could answer that question when the next speaker rises.

One of the reasons is that they're a very unpopular government — very unpopular today — particularly when you look at the polls that are out. The Yukon Party is falling behind the lone member of this House, the Third Party, by 22 percent. I'm sure they're hearing it on the doorstep that people are not happy with their actions.

Now, we are so thankful that the federal government has a big pot of money and a lot of it was able to flow to the Yukon Territory to address some of our problems, yet this Yukon Party government has failed on many fronts. I don't hear members on that side of the House say that.

I don't hear them say that — that they were going to address this or that. They ask for constructive debate in this House and I've brought up a few things to them. One of them was, why can't the Yukon Party government address water quality in the territory? Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation came forward and asked for help. They've been directed around from one pot of money to another and refused. They did their due diligence, they did the hard work for their citizens, and yet we've seen the Yukon Party government fail them again. They had to go out and seek help from the Canadian Auto Workers union to help them address this issue of safe drinking water and better quality water in the community. That's what they had to do.

If the Yukon Party wanted to improve how they conduct themselves in this House, they could directly answer questions in this House. For example, if the Minister of Environment is asked a question, why not answer it and not hide behind the Minister of Economic Development, which we see day in and day out when asked questions in this House.

The Department of Environment — let's see another accomplishment that the Yukon Party government has had.

By law — according to the *Education Act* — they have to do a review of the act every 10 years. For two terms now the Yukon Party government has been in power, and they've failed at that — they failed. The Education minister fails to bring forward those amendments to ensure that we make improvements to the *Education Act*. Instead, what did we do? We go through the education reform process, which was a good process. But guess what again? Here's another failure. The Department of Education has given the orders not to discuss the issue of governance when it comes to the education reform process — governance. Talk about putting some control into people's hands, communities' hands, and so on. Not — or maybe not — but that discussion wasn't allowed to take place. That was according to the Premier to the Minister of Education, which, the Minister of Education accepted. When we say they're all in it together, they're all in it together because they're accepting that type of direction coming from the Yukon Party government. That's what happened.

Now, because of that, First Nations have been disgusted. They've talked about drawing down education, which I don't think most of the general public really wants to see at all. Kwanlin Dun is looking at taking the federal government to

court because the federal government provides dollars to the Yukon government to provide education for their children. Kwanlin Dun says that the Yukon government is failing them, so they're taking them to court. That's what took place. Guess what? Another thing, as far as their accomplishments go when it comes to education in the territory, what about the success rate of our graduates in the report tabled by the Minister of Education? Well, the Auditor General looked into that and said that it was wrong in the way in which they presented information to the territory. It painted a rosy picture — a rosier picture than what we really had in the territory. Clearly, in the Auditor General's report, it was a failure, particularly with aboriginal people. That's what the Yukon Party accomplished.

There are a lot of things they've done that do not sit well with the public. What about the court cases? Fine, there are organizations and other forms of government that could take the Yukon government to court, but here we have something very simple — an argument on behalf of the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation. They were saying they haven't been accommodated in the actions that took place with this Yukon Party government, and that's what the court case is about. It's about accommodation; accommodating a First Nation that has gone through the process of being recognized as a First Nation through a land claim agreement — another big accomplishment by the Yukon Party government. It doesn't sit well with those governments. It has been talked about today and people do not like it. With all these things, this Yukon Party government is losing the public trust. They've lost it. On top of all that, what's being said out in the public and on the streets is that this Yukon Party government is tired.

It's time to change. A lot of those comments come from the Yukon Party supporters, from small businesses and so on. That's what they're saying.

What about the whole ATCO incident — the ATCO scandal? The Premier denied actions in spite of facts and major resignations — major resignations. He saw his own member walk from that side of the House over to this side and who still sits as an Independent Yukon Party member, but was in disagreement with the Premier on this matter. It's well-documented out in the public and in the papers, and voters will not forget. They will not forget this and it's still on their minds. Why would you take away something Yukoners already own and sell it off?

Then the Premier also says that last year's budget and this year's budget are not deficit budgets, but he produces documents in this House, all in glossy form — *Supplementary Estimates No. 1*, which we're talking about now and for the previous year — that clearly show we have deficit budgets. That's two years in a row, and the Finance minister, the Premier, says no. Look at it carefully, he says. The documents he tabled are what the public look at; they are what everybody looks at. It's not the way it is.

