

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Thursday, March 28, 2013 — 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.

**TRIBUTES**

**In recognition of Jo-Ann Waugh, Chief Electoral Officer**

**Speaker:** Today, on behalf of all members of this House, I would like to pay tribute to Jo-Ann Waugh, Yukon's Chief Electoral Officer, who is retiring at the end of this month, after having been involved in Yukon elections for the past 35 years. Jo-Ann was able to join us today on her last day.

Ms. Waugh was born in Regina, Saskatchewan. Her father was in the Air Force, and the family first moved to Whitehorse when Ms. Waugh was three years old. The family moved to Vancouver a few years later and moved back when she was eight. One of her early academic highlights was completing grade 3 in a two-room schoolhouse in Atlin, B.C.

The Chief Electoral Officer plays a vital role in our democracy. The CEO has to ensure that staff, candidates and party workers abide by the laws that ensure that elections are conducted in a manner that is fair and efficient. The CEO must be non-partisan in overseeing this process, one that involves intense partisanship on behalf of candidates and their supporters.

Members of this House have been involved in elections; the number varies with each member. Ms. Waugh, on the other hand, has been involved in every Yukon general election and by-election since the introduction of party politics in 1978. For those of you who are counting, this includes 10 general elections and 11 by-elections.

The general election of 1978 was a significant one. For the previous quarter century, the Chief Electoral Officer in Canada ran elections for what was then called the "Yukon Territorial Council". The 1978 election was run by a Yukon elections board. Ms. Waugh served in that election as a returning officer in the Electoral District of Whitehorse Riverdale South.

In 1983, the elections board was dissolved and Patrick Michael, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, had the role of Chief Electoral Officer added to his list of duties. It was quite an extensive list. At the same time, Ms. Waugh was appointed as Assistant Chief Electoral Officer and would be the only full-time elections officer in Yukon for the next 25 years.

With her appointment in 2007, Ms. Waugh became Yukon's first full-time Chief Electoral Officer.

In addition to her work running elections, Ms. Waugh has also been a central figure in the work of all electoral district boundary commissions since 1984.

Members of this House are, of course, most familiar with Ms. Waugh's work in the conduct of elections to the Yukon Legislative Assembly. What members may not know is that this is only a part of what she has done over the years. Elections Yukon is also responsible for the conduct of elections for Yukon's francophone school board and for Yukon school councils. She has also provided assistance to a number of organizations in Yukon, including providing assistance to Yukon First Nations in the conduct of their elections.

Members may be surprised to learn that Ms. Waugh also has a prominent profile among her peers, nationally and internationally. As Chief Electoral Officer, she is a member of the Conference of Canadian Elections Officials. Her experience and expertise has been demonstrated in her attendance at conferences of Canadian electoral officers and is highly valued by her colleagues.

Ms. Waugh's standing among her peers is such that she has been called upon to participate and represent Canada in a number of international election observation missions. She has travelled to countries as diverse as Peru, Ethiopia, Yemen, Nigeria, Namibia, Russia and Zimbabwe helping — as well as an election observer can — to ensure that people in those developing democracies have access to the kind of fair elections that we take for granted in Yukon and in Canada. Her selection to these missions is, once again, a mark of respect for her expertise and effectiveness.

In June 2007, upon the occasion of his retirement, Mr. Michael had the opportunity to address this House. During his remarks he reflected on those he had worked with over the years. Mr. Michael praised Ms. Waugh's work in administering elections and said, "We all owe her a debt of gratitude."

So on behalf of all Yukoners, I would like to extend to Ms. Waugh our thanks for the service she has provided to all Yukoners for those very many years.

*Applause*

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Both personally and on behalf of the government caucus, I would just like to echo your remarks and thank Jo-Ann for her years of service to Yukon and for her help and wish her the very best in her future endeavours, whatever those may be.

*Applause*

**Ms. Hanson:** It is a pleasure to recognize Jo-Ann Waugh, and each one of us — just as you have said in your tribute to the Chief Electoral Officer — has had the privilege of working with her and getting her guidance on those very difficult issues that she has had to stickhandle for every one of us in each of our election campaigns.

