

**Yukon Legislative Assembly**  
**Whitehorse, Yukon**  
**Wednesday, February 9, 2011 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

## DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

Introduction of visitors.

Returns or documents for tabling.

## TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Mr. Elias:** I have a letter dated December 17, 2010, sent to me by the Minister of Community Services regarding the Old Crow drinking water well for tabling.

**Speaker:** Are there any further documents for tabling?  
 Are there 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 Government of Yukon to revisit and reconsider the Northern City Supportive Housing Coalition's proposal for a Whitehorse housing complex that would comprise 20 self-contained, safe and affordable units, as well as on-site services to support healthy living, in light of the coalition's recently completed detailed business plan, so that the government may:

(1) be assured of the merit of the plan, which was developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders and over 1,250 hours of volunteer work;

(2) work collaboratively with the coalition to advance the project, including securing financial support; and

(3) make an immediate and substantive contribution to addressing homelessness in the Yukon.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to respond positively to the business plan of the Northern City Supportive Housing Coalition through collaboration between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation to secure funding to implement the plan.

**Speaker:** Are there any further notices of motion?  
 Is there a statement by a minister?  
 Hearing none, that brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

**Question re: Auditor General addressing the Assembly**

**Mr. Mitchell:** We asked the Premier three times yesterday about his refusal to allow the Auditor General to present her findings in this House. He wasn't able to justify his actions then and he isn't able to now.

In the past, the Auditor General has provided keen insight into this government's operations. She has scrutinized its failure to complete capital projects in a timely and cost-effective manner, to graduate rural and aboriginal students at acceptable rates, and to appropriately invest Yukoners' money in vehicles permitted by the *Financial Administration Act* instead of in the Premier's asset-backed commercial paper, which has since been greatly devalued. Surely the Auditor General's insights into the Department of Health and Social Services also deserve to be presented publicly in this House, but the Premier refuses.

Why isn't it a priority to bring these important findings forward in this Legislative Assembly?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, actually it is a priority, but I think the leader of the Liberals has somehow lost his way. Let me reference the Standing Order 45(3) that is actually the very important instrument that we are discussing: pursuant to Standing Order 45(3) — the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, PAC, — is responsible — I reference and emphasise responsible — for reviewing the public accounts and, this is the salient point, all reports of the Auditor General in Yukon. This committee is usually chaired by the Leader of the Official Opposition. Why won't the Liberal leader do his job and sit down before the Auditor General and review said report?

**Mr. Mitchell:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier wants to throw the fat in the fire, so let's have at it. Now we know full well that it was moved by the Third Party that we should adjourn this House to do just that and the Premier knows full well if he is speaking to any of his colleagues that everyone on this side of the House wanted to do just that. So the Premier needs to ask himself if he should look to his left or to his right or behind him to find out why we are not proceeding.

The Department of Health and Social Services' operations affect all Yukoners, whether it's through access to doctors, healthy living initiatives, social assistance benefits or other programming. These activities will require almost \$270 million this year, one-quarter of the territory's overall budget. It's important that Yukoners learn which programs are being delivered in a cost-effective manner and where there's room for improvement.

Doesn't the Premier think Yukoners should hear first-hand and from the Auditor General in this House about this important department's performance?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** The last time the Liberal leader took this approach with respect to the Public Accounts Committee, the Liberal leader was forced to stand before the Yukon public and apologize for his actions. The Liberal leader, the chair of the Public Accounts Committee, is shirking his duty. The Public Accounts Committee and the chair have a responsibility to receive all reports of the Auditor General.

Let me make another point: why is it then that, when the Auditor General presented the Yukon Housing Corporation report to the Public Accounts Committee, the Liberal leader did not call for, in such a grandstanding manner, the Auditor General to appear before the House?

When the Public Accounts Committee addressed and received the report from the Auditor General with respect to public schools and advanced education here in Yukon, the Liberal leader did not cry to the mountains that the Auditor General should appear before this House. When the Public Accounts Committee received the report from the AG on Canada Winter Games, the Liberal leader did not even make a peep about the AG appearing before this House. Of course, the members much-vaunted asset-backed paper issue and opinion — that report was presented to the Public Accounts Committee — there was not one suggestion from the Liberal leader for the AG to appear before the House.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows full well that it was in the media that there have been plans for months to hold public hearings on the 15<sup>th</sup> with the Auditor General present as a witness. Those are the facts. There have been plans in place to do that. Those plans had to be changed or altered or modified in order to accommodate the early sitting. There was an opportunity to do that. The Premier must know that, as chair of PAC, I did write to all members. I heard back from two members, saying this is what they wanted to go ahead and do. It took two letters to even hear a peep from the government side. The Premier can stand on the Standing Orders all he wants. The Premier is the Premier of this territory. He commands a majority in this House. If he felt it was in the public interest, it would be happening. He clearly doesn't want it to happen.

Again, why doesn't the Premier believe it's in the public interest for Yukoners to know how well their government functions by hearing from the Auditor General in this Assembly when she will be here?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, I think that's the whole point. The Yukon Party government does place a great priority on the public interest, and that is why the Yukon is doing so well these days — it's that commitment to that priority.

Secondly, the Liberal leader is making the case on why we are suggesting that the Liberal leader is running and hiding from his responsibility as chair of the Public Accounts Committee. The date was set. The Auditor General is arriving to present the report to the Public Accounts Committee. What's the member — the Liberal leader — afraid of? Afraid it will not fit the member's attempts here to suggest to the Yukon public that there is some other way to conduct business? Where does the member even get the idea that anybody in this House can dictate to the Auditor General what to do and what not to do?

Mr. Speaker, that comes from legal instruments — the *Yukon Act*, the *Financial Administration Act*, and so on.

The Liberal leader has lost his way, running on empty. There are no excuses here. Convene the Public Accounts Committee. Do your job.

### Question re: Auditor General addressing the Assembly

**Mr. Mitchell:** It's a new question, but let's go back to the same subject.

The Premier is trying to imply that all we had to do was ask and it would have happened. We did ask; it hasn't happened. It's clear the Auditor General of Canada and her staff have spent the past 12 months auditing the Department of Health and Social Services, a department that comprises fully 25 percent of the budget on an annual basis, close to \$270 million this year. What are we doing next week? In that very time slot, we will be adjourning or recessing debate on the budget in order to receive the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation and the CEO of that corporation — both very worthwhile exercises that we should do at some point during this sitting. Why couldn't we do that later and hear from the Auditor General next week, while she's here?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I really don't think the Liberal leader has an idea of exactly what he's talking about. The date has been set. The chair has a responsibility now to sit down with the Auditor General, along with all members of the Public Accounts Committee, and receive the report. That is the Liberal leader's responsibility.

Why is the Liberal leader trying to fob that responsibility off on this Assembly, by making these wild suggestions that I, the Premier, or any member of this House, can dictate to the Auditor General what the Office of the Auditor General does or does not do?

Does the member not understand what the function of the Auditor General's office is all about? How can the Liberal leader suggest to Yukoners — and this is a matter about trust — that they have any capacity to lead this territory if they don't even understand what the function of the Auditor General's office is? I don't think Yukoners will trust the Liberals. That is one simple thing.

What about the responsibility and the obligations of leading the territory? There is a lot more to it than simply being the chair of the Public Accounts Committee.

**Mr. Mitchell:** There is a lot more than being the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee in leading the territory and that's why we're saying that a Liberal government would not shirk or avoid hearing a report from the Auditor General, no matter what it contained. If the Premier wanted to show leadership, he could make that happen. He could do it very quickly.

Now as far as following the Standing Orders, we heard last year from the now Independent/Yukon Party member, when he gained his independence from this Premier, that the Premier had given direct instructions to his caucus to go in there and blow up PAC. That was how the Premier viewed it — go in there and blow up PAC. We understand that that was a euphemism, because the member couldn't actually use the words in this House.

So, again for the Premier, the original plan was that we would receive the report this week. I believe it was tomorrow.

PAC would have worked over the weekend and held hearings next week. We can still do it. Will the Premier endorse it?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Of course. They can still do it. That's the whole point of the Public Accounts Committee and its function. I would remind the Liberal leader that there are more hours of a day than 1:00 to 5:30 in the afternoon when we're in this House. So, I think it's up to the chair of the Public Accounts Committee to ensure that the Auditor General will be able to present the report to the committee that has the responsibility to receive that report. Furthermore, the only individual I can recall, ever in the history of the Public Accounts Committee, who shirked their duty and actually quit was the Liberal leader.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Well, the only individual I can remember in the history of Yukon who was cited by the Auditor General for failing to follow the *Financial Administration Act* was this Premier. That's another first. But then, we didn't get to hold hearings into that matter, did we? Now, the facts of the matter are this: the Auditor General will be here next week. It's not this side that said that there weren't enough hours in the day to plan and hold hearings.

Does the Premier now say that it's his position that PAC should meet next week and hold public hearings and that we recess this House for one day to accommodate that? Yes or no?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** I don't have a position on when PAC meets. That is the responsibility of the chair and the members of the committee. What the government's side is saying is, "Meet and do your job."

Now, I heard off-microphone from the Member for Klucane that the government's side believes that it is "just the Auditor General's opinion". Let me reference some points, and I quote: "These financial statements are the responsibility of the government. My responsibility is to express an opinion" — salient point — "on these financial statements based on my audit." You know who wrote that and put their name to it? The Auditor General of Canada.

It goes on to say, "In my opinion, these consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the government as of March 31, 2010." You know who wrote that and put their name to it? The Auditor General of Canada.

It goes on to say, "Further in my opinion, the transactions of the government of those organizations listed in Note 2(a)...", and on and on and on. You know who wrote that, Mr. Speaker? The Auditor General of Canada and she put her name to it.

#### **Question re: Social housing**

**Ms. Hanson:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Take it down a notch, I think.

In 2009, the Northern City Supportive Housing —

#### **Speaker's statement**

**Speaker:** Order please. Please, sit down. It is not within our Standing Orders for a member to make a comment on a previous question, so please do not do that. You have the floor, please.

**Ms. Hanson:** Excuse me, Mr. Speaker.

In 2009, the Northern City Supportive Housing Coalition, a group of eight non-profit community organizations, produced an extensive business plan for a proposal to help tackle the crisis for the hard-to-house in Whitehorse. The coalition's objectives are to provide the homeless population in the downtown core with safe, affordable housing with programming to alleviate the adverse effects of mental illness and substance abuse. This group has really taken on the government's professed approach of social inclusion and applied it with compassion and practicality.

The Yukon Housing Corporation has had this business plan for over a year, and the deadline for accessing the needed federal funding is fast approaching. What is the Yukon Housing Corporation's response to the coalition's proposal?

**Hon. Mr. Kenyon:** We do anxiously await that response. My information is that the information that was submitted to the Housing Corporation at the time was inadequate and they were asked for a much more detailed business plan. I've not been informed that such a plan has ever been presented back to the board so they anxiously await it, as we do.

**Ms. Hanson:** The northern coalition has worked on and presented their third business plan. This is neither a new idea nor one that hasn't been tried in other jurisdictions. Housing First models have been implemented elsewhere and have proven extremely successful.

The Northern City Supportive Housing Coalition is proposing a concrete solution to the complex problems this government faces with the hard-to-house. The reduction in emergency room use, ambulance calls, RCMP and court involvement alone will have a very positive effect on our ever-expanding budgets in Justice and Health and Social Services. More importantly, this idea increases the potential for these people to become productive and self-supporting members of Yukon society.

If this new facility is not going to happen due to this government's lack of political will, we are aware of another proposal that is still waiting to be acted upon. Is the Alexander Street Residence being considered for such a proposal?

**Hon. Mr. Kenyon:** All good points from the member opposite and good points that probably should be integrated into a business plan. Again, my information is that it has not been finalized with the corporation. I would suggest that the member opposite again review the structure — the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors is the one that makes the decision; it is not a political decision, and that's only rightly so with a Crown corporation.

My information is that the project has been tentatively approved — pending submission of further documentation to the board. This has not happened.

In terms of Alexander Street, I'm not prepared to start moving people out of there until they have a place to go, which I'm told will be in the next couple months. At that time, we will have somebody in there to evaluate the building and see what needs to be done to bring it up to code, to put it into a more serviceable condition if, in fact, a more serviceable condition is attainable. Everyone has a great idea for what to do with the building — again, we would like to deal with reality.

**Ms. Hanson:** I am happy to hear that there are going to be some concrete plans developed for the Alexander Street Residence. You know, this government is fond of talking about collaboration between the various government departments and agency, and we agree that's a really good idea.

Social inclusion certainly demands that at least the departments of Health and Social Services, Justice, Education and the Yukon Housing Corporation work together cooperatively and collaboratively to address the needs of the hard-to-house. You know, a housing dilemma is facing nearly two dozen people who are being evicted from their hotel at the end of this month. Many of them may end up living on the street or in the bush.

Has the minister responsible for the Housing Corporation met with his colleagues in this collaborative approach to discuss how the government plans to respond to this dire situation?

**Hon. Mr. Kenyon:** Mr. Speaker, government ministers and government departments are always discussing these items. It's not something that sits out on the limb of a tree and is ignored by any means.

Again, for the member opposite, we anxiously await the Northern City Supportive Housing Coalition's proposal and business plan for due consideration by the Housing Corporation. We look forward to their deliberations to see if this is a good way to spend money or simply another good way to make it sound good but really is not feasible. We have to make business decisions. We are the caretakers of Yukoners' money — the Yukon purse. Unlike especially the Liberal leader, we are not prepared to make snap decisions without good data and good information.

#### **Question re: Rural domestic well program**

**Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, the rural well program provides low-cost loans, with security that those loans will be repaid — and has helped more than 140 families install a well for their homes. The Yukon government is not able to make this successful program available inside municipal limits unless it reaches an agreement with the municipal government, and past attempts to do that in Whitehorse were not successful — in part, clearly, because at one point, this was not a priority for the city.

Last fall the Minister of Community Services indicated that officials from his department had met again with City of Whitehorse staff on this issue, but had not yet been successful in resolving this issue with the city.

Will the minister please tell me whether there has been any progress recently on this issue?

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** I've been told the department has been working with the city on this issue. Certainly it is, as he says, a municipal question and responsibility. We're open to dialogue with the city. The last time we met with the city was in the summer and we certainly haven't closed the door on a discussion, but there has not been an interest on the municipal level to enter into this program. It is available. There is the wherewithal to do it, but it hasn't received a green light from the municipality itself.

**Mr. Cathers:** I thank the minister for the answer and appreciate the fact that this does require both governments to be interested in it.

I know Community Services has made several efforts on the file and this issue hasn't always been a priority for the City of Whitehorse or Association of Yukon Communities. The rural well program has made a big difference to my constituents who have used it and is one of many ways the government has helped develop infrastructure so Yukon families have clean, affordable drinking water. The Our Towns, Our Future review consultation lists infrastructure as a priority discussion topic.

Has the issue of reaching an agreement to allow Yukoners within municipalities to access the well program been put forward by Community Services as part of this discussion and, if not, is the consultation an opportunity for municipal residents who want to access the rural well program to express that desire to Community Services and to their municipality?

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** Exactly — that is why we are out doing that. So I recommend that for anybody who has questions, if they missed the public meetings that we held, there is an available e-mail address where people can put their concerns forward. If anybody has questions on the municipal ideas, I recommend and I think it would be appropriate to communicate in that fashion, and certainly at that point we would be looking at it.

**Mr. Cathers:** I appreciate the minister's answer. This issue seems to have been discussed a number of times in the past by department and city staff and has not yet reached a resolution. Last year I had a productive meeting with Whitehorse City Council and administration to discuss possible solutions and I felt that some progress was made toward common ground. Sometimes elected representatives sitting down to talk directly can find common ground and solutions and move forward issues that are otherwise stalled.

Would the minister be willing to sit down with representatives of Whitehorse City Council and have a political-level discussion aimed at coming up with possible solutions that would allow people living in Whitehorse to access the rural well program — recognizing, of course, as the minister alluded, the City of Whitehorse also has to be willing to have that discussion?

Would he be willing to have that political-level discussion?

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** I have discussions with the City of Whitehorse and all our municipalities on a regular basis. I would recommend to the member opposite that he puts the communication in for the new municipal ideas that are out there. "Our Towns, Our Future" is exactly what it's built around: getting input from concerned citizens or citizens on how our municipalities move forward.

It's one of the many issues. I am amazed that the municipalities don't take advantage of this program. It's a good program; it has been successful in all other areas we're responsible for. To date, we have 105 projects that are finished; there are 105 wells dug throughout the territory and we have 42 in progress.

It has been a very successful program and I would recommend all the municipalities to take a look at it and see how they could become partners in this to make it work within the municipalities.