The Yukon Party will boast that it has over half a billion dollars in surplus, but we can't spend our schools; we can't spend our public buildings; we can't spend the building we're in, unless we sell it off and earn money on it. They could not address the water issue with the First Nations. They said they

are there for the greater public, but what happened with the First Nations? Why are they going through such a hard time with this?

Fortunately, the Selkirk First Nation has joined the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation and put together a low-pressure water system project. Theirs have been funded. There's not enough money in there but it was somewhat funded by both the federal and territorial governments.

The Education minister would get up and brag about a number of things that the Yukon Party has done. The Department of Education is there to provide education for the public, no matter what party was in place. There is much discussion about the community campus in Pelly Crossing. It has long needed to be rebuilt, or a new one to be built, Mr. Speaker, but it was delayed a year and short on funds. It was overbudget. The Yukon Party government, with over half a billion dollars in surplus, couldn't find money — a couple hundred thousand dollars — to help them out with that.

Well, this is another thing the Yukon Party government has done. They spent down the savings account to almost nothing. If we had some type of emergency here we'd be in trouble. The Premier knows that. We've got millions of dollars tied up in ABCPs, the asset-backed commercial paper. We can't touch that for a few more years and we've lost money on that already — \$36 million. That was a bad investment. I didn't hear the Premier say anything or anyone else out there talk about that at all. They'd like that to be swept under the carpet, have the public not even think about it when they go to the polls. The fact of the matter is this Premier was warned about it and still continued to make these bad investments.

Clearly this Yukon Party is in damage control. We hear it during Question Period in the responses from ministers. Every day we hear it, and you can really tell when a government is in trouble. They all of a sudden can't back up their own budget. They say nothing about it. They don't answer questions in Question Period and they go on and attack the Opposition.

"That this House urges the Yukon government to practice good governance" — what the Minister of Economic Development did when this motion came up to practice good governance, listen to the people, consult and so on — the Minister of Economic Development stood in this House and talked for three and a half hours and did not let his own colleagues talk, did not let the Third Party or the Independent member speak to this motion at all. Why? Obviously, they're not very proud of that fact. They had to bring out their own motion patting themselves on the back saying, "This is what we accomplished." Well, governments have to accomplish something in two terms. They've got to accomplish something. Some good things have happened.

I can give credit to government for those things, but when government fails to go out and consult the general public when it comes to building hospitals in two communities — instead of perhaps asking the public about how best to go about this — that's wrong, and it's out of control too. A hospital in Watson Lake, a \$5-million project. The Premier waved his wand and it turned into a \$25-million project, and it's probably still grow-

ing. Good fiscal management, isn't it? Well, I'm sure. The next speaker may get up and talk about that.

There are good things that did happen to the Yukon Territory. Devolution of federal programs made a big difference here in the territory, and the general public knows that. The Yukon Party government would like to take credit for that, saying, "We did all those wonderful things." They weren't going to sign that agreement because it wasn't good enough, but they did put their hands over their eyes and signed on the dotted line. That's what they did.

Yukoners now make decisions, and this is what we're seeing — how we can make progress today. When it comes to mining, well, it's as though the Yukon Party feel they can control how much investment goes into this territory, just by being elected, because they perhaps support a mining company or two.

But they fail to recognize that, in 2002, the price of gold was \$260 and it's up to almost \$1,300 today. If they went out and talked to some of the placer miners, they know that what's driving them to dig more ground and move more gravel and sand and dirt is the price of gold, because they could be making money. As a matter of fact, some of them are working poor ground on their claim that had been left alone for many years.

That's a big difference. YESAA has made a big difference in improving the regulatory climate here in the territory. Let's not forget we have historically low interest rates and historically low inflation here in the territory — I have two minutes — and that Ottawa has been generous to us and has given us big pots of money. People out there really feel that we're spending too much here in the territory.

This Yukon Party government, led by the Premier, said when he first got elected, "It's out of control. The trajectory is going straight up." Well, it's gone sky-high from where he first started, and he fails to tell the public that, well, he kind of flip-flopped on that one. We've seen a lot of flip-flops with members on that side of the House.