You know, we often think about this little territory as being so far away and so remote, but we have these amazing links. The fact that Jo-Ann Waugh has perpetuated and made those links grow to try to reinvigorate democracy around the

world is a fitting testament to this Legislative Assembly. So, on behalf of the Official Opposition, thank you, Ms. Waugh.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Introduction of visitors.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Speaker:** I'd like to introduce Brenda McCain-Armour, Assistant Chief Electoral Officer, and thank her for being able to join us today for this.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 55: Introduction and First Reading

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I move that Bill No. 55, entitled *International Interest in Mobile Equipment (Aircraft Equipment) Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 55, entitled *International Interest in Mobile Equipment (Aircraft Equipment) Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

*Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 55 agreed to*

**Speaker:** Are there any further bills for introduction?  
Are there any notices of motion?

## NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Department of Education to explore models for the establishment of a career and technology centre to serve high school students wishing to pursue apprenticeship opportunities in trades.

**Ms. Stick:** I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to provide financial assistance and support to the Food Bank Society of Whitehorse so it may continue to deliver its essential service to our community.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to extend the interim electrical rebate indefinitely in order to shield Yukoners from further increases to their power bills.

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

THAT it is the opinion of this House that the Auditor General of Canada immediately examine the Government of Canada's Nutrition North program insofar as it is related to the

community of Old Crow, Yukon, in order to establish the program's efficacy in fulfilling its publicly documented goals and objectives.

**Speaker:** Is there a statement by a minister?

This brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Capital project expenditures

**Ms. Hanson:** In the last 10 years, the Legislative Assembly has authorized billions of dollars in capital spending. The public expects that money is spent on needed infrastructure projects in a fair, transparent and cost-effective manner that benefits the local economy and improves the quality of life for Yukoners. The Yukon Party government — in power for many, many years — has accumulated a rather long list of projects that have been overbudget or have gone off the rails in some way.

Yesterday the NDP Official Opposition suggested that all elected members of this Legislative Assembly have a responsibility to make sure that public funds are spent properly, and we brought forward a constructive motion to give legislators greater oversight in the hope of avoiding future spending boondoggles.

So, Mr. Speaker, instead of using this opportunity to increase legislative oversight to avoid future mistakes, why did the government choose to simply congratulate itself and keep the status quo?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** It's very disappointing that the members opposite fail to recognize the good work that has been done by the government and our employees in improving project management and contracting procurement. The government has taken a number of steps that have directly responded to what we have heard from the Auditor General on these improvements that can be made, and we will continue to make improvements to both contracting and project management. Mr. Speaker, I spoke about many of these in the House before. Unlike the NDP leader and her caucus, my colleagues and I appreciate the good work that the government employees have done in this area and have the confidence in the work that they are doing.

**Ms. Hanson:** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the minister opposite misses the point. Other parliaments have legislative committees that provide greater oversight of capital expenditures. Yesterday, we brought forward a reasonable proposal that would ensure that Yukoners would benefit from greater financial oversight by their elected representatives. This was rejected. The Official Opposition does not understand why the government would be opposed to giving publicly elected MLAs a larger role in scrutinizing the expenditures, calling witnesses, ensuring that decisions are fair, projects provide good value for money, and that major mistakes are avoided. I am looking for an explanation from the Premier.

Why does his government believe that Yukon taxpayers don't deserve greater legislative oversight of how he spends their money?

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** Yesterday the motion put forward by the members opposite was basically a motion that stated we hadn't done anything. This government proposed a friendly amendment because we have been working hard. We've been working hard since the Auditor General's report, and it's disappointing that the members opposite fail to recognize the good work that has been done by this government and previous government and all our hard-working employees on improving how we do procurement, project management and contracting. This government has taken a number of steps, as I've alluded to before.

**Ms. Hanson:** Well, the reason we rejected the amendment is that fiscal responsibility is more than spin. To practise fiscally responsible government means having oversight and controls. The public expects promises made on projects are based on public priorities and demonstrated needs, not for cynical election purposes. It is the public purse, not the particular government's purse, and we as legislators must be continually working to deliver better results for the people we are elected to serve.

Now that the government has rejected our proposal to increase legislative oversight of capital spending, what is the government's alternative?