**Question re: Yukon College, university accreditation**

**Mr. Fairclough:** On October 4 of the fall sitting, we encouraged this government to look at the possibility of establishing a comprehensive university in Yukon. We noted Yukon College has grown to offer many programs over the years, but feel it's time for the college to be given the opportunity to expand even further.

Canada currently has no university north of 60°. A university here in Yukon would enable more of our youth to study closer to home. Yukon would become even a brighter beacon for secondary education for the Canadian Arctic than it already is. Four months ago, the Minister of Education told us that he was working toward the creation of a comprehensive university in the Yukon. Could the Minister of Education inform Yukoners on the progress he has made since we last asked him this question?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** There has been an incredible amount of progress on the issue of post-secondary education here in Yukon, in no small part by Yukon College.

It was this Assembly and these members here that approved the legislative changes necessary to give Yukon College the degree-granting capacity that it now has. I was so pleased to see that all members of this Assembly voted unanimously to amend the *Yukon College Act*, which empowered the college to go in that direction. Since that time, we've seen the college start to flourish with the increase of additional university-level programs, whether it's a bachelor of social work program, a Master of Education program, or some of the tremendous work that they have been doing with the Research Centre of Excellence and having visiting professors coming into the territory, who are not only teaching courses here but doing research and sharing that with others. Also, we have seen the construction of two new Yukon College campuses in Pelly Crossing and Dawson City.

Those two facilities, which were made available because of the good investments of the Yukon Party government, are going to have a lifetime of benefit and help citizens, not only here in Whitehorse, but throughout the territory. There are incredible things happening in education and the member opposite should take pride in those.

**Mr. Fairclough:** I do, and I have been part of bringing some of those courses here to the territory — the bachelor of social work, for example.

We're talking about a comprehensive university here in the territory. A university in the Yukon will not only lead to more academic possibilities for Yukoners, but it would greatly benefit our economy as well.

Four months ago, we tabled Motion No. 1175, which urged this government "...to work with the Yukon's Member of Parliament and Senator, their federal Conservative colleagues and in consultation with the Board of Directors and the President of Yukon College to seek federal funding for a study

on costs, timelines and design for a comprehensive university in Yukon."

Has the Minister of Education followed this advice? Is he working with all these stakeholders toward this goal? Will he highlight for us why he has not produced any of these results yet?

**Hon. Mr. Rouble:** When we talk about results, we just have to look at the ongoing offering from Yukon College with increases in programming, such as the heritage and culture certificate and the Northern Institute of Social Justice, which is established in cooperation with the Department of Justice and the programming that it is offering.

Yes, of course I am working with my other colleagues in the other northern jurisdictions. Increasing the opportunities for post-secondary education in Canada's north is important to Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon. We just have to look at the enrolment at Yukon College, which we have seen increase by 15 percent between 2006 and 2010.

I am certainly proud of the work that Yukon College is doing and that its board of governors is doing. I am certainly supportive of the approaches that they are taking. We only have to look at the changes to the *Yukon College Act*, which we all agreed to in this Assembly. It was great to see the collective agreement on this important issue, with all members supporting that legislation, putting forward those changes to allow Yukon College to become a degree-granting institution.

Now looking at the work that Yukon College is doing is just tremendous. When we just look at this budget, you will see that there is over \$30 million of funding for Yukon College in it. This is a strong endorsement of an excellent post-secondary educational institution that all Yukoners should be proud of.

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, my apologies for the interruption, but I would ask all members to join me in making welcome the Chief of the Ta'an Kwäch'än First Nation, Chief Brenda Sam; the Deputy Chief of the Ta'an Kwäch'än First Nation, Mr. Rick Martin; and Deputy Chief of the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, Jessie Dawson. Welcome.

*Applause*

**Question re: Multi-year capital plan**

**Mr. Mitchell:** I have questions for the Minister of Finance on the long-term capital plan he tabled as part of this year's budget. Given this government's track record, believing that this government will actually adhere to this plan is yet another fantasy. The editor of the *Whitehorse Star* commented earlier this week that the Premier's budget suffers from a "crisis of credibility" and the same can be said of the long-term plan.

Contractors were told last year to gear up for a \$50-million construction project, the new F.H. Collins Secondary School. This year that project has been pushed back and contractors who were preparing to bid are out of luck. It's more likely the Leafs will win the Stanley Cup than this government will stick to this long-term plan.

Given the changes from the one tabled just last year, why would anyone believe this year's capital plan will be followed?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Now that we're into sports analogies, for Yukoners in general to buy into the Liberal leader's view of the finances of Yukon, it would be more likely that the Liberal leader would hit a homerun with a toothpick out of Yankee Stadium.

The long-term capital plan before all members of this House — the numbers are on paper. It is part of our budget. It is an innovative way of presenting to the Yukon public, especially the contracting community, what they can look forward to in the years ahead. By the way, most recently, agencies like the Chamber of Commerce have taken a very positive view of this type of planning — fiscal planning and construction planning for this territory. It has served us very well. When you consider the amount of infrastructure over the last nine years that the Yukon Party government has invested in and put on the ground in this territory, the Liberals have a long way to go — when we compare those heady days of government renewal in this territory that drove Yukoners out of the territory and had us in a desperate situation and double-digit unemployment, with virtually no private sector economy. That has dramatically turned around because of how we've managed the finances and strategically invested. Now, I know the member — the Liberal leader — does not believe in these numbers, but it's up to him to prove to Yukoners why.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Well, Mr. Speaker, when the Premier tabled his first long-term plan last year he said it was the first time it had even been done in Yukon. That was incorrect. Both the NDP government of Piers McDonald and the Liberal government of Pat Duncan tabled these plans. It was the Yukon Party government that abandoned them for years. It comes down to credibility and trust. Yukoners no longer trust this government and this is another reason why: it tables long-term plans, but then it fails to follow them. F.H. Collins was to be in the budget for this year, but now it's not.

In 2007, the Auditor General of Canada criticized this government for its poor planning of capital projects. This is the same Auditor General this government said should not appear in this House next week. Why hasn't this government followed the advice the Auditor General of Canada provided to it years ago and improved its capital project planning?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess the best way to respond to the Liberal leader with the empty criticism is to point out that if the member has a problem with the budget — and by the way, we have had significant numbers of public accounts presented to this House, duly audited by the Auditor General. Obviously the Liberal leader even puts that off as in question. If the member has such an aversion and a problem accepting the hard work of government officials who construct budgets, and the budget before us that's presented to the House is no different, why doesn't the Liberal leader write the Auditor General and demand a forensic audit?

Secondly, the member has brought up this issue of bringing the Auditor General before the House. Now the member does not support the standing committee, the Public Accounts Committee. He quits and then when it's convenient, re-engages and when it's not convenient, he quits again. Mr. Speaker, he doesn't believe in other instruments that dictate how this As-

sembly — this institution — operates and indeed, the functions of the Auditor General's office. Maybe the *Yukon Act* might help the member.

I refer the member to section 34(2). This is in direct relation to the issue of the Auditor General bringing anything to the Assembly. It says: "The Auditor General shall report to the Legislative Assembly any matter falling within the scope of the audit that, in his or her opinion, should be reported to the Assembly." So instead of standing here wasting time, write the Auditor General and ask her to appear.

**Mr. Mitchell:** Actually, Mr. Speaker, the last time that the Auditor General of Canada did table audit accounts on the Yukon government's finances, it proved that they ended 2009-10 as a deficit, which we've been saying all along, and not the surplus predicted by this Premier.

The government has put forward a motion for debate later today that basically pats itself on the back for producing this long-term capital plan.

It also urges contractors to review the document so they can benefit from these "stable, predictable, long-term government investments". We've already demonstrated that these investments are neither stable nor predictable. Contractors looking to bid on the new F.H. Collins Secondary School have learned that the hard way.

Here's another example. Last year contractors were told to get ready for \$15 million worth of land development. That number is now more than \$40 million — a \$25-million difference. It's about credibility and trust, and this government has neither. Why can't this government produce a reliable, long-term forecast and then stick to it?

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, really all that has been demonstrated here is that the Liberals aren't a good choice or option for this territory and its future. That's pretty clear, given the Liberal leader doesn't understand the function of the Auditor General's office, and he doesn't believe in the budgets presented through all the effort during the course of any fiscal year by all departments, including the Department of Finance. He doesn't believe in the public accounts that are audited and tabled before this House. He doesn't believe in the economic fortunes of this territory. Mr. Speaker, he doesn't believe in the very solid, environmental agenda of the Yukon Party government, which is balanced, creating and promoting development, but at the same time protecting Yukon's pristine wilderness.

Mr. Speaker, he doesn't even believe in the need for Yukoners to access the health care system and using a savings account to meet those needs by spending down that savings account. The Liberal leader doesn't believe in a single, solitary thing that has put the Yukon Territory on the pathway to prosperity. Why would Yukoners trust their future to a Liberal leader and a Liberal Party that has that position? It is empty, void, running on empty. The Liberals have got a long way to go.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

**Some Hon. Member:** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

## QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

**Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, on a question of privilege.

**Mr. Elias:** I rise on a question of privilege. My question of privilege arises from yesterday's response by the Minister of Community Services during Question Period. The minister implied that he has never received communication from me regarding the Old Crow water well. My word means a great deal to me, Mr. Speaker. It is important to me that all people can rely on my word. I feel that the Minister of Community Services implied yesterday that my word cannot be trusted; therefore, I had no choice, and found it very necessary, to stand on a question of privilege today to demonstrate that what I said yesterday in this House was in fact true, and that the document I tabled earlier today proves that I have in fact sent communications to the Minister of Community Services regarding the water well in Old Crow.

My reputation as the MLA for my constituents in the Vuntut Gwitchin riding has been cast in some doubt. The minister's inaccurate comment has, and will continue to, until corrected, impinge on my ability to perform my duties both inside and outside of this House.

For the record, in Question Period yesterday, I said, "I've asked for face-to-face meetings with this minister; he said, 'No.' I've sent emails and letters; he said, 'No.' I've asked for briefings about the Old Crow water well; he said, 'No.' Do you know what this is? This is shameful for this Yukon Party government to be playing politics with the drinking water in my community of Old Crow.

"When is my constituency going to be able to see the upgrading of the water well in Old Crow?"

In response, the Minister of Community Services said, "I'll correct the member opposite; I have never had a communication from that member opposite on the water well at Old Crow."

I request an apology from the minister and that he rise in this House and correct the public record.

**Speaker:** Does any other member wish to make a comment on this question of privilege?

### Speaker's statement

**Speaker:** Hearing none, the Chair will take the issue under advisement and report back to this House. Thank you.

Now we will proceed to Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

#### MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

##### Motion No. 1260

**Clerk:** Motion No. 1260, standing in the name of Mr. Nordick.

**Speaker:** It is moved by the Member for the Klondike THAT this House urges the Yukon private sector contractors to review the Government of Yukon's multi-year capital plan contained in the 2011-12 budget that identifies capital

priorities and their related expenditures over the next four years, including the three-year plan of core expenditures concerning information technology of \$6.5 million and capital building maintenance of \$12 million, as well as the \$42 million for land development and minimum of \$46 million for highways and airports in order to obtain maximum benefits for their companies and employees through the certainty provided by the stable, predictable long-term government investments in the identified key sectors.

**Mr. Nordick:** It gives me great pleasure to speak to this Yukon Party government's multi-year capital plan.

The multi-year capital plan identifies capital priorities and their related expenditures over the next four years. That includes —

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

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Mitchell:** I am sorry to interrupt the member, but I would just like all members of this House to issue a hearty welcome for Her Worship, the Mayor of the City of Whitehorse, Bev Buckway.

*Applause*

**Mr. Nordick:** Once again, it gives me great pleasure to speak to this government's multi-year capital plan. The multi-year capital plan identifies capital priorities and their related expenditures over the next four years. That includes this current budget year, plus three fiscal years to follow.

Although subject to revisions each year, the multi-year capital plan provides an overview of the Government of Yukon's future capital expenditure priorities. As a framework document, the multi-year capital plan highlights the multi-year sustainable level of capital investment targeted by the government.

Known priorities for future years are presented over a three-year horizon with the identified net capital target for each fiscal year. The ongoing capital planning process will provide the government the opportunity to update the multi-year capital plan in response to changing and/or emerging priorities, changing market conditions and sector capacity.

I know the Leader of the Official Opposition mentioned that during Question Period today. I understand that the Liberal government would not change because of opportunities or issues in the territory; they would just go on and force things their way and their way only.

Mr. Speaker, we listen to Yukoners. The multi-year capital plan has to respond to changing and emerging priority issues and other factors that may require government to revisit its capital expenditure plan.

Once again, I am pleased to speak about the many municipal infrastructure, land development, transportation, building and information technology investments that are featured in this government's multi-year capital plan.

In 2009, the Yukon government met with all municipalities and First Nation governments and visited every community to

hear about Yukon's infrastructure needs. These meetings resulted in the Yukon infrastructure plan.

Projects identified in the Yukon infrastructure plan's annual capital plans include initiatives that will provide important infrastructure improvements and support economic growth throughout the territory. This planned investment through the Building Canada fund will be of long-term benefit to Yukon's economy.

In keeping with this collaborative approach, this government has also struck a committee of senior officials from key departments to work with industry and other governments in planning our capital projects in the Yukon. These meetings of the Department of Community Services, Highways and Public Works, the Yukon Housing Corporation, and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Contractors Association and others have resulted in an effective, long term —

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

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Cardiff:** Mr. Speaker, I would like all Members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in welcoming the Grand Chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations, Ruth Massie.

*Applause*

**Mr. Nordick:** Mr. Speaker, these meetings between the Department of Community Services, Highways and Public Works, the Yukon Housing Corporation, the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Contractors Association and others have resulted in effective, long-term capital planning to maximize benefits to the territory. I felt that paragraph was worth repeating, so the Liberal opposition members realize that this long-term capital plan was made in conjunction with Yukoners.

This multi-year approach will ensure that Yukon's infrastructure needs are systematically addressed. It ensures that local industry and local governments can better plan and prepare the labour force to complete this work. Everyone benefits, Mr. Speaker. It's a new approach. It's an approach that's working and it's an approach that this government brought to the Yukon.

I'm going to now speak about just a few of the many capital projects that are planned for the coming year. In 2011-12, Building Canada municipal-type infrastructure projects that are in the Department of Community Services' budget will be taking place in virtually every Yukon community.

Let's start with Old Crow, Mr. Speaker. I know the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin will want to listen to this very closely. There will be \$1 million to complete design and start construction for upgrading its drinking water system. There will be \$500,000 to upgrade the solid-waste facility and we expect to spend \$1 million of the \$2 million project to upgrade the community's water supply system. In Destruction Bay, the 2011-12 capital budget includes \$250,000 for repairs to the sanitary collection system. In Haines Junction, there will be \$400,000 spent for phase 2 of the water treatment project.

Teslin will benefit from \$926,000 to resurface and improve drainage of roads. In Ross River, 2011-12 capital investments will include \$3 million to engineer, design and construct a new

public works building. The Carmacks sewage treatment and collection project will be completed with the replacement of the existing mechanical facility for \$2.4 million in 2011-12. In Watson Lake, there will be \$3.2 million put toward water, waste-water assessment, engineering and the start of construction of upgrades for water and sewer lines. Construction of the Dawson City sewage treatment project represents almost \$22 million of infrastructure investments for 2011-12 alone. In Mayo, \$200,000 will be spent on water and waste-water sewage upgrades. There is \$500,000 for phase 2 of the Carcross water treatment system. Faro will see \$200,000 for water and sewer replacement and there is also \$100,000 to engineer upgrades to the Tagish water supply, pumphouse and fill point and \$500,000 for the Marwell water and sewer upgrades. Burwash Landing will receive \$150,000 for road improvements, as well as \$250,000 for engineered, design and first-stage construction to expand geothermal heat to public buildings in that community.

There will be \$185,000 for design for the future construction of a water treatment plant and well to serve the Deep Creek and Horse Creek communities. It is also in the 2011-12 capital budget for Community Services.

These are all important projects, but that is not all. Under the municipal infrastructure investment fund, this government, in the 2011-12 capital budget, also includes \$4.523 million to complete the construction of the Champagne and Aishihik cultural centre. Through the Canadian strategic infrastructure fund, \$1.5 million will complete the \$22-million Kwanlin Dun cultural centre; \$4.827 million will be dedicated to continuing to improve and beautify our Whitehorse waterfront; and \$1.037 million will do the same for the Carcross waterfront. These First Nation projects and waterfront improvements are not only an investment in our infrastructure, they are also preserving local First Nation cultures and will help contribute to increased tourism and local enjoyment for many years to come. I cannot continue to talk about Community Services' capital budget without also addressing our land development projects.

The 2011-12 capital budget features \$41.8 million allocated to land development throughout the Yukon with a view to having 434 new lots on the market in the next 18 months.