So I urge the government to get on track, listen to the public a little more, consult where consultation needs to take place, accommodate where accommodation needs to take place, and work with the public rather than pat themselves on the back. I urge them to do government business on the floor of this Legislature and avoid bringing this type of motion forward to the floor. It's not needed and it's actually quite shameful. I'll allow the next speaker to speak.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: I'd like to start by saying that this is timely. This is a timely motion because the opposition parties have repeatedly accused the government of not meeting Yukoners' needs.

Well, this government has decided to put facts on record for clarity and not to pat themselves on the back. The opposition parties provoked the government side to come forth and tell the Yukon public what they have done to improve the quality of life, so I thank the Member for Klondike for bending to their requests and bringing this motion forward.

Citizens are spending money in this territory, buying homes and have employment. I think those are responsibilities

of government and, to date, the Yukon is the place to look for work. I know that even on the cultural centre that's being built by the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, if you go and look at some of the vehicles parked in that area you'll find that there are a lot of licence plates from out of the territory, but at the same time there are also a lot of Yukon citizens working. I would have to say that any government that can provide those kinds of initiatives for citizens in this territory are doing their job, regardless of a few negative examples an opposition party can dig up from somewhere.

I think the positives far outweigh any negative signs that the quality of life in the Yukon is going bad. There are a lot of opportunities and that's exactly what this government is providing for all the citizens in this territory.

I've heard a lot of comments over the last several months, I guess, from the opposition talking about the lack of collaboration or cooperation by the Yukon government and First Nations, so I'm going to focus just a little bit on that today. I'm going to provide some examples of exactly some of the Yukon government's and Yukon First Nations' work, cooperatively and collaboratively delivering government programs and services.

It's working government-to-government that is the answer to being able to cover as many initiatives as we have for the last nine years. I believe there's probably over 200 or 300 examples of the government working in partnership or in collaboration with First Nations on number of fronts on every program. Some of the headings of the different areas that I'll talk about are: the capacity development and training; economic development; governance; heritage and culture; resource management; community issues; education; health and wellness; justice; women's issues, and; youth. That's a pretty wide spectrum of citizens in this territory.

When we talk about capacity development and training we have an example. Alcohol and Drug Services continues to work closely with First Nations communities through the provision of our continuum of addiction services. Our prevention team travels to all 14 communities to directly assist in capacity building, information sharing and support. When the prevention team is not travelling to communities, they endeavour to maintain connections with key contacts throughout the year. The community outreach workers travel to all 14 communities to offer assistance in development of various preventive and wellness programs. The outreach position also offers assistance in proposal writing, or the development of community-based pre-treatment and after-care activities. We do this with all First Nations in every community.

Another example is training and assistance related to economic opportunities. Economic development routinely works with Yukon First Nations in assisting them, with either development proposals for funding, or referring them to other programs. Funding is provided, in some instances, through the regional economic development fund. Some of the departments work includes, guiding the focus of discussions and helping to clearly define objectives.

In certain circumstances where relationships have strongly developed, the branch may review drafts of correspondence

and provide informal advice and safe counsel. The branch has also focused considerable efforts in consulting with Yukon First Nations on both their capacity development requirements and how the branch can provide assistance to developing investment plans and priorities with Yukon First Nations and other governments, such as INAC and CanNor.

We also look at First Nation human resource pilot projects. The Yukon government Regional Economic Development branch submitted a funding application to INAC for a project that would foster and support Yukon First Nation governments in improving HR, governance, structures and mechanisms to support economic development. This project would include providing guidance and assistance to a minimum of two Yukon First Nation governments and devising human resource strategies to empower the Yukon First Nations to take responsibility for human resource problem solving and decision making, including the possible development and implementation of policy frameworks to support shared human resource services.

There's also training to develop municipal and First Nation government capacity. The northern strategy trust is being implemented in collaboration with Yukon First Nations under the direction of the Yukon Forum. Total project funding for training to develop municipal and First Nation government capacity is valued at \$700,000.