Mr. Speaker, what actions has the Premier taken to stop projects from coming in overbudget, to avoid sinking public tax dollars into money pits and to ensure that politics are taken out of major capital decisions?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I guess, to go back to yesterday, I would just like to say that the government brought forward a friendly amendment to their motion in order to really simply say "to continue to improve" the oversight and management of the good work that has been done by the Minister of Highways and Public Works and his department. All money that is appropriated, all money that is spent by the government, either on operation and maintenance and programs and services or on the capital investments, of course has the opportunity to be fully debated and voted upon in this House, where all people have that opportunity. The Leader of the NDP is also the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. It is actually out of the norm of the rest of Canada to have the Leader of the Official Opposition leading the Public Accounts Committee. But again, she has the opportunity to chair that committee to be able to review the audited work that the Auditor General's office of the Government of Canada produces in terms of auditing all the money spent by the Government of Yukon.

#### **Question re: Select committee on hydraulic fracturing**

**Ms. Hanson:** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government announced the creation of a select committee on the risks and benefits of hydraulic fracturing, commonly known as "fracking". A letter has been sent to the Government House Leader confirming the Official Opposition's support for this select committee. It is vital that select committee members have an effective and cooperative working relationship. We would gladly provide input to the development of the motion to create this select committee, including its mandate, as would, I imagine, the Independent member and the Third Party.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of cooperation, will a copy of the draft motion establishing this select committee be provided to this side of the House for comment and input before it is tabled in the House for debate?

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** First of all, the Leader of the NDP indicated that they have provided their written response. I look forward to receiving that. I have not seen a copy of it. I have received comments from the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, which we will certainly take into consideration when finalizing the draft wording of the motion.

I look forward to reviewing what the NDP have actually proposed in their response and giving it consideration. I would point out that establishing select committees to deal with matters of public importance, including topics like this, which are potentially very divisive, is an initiative started by the Yukon Party during the last mandate. In fact, prior to our time, there had only been one select committee of the Legislative Assembly established to tour the territory and hear the views and input of Yukoners. We think this is a good model. I am pleased to hear the indication from the Leader of the NDP that they will participate in this committee, and we look forward to bringing this motion before the Assembly.

**Ms. Hanson:** I note that the minister did not answer the question. The question is important, because the public trust is strained over how this government has directed public consultation. There are concerns over the government's bullish comments about the potential for shale gas development, which requires fracking.

So in response to concerns that I have already heard, I would like some clarity on a very important component of this proposed process. So, will the Premier provide this House with his unequivocal assurance that his government has no predetermined outcomes for the work of the select committee?

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I would point out to the member what we said in the letter that I've sent to members with regard to the proposal to establish the select committee. It talked about establishing a select committee to facilitate the public dialogue and subsequently make recommendations to the Legislative Assembly regarding the potential risks and benefits of this technique if it were to be used in Yukon.

What I would ask the NDP — I hope in their minds they are not set on one predetermined outcome and will actually engage in a review of the science, engage in discussions with Yukoners and consider both the economic risks and benefits. We do not have a predetermined outcome, in specific answer to the member's question. The question I would ask the NDP is this: Are they prepared to look at the facts or do they have a specific outcome set in their minds?

**Ms. Hanson:** Mr. Speaker, I do believe this is Question Period. I am sorry to belabour the trust issue but it is a fact and a reality in the Yukon that this government has repeatedly eroded the public trust in public consultation processes.

My question is still: How does the Premier reconcile his strong support for fracked shale gas, as stated in the Budget Address, with his assurances of an open process with no predetermined outcomes?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I think the Government House Leader just articulated the answer and it was clearly articulated in the message that went out to Yukoners through the media. The letter was distributed to the parties and to the Independent member. As we have described, we're talking about another Yukon Party initiative in terms of another select committee, something this government has done many times during the last three successive mandates that we've had. As articulated in the letter, this would be a committee consisting of three members of the government, including the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, the member from the Third Party and the member from the Official Opposition. I think that speaks for itself.

#### **Question re: Dawson City and Watson Lake hospitals**

**Mr. Silver:** The issue of new hospitals has been in the news lately and for all the wrong reasons. The government has been roundly criticized for poor planning and poor financial management of the two new hospital projects in rural Yukon. The Auditor General of Canada's report on the mistakes the government made is quite a read.

The centrepiece of this year's budget is a \$27-million bailout of the Yukon Hospital Corporation to clean up the financial mess that has been created. Once the hospitals are finished they will need to be staffed. When the government decided to build these facilities there was no plan in place to staff either one of them.