I've talked a lot about capital investments led by the Department of Community Services, but now I'd like to also address the \$46.6 million in transportation infrastructure, the \$37.451 million for building assets and \$10.873 million for information technology assets, which are led by the Department of Highways and Public Works. More specifically, this capital plan includes investments of over \$42 million in highway construction over the next four years, including \$14.25 million in 2011-12.

These funds will meet our continued commitment to the reconstruction of the Campbell Highway, a critical link for so many of Yukon's mining initiatives, and will provide significant improvements to the Atlin Road between kilometre 1 and 41. The capital plan also includes \$32.5 million of investment in highway rehabilitation, with over \$15 million of work planned for the 2011-12 year.

These funds will support the Shakwak permafrost rehabilitation project, as well as numerous resurfacing and culvert replacement projects.

This government has carried out a significant program of bridge repair and replacement over the past five years, which has seen major improvements for the Donjek River bridge, the Duke River bridge, Slims River bridge, the Lewes River bridge, the Pelly River bridge and the Nordenskiöld River bridge.

The 2011-12 capital plan includes \$2.3 million for the replacement of the Morley River bridge deck — approximately 40 kilometres south of Teslin — and \$1.7 million for upgrades to the Flat Creek bridge on the Klondike Highway.

A total of \$40,000 will be spent on the turn-button lighting that will allow the Boeing 737 and larger aircraft operations to land in Dawson and Old Crow. Additional lighting allows the new buttons to be used properly in poor visibility and at night.

Burwash Landing aerodrome will receive an EK35 application to bind the runway surface, reducing maintenance costs. EK35 reduces dust that can negatively affect residents and can have adverse effects on aircraft engines. This \$200,000 investment will benefit all aircraft operators, including the medevac carriers.

The new air terminal building in Faro is scheduled to be completed. \$400,000 will be invested in building a replacement to facilitate increased air activity expected this year associated with resource development. This will provide work for local contractors.

Additional work on the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport will continue throughout the next fiscal year. \$100,000 will be invested in improvements to the current passenger bridge. A new passenger bridge is expected to be installed at the Whitehorse airport in the 2012-13 fiscal year at a cost of \$1 million. The new bridge will facilitate increased passenger volumes, as well as increase the safety of travellers. In order to prepare for the new bridge, \$500,000 will be spent on the north apron this fiscal year to provide appropriate space for the new passenger bridge and aircraft parking.

Continued improvements to Otter Road will improve airport accessibility and air carrier operations. This will include a total investment of \$213,000 that will provide work for local contractors. We are investing almost \$11 million in information technology across the government in 2010-11 for hardware, network equipment and computer applications that support the many programs and services delivered by government. These investments support a vibrant Yukon IT sector through jobs and contracting opportunities.

This government has also established a core fund envelope to manage the building maintenance program, coordinated by the Property Management division of the Department of Highways and Public Works.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** I'd like to introduce Sue Staffen, the Speaker's wife.

*Applause*

**Mr. Nordick:** It's almost overwhelming to see that many Yukoners in the gallery today to listen to the motion debate on our five-year capital plan.

The 2011-12 budget includes investments of \$12.4 million in building maintenance and an additional \$12 million is identified for each of the following years in the capital plan. These investments are critical to procuring and managing facilities that will provide affordable, comfortable and appropriate accommodations for government and publicly funded agencies, programs, and activities to help them meet their objectives.

The plan also identifies \$25 million in new building assets for 2011-12, including the new Correctional Centre in Whitehorse, which is slated for completion at the end of 2012, and a new secure assessment centre.

The first phase of construction for the replacement of F.H. Collins Secondary School is part of the plan, and key investments in housing are also included, such as the Whitehorse Abbeyfield and Takhini duplexes.

Looking beyond the 2011-12 fiscal year, major capital investments led by Highways and Public Works will include for transportation infrastructure in 2012-13, \$42 million; in 2013-14, \$21 million; in 2014-15, \$22 million. For information technology in 2012-13, \$6.5 million; in 2013-14, \$6.5 million; in 2014-15, \$6.5 million. For building assets in 2012-13, \$41 million; in 2013-14, \$20 million; in 2014-15, \$15 million.

Planned capital investments led by Community Services will include for municipal infrastructure in 2012-13, \$54 million; in 2013-14, \$27 million; in 2014-15, \$17 million. For land development in 2012-13, \$39 million; in 2013-14, \$21 million; in 2014-15, \$7 million.

In conclusion, while I have listed many projects today that represent this government's impressive capital investment and its important impact on our economy, I feel something equally important to note is that these investments go beyond simple economics. These projects create opportunities to build local capacity in our First Nation and municipal governments and in our citizens — capacity to plan and manage capital projects, capacity for Yukon workers to gain valuable expertise and increase the local number of tradespersons, capacity for increased tourism and capacity to access our valuable natural resources.

By providing a five-year capital plan, this government is able to work collectively with Yukon private sector contractors to ensure Yukon's economy remains vibrant and strong through these predictable, long-term government investments. This infrastructure supports a bright future for Yukon, a future filled with opportunity, a future created by this government meeting its commitment to practising good government and achieving a better quality of life.

**Mr. Inverarity:** The best place to start with this particular motion today is with the motion itself.

This motion tries to bring an air of certainty from within the government that in fact their budgets are sound, true and believable and not just made up in some fashion. I'll get on to this a bit later, but it comes down to an issue of trust. It comes down to whether the business community can actually believe the budgets that are being tabled within this Legislative As-

sembly. It comes down to whether or not the goals that the government are laying out — be it last year, this year, or for the next five years — are even achievable in attempting to lay out future capital plans.

I think it's worth us looking at the motion itself. There are really two components to it: it's the "do" which urges the "...private sector contractors to review the Government of Yukon's multi-year capital plan contained in the 2011-12 budget that identifies capital priorities..."

My understanding is that the government wishes businesses out there to look at this capital plan, to have faith in this capital plan so that they can go forward with long-term investment into their businesses and their corporations and in the assets that they need to purchase, be they human or capital, so that when the next year's budget gets presented they are geared up to be able to bid on these contracts and to do these contracts in a sound, feasible manner.

The second part of this — I am going to skip over the amounts that are being listed — but the purpose of the motion, as I have tried to indicate and I will read it here, is in order to obtain maximum benefit for their companies and their employees through the certainty provided by a stable, predictable long-term government investment in the identified key sectors. As I have just indicated, that is the most critical component in this particular motion. If I were a businessman — and I have been a businessman in the Yukon — it's important for me to know what I am doing today, tomorrow, next year and I, in fact, have plans — or when I was in business had plans — as to how my business would grow. Do the government's capital plans affect that business? Absolutely. It's absolutely critical that if the government is prepared to stand up and say we are going to invest \$24 million next year in building a school in Riverdale, that that is something that businesses would like to be able to take to the bank.

If I were in the sheet metal business, for example, and I know that there is a shortage of sheet metal in the world markets because there's a shortage of tin, I'm going to go out and I'm going to say, well, I've got a pretty good chance of bidding on this particular contract for putting in ducting work and all that kind of stuff. So I might go out in January, based on the financial plan that the government has set forward and purchase significant amounts of product in order to tender on those contracts, because I think that I stand a pretty good chance of getting it. Okay? It may not be prudent, but if there is a shortage in the market and you know that your competitors are going to be confronted with the same product and you're able, because of the size and purchase of the materials, to get a bigger bang for your buck, then the likelihood of getting that contract is probably still that significant. Yukoners are angry with this government. I said this yesterday in my budget reply speech. I believe that the trust is gone. I'll try and demonstrate some of this.

I've alluded already to the fact that F.H. Collins school, which was in last year's five-year plan, which should have put it into the mains this year, has been pulled out. Plans go up and down. With regard to whether there's an increase in spending one year over the next isn't the issue here. The issue here is,

what's the difference? We've gone from \$24 million on F.H. Collins Secondary School to \$2.7 million, and even that number isn't that reliable. The minister said yesterday that this project was approved by Management Board — I'm sorry, he has stated in the past that the project was approved by Management Board — but yesterday he said that it was only partially approved. I'm not sure what that means. Is the \$2.7 million the partially approved amount or is there another amount that is only partially approved? How can business rely on making predictions, moving from \$24 million to \$2.7 million? Even that number is not secure.

It's about believability, and we need to concentrate on what the government is projecting over the next five years. In terms of believability, it's also about what they've said in the past that the government was prepared to do and hasn't.

We look at another instance here. Last year in their plan they said that there would be \$9.1 million for the Dawson City sewage district heating system in this year's budget. While \$9 million would have been a nice amount of money — I think anybody who is a contractor would appreciate it — in fact the amount this year is \$21.7 million. That is an increase. So, last year if I were an employer and looking at staff based on a \$9-million contract in Dawson City and now there is \$21 million, I am going to be short staffed. I probably wouldn't have gone out and hired those extra bodies because the amount wasn't there, and now I would be scrambling for tradesmen, skilled plumbers and welders in order to meet that commitment, particularly if I got the contract or in the likelihood that I would get the contract. And yet unemployment, as we know, is very low in the Yukon right now, so how do I plan when the numbers keep changing? It isn't about going up or going down, it is about difference. It is about believing the numbers that are on the paper. We — and the Premier — talked about health care today and how, you know, they have increased the budget in order to support added costs to health care. Well, that's really not what the issue is; it is about whether or not they budgeted the right amount to begin with.

We know that health care costs go up every year, yet last year they underbudgeted. They knew they underbudgeted. Why? They needed to have a balanced budget.

Businesses need certainty in their process and in their planning, and when you have a significant corporation — in this case, the Government of Yukon — which is going to spend millions and millions of dollars, or not spend millions and millions of dollars, there is no certainty. No one can look at this budget in terms of their five-year capital plan and have any faith that these numbers that are listed there for next year's spending are realistic. Why? Because they haven't proved it in the past and history repeats itself. That's the issue here, and that's the problem with this particular motion.

How can a government go out and encourage Yukon's private sector contractors to review their multi-use plan when, in fact, the plan has no foundation because there has been no track record?

It was interesting to note today that the Premier has indicated that last year's plan was the first long-term plan that the government has ever issued. Let me correct that: the Premier

tabled his first long-term plan last year, and he said that it was the first time it had ever been done in the Yukon.

Even that statement is not correct. We know that previous NDP and Liberal governments have, in fact, tabled long-term fiscal plans that go over multi-years — not believable, Mr. Speaker.

Let's look at another project that we had this past year. They said that there would be \$15.1 million for land development in the next year's budget. This year? The amount is \$41.9 million. Now, if I were a contractor and I was looking at a \$15-million contract and I knew it was going to be largely for Whistle Bend, would I go out and invest in a D9 Cat to do work? Would I go out and invest in staffing and tradesmen based on that? I might. I might stand a pretty good chance, particularly if I have a good relationship with the government and I continually get contracts. The problem is that it has now gone to \$41 million. In the current environment, how do I plan around that? How do I have certainty that when I'm projecting my next year's plans for staff and capital investments based on a \$15-million purchase — and I know that if you are a major contractor, while these numbers may be big for some people, they are not to a lot of contractors. But they are significant enough that we need to pay attention, and they need to have some certainty about how they go about investing.

That's what the purpose of this motion is — to try to encourage the Yukon businesses to have certainty in the numbers that are being projected. It isn't a matter of going up or down. We have seen that some go up and some go down. It's about the difference. It's about how you plan around \$30-million differences. That is a lot of money, and you can't if you can't have reliability, trust and faith in the actual numbers that are being tabled in this Legislative Assembly. That has been our point all along — that people don't know what to believe or not to believe when budgets are tabled in the Legislative Assembly. They fluctuate so much. We go from — well, one year it was a \$23-million surplus to a \$20-million deficit — a \$40-million difference.

A couple of other notes — last year they said there would be a \$3.3-million highway rehabilitation in next year's budget, so that would have been this year we were expecting it. The amount has gone up to \$5.9 million and that's a good thing, if you can get the workers and if you can get the resources in order to actually meet that goal. Frequently we have seen projects put over from year to year because the resources there within the business community have not been met.

Last year they said they would spend \$8.8 million this year on bridges and primary highways, and that would have been in the current fiscal budget. So how much is there this year? Zero. It isn't about the difference — government sets its priorities — but it's about continuity and it's about having some certainty in the numbers. Businesses don't have that certainty in last year's five-year plan and in the going-ahead five-year plan because of the track record of this government.

Even the Auditor General, in 2007, looked at the government's contracting practices and had sharp criticism for their performance. I remember we had looked at contracting.

There was supposed to be space plans and all kinds of stuff done, but I know that the Premier thinks that it is just her opinion; that her opinion on the public accounts has to be stated — or that they are stated that they are her opinion. Well, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I'll take her opinion over any facts that this Premier puts before this House any day of the week.

We're looking at the asset-backed commercial paper. The Auditor General was critical of that, and we see again that this government that goes to the highest auditor in the land dismisses it as just her opinion. Well, sorry, Mr. Speaker, her opinion counts; her opinion matters; her opinion is something that people have certainty in as opposed to the Premier's opinion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am getting a little hot under the collar, and I think that given the events of today I have pretty much exhausted my thoughts on what I think of this particular motion and how I think that businesses can actually rely on this capital plan in future budgets. They can't.

It's not something that they have the ability to do, not only because of past performance, but because we see that the government keeps changing their minds. With that, I'll sit down.

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** Addressing the motion today, I'd like to remind Yukoners and the Liberal government — the short-lived government and the only Liberal government this territory has ever had — that they tabled the NDP budget from the previous government and neglected to take the names of the ministers out of the document. Do you think that Yukoners are ready for that kind of management team? That's what they did. In saying that, in support of this motion, this is a very progressive way of working with the communities and working with the contracting community to make sure people are aware of the projects and what is happening in the future. Addressing the Liberal Party or the Liberals' figures is pointless because they put mostly incorrect figures on the floor of the House. Today obviously was an example of how they project or present themselves to the Yukon people.

The idea that a contractor — the naïveté of the Liberal Party to think the contracting community could take our budget down to the bank, and say they're going to do \$18 million worth of work this year, so give me \$18 million, because I'm going to get the contract — that's not how the real world works. This is an example of the Liberal Party mentality.

Our multi-year capital plan is a blueprint of how this government will move forward, investing in the Yukon, and it's extensive. The Member for Klondike went through a good hour of explanation of how this thing would work and the investments that would come from it. It is a tool the business community will use, and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce has been very supportive of this plan because they can see the merit of it — that we're looking at a plan that goes forward.

Contractors, individuals, suppliers can look at it and see the investments that are being made in the territory as a tool to do business.

It will not serve as a tool to go to the bank and raise money until such a time as they participate and have a contract in hand, so that they can have certainty in the contracting world.

But if you were to take a look at the infrastructure for water, sewer and roads, Dawson City — again, the member opposite talks about ongoing investments in our communities like the Dawson City water project — that contract has already been let. The contract has been let. What we show in our multi-year investment is the progress payments on that project; that's what that is. It's not something that's going to be recontracted out; it's an on-going investment we're making in the Dawson City wastewater sewage treatment plant — that's what we're doing. So it's not some kind of a trick of hand or a financial — like he was commenting on, that somehow the Department of Finance has rigged the books in such a way that it presents a picture to the territory that's incorrect. Certainly the Auditor General has a place in this, because the Auditor General audits books that have already been done.

I remind the member opposite that we project as much as we can forward, but after the job is done, the Auditor General comes in, does our books, reports back to us, and we act on her recommendations. We have in the past. This government is the one that brings the Auditor General in to do an overview of the departments. We do that because it is a management tool to take a look at Highways and Public Works, to take a look at the other departments and see how well they are being run financially. We do that on a regular basis. We are not afraid of the Auditor General. The Auditor General is part and parcel of good governance. Independent of the House, an auditor who is well-respected in the country is certainly a service that we get that makes our government a better government. With that kind of independence, we get recommendations from the Auditor General and we act on those recommendations. If we were to look at our capital project as we move forward, working with the contracting the community, certainly it shows that we are investing. Again, this government in nine years has taken the territory from basically a basket case financially.

The Liberals were running the country and not only presenting NDP budgets to the House, they neglected even to take the ministers' names out of it. That shows how much work they did on that budget. They also had to get an operating loan to make the payroll. They didn't have enough money in the bank to manage the government on a daily basis.

When the NDP was in government, they had money on reserve to meet the payroll and do the things they had to do. The situation the territory was in in 2002 is unexplainable. It's unexplainable how a Liberal government could, in 18 months — just two years — take the economy from where it was when they took over to where it was when we took over.

That's behind us, but when we listen to them day in and day out, talking about the finances of the territory and talking about what we're doing wrong, there's no recommendation of what we could do to improve it. They don't have any answers. All they have is criticism. I go back to an old saying, "The empty drum makes all the noise." In the case of the Liberals, that's factual.