There's also a section of boards and committees capacity training initiatives. A contribution agreement was finalized to support the northern strategy project between the Yukon government's Department of Education and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in for the board and committee leadership training services project valued at \$405,000. This program is designed to assist these groups to transfer their learning in such areas as board development, capacity building, volunteer management and organizational management to their work environment in concrete ways.

There's also the aboriginal skills and employment partnership coordinated by the Yukon Mine Training Association. This joint project with the Yukon First Nations, industry and Yukon government will provide training and skills development opportunities for 500 aboriginal people in the Yukon mining and resource sector — learning for long-term jobs.

I will go on to some examples of economic development. I will start with the FireSmart contracts. In 2007-08, Wildland Fire Management renegotiated five-year fire service contracts with 11 Yukon First Nation governments to provide three-person initial attack crews from May until the end of August in the following communities: Old Crow, Dawson City, Mayo, Carmacks, Pelly Crossing, Ross River, Haines Junction, Whitehorse, Carcross, Teslin and Watson Lake. These contracts account for half of Yukon government's initial attack capabilities. The contracts exceed land claim responsibilities, except for Carcross-Tagish, which is in year 2 of the guaranteed five-year PSTA contract with the wildfire management services.

We also have the FireSmart program. Most Yukon First Nations are assisting with FireSmart program projects in their communities. Projects usually provide each Yukon First Nation with about \$40,000 in contract work annually. Ross River Dena

Council and Selkirk First Nation have not participated the last few years, due to their own priorities.

We also have a Kaska economic table contribution agreement, which provides financial assistance to Kaska members to assist them in working with Yukon government in identifying mutual priorities for economic development in southeast Yukon, particularly in the oil and gas and mineral sectors. In 2005-06, \$100,000 was provided to the Kaska Tribal Council.

We have the Kwanlin Dun First Nation Bureau of Statistics. In 2008, the Yukon government's Bureau of Statistics staff assisted Kwanlin Dun First Nation to survey Kwanlin Dun members about their skills and business activities and experience.

The project comprised a digital database that Kwanlin Dun First Nation can use to create an on-line database of this information to help the First Nation with employment and business development. The project is one of the components particularly funded by Yukon government as part of the airport expansion asset construction agreement. Yukon government's contribution to the survey database project is \$108,000.

We move to the Old Crow airport. The Yukon government's Aviation branch and Vuntut Gwitchin partnered with respect to the Old Crow airport. The Yukon government and Porcupine Enterprises were partners in the contract to reconstruct the Old Crow runway, completed in 2006.

We have the northern housing trust through the Yukon Forum. The Yukon government and all Yukon First Nations agreed to the distribution of \$32.5 million in federal affordable housing funding. The allocation formula was agreed to by resolution of CYFN. This funding is being used by First Nations to address affordable housing needs specific to their communities.

Of course, we have the 2010 Olympics. The Yukon government contributed \$325,000 to the Council of Yukon First Nations to support Yukon First Nations at the 2010 Olympics and Paralympics in their partnership with the four host First Nations' initiative. This included programming at the aboriginal pavilion and other venues that showcased Yukon First Nation culture to the world. Yukon worked closely with Nunavut and Northwest Territories to create a pan-northern experience that included arts and culture.

Then I move to the heading under governance. We have land claims training. The Yukon Staff Development branch contracts with Yukon First Nation facilitators to provide land claims training to Yukon government staff. Fees are waived for employees of Yukon First Nation government and renewable resource councils to attend this training. The training is a four-day workshop, which compresses First Nation culture, intercultural communications and the history and process of Yukon land claims to self-government. As of March 31, 2007, one hundred and fifteen courses had been delivered to the 1,822 participants.

I'll go from there over to another example of governance with the Vuntut Gwitchin intergovernmental relations accord. The accord between the Yukon government and Vuntut Gwitchin established that common priorities will be identified and that the parties will work together to achieve those priorities.

Also, there's another one with the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations on improving the intergovernmental relations accord. The Yukon government and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations signed an accord in 2008 setting out common priorities that will be undertaken cooperatively. The two governments also signed a memorandum of understanding outlining their commitment to work collaboratively toward the construction of a new cultural centre, which will include the relocated Haines Junction visitor information centre.

We have the Tombstone Park visitor reception centre. The project management of the design and construction of the facility was led by Yukon government Highways and Public Works, with participation from the Department of Environment and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. Han Construction was the general contractor for the main facility. The construction of the centre was completed in 2009, with an official opening in late August.

There are many examples under heritage and culture, but I'd also like to just talk quickly about some under resource management. Resource exploration training programs — in 2004, Yukon government announced it would provide a contribution of \$100,000 to assist with a new program to prepare Yukoners for opportunities in the mining industry and help ensure the industry has an adequate supply of skilled Yukon workers. Yukon First Nation candidates were encouraged to apply. Graduates will receive training in mining exploration, prospecting and driller's helper employment. In 2004, forty-one completed the administration portion and 22 completed the field portion of the program. This program continued in 2005, along with a diamond drilling program.

I will give another example under resource management: we have moose management. Environment Yukon works with Yukon First Nations to plan and carry out moose population monitoring activities. The Selkirk First Nation and the Yukon government have cost-shared every moose survey in their traditional territory since 2000. Teslin Tlingit Council and Vuntut Gwitchin have also cost-shared surveys in their traditional territories. Carcross-Tagish First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, Kluane, Kwanlin Dun, Liard First Nation, Ross River, Ta'an Kwäch'än, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Selkirk First Nation, Teslin — they have all looked at the survey of moose in their traditional territories.

The list goes on and on when it comes to working in collaboration with First Nations in trying to improve the quality of life for First Nations in this Yukon Territory. Thank you.

Mr. Mitchell: It has been a long day. It has been an interesting day. There has been a lot said, some of it constructive, some of it would appear to be less so. I'll just start with the wording of the motion: "THAT this House recognizes the record of accomplishments by the Government of Yukon in improving the quality of life for Yukoners." I have to question the purpose of this motion. Traditionally in this House, motions are action items. They urge the government to do something. They urge the government to take action — needed action, future action. Sometimes they urge other governments, such as the Government of Canada, to take action. I guess it's an active verb — "recognizes" — but it's pretty weak, because what is

going to be different no matter which way this vote goes? What will be different for Yukoners, whether this would be voted up or down? I question the purpose. With this motion, the government puts itself — the Yukon Party puts itself — ahead of public business because of its back patting. Even on the government side, there was an admission by one member that some would say it's back patting. I would say that there'll be need for a physiotherapist there has been so much back patting today.

It only continues, as the Economic Development minister did last Wednesday for three hours plus, but the fact is that there have been some things accomplished over the past eight years. Some have been accomplished because the government took action on things at the urging of Yukoners, at the urging of opposition members, or of their own volition. Others, as have been pointed out by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, are things that simply would have happened regardless. Gold has gone from \$260 an ounce in 2002 to over \$1,300 this past week. That's extraordinary. That's the longest string of year-over-year increases since the 1920s. Silver has gone from \$4 to \$21. A similar increase has occurred in the price of base metals.

The Member for Mayo-Tatchun said that devolution has made a big difference. It has. Yukoners now make many more decisions on their own behalf and that's a good thing, even if the Yukon Party government was reluctant to sign the devolution agreement with Canada. It is a positive thing because it has helped to add to our fiscal capacity.

We have more government employees, because we're responsible for more activities, so that's a positive. It's not because of the government; it was something that was negotiated by previous governments.

YESAA has made a big difference; it has improved the regulatory regime. We have a lot fewer separate windows we have to go to for permitting anything. I believe the government members now recognize this, although many of them were less than enthusiastic at the outset of the process.

Let's look at what has changed from Canada. We have a budget in front of us, even though we're not debating it today — we will be back debating it tomorrow and in the coming days or weeks. Look at the differences in what Canada does now — massive transfers — \$690 million plus in the current fiscal year; \$691 million transferred from Canada; another almost \$201 million in recoveries from Canada, which is just things we pay for and then we get repaid by Canada; third-party recoveries, \$67 million plus. In fact, out of this \$1.141 billion budget, it's almost exactly just 10 percent — \$114 million — that is actually out of own-source revenue — taxes and general revenues.