I remind Yukoners and the House that they were only in government for two years of the last hundred years. They had no track record in governance or governing. They mismanaged the territory to such a point, Mr. Speaker, that it's unbelievable

what they did in two years. Never mind that they couldn't count how many members that they had; they went from a majority to a minority and didn't know that they had a minority, so how could you trust them with the economy? How could you trust them with the purse strings of the territory when they can't even count heads around the table? So, again, this multi-year plan came not only out of the government but came out of the contracting community, came out of our partnership with other governments in the territory. It's important to municipalities, to First Nations, to our own government — and going further the Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Contract Association. All these people are demanding a clearer picture of a long-term plan.

There have been many, many discussions about whether we should have two budgets. Should we have an operating budget once a year, or do a capital, or vice versa? We've had this discussion around for the last period of time. Well, that answers that question, Mr. Speaker. We don't have to do two budgets. We've got the forecast out there; we've got the plan, and we've got the resources. I remind you, Mr. Speaker, today we're in good financial straits; the territory is very sound — lowest unemployment in North America — just over three percent. That's the lowest unemployment in North America. We have money in the bank; we can pay our payroll, meet our commitments, all our obligations to our employees — whether it's the pension plan, whether it's Yukon College, whether it's the hospital — all those institutions are covered 100 percent. We did that, Mr. Speaker. That wasn't being done when we took office. All of those things had been neglected for the two-year period — neglected.

We stand here today with a budget that has been presented to the House. The Liberal opposition has said it's incorrect.

Another thing I'd like to remind the members opposite: there's a lot of work to put a budget together. That's why the Liberals — when they presented their budget — didn't do it. They didn't present their budget. They presented the last government's budget. There's a lot of work in putting — by every department — the figures down. I compliment all the people in all the departments who do the hard work. To listen day in and day out as this sitting goes on how, somehow, these figures are incorrect — or actually, even worse, that we're questioning the professionalism of these people who work in these departments. These are very highly qualified people working in these departments to put these figures together — these projections — this financial projection together. They're the ones who are being affected by this conversation. I'm not a trained accountant. I have no degree in accounting. I represent the departments, and I represent them here in the House. I depend on those departments with the capable staff to put the proper figures on the paper in order to participate in the budget that was presented at this sitting.

As far as the multi-year capital plan is concerned, I'd like to compliment the departments — especially Community Services and Highways and Public Works. Obviously, they're a big part of this because Public Works covers all of the public work investments.

Community services affect all the communities. These multi-year capital plans will work. This is a government that will do exactly that. I would say to Yukoners today — and, of course, in the fall we will be talking to them again. But I would say to them that the Liberals are running on empty. The Liberals have not stood up in this House and presented their plan at all. All they have done in this House is question the professionalism of the departments, especially the Finance department and the individuals here in the House.

We are representing Yukoners — this whole House. When people stand up and talk about figures and do this and do that, what the government has to do is to be factual. If I stand up in the House and mention \$12 million, it has to be correct. I have notes here and I have capable individuals working with me to make sure that the figures that I present to the House — that obligation doesn't hold true for the Liberal Party or the members opposite. The figures they mention can just be convenient figures as they throw out this misinformation into the House here.

In turn, we as a government can present to the Yukon people in our campaign, or as we move forward — we're producing a plan. I'd like to remind everybody in the Yukon — because it didn't affect us like it affected other areas in the world — that in the last two years, we went through the worst financial times since the 1930s on a worldwide basis. Because we had the savings account — that was very important here, Mr. Speaker — we rode out that dip in the economy very well. In fact, we came out of it with the lowest unemployment rate in North America. The balanced budget was a surplus — the first one in Canada — and was presented here to the House.

We came out with a strong plan on how to go forward. In looking back, if that's what we want to do, we weathered the storm very well. There's only one province in Canada that did better than we did, and that was Alberta. The territory did very well.

As we look at our departments, and as we critique the departments over the next 20 or 30 days — whatever we have left — I would say to you that it will become apparent — very clear and very apparent — that our government has a plan in every department, whether it's Yukon Housing Corporation replacing our housing stock; whether it's tourism — tourism is up 17 percent. In a depression, it went up 17 percent.

EMR — mining; Education — we've gone on and on about F.H. Collins. Again, conversation in the House here — somehow we cancelled F.H. Collins Secondary School. The government has cancelled it. Well, you can see by the multi-year plan that the investments for infrastructure are going in this year. We're moving forward next year in the actual building of the school. It's not cancelled at all. F.H. Collins is a commitment this government made and F.H. Collins will be built. As we move forward here, everything you build needs infrastructure, needs the proper, finished architectural drawings, needs to have plans in place. This government is investing \$2.7 million to put the infrastructure in place to minimize the impact on the existing school. We're building a school around a school, Mr. Speaker. At the end of the day, we want to minimize the impact we have on the students and the school as a

whole. This government will do it. We are going to replace F.H. Collins. It is going ahead.

We are putting the infrastructure together this year, and you will see work being done on the F. H. Collins school. As we move through infrastructure plans in the ongoing year — and of course the Member for Klondike was very extensive on the amount of money — the Member for Porter Creek South questioned us because we put the land development from \$15 million to \$43 million. I don't know where he got the \$15 million from. That's the largest investment any government has put on the ground as far as land development. He stood up and made it sound like a bad thing — unbelievable, Mr. Speaker. Somehow \$43 million, out of a government that is broke — if you listen to the members opposite; running on empty, if you listen to the members opposite; working with cooked books, if you listen to the members opposite. We're spending \$43 million next year on land development throughout the territory, Whistle Bend included, on infrastructure and on roadwork. That is what this government is doing. The members opposite — the Liberal Party especially — said we were broke. We had no resources, we cooked the books — not we, the department has cooked the books. And we are presenting a budget that is the first balanced budget in Canada and with a healthy surplus.

We're replacing the money that was needed over the last 24 months as we went through the worst depression — or the worse financial crisis — in 50 years. We're running on empty. Well, we're not running on empty. We have the resources and I support the motion. This multi-year capital plan that we put together in partnership with First Nations, municipal governments, ourselves and in consultation with the Chambers of Mines, Chambers of Commerce and the construction community — we're doing just that. Yukoners can see what this government's going to do. We don't know what these guys are going to do. They might table another budget with — well, Mr. Fairclough's name was in it at the time.

### Speaker's statement

**Speaker:** Order please. No mention of other members, please. The honourable minister still has the floor and has a minute and a half left.

**Hon. Mr. Lang:** Anyway, in closing, with the comments we hear from the members opposite, I'm sure that Yukoners can't really take them seriously. We, as a government are going to move forward with their help or without it and make a better Yukon as we forward to prosperity in the territory. We can see it all around us. The members opposite can say whatever they want. It's a better community out in the territory today than it was under the short-lived Liberal government and it's a growing economy.

Again, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Member for Klondike for this very important motion. As we move forward, I look forward to better days in the territory.

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Cardiff:** Before I begin my comments, I'd like to ask all Members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in

welcoming Tracy McPhee, the Ombudsman for the Yukon Territory.

*Applause*

**Mr. Cardiff:** I appreciate the member opposite's attempt with this motion. First of all, we should look at it for what it really is. This is nothing but blatant electioneering in the Legislature. We hear the Minister of Community Services, Highways and Public Works, talking about balanced budgets. We haven't seen a balanced budget from this government in the territory. They run deficits when you look at the supplementary budgets.

The motion and the idea of multi-year capital plans are nice ideas and, as was indicated earlier by the Member for Porter Creek South, this is something that was done by previous governments. This government chose this, and I'm glad that they decided to follow the lead of previous New Democratic governments and do that. I remember conversations with the Premier at the time about exactly that — about having projects on the shelf ready to go — shovel-ready, so to speak — so that when economic times were a little tough, we had the tools to stimulate the economy and bring these projects on-line and actually create employment here in the territory for Yukoners. It is a good idea. Unfortunately, as has been pointed out — and it is unfortunate — I don't believe the Minister of Community Services will probably pay attention, they lack credibility. The minister just stood on the floor of this House and asked where the Member for Porter Creek South got the \$15 million for land development. Well, it came from their capital plan last year. It's right there in black and white. It says \$15.1 million for land development. So that's what contractors were planning on for this year — \$15 million. Now they find out that it's actually \$41 million, or \$42 million. So there's not much credibility there.

Look at Education — F.H. Collins school. Last year they said that the forecast was going to be for \$24.4 million. This year it's actually \$2.7, so they planned for that project, but where is it? That's a government policy decision. I see a good side and a bad side to this decision. But I don't know what the reasons are. I don't know what the policy of the government is around this and why exactly they're doing that.

So let's talk a little bit about the government's plans and exactly what the government's plans are. We saw this discrepancy with F.H. Collins. Now if it's about ensuring that the engineering and the development work — the design work — is done appropriately so that when the contractors bid the job, they have an idea of what it is, I'm sure the contractors will tell you that that's a good idea — unlike what happened at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre where it was fast-tracked and design and engineering was actually behind.

Just so members understand what happens here — as somebody who has worked in the construction industry and still maintains close ties with the construction industries, this is how it works: if it's not designed properly, if the engineering's not done properly, what you end up with is — you install it, and then you take it out. Then you install it again, and then you take it out. Then you install it again, and then you move it.

Now, that's good if you're a construction worker, because you get paid the same amount of money whether you install it or you take it out or you move it or whatever you do. But if you're doing the job two or three times, that's how you end up with cost overruns. What I've heard from the Department of Justice is that the Department of Highways and Public Works is telling us it's on time and on budget. I looked at officials from the Department of Justice this morning, and I said, "Do you really believe that?" I find it hard to believe, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Cardiff:** The Minister of Justice is chirping in here a little bit about it being on time and on budget, but I would hazard a guess that it's probably not.

How about this for planning and letting the private sector know exactly what your plans are? We can go back several years to the Watson Lake health care centre. Here's \$5 million; we're going to build a new health care centre. Contractors wanted to bid on the project, and they bid on it, and what do we have now? We have a \$25-million hospital. Where is the long-term planning around that? How are they notifying the private sector about that? That wasn't included in any of the forecasts.

Let's go back to an election year, 2006, when the Minister of Health and Social Services announced major renovations at the Thomson Centre. What did we hear at the beginning of this sitting? Major renovations at the Thomson Centre — and it's still not complete. So four and one-half years later, the Thomson Centre is still not in operation. Now, what signal does that send to the private sector?

Just for the information of the Member for Klondike and the government, I've got some problems with actually urging the private sector to do this because, quite frankly, I think in a lot of ways it lacks some credibility, but it's actually something similar to what the government does on a regular basis. They bring forward motions looking for unanimous consent, urging the government to do something that it is either already doing or something that it is about to announce. Well, I've got news for the government. The private sector does this already. It has been doing it for years. It has been looking at capital budgets; it has been planning how it structures its organization and the work that it is going to do by looking at capital budgets, by looking at tender forecasts, so it is something that the private sector already does. As someone who worked in the construction industry, I am quite familiar with how that works.

One other thing, Mr. Speaker, that we saw here on the floor of the Legislative Assembly today is — and we actually witnessed something here in the Legislature yesterday that was quite unfortunate. The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin asked the Minister of Community Services about the Old Crow well, and the minister got up and read from his briefing note and read what the schedule was. The reality is that all this stuff is going forward. He read it like it was a done deal, that all the approvals through YESAA and the permitting would be done by April of 2011, so it is something that hasn't even happened. Then we have the Member for Klondike this afternoon announcing that there is \$1 million in the capital plan. Well, I challenge that member to stand up — to close debate on this — and show us in the book where that \$1 million is, because nowhere in this

forecast does it show \$1 million for the Old Crow well. There is money in there for solid waste, and there is money in there for a road upgrade, but there is no money in there for the well.

There's no line item. It's not in the forecast. Maybe the Member for Klondike overstepped his authority here and made a budget announcement that isn't even in the budget.

While the government is forecasting all this construction work and work that needs to be done, it is a matter of policy and it is a matter of vision. We've had billion-dollar budgets for some time now, yet nowhere in this forecast — it's not just private contractors; it's not just the private sector that's going to look at this and look for hope for the future. It's Yukon citizens.

I'm looking at the forecast here. I have the forecast from last year and the forecast from this year in front of me, and I see absolutely nothing — absolutely nothing — that would give hope to people who are having difficulty finding a place to live. We're talking about the people who are going to be evicted at the end of the month — very shortly. We're talking about young people. Millions and millions of dollars have been spent on affordable housing in the Copper Ridge and Logan subdivisions and up in Arkell and all that. There are lots of homes up there. There are affordable housing projects in Riverdale for single parents. There are seniors facilities. But when it comes to young people and those people who are struggling with addictions — and they look at this, where's the hope? You know what would be really novel? I see the Government House Leader nodding, and I trust that she will have something to say about this when she gets her turn. When young people look at this budget, what hope do they have for an emergency youth shelter? Zip, nada, not there. They can't live in hope; they have been living in hope for years.

Let's talk a little bit about how hot the economy is. The Member for Southern Lakes was talking about that a little bit the other day. I've heard members on the other side of the House talk about how good the economy is and how much work there is. Well, why are people still struggling to find jobs?

If you go to Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport — which was something the Member for Klondike talked about and all the work that has been done there. Well, great — now we have an international air terminal. I've made several flights over the last couple of years and it's interesting — depending on the time of week that you fly, you'll be on the airplane with construction workers who are either working at mines or the Whitehorse correctional facility, working drywall, bricklaying, working on some of the mechanical systems — we're importing labour from Outside. The government wants to talk about a U-Haul economy — how about we talk about the fly-in/fly-out economy, where we're providing employment for people from other jurisdictions, who are paying taxes in other jurisdictions? We're providing them with jobs, while there are people in this territory who are struggling to find places to live, struggling to find employment, struggling to get training to get on some of those jobs — but we're flying people in and out.

Now we have an international air terminal. We have the Yukon nominee program and the foreign worker program.

Are we going to be importing workers from other countries? Are we going to have a fly-in/fly-out economy, or are we going to have an economy that serves Yukoners? That is what these capital plans need to reflect, and the approach needs to be measured. It's not a matter for the department — and the Minister of Community Services says that, because we don't believe the numbers, we don't believe the bureaucrats. It's not the bureaucrats. The bureaucrats we believe. It's the government; it's the members on the other side of the House who are creating the policy for how this work is done. Is it that kind of economy? Is that what the private sector should be looking for? How to import workers so that they can keep up with all the capital construction projects and work that needs to be done? Maybe they should buy passes on Air North and Air Canada so their employees can come in. Is that what it is, Mr. Speaker?

I would like to just go back a little bit to this whole concept of how projects move forward, because I would be remiss not to ensure that I get on record what needs to actually be said here. This is to do with how projects are moved forward — what's happening at the Whitehorse Correctional facility and what has happened with several other projects in this territory. That's the idea of fast-tracking and not having the engineering and the design work done so that the work gets done properly. Tied in with that is that the government has decided a number of times to go with what's called a design/build process. I can tell you right now that the contracting community has some concerns and problems with that process. Contractors in this territory need to be treated fairly and they need to be treated equitably. So when you get into this whole concept of a design/build process, the government throws out a concept and says, "This is what we're looking for; you design it and you build it." It takes a lot of time to go from a concept to actually taking that to something where you've got a bit of a design and you've got the pre-engineering work and it costs, in some instances, such as for the Dawson City sewage treatment project, hundreds of thousands of dollars to do.

The contractors expect to be treated fairly and equitably in the process. When they're not treated fairly and equitably in that process, they need to be reimbursed for their costs, because they made an incredible investment of their own time and the time of others getting engineering work done, bringing together a team, hoping they are going to be successful. Then when for some reason they find out that they are not successful, they're out of pocket. So we need to look. All these capital plans are great, but we need to ensure that they are managed properly. I don't believe that this government has the policies in place to actually manage them in an appropriate manner, because what I am hearing — what people are telling me — is that they are not happy with the process. The motion is a very nice idea, but once again, I think we should look at it for what it really is. It is nothing but pure, blatant electioneering in the Legislative Assembly going into an election year. That's what it is. It's urging the private sector to do something that they already do.

In the interest of offering some constructive criticism, I hope that the members opposite have listened to what it is that I've heard and my experience with the contracting community and the private sector, that they take some of that to heart and

will actually make some changes. Because if they don't make the changes, the changes will be made come this fall anyhow.

**Hon. Mr. Kenyon:** I'd like to thank the Member for Mount Lorne very much for his electioneering speech, complaining about electioneering. It's always interesting to listen to debate here in the House.

The Government of Yukon's 2011-12 capital and operation and maintenance budgets, totalling \$1,089,000,000 was tabled, of course. The budget is balanced and results in a healthy savings account for Yukon. Our government has been strategic in planning and preparing for the previous eight budgets and we're seeing success through the lowest unemployment rate in Canada — certainly the lowest unemployment rate in North America.

I hear members opposite complaining about that, but I would say the best in North America is pretty darn good at this point.