So, when we look at this larger fiscal capacity that the Premier likes to talk about, the fact is that, over the last decade, we've become less self-sufficient. We've become less able to pay our own way. Now, the Premier will say, "Oh, Liberals would just send the money back." Well, that's a simplistic approach. He has said it before; he'll say it again. The fact is that's not what we're saying. We're saying that a positive trend would be if we were increasing the ratio that we are generating

the revenue from within Yukon, as opposed to having that number go down every year. If the Premier thinks that it's a positive thing that that percentage has gone down from — I don't know, 18 or 19 percent years ago to 10 percent, then I guess it would be really positive if it went to zero, by that logic. It makes no sense. What else has happened? We've had historically low interest rates, as has been mentioned. The prime rate, up until the last few months, has been as low as one quarter of one percent — 25 basis points. People were getting mortgages below three percent — unheard of.

We've had housing prices rise across this country and in the United States. As the Economic Development minister has said, that's a positive for some people, but it also makes housing unaffordable of an ever greater number of people. It's good for those that already have — those of us who are of an age where we've owned our houses for years. It's not so good for younger people, whether they be Yukoners or people living anywhere in North America and can't get into the housing market. All these things have something in common, Mr. Speaker. They have nothing to do with the Yukon Party having been in government. It would have been the same if the New Democrat Party or Liberal Party would have been in government, because they were outside of our control.

Now, why are we even talking about this? Why do we need to recognize what this government has done? We're certainly happy to recognize what some 4,000 public service employees have done — government employees, teachers — because that's who does the lifting. It's not done by nine or 10 people; it's not done by 18 people. It's done by 4,000 people. That's who does the heavy lifting. We know that. Those are the people that deserve the credit for the programs that have been well-implemented. That's certainly the case.

You know, there are many issues that we could be addressing. There are educational issues, FASD, the vacant seat downtown, and explaining why the community tour was cancelled. These are all issues that Yukoners want answers to. I had an opportunity to attend — only for a brief period, for a little less than two hours — the FASD conference yesterday. After listening to debate today, I think had we had an early motion to adjourn, we might have done more good for the public had all 17 members of this Assembly spent the day just up the street and learned more about FASD and the challenges that are faced by health care workers, educators and, most importantly, people who live with FASD. We might have been able to bring that information back here and get more done. I'm certain that I got more out of the two hours or so I did get to spend at the conference than I've achieved, learned or will do for the public good in here today. Instead of patting ourselves on the back, Mr. Speaker, we should just be getting on with the work.

Now, perhaps there's a political reason why the government felt they needed to do this today and the Member for Klondike felt it was important to recognize ourselves — or to recognize the government side.

Perhaps it's as the Member for Porter Creek South so clearly delineated, that this government, despite any accomplishments, has lost the public trust. Why? Well, perhaps it started with the \$36 million in bad ABCP investments made

contrary to the *Financial Administration Act*, as the Auditor General made clear, frozen for years to come. We never had a good explanation for that, but it certainly cost a lot of public confidence in this government.

It diminished further a year ago when the secret negotiations to privatize the assets of our very own Yukon Energy Corporation became known. How is that going to improve Yukoners' quality of life? You know, there was an election in New Brunswick this week and the government fell. Normally, we would have heard a lot about that in this House because it was a Liberal government that fell. Why did they fall and why have we not heard a word about the loss of a New Brunswick Liberal government? Because that government, for the benefit of the Member for McIntyre-Takhini, lost the public trust because they looked to sell NB Power to Quebec, to Quebec Hydro, and the people wouldn't stand for it; they wouldn't have it. Perhaps if the government had held the community tour, they might have heard some of these things.

Mr. Speaker, my time is limited and I'm not going to speak to the end of the day, because I know there are members who are eager to get this to a vote.

There are some things I would point out to the Member for Klondike, who said that we had nothing positive to say. Was he listening, Mr. Speaker? Is he listening today? Was he listening yesterday? This morning I heard the Member for Porter Creek South propose that the government should work toward establishing a Yukon university. Is that not a positive message? Yesterday I stood in this House and urged the government to address the need for supportive housing for those people who need it in Yukon — people who are living with FASD, people who are living with mental health challenges, people who have dealt with substance abuse and could use some support to become independent again. Was that not a positive message? I think it was.

For years we urged the government to support the food bank and, to the government's credit, they provided support to a permanent food bank. That was a positive message. Five years ago, in my first term in this Assembly, I urged the government early on to come up with a plan to increase medical practitioners in Yukon. I urged the government to look at tuition subsidies, tuition forgiveness, bursaries, and the Economic Development minister, who sits across from me today, mocked it. He stood up and said, "Doesn't the member know that it takes seven years to grow a doctor?" My point was that you don't have to start at year one any more than you have to start when they're in kindergarten. There are people graduating from medical schools with huge debt and graduating in the other health professions with debt. You can put in a program and you can have an immediate impact in Yukon. You don't have to wait seven years. Well, that interim minister didn't see it, but the next minister did. The member who now sits as the Independent/Yukon Party member saw it and, to his credit, he moved forward with that idea.

We've thrown lots of positive ideas out, and we've got lots more. For the Yukon Party members to pat themselves on the back for what they've done with lots of help from lots of officials — I don't see what that achieves. The Justice minister was

talking not long ago about the new Whitehorse Correctional Centre that's being built. She said that the Liberals were just going to build a big box to replace the Whitehorse Correctional Centre — you know, talk about flip-flops. Instead of looking up what members on this side said years ago, she might have looked at what her own party was saying because they said that it was going to be a Cadillac facility. It was going to be just an overpriced Cadillac facility when it was going to cost \$30 million. Now it costs more than twice that and they're describing that it was going to be a big box — it was going to be a warehouse. Maybe it was going to be a Cadillac warehouse. We don't know.

There have been lots of positive things to come from this side, and I would encourage the mover of this motion to pay more attention when we're saying them and to adopt more of our ideas, and then maybe together we could make changes that would add to the well-being of all Yukoners by improving the quality of their lives. I'm going to allow this to come to a vote. I'm not going to filibuster like members opposite, so I won't use all my time. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Lang: I'd like to thank the Member for Klondike for bringing to the House today this motion. It was interesting when I listened to the information that comes from the opposite side of the House and how much of it has any bearing on what's actually happening in the Yukon today.

The Member for Mayo-Tatchun went on about — just one little aspect — why we aren't doing anything about the water situation or the potable water in our communities in the territory. He was saying we're not investing in partnership with the Little Salmon-Carmacks First Nation — in fact, we are.

This government is putting money toward a water delivery station that's under construction. He obviously hasn't been in his riding for awhile. The Marsh Lake water treatment plant is completed; in Takhini North, new water mains and hydrants and new water services — completed; Champagne and Aishihik — no First Nation participation in this government — Champagne and Aishihik insulated water main extension — completed; Watson Lake pump; Old Crow, water system, conceptual design for improvements is scheduled for completion in 10 days. We do invest in Old Crow. Old Crow has never had a bigger investor than this government.

Burwash water supply and geothermal project, a tender to be issued this fall; Carcross water system upgrades; Rock Creek water treatment plant upgrades; Mendenhall well and water treatment plant; Keno water treatment plant; Watson Lake pumphouse; Champagne and Aishihik; Tagish water treatment plant; Selkirk First Nation piped water system, an investment this government made; Teslin arsenic treatment upgrade.

What I want to say on the floor here today — what those individuals bring on the floor here and discuss in this House, they haven't been out there in the territory. If the Member for Mayo-Tatchun said we don't invest in water, here's a list of the investments this government has made and will continue to make in our communities. Thank you very much.

Anyway, I have a few more minutes and I'm sure the members opposite would like to listen to more facts — rather than talk about fiction, we'll talk about facts. You know, good governance started the first day we acquired power from the Liberal —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order please. Order. Members, each and every member has sat quietly while other members have given their speeches to this motion, and we expect everybody to show the same respect to the member now speaking.

The Minister of Highways and Public Works has the floor.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Again, I remind the members opposite — this started eight years ago when this government acquired the reins of office in the territory here. The Liberal government was running on a line of credit and the situation was there was no cash to do business in the territory. We had to borrow money — or they had to borrow money. The Liberal government had to borrow money to meet their payroll. Today, it's a different story. Somehow, the Leader of the Official Opposition thinks that the transfers from Canada, the \$600 million, aren't warranted.

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

Debate on Motion No. 1138 accordingly adjourned

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.