I do have to correct my esteemed colleague, the Minister of Community Services, when he mentioned earlier that we are close to Alberta. In fact, Alberta and Yukon are the only jurisdictions in Canada that have no net debt and in fact, on a per capita basis, we are ahead of Alberta. We have a lower unemployment rate than Alberta and we are one of only two jurisdictions in all of Canada that had a positive GDP last year. Alberta was not the other one. So we are doing quite well, I would submit, overall.

Direction from the Council of the Federation and the federal government has been to go to surplus budgets, and I am very pleased to say that Yukon is the first jurisdiction in Canada to table a surplus budget, along with a healthy savings account. Now, what do you do with a savings account? The members opposite, the Liberal leader, has repeatedly suggested that we let the savings account build and that we not touch it; that we not draw down on it. I don't think that is consistent with any financial advisor that I have ever talked to. I think most people who have a small savings account, or a large savings account, or any savings account, will recognize the need to draw down on that occasionally.

That's what we did. We drew down on that savings account and, as the Member for Porter Creek South put it, he didn't even notice there was a recession. I take that as a high compliment. While there were some effects here, we managed to come through probably as unscathed as any jurisdiction in the world — certainly in Canada and probably North America. But the member opposite didn't notice a recession. Boy, I take that as a high compliment.

Now, the 2011-12 budget includes a multi-year capital plan and a schedule for very specific capital projects. That provides the direction over the next four years. It identifies capital priorities and their related expenditures over the next four years. Although subject to revision each year, the multi-year capital plan provides an overview for the Government of Yukon's future capital expenditure priorities. As a framework document, the multi-year capital plan really highlights the multi-year sustainable level of capital investment targeted by the government.

Now, again, the Member for Porter Creek South suggested in his speech yesterday that there were a lot of things that he just couldn't see coming. You can't see those things coming. You know, I guess you can't see a broken leg or a medical case that requires a patient to be flown out. This government would respond to those. We have to. It's only reasonable and it's only fair.

But as the Leader of the Liberal Party put it, he would do everything in his power to maintain that budget that he would present and to live by it, which kind of implies that he would not respond to unforeseen circumstances. That, of course, draws the immediate question: what would he cut? Where else would he cut back? Or, would he leave a patient untreated? Would he leave people without services? Would he close a road because he didn't want to fix the potholes that suddenly appeared there? Not reasonable at all, I submit, Mr. Speaker.

When you start looking at some of the things that are involved in that — and I do have a long list — we're partway through the responses to the budget, so I do give the members opposite some latitude. But when members opposite complain, for instance, that there has been no action on the Old Crow water supply, if you delve into the budget and actually attend the opposition briefings in the departments, it would quickly become clear that in the Building Canada annual capital plan for next year is Old Crow water supply upgrades — upgrades to Old Crow's drinking water system to comply with environmental health regulations.

The money is there, Mr. Speaker. To say that it is not, simply shows either an inability to read financial documents — and I can understand that — or simply not reading them, which is perhaps more the problem in many respects.

I heard the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin agreeing with me off-microphone, and I appreciate his comments on that.

When you start looking at things within that multi-year capital project, Dawson sewage and district heating — \$21,000,768 in 2011-12, in arsenic treatment upgrades. And I do have to point out to people that arsenic is a naturally occurring element in the Yukon. We live in a high-arsenic zone. So this is not a problem, as some people thought when it originally became a problem in the Marsh Lake area, and it was noticed that the arsenic levels were high — it was actually the federal government dropping the safe levels in an area that has naturally occurring arsenic.

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations water truck stop; Rock Creek water supply upgrades; Deep Creek water treatment plant; Beaver Creek road upgrades; territory-wide transfer stations; recycling and sorting facilities; Old Crow upgrade to solid-waste facility — and the list keeps going on and on.

There is just so much ability to predict in the future what is going to be happening in there, and it is a prediction. Now, somehow members of the Liberal Party seem to think that they have the crystal ball and can see ahead and they can understand what's going to happen in the future. Interesting, when one member says that they can see what's happening and make those predictions, and the next member stands up and says that you couldn't see that coming — couldn't possibly understand that. That's a little scary.

It is a debate, in general, over those last few days and the next few days, on the budget and it is the responsibility of the Official Opposition to hold the government accountable — we understand that — with reasonable criticism and, preferably, suggestions as to how to handle things better. Suggest improvements — what a marvellous concept to do that. But we don't see that, and that becomes the problem on this.

I go back to how some of the Liberal members themselves look at this. I had forgotten, and I thank the Minister of Community Services for reminding us of the short-lived Liberal government — the shortest lived majority government in the history of the Commonwealth of Nations — and you've got to be really trying to hold that record.

I look back at the Member for Mayo-Tatchun who, in *Hansard* on November 7, 2001, said, "When you vote Liberal, you are prepared to throw your values out the window. You are prepared to forget everything you've heard and hang on for the ride and expect darn near anything they'll throw at you, because the decisions will be made in the backroom with their backroom friends."

Mr. Speaker, it's rhetoric, I know, and the Member for Mayo-Tatchun is smiling, but interesting now that he has migrated to another party, he says the same thing about another party — exactly the same thing and, in some cases, in the same words. Again, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin is saying, off-microphone, that he agrees with me. I appreciate his comments on that. Wonderful show there, Mr. Speaker. It's just actually kind of scary when you start going through some of the past on this. As I say, the rhetoric is rhetoric, and we understand that.

As the Leader of the Official Opposition has said outside of this House, "Well, it's all politics; we don't really mean that." Well, that's the good thing about being in opposition. You can say anything you want. You don't have to actually be accurate with it. You can say anything you want and you can criticize anything you want, because you are not required to come back and give your opinion of how it should be done. That was pretty obvious when the Liberal government — when they were elected, they tabled the NDP budget. They did it in such a marvelous way. They didn't even take the NDP ministers off the budget documents. The NDP ministers were named in the budget documents that were tabled. Priceless — the amount of work that went into that budget — it's just, you know, quite unusual. Now, when you start looking at some of the other things that have happened — and again, it's really quite interesting to get into this — but I do have to question the criticism coming from the Leader of the Liberal Party — the party that brought this government from 60 to zero in 22 months. A U-Haul economy — people were leaving in droves — the highest unemployment rate in decades — double-digit unemployment. Under a Yukon Party government, 3.6 percent — the best in North America. Wow — what a comparison to take to the electorate. But I don't want to be electioneering, Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Mount Lorne puts it — it's an electioneering speech in electioneering times, and I do appreciate his electioneering speeches at the same time.

We have a long-range plan that has been laid out in this document and laid out in so many ways within this budget. For

instance, in attracting investment to the territory, where, depending on which accountant you talk to, at least \$400 million to \$500 million have come in from Asia. When you look at what those businesses have actually invested after they came here, I would submit that we're probably well over \$1 billion. When you start looking at the Liberal plan on that, they went to a trade mission to China. They got there during the Chinese holidays. They were quite surprised to find most of the offices closed. Good research on that one.

Again, I quote from *Hansard*, on February 28, 2001, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun who was at that point in the New Democratic Party: "How did the Premier feel on her trip to China when standing beside the Canadian team and the Prime Minister, making deals with China to sell cigarettes there? How did the Premier feel about that?"

Well, I'm not really sure if that benefited the cigarette industry in the Yukon. Somehow I have a feeling that really didn't have an awful lot to do with the cigarette industry here. We would go over to promote Yukon business. Yet the members opposite criticize that. How dare we go over and actually promote an economy that has taken off, one of only two positive GDPs in Canada — and the other one isn't Alberta. We have the lowest unemployment in North America — these were the things that we have been able to accomplish.

When you look at long-range planning — and I do realize that 22 months was not a particularly long time to do any kind of long-range planning. Given the fact that they left the NDP ministers' names on the documents they tabled, I would say it wasn't really a good time to do short-term planning. Again, the electorate has to be the judge of that.

We have to go back and look at all these various things. We take criticism on a daily basis for the housing situation in the Yukon, and I do agree that we have a definite problem. The good folk at Yukon Housing Corporation are working on that; this government is working on that. I realize that in 22 months there wasn't the time to do much of anything, certainly given the planning expertise that we saw, but in two NDP governments, they didn't build a single, solitary social housing unit.

We've increased the inventory by 40 percent. Now I hope the NDP do have some solutions for that, and we are always glad to hear them, but I hope they are better than the solutions of the last two NDP governments.

Basically the historical stuff you have to look back at is really quite frightening when you start looking at all of this stuff. That's what we have tried to get around in this long-term plan. Give us an idea of what is going to happen in the future, where we are going and in what direction. It may not be written in stone — we know that. You may plan a project and find that the planning is incomplete, and that you have to take it a little bit further. The Liberal solution to that is to build it. Go ahead and do it, what the heck. Put in a driver's licence. Don't worry about what Homeland Security in the United States says. Don't worry about what the Department of State says. Don't worry about the fact that we may not have a use for that driver's licence. It may not be consistent with anything else in North America, but do it now. What the heck, if we do it wrong, we'll just do it again. We would rather do it right. That's why this

government, through PNWER and long-term planning, which is all part of this, looks at where we are going in the future and how that is going to unfold.

The idea of Economic Development, which is key to any kind of long-term planning — what was the Liberals' solution? Completely fold the Department of Economic Development. Do away with it; scatter the employees. What was the solution with the Women's Directorate? Yes, fold that, we don't need it. We reinstated the Women's Directorate, we reinstated the Department of Economic Development and we have, I think, made great strides when you consider the statistics. You don't have to look at any more of those statistics to know the progress that has been made. I've mentioned in this House before, and I do have a concern — I have had some on this side of the House be concerned that I've put it this way — 3.6 percent unemployment, which is the best in North America. And yes, we are very proud of that, but it also concerns me because what that means, according to most economists that I've talked to, is that there is probably a level of unemployment that is not only acceptable, but it's desirable. There are people who need to rely on that social safety net. They have to, and 3.6 percent tells me that we are starting to get into the range and people are working who perhaps should not be.

Now, does that — you know, are there people looking for jobs? Yes, I'm sure there are. I'm suspicious, given the statistics that we see — basically, it's easy to sit back and say, well, if you want a job, you've got one. You know, if you have a pulse, you can find a job. It may not be the job you want. It may not be convenient, but there is something that you can be doing. But there is a point where some people really should be relying on that safety net, and that is a concern to me and this government. So, with those comments, I will yield the floor to members opposite or to other activities.

**Mr. Fairclough:** I'll try to be short in response to the Member for Klondike's motion that's on the floor today. I just heard the previous speaker talk about years back when they have a big budget in front of them and they should be proud in promoting it. What we've seen is them looking in their rear-view mirror, blaming other governments for things that went on 10 years plus ago. He didn't mention anything about the fact that his leader said all kinds of things in 2001 about the Yukon Party.

He didn't mention that at all. I also want to point out that the Member for Klondike probably spent a lot of time writing this motion and feeling that this is the right time to bring it forward. This Yukon Party government has been in power now for close to nine years and they're now urging the private sector to look at their budget, for crying out loud. Don't you think they do it already, as was said by the Member for Mount Lorne? Of course they do. They look at government spending all the time. The Yukon Party now wants to urge them to look at their long-term capital plan, like it's a good thing that they're doing, like there's certainty out there or something like that.

Let's have a look at F.H. Collins school, for example. They did alert the contracting community to the fact that they were going to build a school. Guess what? It didn't show up in

this year's budget — no \$24.4 million showed up in this budget. They took it out. What happened? They pushed it back a year. It just happened to be over \$20 million and it just happened that \$20 million was what it took to balance the budget. Isn't that interesting?

What about other things?

The Minister of Finance in his budget speech said that all that they have done over the years is good fiscal management — "prudent fiscal management" is what he said. We pointed out time and time again that it is not. When you say to the public, "We're going to have a balanced budget," and then the following year we learn that we're going into a deficit, well, that's not prudent fiscal management. Then the next year, you say, "Believe me this time. This year, we're going to have a balanced budget and we're going to have a surplus." Guess what? We're going into another deficit? You know what? The Premier stood on his feet again and said, "We've got a balanced budget. We're not going into a deficit at all." Yukoners don't buy it. We hear it on the street time and time again. This motion, Mr. Speaker, has nothing to do with really urging the government to make improvements down the road; it's urging the private contractors out there to look at government budgets, which they already do.

Let's take, for example, another one. The Premier says that they are good fiscal managers on, say, the hospital, or whatever they called it at the beginning in Watson Lake. They said, "We're going to spend \$5 million and you'll have the facility, the extended care facility", which now turned into a hospital.

The price just goes up and up and up. They can't say to the public now that that was good and prudent fiscal management. That project went from \$5 million to \$25 million and who knows when it's going to end.

Here's another one that the Yukon Party doesn't seem to brag about too much — the Whitehorse Correctional Centre. Here, they took a plan that was \$30 million — and at that time they complained about it and called it a Cadillac facility. That's what they called it. Next thing, they turned it into a warehouse, and it went from \$30 million to \$50 million to \$60 million, and they're still telling the public, "We're good, prudent, fiscal managers." Now it's \$70 million — and who knows where it's going to go from there. "Good fiscal managers," they said. You know what? They took the footprint of that jail from what it was before and they built on it — same thing. Isn't that something? Then they said they're going to work with the general public and a consultation will take place. How many years in this House have I asked the government to do proper consultation and they didn't.

You know what it resulted in? The whole mandate of the Yukon Party in court with First Nations — the whole mandate. Frustration out there in the public — and they say they don't know why there would be a reason the public wouldn't vote for the Yukon Party. We're hearing some loud noises from the bottom of the barrel from the Yukon Party.

We had demonstrations outside this House from First Nations in regard to the school in Carmacks. You know what? They had very choice words on their signs — things like "Dictator go, mahsi' cho". Isn't that a pretty major message? The

Yukon Party barely squeaked in during the last election — by some 300 votes. They could have been sitting on this side of the House. Sixty percent of Yukoners said they don't put their trust in the Yukon Party, and now its popularity has fallen even more. They're struggling, and it's an act of desperation to bring forward a motion like this because, of course, there is an election soon, and all they can do right now — and we heard it from the Premier who, in my view, isn't acting like a premier. He's blaming the Yukon Liberal Party and the New Democrats for everything that happened, and he doesn't give credit where credit is due.

Let's look at a couple of those that boost the economy here in the territory. One of them was the First Nation final agreements that gave certainty to this territory — had nothing to do with the Yukon Party at all. The other one was devolution, which the Yukon Party didn't ever support, and now they brag about it. Those were bringing certainty to the territory. The development community knows that and to this day, when we talk to the mining community, say, at the Roundup in Vancouver, they bring those words out to us. They don't see the Yukon Party in government at all in the next term. Everybody feels a change. I can see it on the faces of the members opposite. They don't like their leader; they don't support him. They said they would improve decorum in this House. It has gone downhill with the Premier himself, who, probably, if you looked at the record, has been called to order — not by prompting on the opposition side at all, but straight from the Speaker — more times than anybody else in the territory.

#### Speaker's statement

**Speaker:** Order please. Two things: first, honourable member, please don't involve the Speaker in this debate. I am here simply to arbitrate, not be part of the debate. Secondly, I think we will now recess.

According to Motion No. 1255, adopted by the House on Tuesday, February 8, 2011, the House will now recess in order to receive an address from His Excellency the Governor General of Canada.

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Speaker:** However, prior to recessing the House, I would like all honourable members to join me in welcoming our new Commissioner, the Hon. Doug Phillips, and his wife Dale Stokes, please.

*Applause*

#### ADDRESS BY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA

**Speaker:** The Chair would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort Their Excellencies and the Hon. Premier into the Chamber.

*Their Excellencies the Governor General of Canada, the Rt. Hon. David Johnston, and Mrs. Sharon Johnston, and the Hon. Dennis Fentie, Premier of Yukon, enter the Chamber, announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms*

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Fellow members, distinguished and honoured guests, please join me in making welcome Their Ex-

cellencies the Governor General of Canada, the Rt. Hon. David Johnston, and his lovely wife, Sharon Johnston.

Welcome, Your Excellencies.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Members, please be seated.

**Rt. Hon. David Johnston:** Commissioner Phillips, Premier Fentie, Speaker Staffen, Members of the Legislative Assembly, let me begin by thanking you for the warm welcome you have extended to my wife, Sharon, and me since our arrival in the Yukon.

As you know, this is our first official visit to the Yukon — omit the “the” — to Yukon, and it's an honour to be invited to speak today before the Legislative Assembly.

This is my third visit here and I will come back again many times. The first, in fact, was about 20 years ago. I was the founding chair of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. We met here in Whitehorse and we met in Haines Junction. If my memory serves me, it was at those meetings that we developed the notion of taking sustainable development, which at that time was a relatively new concept from the Brundtland Commission, and we began the steps that got the test of sustainable development placed in all federal public legislation thereafter. That is, any time an act was passed by the Parliament of Canada, it would have to meet appropriate sustainable development standards, something that was very important to Canada and I think the world. The concept of sustainable development, in a sense, had its birth right here in Yukon. I can't think of a more appropriate place for something like sustainable development to have its birth.

As you know, this is our first official visit to Yukon, and we're honoured to be able to be with you today and for me to speak before the Legislative Assembly.

Yukoners have a long history of working together and developing solutions that work for northerners, and I want to congratulate you, as sincerely as I can, on your many past and present successes. What has happened here in evolving new methods of government, taking something from the old, taking something from different traditions, melding together different cultures, different customs, different practices, in establishing a framework of law and custom that works so that people can build permanent, prosperous, happy and healthy communities is something that I think is truly a model for the rest of the country and for the entire world.

*[Rt. Hon. David Johnston spoke in French. Text unavailable.]*

The north has long captured our imagination in so many different ways and, today, Yukon captures the world's attention. Along with your leadership in climate change research and innovation, Yukoners are breaking new ground in education and training, native language studies and circumpolar research. You have also taken, as I mentioned a moment ago, great strides in self-governance, becoming an example to the rest of the world.

Since my installation, I have been inviting Canadians to join me in imagining our country as it could be. We strive for a

smart and caring nation, and both adjectives are important — smart and caring — where all Canadians can succeed, contribute and develop their talents to the fullest potential; that is, taking from within each one of us and developing that talent just as far as it possibly can go and maybe even a little bit further. Coupled with that, we want to be a nation that increases and applies the knowledge of its citizens to improve the condition of all — at home and around the world, to see knowledge and the smartness of knowledge as an advantage for us in building healthy communities and being a competitive nation around the world. To achieve this vision, in my installation speech, which was entitled, *A Smart and Caring Nation: A Call to Service*, I envisioned three pillars: one supporting families and children; the second reinforcing learning and innovation; and the third encouraging philanthropy and volunteerism.

I know that supporting families is important to Yukoners. In remote communities, neighbour often relies on neighbour. Close-knit families count on each other for support.

Sharon and I live in Waterloo County. We actually live on a farm just outside of the Village of Heidelberg, about an 11-minute drive from the university where I had been president for the last 12 years — the University of Waterloo. We live on a 100-acre Mennonite farm, so our neighbours are all Mennonite. They are horse and buggy people; they use tractors on their land, but they conduct themselves by horse and buggy. They have a wonderful tradition of barn raising. Whenever a newcomer moves into the area, all the neighbours gather round and build a barn. If a barn burns down, the neighbours gather to help a neighbour rebuild it.

Sharon runs a horse stable operation with 30 horses; it's very difficult to do this on a break-even basis — horses eat a lot of hay — and the insurance rates were going up and she was trying to re-evaluate each property and each of the buildings on the farm to be sure that she had the replacement value adequate but no higher than necessary to keep the premiums under control. Our neighbour, Edgar Chance — Mennonite, horse and buggy guy — was there on his tractor at the time she was doing this.

She said, "Edgar, what would be the value of that drive shed if we had to replace it? I put \$20,000 on it. Do you think that's about right?" He said, "What do you mean, replace it? And why do you put a value on it?" She said, "We need to insure it in case of fire." He said, "Why would you insure it?" She said, "Well, if it burns down, we have to replace it." He said, "If it burns down, we'd replace it. That's what neighbours do."

Out of that notion of barn raising has come something called the barn raisers council in our area, which brings volunteers from different segments of our society — public institutions, private sector and so on — to establish those great visions of a community looking five, 10, 15, 20 years out. One of the early ones that we fastened on was important to me and it had to do with learning and innovation, building great knowledge institutions. The next one had to do with building art and culture in a more substantial way into our community, both for the development and edification of our sense of our place and the artistic features of it, but also art and culture as an industry.

This notion of barn raising has been an important theme in everything we've done, neighbour helping neighbour.

Learning and innovation are priorities in the Yukon. The development of a knowledge economy through institutions such as Yukon College is an exciting development for the north and for subarctic regions around the world.

Just a few moments ago, as I was chatting with Premier Fentie, he was describing his notion of Yukon College joining with other educational institutions in the north, where one has the sum that is much greater than the addition of each of the parts — a kind of virtual higher education network, where each contributes to the other and, as a consequence, raises the whole. The smart and caring nation that we envision will provide its people every opportunity to grow intellectually to the best of their ability. Canada should build a nation that learns, but it must also foster a nation that cares, a nation that looks outward beyond its borders to the wider world. In a globalized world, leadership comes from the strength of our ideas and the pace of our innovation. Through your commitment to learning and innovation, volunteerism, philanthropy, a strong sense of family and community, Yukoners are taking charge of their own destiny.

I want to extend to you my appreciation for answering the call to service in so many ways, and I want to encourage you to continue your efforts as we move toward a smarter, more caring Canada. I want to thank you for being such an example to all of the rest of us. Merci.

*Their Excellencies the Governor General of Canada, the Rt. Hon. David Johnston, and Mrs. Sharon Johnston leave the Chamber*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order. Please be seated.

#### **Debate on Motion No. 1260 resumed**

**Mr. Fairclough:** Mr. Speaker, the Member for Klondike brought forward a motion for us to debate — one he felt was pressing.

I've listed off a few things that this Yukon Party government has done over the last little while. What we've been hearing out there in the general public is that they see the Yukon Party as a tired government, as a tired party governing this nation. They see that the Yukon Party can't be trusted on their word in this Legislature and outside of this House. We've seen it time and time again. When they say one thing and do another, the general public questions that.

They campaigned on improving decorum in this House and we've seen the total opposite of that, particularly coming from the Premier himself, and that was classic in the budget speech he read out in this House last week. All the Yukon Party feels what they can do right now is to say that the Liberals are bad, the NDP are bad, and they cannot govern this territory.

They feel and they think that they are the only party that can govern in the territory. Well, I think they're going to have a surprise in the next election. People are fed up. They're tired of broken promises. They're tired of the government saying one thing and doing another. They're tired of this government say-

ing, "We've made a decision. How do you like us now? Now we can consult." They're doing it backwards. That's what took place with the Yukon Party government over their two mandates. They were lucky to get back in the last time. They are lucky that the federal government has a pot of money that comes to the territory. They are lucky that the resources and metal prices have turned around and climbed so high. In 2002, when the Yukon Party took over, the price of gold was \$260 an ounce and it's \$1,300 now. Don't you think the private sector will take an interest in that and start spending some money out there? Well, of course. We've been hearing this at the Roundup in Vancouver over and over and over again. Private sector is driving the economy here in the territory.

There are good things to say that the Yukon Party has done. I'm not going to totally say the Yukon Party has been bad. We've had projects in the communities, and I know the members opposite say, "Why don't you vote for them?" We support them, of course. The budgets aren't going to fall by us voting against them. They're going to pass; we realize that, and they do too.

Our vote for the budget this year and in previous years is a confidence vote, and we're going to vote on the side of Yukoners who want a change and to see a different government and a different party governing this territory. That's what we're hearing, time and time again. I'm sure the Yukon Party members all know it; they've been hearing it on the streets. That change is going to happen.

I feel that the Yukon Party is going down the road, or the Premier is, without his team behind him in the way he conducts himself here in the Legislature and outside it. When you promise and say to the public, "We have a project here. It's going to cost \$5 million" and then, in a matter of a year, it turns into \$25 million, well, you lose the trust of the people.

That is what has taken place in this mandate of the Yukon Party and they are asking: why does the public want to vote for any party other than the Yukon Party? I'll lay out a few reasons for the members opposite to think about. It's not as if the Yukon and its finances from Ottawa are going to be drastically cut. It will be there. Those monies will be coming from the taxes and royalty revenues. Those will be there. As a matter of fact, 10 years down the road, should some of the big developments happen, there will be all kinds of money as far as royalty revenues coming, but right now they will be going to Ottawa.

I was pretty surprised at the Premier's reaction when it came to fighting for Yukon to keep some of our royalty revenues here in the territory. There was no fight for Yukon, actually. Talking to the development community, some of them out there — and it's a very short time since we started the sitting — they agree. That was an issue that was brought up to us at the Roundup in Vancouver. It was an issue that was brought up to us by the leaders of the First Nations — the chiefs. They are talking about it. They are dealing with it. It doesn't seem to be of great interest on the part of the Yukon Party.

Now we have heard some of the ministers say how they like to plan, they like to talk with the people — those who are affected by decisions they made. Well, I didn't hear a whole lot of discussion take place when they were building the extended

care facility in Watson Lake to turn it into a hospital — how it would affect the Yukon in general. That discussion didn't take place. They made the decision and said, "How do you like us now?" Yukoners don't like it, and they will definitely have a say — five minutes left, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

What about other things I've talked about here? No credit was given to the First Nations. The Yukon Party said, "We did it all since 2002." Well, that planning that took place years back with regard to the land claim negotiations didn't happen with the Yukon Party. There was no diversification of the economy by the Yukon Party at all. Those negotiations took place with a different party that happened to be the New Democratic Party, and when the Yukon Party got in, they ended up signing on the dotted line. The work was already done.

I hear the Environment minister say, "Look how good we are — we have all kinds of habitat protection areas and parks and protected areas in the territory." Those were done through First Nations. It wasn't initiated through the Yukon government — not at all. The Yukon government was part of that process but it was the lead of the First Nations that happened here, and they know it. You know what? When we meet with the leaders, they bring this up time and time again — "This is ours." Where was the Yukon Party when the development of the Nordenskiöld special management area took place? They brag about it today, but they sure as heck weren't there in putting that together. They were not part of it, but now they're signing on the dotted line because, hey, what else could they do?

When it comes to planning schools, five were built. There was a planning session that took place with the chairs of school councils and it survived three different parties that governed the territory. I would say putting the decision back into the people's hands was a good move.

The Yukon Party had a challenge to build a school in Burwash, which I never hear anything about any more, and F. H. Collins school — they failed at both. They said in this House that the Yukon Party is going to build a school — an F.H. Collins school, a replacement. But you know what? That's not going to happen. The Yukon Party is not going to be there. It's a big-dollar item and, from what I hear from the Education minister, that amount of money for the replacement of the F. H. Collins school has already grown by some \$6 million, in a matter of months. The Premier says, "If this isn't prudent fiscal management, I don't know what is." That's his message to the general public right now. Well, there's a lot to be said about that, and Yukoners are smart people — a lot of educated, smart people here — and they can read the Yukon Party. We know that this is a tired Premier and a tired government and they are on their way out. The public do not trust them any more. They have lost the trust of the public. We have heard that over and over. Just walk down the street here and talk to people, and they will tell you the same thing.

They will say that they tell us that this is a government that cannot be trusted and they are a tired, tired government and they need to go. The Yukon Party is trying to say other people are to blame — still blaming people. Isn't that incredible? Two mandates and they still can't get over it, as if they want to be in

opposition so badly. Well, they're going to have their opportunity to do that, because they are coming on this side of the House, and they will be replaced in the next election. However they go about doing this, all of the projects that they have listed — man, I could think of some of the contracts that took place under the Yukon Party that even frustrated contractors, like the building of the Dawson City bridge and so on. Not good things have been said in regard to that. That's it?

**Speaker:** That's it.

**Hon. Ms. Horne:** I would like to talk about this motion for a few minutes today. Yukoners have shared with me how they wish that they could do more long-range business planning. One of the ideas put forward was to do a fall capital budget, so the budgets approved in the fall could be planned, designed and tendered for the next summer's work.

I am given to understand that a fall capital budget creates its own set of issues and that a one-budget approach doesn't really make sense. It is not good for planning.

I like the approach of a five-year capital plan. I would just like to make a comment to something the Member for Mayo-Tatchun said. Contrary to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, we aren't saying the Liberals are bad. What we're saying is that they're incompetent. It is the Liberal Party that is tired and still singing the same old song, only now it's in a choir.

I like the approach of a five-year capital plan. In this budget it is comprised of the following expenditures by category for 2011-12: \$37.451 million for building assets, both new and maintenance of existing buildings; \$46.6 million for transportation infrastructure; \$10.873 million for IT assets, inclusive of school-based IT requirements; \$66.99 million for municipal infrastructure, supported by Building Canada funds; \$27.349 million for other projects and programming; and \$41.921 million for land development.

I am keenly interested in what this means specifically for my riding. We have identified \$2.3 million for work on the Morley River bridge deck replacement project, and I am sure all of us have passed over this bridge at Morley. It's a beautiful, beautiful area, and I am pleased to see this work being carried out. Also in my riding this means things like \$1.5 million for Teslin roads and drainage upgrades. It means \$136,000 this year and \$1.4 million in future years for Teslin arsenic treatment. As well, in this five-year capital plan is \$1.5 million for Ross River water systems upgrades and arsenic treatment.

Because arsenic is of particular concern in Yukon drinking water due to regulatory standard changes in 2011-12, funding is being provided for arsenic treatment, including \$1.013 million for systems upgrade and arsenic treatment in Ross River. There is \$2.907 million for arsenic treatment upgrades to meet 2011 regulatory requirements in Teslin and other communities. We have \$100,000 for Teslin, phase 2 arsenic treatment. Arsenic in drinking water is absorbed by the body when you swallow it and distributed by the bloodstream. It does not enter the body through the skin or by inhalation during bathing or showering. Health Canada and the International Agency for Research on Cancer consider arsenic a human cancer-causing agent. Test results suggest that consuming water with very high levels of

arsenic over a lifetime can increase the risk of cancer in internal organs. This is one of the reasons we are moving forward quickly on this issue.

There is \$4,913,000 identified for work on the Robert Campbell Highway. I know some members opposite complain that we are spending money on places other than Whitehorse, but we are simply being responsible for the entire territory.

The fact of the matter is that the Campbell Highway needs work. If we took the Liberal approach and killed the economy, like they did 10 years ago, then really, your highway would only need to be built to withstand U-Haul-sized loads. However, under our watch we have transport trucks hauling supplies and resources out of the region. For me, a highway is a way to generate wealth and revenue; it is a way to build a local community and a local economy. I am pleased that we are doing just that.

Transportation links are critical to the development of economies. I believe they go hand in hand with developing tourism opportunities, as well as resource-based opportunities. In my reply to the budget at the beginning of this mandate, I spoke about the importance of roadwork. I committed then to work to ensure the Robert Campbell Highway was targeted for reconstruction initiatives of the Government of Yukon.

It is, and that work is being carried out. As the MLA for Faro and Ross River, the two communities most affected by this roadwork, I am very pleased to support this initiative. I have been, and will continue to be, very vocal in my support for work on the Robert Campbell Highway. My constituents deserve to have a safe, reliable, high-quality road.

The Robert Campbell Highway is the road between Watson Lake and Carmacks. It is about 583 kilometres long and it provides access to two of the communities in my riding, Faro and Ross River. It also connects, by the Canol Road, these two communities to the third community in my riding, Teslin. Last summer I visited these communities several times, including two trips in late August. I had the privilege of showing my riding to someone who had never been there before. As I drove, I was reminded of how beautiful the Yukon is. I also thought about the skill and determination that earlier residents of the region showed in creating transportation routes throughout the region.

As I said in this House before, I travelled down the Canol Road a few days before my birthday in September, and I was reminded of the strength of my mother, who gave birth to me on top of a mountain on the Canol Road. Our pioneers had so much strength and dexterity. They made their travel routes and used them very efficiently. I'm very proud to have Tlingit heritage.

In this five-year capital plan is a methodical approach to roadwork. I think that is a very good move. It means some \$3,400,000 for Faro water and sewer pipe replacement work.

As I thought about what makes for a successful community, I was reminded about how important it is that we address the basic necessities of life — things we don't think about, but that are so important to the quality of our lives. Things like safe drinking water, which we take for granted here in Yukon, are

so very important. I'll come back to water systems in a minute when I get to the domestic well program.

Having spoken with many community members in Faro, I am well aware of their concerns about the quality of their underground infrastructure. I would like to thank my Cabinet colleagues for supporting my advocacy for improved water and sewer lines in Faro.

Speaking of Faro, we have \$400,000 for the Faro airport terminal building replacement. In the five-year capital plan is \$900,000 in both this year and next for territory-wide transfer stations. As a rural MLA, I am pleased to see this being done.

We have \$600,000 in each year for the domestic well program. For those of us who don't live on piped water and have to drill our own wells, these kinds of programs can make a real difference in our daily lives.

We have a related program — actually, the well program's precursor — called the "rural electrification and telephone program." We are funding this for \$600,000 each year as well.

I would like to take a moment to just talk about this for a minute.

The rural electrification and telecommunications program offers rural Yukoners an affordable and convenient way to have electrical or phone service extended to them where it might not otherwise be practical or possible. Eligible projects include single site connections, group installations and alternate energy systems for private use.

The Yukon government will finance up to 25 percent of the assessed value of the property or group of properties in a defined area that a proposed project will serve. Property owners may choose to repay their share of project cost in a lump sum or by paying a local improvement charge as part of their annual property tax bill. A local improvement charge may be repaid over 15 years.

I would encourage interested constituents to contact Community Services for more information.

We also have some \$7,476,000 for corrections infrastructure and \$3,580,000 for the secure assessment centre. The secure assessment facility will ensure the highest standard of care and protection for persons taken into RCMP custody, including the acutely intoxicated.

Persons detained by the RCMP can experience medical complications that require medical assessment and supervision to ensure safe care and control while they are in custody. The secure assessment facility is an innovative model that will provide on-site medical assessment by medical professionals. It will also provide care for RCMP prisoners and supervision by corrections officers with specialized training.

This is not the last word in how Yukon deals with severely intoxicated people. This work is a continuation of our commitment to address substance abuse through the *Substance Abuse Action Plan*, which speaks to harm reduction, prevention and education, enforcement and treatment initiatives. Let me contrast what we are doing here with the five-year capital plan and the Liberals' approach.

The opposition's action to address substance abuse was to actually shut down the Sarah Steele program. Let's ponder that for a moment. Yes, they actually shut down the program. The

Liberal philosophy: if you don't see the problem, it will go away.

The Leader of the Official Opposition likes to say that they really support the individual programs, but they have to vote against the budget. Yes, here is one example where they looked at a specific program at Sarah Steele and they closed it down. They killed it. When we took office, our response was to consult extensively with Yukoners, develop the *Substance Abuse Action Plan* and then implement it.

In addition to the many other changes we have made, we have also developed land-based treatment options here in Yukon. I have to ask, if the members opposite care about this issue so much, why did they kill the program? Why do they continue to vote against the funding for treatment programs that we have in place?

We have a plan going forward — the five-year capital plan that lays out what we are planning. This is a good move — good management, good governance, a good leader.

This government has proven that we listen to Yukoners; we listen to Yukoners and we will continue to listen to Yukoners. We make sure we consult and quickly implement what we hear because, to put it simply, we care. That's our job: improving the quality of lives of Yukoners.

**Ms. Hanson:** It's interesting to rise to speak to Motion No. 1260. At the outset, I'd like to say that I guess I'm somewhat surprised that we're actually discussing the idea of multi-year capital planning as if it were a new concept, as though it should not be a part of actual good government. For this Yukon Party government to suggest that they've discovered multi-year capital planning is a bit of a stretch. I've been in government for over 30 years, with many years' experience in multi-year capital planning, so I'm not quite sure what the novelty is.

This motion is really about how the money for big projects is maximized in terms of local business and local job creation in the Yukon. If that's what we want to talk about, then I think we should really focus on that. We should also acknowledge that this Yukon Party government has had massive amounts of money to spend over the last couple of years and perhaps that's why they're now suggesting it's time to think about planning, because they got caught short in demonstrating that they could not manage the kinds of resources that were flowing through this territory. So we need to recognize that most of the money that has been flowing through this territory and has financed many of the excellent projects that we've now been able to catch up to pass demand, flowed through stimulus funding — the municipal rural infrastructure program, Building Canada, CSIF and other sources of money. It wasn't because this was money that this territory generated — this Yukon Party government generated — on its own and it was then making a conscious decision to spend. These are targeted federal initiatives.

So if we really want to talk about how the money for big projects is maximized in terms of local business and local job creation, then I think we need to talk about how the government manages those funds. If we're talking about projections for expenditures, for budgets and for capital projects, then it's

very important that we have assurance that the projections are accurate. If we can't have accurate projections, then it's very difficult to expect a contractor to make plans. So you're saying that you're going to be spending X million dollars this coming year. Contractors should be able to take that to the bank as they make their plans. That's clearly not what the track record has shown us.

There is a credibility gap between what's in the capital projections and really what makes it to the budget in the next year. For example, the 2010-11 capital projections had the F.H. Collins school construction, as people have noted repeatedly over the afternoon. The Dawson City district heating — spoke about a \$9-million projection. We had land development costs much lower. Suddenly, in 2011-12, we are talking about a much reduced level for the F.H. Collins construction, we are talking about the Dawson City district heating projections rising from \$9 million to \$21.7 million and we are talking now — thankfully — about land development costs, or investment, of about \$40 million. Now if we believe that, that would be great, but do we have the ability to believe it?

Advanced warning to prepare for upcoming big projects would be good, but is this what the contracting industry has really been asking for? I mean, normal budget processes would tell us that you know that you will be spending money going forward. The government contractors will be looking at the projections. They will be looking at the actual budget as it comes down though, because they know, based on past experience — particularly over the last eight or nine years — that they can't count, going forward, on actually seeing the government delivering on that.

I would suggest that it's really not at the top of the contracting or construction industry's wish list. I think what they'd be really asking for, and have been asking for, is transparency in the tendering and awarding of contracts, that there be a serious review of contracting regulations. I would also argue that, based on the experience of a number of projects throughout this territory that have made the media and that have been subject to debate in this House, that the whole issue of sole-source contracting needs to be looked at as well.

So I think that the motion that the member, Deputy Speaker — that you, I guess, the Member for Klondike that is — sorry, I guess I'll apologize right now for using a personal pronoun. I do think that what the motion is really about is keeping more money in the territory, and I agree. This is a great concept, whether it applies to the current mining boom or the construction boom. But also, it's about the ways and means that we go about it. Does giving a little bit of information, which is highly likely to vary, going to lead to more money being kept in the Yukon? Perhaps, but I don't think you can build a strong case on that argument.

Spacing out capital projects is another idea, and you will recall that the Yukon NDP has been raising this issue for the last few years in this House about the idea of spacing out the projects so local contractors can bid on them. We have raised this for years; we'll continue to raise it because it doesn't seem to be sinking in. I can see where you are saying you are going to plan it going forward now, but given the track record of ac-

tually spending it according to what your plans are, I think we are going to be coming back time and time again, saying, "Where is the actual plan? Where is the implementation of that plan?" Although, I am somebody who can be convinced and hopefully we will see that the government is coming around to our way of thinking. If that is true, we will be very happy.

On Monday the Minister of Education talked about the decision to pull back on the building of the F. H. Collins school. At that time he said that we recognize that the economy is very hot in the territory and that our construction workers are working on a number of different projects, not only in Whitehorse, but throughout many of the communities. We have heard from the contracting associations that we need to work to ensure that we have long-term sustainable projects. Well, I think it is a bit late.

Most of the big projects and most of the money that, as I mentioned at the outset, is coming to this territory — the flow-through funds from the federal government that were targeted for specific projects — really, the cows are out of the barn. Those monies have been dedicated and/or spent.

This government probably has a very good reason for the current spending spree it's on. At least we know they're telling us they have another \$38 million that they can fling into the public arena between now and the fall. They're talking about having this very prudent approach to budgeting and to capital planning. I think there may be a link to a fall election.

As I said at the outset, this motion is really about keeping more of the project spending in the local economy. We know that when we hire local, more money stays in the local economy. My colleague, the Member for Mount Lorne, spoke to this earlier today. It is spent on local suppliers and manufacturers; it comes to the territory to increase local corporations and corporate income tax. When more local workers are hired on projects, more money stays in the territory through their personal income tax. They're not flying in and out and paying their income tax elsewhere. Resident workers also spend their wages at the local stores. They buy homes; they buy cars and ATVs. So what we do need to recognize and where there have been some real challenges in working with this government, is there's a real barrier to our ability to do this with the big projects, mainly because of the *Agreement on Internal Trade*, which this Yukon government signed on with the rest of Canada.

You know, before we had the *Agreement on Internal Trade*, we had Yukon hire. We had financial incentives to hire locally and this did benefit the local industries very much. Now, with the *Agreement on Internal Trade*, our contractors and our workers are up against it from contractors across the country. There are those who would suggest that with the negotiations of the agreements with the European Union, CETA — there have been real concerns being expressed by local, provincial and municipal governments that this may open us to more European companies winning bids on big projects here and flying in workers from outside Yukon. I suggest to the Minister of Tourism that she may want to look at increasing the flights from Germany here because that's quite a possibility.

We are a small jurisdiction. It's hard to compete on big projects. We've been asking over and over again — and if we're talking about capital planning, then we also want to be talking about the return to this territory on this expenditure of monies. So let's hear about the percentage of workers from Yukon hired to work at Mayo B, the percentage of workers from Yukon hired to work at the staff residence across the river, and the percentage of Yukon workers hired to work at the hospital projects in Dawson and Watson Lake.

How many of the workers who are benefiting from these large capital expenditures by this Yukon Party government are coming from outside of the territory? We've asked for these numbers and, to date, we've not received them.

Throughout the Premier's so-called stimulus budgets, we have asked for breakdowns on jobs created as we go out and build big projects. We have still not received them. We think that that would be important information to offer to the citizens of Yukon — not simply listing a litany of expenditures, but talk about what that means for the Yukon economy.

So, Mr. Speaker, this motion, to a large extent, is really just window dressing. I don't see that this government has any real solutions for retaining financial benefits, for keeping more of the revenue in the territory, and for being creative in making rules that will benefit local industry and lead to well-paid jobs for Yukoners.

One of the things that we talked about earlier was the issue of ensuring transparency and working with contractors. The Deputy Speaker spoke about this, urging contractors to take advantage of the knowledge that they will have planning forward for five years. I think it's really important that we also acknowledge that there is still some work to be done in-house within the Government of Yukon. Highways and Public Works did a survey in 2009 on the contacting regulations review. It does demonstrate that there are some serious issues that need to be addressed by this Yukon Party government to ensure there is confidence in the process these contractors are being asked to engage in.

When you look at the contractors' feedback with respect to the issues of preparation for bids, the support from the Yukon government, the competitive bidding requirements, the process around evaluation and contract administration, there is quite a variety of scoring that goes with respect to the level of comfort and confidence the contracting industry has demonstrated or feels is their assurance they are going to get a fair deal, essentially.

If we look at the preparation of bids, contractors were asked if the Government of Yukon provides sufficient time and information for businesses for the preparation of a bid. Over 35 percent of the contractors — 37 percent, to be exact — said no. When they were asked if the Yukon government provided adequate ongoing support to businesses throughout the bid preparation process, 40 percent said no.

There are some real issues and credibility gaps here because, if we're telling people there is all this money, but we're not facilitating local businesses and local contractors to actually benefit from it, there are some problems. Of real concern to me and to the Yukon New Democratic Party was the response to

the question of whether or not the Yukon government provides a fair and transparent opportunity for businesses to compete on potential contracts — a fair and transparent opportunity for businesses to compete. Forty-nine percent said no. That is a significant number, and it does raise some serious concerns.

Similarly, on the evaluation and award aspect of the contracting process, contractors were asked if bids received by the Yukon government are evaluated and awarded in a fair and transparent manner. More than one-third — 35 percent of contractors — said no.

Similarly, when the last question was asked about the administration of contracts — so, again, we are asking contractors to work with the Government of Yukon to take advantage of these capital projects. But we want to make sure that once you enter into an administrative contract with another body — with the government — that it's dealt with in an effective manner. So, once awarded, they were asked: are contracts administered by the Yukon government in an effective manner? The government's own response to the survey was that 38 percent of contractors do not feel that they are awarded or managed in an effective manner.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that although the intention — perhaps of what I said at the outset — the sub-intention of this motion ostensibly is to tout the idea of multi-year capital planning, which I think anybody who is in business or in government for any length of time would recognize is simply good business practice. So I don't think we need to comment any further on the notion that multi-year capital planning is standard practice. It really is one of the most effective ways of ensuring that project money is spent to develop and enhance the local economy, and I'm not convinced that what we have heard from the Yukon Party this afternoon or over the course of the last nine years will do that. I think we have — as we've said numerous times — a credibility gap. What we need to be seeing is an actual continuity — you can plan all you want, but unless you are prepared to actually commit to delivering next year and the year after and the year after on those plans, then it is just another piece of paper.

I think Yukoners will judge this party, the Yukon Party, on their track record and not on the promises, as wild as they may be, on those lovely promises going forward. They will be looking back and saying, "Did they deliver on the commitments they made?" I think the assessment will be no.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** There really must be an election in the air because I've heard nothing but — how do I put it — electioneering, although I have heard many members saying we're doing anything but electioneering. Call it what you will; it has been a really interesting debate. There have been a lot of interesting comments put forward by members. I want to get into that shortly. It's really fascinating, actually — discussion and points made by members opposite about their take on the economy and about their take on capital improvements to the Yukon and employment of people from Outside and so forth.

I want to start off my remarks by thanking the Member for Klondike for bringing forward this timely motion. It is a timely one. It is certainly something that we have discussed from oc-

casation to occasion in the Legislature, but it has to do with investments — strategic investments.

I want to say that in the Yukon, when it comes to our government cultivating partnerships, it continues to be a priority, whether it has been partnerships with the Yukon First Nations, our sister territories, the federal government, municipal governments, business or industry. Since taking office in 2002, one of our government's key priorities has been to promote a very strong, diversified and sustainable economy. We've done this very well by working in partnership with others to create opportunities for economic growth.

I know from time to time governments can put many points forward about capital initiatives, and it is true that capital initiatives can create that climate that's conducive to the growth of the private sector and others but, at the end of the day, it does take partnerships in order for anything to work, especially here in the territory. Put politics aside — I know it's difficult for all of us members to do, but park it at the door, call it what you will. At the end of the day, partnerships are key to sustaining the economy and to ensuring we have a good quality of life here in the territory.

Spending responsibly and investing in areas with strong, sustainable economic growth potential has been another key priority and one that we have worked very hard to achieve. As one of two jurisdictions in the country to have net financial resources — that is, no net debt; in fact, we have a savings account, we have money in the bank — and, by the way, we're one of two jurisdictions in this country to have that — it has afforded the Yukon to be able to invest in the key infrastructure to assist in the creation of jobs in the short term, as well as provide an environment for long-term investment and growth.

So I've been very pleased to be able to see within the budget and to be able to talk about the motion before us about the financial position that is contained within the budget, about the net financial situation that Yukon finds itself in. It contains an annual surplus, it has positive net financial resources, and a position forecast from here on out. There are very strong indicators of not only the government's plans for continued financial health but it also gives a very clear picture on what we are to do, moving forward; hence the debate on the multi-year capital budget. For example, we're committed to a three-year plan of annual core expenditures that are related to information technology of \$6.5 million.

I take it back several years go, when this was one area in the Government of Yukon that was relatively low. It didn't have any stability in terms of having a stable funding base moving forward. That is one thing on which the Government of Yukon did move forward.

Today we're sitting at \$6.5-million plus each year, and that has been built up over the subsequent years since 2002. As a result of that investment — it was a strategic investment — not only did it make sense but it has also helped build capacity within the IT sector. We talk about the knowledge sector as being an area of diversifying our economy, adding to the strength of the territory, and I think this is one really great example of where that particular expenditure has resulted in some great net benefits to the private sector, and it has signalled sig-

nificant growth in capacity in our area. There are some very good plans going forward we have been able to identify and meet from year to year.

Each of the departments adhere to their respective budgets that are put forward, but they do know that there is a minimum sum each and every year for IT. So it is very important to take note of that because that has also led to core expenditures for capital building maintenance projects of about \$12 million from here on out.

When we talk about ongoing expenditures for contractors looking for years out, these may be smaller projects. Maybe for individual companies that are the Mom-and-Pop machines of the territory — of which there are many and are the backbone of the territory, I might add — these expenditures again provide that stability and it is something that the departments can also look to prioritize what those key building maintenance projects shall be, based on that budget going on year in and year out.

Of course likewise we have identified almost \$47 million for highways and airports and over \$41 million for land development in the upcoming fiscal period. I think that's very important to point out as well.

There have been suggestions as to how we should be looking for more flights from Germany. Well, I'm very pleased to say that we are building capacity from overseas and that in fact is what led to the expansion of the Whitehorse International Airport terminal building. Of course, that started many years ago with the expansion of the runway and so forth, to the expansion of the parking in order to accommodate the huge growth in population that we've experienced in the territory over the last number of years, but as well in the increase in the traffic coming through our airport. In fact, I think it was since the last four or five years that we've experienced — I think it has been probably over a 25-percent increase in air traffic of those people planing and deplaning in the airport, many of which belong to overseas. We receive direct flights from overseas and are soon to build on those.

Of course, credit has to also be given to companies like Air North, Yukon's airline, which has been able to — as a result of working with industry, working with governments across the spectrum, all orders, levels of government — grow their airline and are doing a magnificent job in collaboration, in partnership, with the Vuntut Gwitchin government.

I think that is a tremendous success and I pay nothing but gratitude for Air North and the stellar service that they provide and the enhanced delivery of flights that they provide; they very much work very closely on the tourism sector, and of course working with them are our gateway cities of Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton: all key to the growth of the territory. We are really pleased to be able to enhance our budgets for marketing those particular areas because of the direct air access to those areas and because of the great success in being able to attract those individuals to Yukon.

Of course, when we talk about highways, we need to have good roads in order for Yukoners to travel, in order for goods to be delivered, services to be provided, for visitors to be accommodated, and I am very pleased again that there is a sig-

nificant dollar amount in this year's budget for highway infrastructure, which will be increased year after year.

I think it's very pertinent to say that there is a whole host of initiatives in the capital plan moving forward: some that are midway, some that are winding down, and some that haven't even started. But I can speak with great pride of initiatives, investments in the waterfront, for example — Carcross and Whitehorse — and the major transformations that we have seen as a result of investment such as that. You know, I've heard the members opposite, specifically from the Third Party, saying that it's all Government of Canada money.

Well, I actually have to correct the record. It's not all Government of Canada money. It's actually an investment by the municipalities, by the First Nations, by the Government of Canada, by the Government of Yukon. It's by way of infrastructure funds made available through the Government of Canada but which leverages funding through other governments.

We're very appreciative of those partnerships that have made available initiatives such as the two cultural centres going up. Kwanlin Dun First Nation combines a new Whitehorse community library and there's the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations cultural centre as well. That in itself is about a \$12-million expenditure and is housed within the next fiscal budget. Kwanlin Dun, for example, is a \$22-million initiative of which there is \$1.5 million, because the project is going so well that it is ahead of time and is on budget. I am very thankful of investments in our waterfront. As I mentioned, one only has to take a look at the Yukon Quest, for example. They held their starting lineup at Shipyards Park and you know that is an area that we have seen improved over the years. We have seen a number of heritage buildings being restored in that area. We have seen the refinement of trails and lighting. We have seen facilities like the Old Fire Hall being transformed and refurbished; likewise the roundhouse. The expansion of the MacBride Museum — I was there last night at the kickoff of the hockey history exhibit. What an amazing facility is all I can say.

Kudos to MacBride Museum, the board of directors, the staff and to the executive director for just doing an amazing job in leveraging funding from other governments, the private sector and private donations. But you know, it's an example of an investment in a facility that has grown and grown and grown and it continues to grow. It has leveraged growth of other improvements on the waterfront. We see new housing developments going up along the waterfront, including one that is being put up by Yukon Housing Corporation.

Now I just wanted to say that there are some other comments made about there being absolutely nothing in this budget for those in need of housing. I think there was even a comment about affordable housing initiatives going up in Copper Ridge or Logan or call it what you will, according to the member opposite. You know, I have to take a little bit of issue there, because individuals who live in Copper Ridge or Logan or Arkell — and in this case, it actually wasn't even built in any of those areas; it was built in the new subdivision of Ingram, by the way

— are just as deserving as those in any other area in the city and the territory.

I have to say that, through the Yukon Housing Corporation, thank you to those officials who have worked very diligently with the community and the Government of Canada over the last number of years in putting up over 150 new units of affordable housing in the territory. Again, it's about an increase of 40. I know the members opposite don't really appreciate hearing it again, but I think it's a good reflection on how much has been done over the last number of years. Is it enough? Absolutely not. There's always work to be done. The one challenge in government is that there is always going to be funding pressure. It does come back to priorities. I'm very proud to be part of a government that, despite criticism being shared — and that's all of our job to share our own perspectives and those on behalf of constituents — but we do and we have done our best to provide a balance of meeting the social side of the spectrum as well as the economic side of the spectrum.

I'm very pleased to be able to have been part of an initiative that provides 30 new units plus of affordable housing for single-parent families, of which, unfortunately, women and children happen to comprise the lion's share. But you know, Mr. Speaker, it is a fine facility. I am so proud of that facility. I know there is a lot of naysaying on the opposite bench about that, but thank goodness for it. And thank goodness for the other 120 units of affordable housing made available as well.

I just want to take a couple more minutes. I know I have only a couple more minutes left. When we talk about fly-in and fly-out, there was some reference about individuals coming to the Yukon through the Yukon nominee program and coming from all over. Well, you know, we all arrived here — I was actually born and raised here, so I can't really say I arrived here from Outside, but I'd say that probably a good chunk of the population did arrive here from other places, and it's what has made the Yukon today. I think we should all be very proud of the cultural diversity in our territory. So to take issue with individuals arriving through the Yukon nominee program, I say shame on those members because individuals come in and are contributing — by the way, who are also being sponsored through employers in the territory. I think it's very important that they are contributing to our economy and are contributing to the social health of the territory as well. I just wanted to put that on the record.

In terms of the *Agreement on Internal Trade*, that is an agreement that was signed on by every province and territory in this country and finally came to fruition after about 15 years or so. It is something that everyone is having to work with, having to deliver, and I can say, very safely, that there are companies within the Yukon that do a fine job of exporting. There are wonderful examples of companies like Northerm that does work in the Northwest Territories and other parts of the country because they built the capacity and they have the ability to compete with the rest of the country. I feel that, yes, it is something we have to work on, something we have to pay attention to, but it is something to which every other jurisdiction in this country has signed on.

I know my time is up, but I'd just like to thank the Member for Klondike again for bringing forth this important motion, and I commend it to the rest of the House.

**Mr. Mitchell:** It is with great interest that I have been listening to members this afternoon, debating the motion from the Member for Klondike — Motion No. 1260.

You know, as I listened to the debate this afternoon, I thought that the main purpose of today's motion was purportedly to debate whether or not this House should urge private sector companies to review the five-year capital plan and then to make their plans accordingly, based on that. That would be a debate worth having. It sounded like much of the debate this afternoon coming from the government side — from the ministers who spoke — indicates that the debate is either over whether or not there should be a five-year capital plan or even whether or not there should be capital projects, because there has been much criticism of members on this side of the House that implies that we don't want to see capital spending. I don't know where that comes from.

But this motion urges Yukon private sector contractors to review the Government of Yukon's multi-year capital plan contained in the 2011-12 budget that identifies capital priorities and the related expenditures over the next four years, including the three-year plan of core expenditures.

It goes on to say they should do so "...in order to obtain maximum benefit for their companies and employees through the certainty provided by these stable, predictable long-term government investments in the identified key sectors."

So let's look at those two issues. First of all, urging Yukon's private sector contractors to review the plan — I dare say that they already do. The private sector reviews the budgets and the extended long-term capital plans of any government, regardless of political stripe, and they have been doing so for years and years and years, as long as there have been budgets.

Of course, last year when the Premier gave his budget speech, he heralded the supposedly innovative never-before-seen innovation of having a multi-year capital plan. But when I looked back at previous Liberal and NDP budgets — both from the Duncan and McDonald governments — I found that there was the same multi-year plan in the budget books — in the books themselves. And the Premier, as the Member for Kluane so accurately points out, sat as a member of the NDP government, so he should have remembered that. He should have remembered it, but we will get to some of the Premier's thoughts and comments a little later.

In listening to the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation this afternoon, I heard him citing one of his favourite phrases. He has done it in Question Period and he has done it in the afternoon in this House. He talks about the fact that the Minister of Economic Development says world mineral prices, we refer on this side to the change in world mineral prices, don't we understand that they are world mineral prices, and why are some of these activities 20 times higher in Yukon than in other jurisdictions?

I would point out to the Minister of Economic Development that you should understand this: mines are where you find

them. The reason that activity is higher here with higher world mineral prices is because we actually have gold and we have lead and we have zinc and we have copper and we have molybdenum. We are blessed to have these resources. So when gold prices, which were at some \$260 when the Liberal government was in office last, are at \$1,340 per ounce this past week, of course there's going to be a fervour of activity.

I might also add that as long as the United States of America continues to print money as fast as it will dry and call it "quantitative easing", which near as I can tell is new-speak for printing money as fast as it can dry, gold is going to stay high because its valuation is not based on industrial demand; it's based on a lack of confidence in the U.S. dollar and many other paper currencies.

The base mineral prices — we know that they won't stay high forever. We hope that we'll get the most benefit out of the current upturn with some good planning. Of course, we're talking here about planning today. To go back to this point of why is it higher here than elsewhere, I would suggest to the Minister of Economic Development to take a look at the amount of oil and gas activity that goes on in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Why in this era of \$90, \$100 oil is there so much more activity in Alberta and in Saskatchewan than in Yukon? Well, probably because they have more known reserves of oil and gas. So people will look for minerals and they will look for resources where they have a good expectation of finding them. I hope perhaps the Minister of Economic Development has learned something today and he can stop setting up a lack of understanding in his comparisons.

Similarly, the Minister of Economic Development is always talking about how could there have been economic development under the last Liberal government when they didn't have a stand-alone Department of Economic Development? Well, first of all, I would point out that none of the members sitting here today were part of that government, but nevertheless, one answer I would give them is to check on the structure — and the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin should do this as well, because she is apparently keenly interested in this — check on the government structure of departments in Alberta since they are so fond of referring to Alberta. I don't think they have a stand-alone Department of Economic Development and they certainly aren't suggesting that they don't have any economic development in Alberta. One would think that many of the members opposite are Albertans for as often as they refer to Alberta.

So again, these are statements that don't hold much meaning.

Now, if things were as good, and things are relatively good for us in the Yukon — we know that — as the Minister of Economic Development says they are, we would ask, why does the food bank need to assist an ever-increasing number of Yukoners? Because that's what the executive director of the food bank reports and we have all been to these fundraisers for the food bank and we are told that, almost as fast as they can replenish the shelves, they empty out again. So I guess we would say that many, many Yukoners are doing well and we're happy

about that. Some are not and are struggling and we need to do more about that.

Now getting back to this five-year capital plan, we've said it's a fantasy to believe that this government will follow the plan. Why have we said that? Well, we've seen examples today. Other members have cited them. But I have the two plans in front of me and I'm looking at various examples. Last year, in the five-year capital plan, there is one set of numbers for work that's going to be done on primary highways. Then the next year, we get a completely different set of numbers. Again, last year, the government said there would be \$15.1 million for land development in the very first year of the five-year plan — the very next year. Now that amount is \$41.9 million.

How are contractors going to effect the second part of this motion — the part that says, "...in order to obtain maximum benefit for their companies and employees through the certainty provided by these stable, predictable long-term government investments..."

They're not very stable and they're not very predictable if one amount goes up by two and one-half times and then, as we've seen in the case of F.H. Collins school just a few months ago — last year there it was in the five-year capital plan.

It was down as being \$24.4 million for F.H. Collins school for this year's budget. Contractors thought, "Wow, we can now make plans to bid on this major contract."

We know that from an education point of view and from a pedagogical point of view that this is great news for the parents of those children who go to that school. They are not just Riverdale residents. They are not only from across Whitehorse — residents from across Yukon, from as far away as Old Crow, from Burwash, from Destruction Bay, from Haines Junction, and from all across Yukon, come to Whitehorse and attend that school. So this was good news. I know from speaking to members of the school advisory committee and the planning committee that they were quite excited about it. They were quite shocked to suddenly see the money disappear from this year's budget and move forward yet another year. The Minister of Community Services — I heard him earlier this afternoon when he was on his feet — said, "Don't worry. We are committed to building that school."

Well, it's difficult to judge the commitment when the money has now been pushed to beyond the mandate of this government. Now they're beyond the mandate of the current government. I guess they're hoping to get re-elected so they can try and fulfill that commitment, but that's yet to be seen because an awful lot of Yukoners are disappointed in the broken promises.

What else? Last year, the government said there would be \$8.8 million for bridges on primary highways in next year's budget. The budget comes out. It's zero. The Yukon Housing Corporation wasn't even categorized in the last multi-year plan, but over \$7 million is now listed in the 2011-12 main estimates. Speaking of the Yukon Housing Corporation — and they have done many good things and we commend the officials — all of the people who work for the Housing Corporation — for yes, taking advantage of the stimulus money and taking advantage of the money that started to flow under the Liberal government

when Prime Minister Paul Martin created the northern housing trust — some \$50 million of which came to Yukon and carried forward under the current government. Yes, it is important that we've built more facilities.

I say to the Tourism minister, who felt that there was such opposition to the single-parent housing — the name changed a number of times, so it was confusing — that the fact is there has been a need for this kind of housing. There are single parents that struggle to find affordable housing. We are glad to see that that need is going to be addressed — at least more addressed than if that didn't exist. But there are many other groups of people across the economic spectrum who are struggling with affordable housing and that would bring up another fact, which is the fact of the monies that get pushed forward when this government couldn't work cooperatively with the City of Whitehorse early enough and long ago enough to actually plan for additional housing and plan for additional land to be developed. We saw money in previous budgets that had to be lapsed and revoted that was going to be for the development of additional lots in the City of Whitehorse and across the territory that didn't come to fruition.

Now the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, the Minister of Justice, was on her feet earlier this afternoon and she indicated that the members on this side don't support the construction of roads, that they are not happy to see highway development, that they are not in favour of there being roads built to areas because not a lot of people are living there and we don't understand there are needs for mining companies. We understand that very well, because my colleagues and I have been going to the Roundup ever since we were elected, and we certainly speak to mining companies. We understand the importance of the roads. It's interesting, though, because I think the minister should perhaps be giving that lecture to her leader.

Since everybody is into reading quotes from long ago today, here's one. This comes from the Hon. Premier's budget reply speech on February 22, 2000 — granted, he was sitting as a member of the NDP at the time. Here's what he said: "On the other hand, the Yukon Party would have us back in the Dark Ages, focused on one sector of our economy — mining — and spending all the capital dollars in road building, when there are so many other facets of our economy that are contributing to the turnaround that we are experiencing today."

That was his view of roads and mining just 10 or 11 years ago — I guess 11 years ago. I thought that would be relevant because we have heard so many quotes from different members and what they said 10 or 11 years ago. But what Yukoners are interested in is —

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

#### Point of order

**Speaker:** The Hon. Premier, on a point of order.

**Hon. Mr. Fentie:** Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that our Standing Orders require that needless repetition be addressed. The Liberal leader is continuing on with needless repetition.

**Speaker:** On the point of order.

**Mr. Mitchell:** On the point of order, I haven't repeated anything. I have used a different quote each time and a different number each time since I started speaking.

#### **Speaker's ruling**

**Speaker:** From the Chair's perspective, there is no point of order, simply a dispute between members.

Leader of the Official Opposition, you have the floor, and you have five minutes left.

**Mr. Mitchell:** That's good to know because we do have other quotes we could read if we wanted to.

The fact is that the purpose of this motion is to encourage the contractors to do what they're already doing — read the multi-year plan — that's a good idea — and then suggests it's in order to obtain maximum benefit for their companies and employees through the certainty provided by these stable, predictable, long-term government investments. What we would say is that that is going to be difficult for them because there is no certainty when we see schools moved a year forward, as if they were jacked up and put on the back of a truck and hauled away, or when we see bridges that were budgeted or predicted to be built disappear out of the budget once we get to the actual year, or when we see land development amounts go up and down, without rhyme or reason.

It's difficult for the private sector to be predictable and to count on this government doing what it says it is going to do. In fact, the Auditor General told us this in 2007 when she said that this government failed in its ability to bring projects in on time and under budget. In fact, here's what she said in paragraph 50 of her report at that time: "In the 10 projects that we looked at, we did not find any documented project plans that clearly set out a strategy and course of action for completing a project, including proposed quality control and quality assurance processes, work schedule, cost planning and project-team organization. In five cases, we observed changes in scope and design imposed by client departments doing the project delivery, resulting in both cost increases and delays. In some cases the problems were beyond the department's control."

There's lots more in that report and lots more that we could say, and I know my time is short here. We are adjourning a little earlier today, and the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin sounds disappointed at that. But in fact here is another interesting thing in that report. This talks to predictability for the private sector. It talks about the facilities in Watson Lake and Dawson City. You might have heard more about that and may read more about that next week when the Auditor General does table the report on the Department of Health.

Paragraph 54: "The roles and responsibilities for project management staff and the client department were not clearly defined for the multi-level care facility projects in Watson Lake and Dawson City." She went on to say in December 2004 that the department — that's referring to a department where the minister for it was then the Member for Riverdale South — recommended that it decline the assignment of these two projects. In June 2005, the Minister of Highways and Public Works, on behalf of the department, declined responsibility for

the projects — imagine that. The minister had to go in to Cabinet and decline.

#### **Motion to adjourn debate**

**Mr. Mitchell:** Mr. Speaker, being that there was an agreement today and that we all have a very important dinner to attend, I move that debate on Motion No. 1260 be now adjourned.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition that debate on Motion No. 1260 be now adjourned.

*Motion to adjourn debate on Motion No. 1260 agreed to*

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

*The House adjourned at 5:00 p.m.*

#### **The following document was filed February 9, 2011:**

11-1-168

Old Crow Drinking Water Improvement; project status report: letter (dated December 17, 2010) to Darius Elias, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin, from Hon. Archie Lang, Minister of Community Services (Elias)