Will the Minister of Health and Social Services confirm that nurses from Whitehorse General Hospital have been asked to work in the new hospital in Dawson because there are not enough nurses to staff the facility?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** At this point in time I'm not sure if what the member opposite said is accurate or not.

I will ask the Yukon Hospital Corporation to provide you with that information as quickly as they can.

**Mr. Silver:** I appreciate that from the minister responsible. Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the current plan is to staff the new hospital in Dawson by bringing nurses in from Whitehorse because the government's recruiting efforts have been a failure to date. Whitehorse General Hospital is already short of nurses and that problem is going to get worse because the government wants to use these same nurses to help out Dawson. We find ourselves in this position because of poor planning by this government. Where the government is going to find doctors for the new hospital is another question entirely — one that just got harder to answer because of this government's poor relationship with Yukon doctors. Yesterday the head of the Yukon Medical Association said, and I quote: "The government should make it their top priority. Changing their attitude and mending their relationship with the doctors."

We know that nurses at the new hospital will come from Whitehorse. Does the minister have a plan to ensure that there are enough doctors to run the new facility in Dawson?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I would take my whole minute and a half to answer the member's inaccuracies in his preamble, but instead I will keep it very short.

I have recently talked to the lead physician in Dawson City, who has assured me that he has done an excellent job of

recruiting, in cooperation with the Government of Yukon, Department of Health and Social Services, and he felt — as late as two weeks ago — that he would have absolutely no trouble at all staffing his clinic in Dawson City.

**Mr. Silver:** I would love to get some information on that, as far as these doctors' names — it would be great to hear. It would be the first time.

Aside from the fact that the government has no plan to staff the new hospital in Dawson, there continues to be a problem with the construction of the project itself. The hospital is delayed; it is millions of dollars overbudget and there have been problems with the general contractor on the project as well. The government has acknowledged the problem with the general contractor, but hasn't given the public any information to date about the potential impacts on the construction project. These delays will likely mean more money and a later opening date.

Has a new contractor been found to finish the project, and what is the project's opening date and final cost of the building?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I had a meeting with the CEO and the chair of the Yukon Hospital Corporation Board yesterday, and they inform me that progress was being made with a bonding company that represented or bonded Dowland. They hoped to have a new contract signed in the very near future and that work would recommence on the Dawson City hospital — or the Dawson City health facility. I should tell you that work has been progressing, although very small projects — but work has been progressing on the health centre, even though the main contractor has deserted the project.

#### **Question re: Water resource protection**

**Mr. Elias:** As we sit here, Northern Cross Ltd. is driving drill bits up to three kilometres deep into the Yukon's crust up on Eagle Plains. They are looking for oil and natural gas. Obviously, whenever there is drilling, there needs to be special attention paid to our most important natural resource: water. There is a lot of legislation in place, and even more regulations in practice, designed to safeguard our water. Even so, the threat to our water will always be present. My constituents of Old Crow have been committed to understanding and protecting our waterways, such as the Porcupine River watershed, for generations, and we remain committed to this.

Does the government share our commitment? Is the Minister of Environment or of Energy, Mines and Resources ready to stand up and commit to this House that they are doing everything in their power to understand and safeguard the north Yukon's most important natural resource: water?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** In response to the question from the member opposite, I have to say that we think that the water resources are, of course, important to the entire Yukon, not just in north Yukon. We operate, in partnership with Environment Canada, a network of 10 water-quality monitoring stations throughout the Yukon, and from time to time when we have demand, we conduct specific baseline studies in specific areas.

Oftentimes we do that with the support of the First Nation. Beginning last year, we started a project with the First Nation

of Na Cho Nyäk Dun on a two-part water-quality monitoring project in the Na Cho Nyäk Dun's traditional territory.

In response and in recognition of the importance of maintaining high quality water to the community of Old Crow, we're going to extend that project into the Eagle River watershed as well. So we'll have additional monitoring in the Eagle River watershed, which is upstream of the community of Old Crow.

With regard to the member's comments relating to oil and gas development, of course the departments of Energy, Mines and Resources and Environment review all planned oil and gas exploration and development activities in detail, including the level of pre-project baseline information available for assessment and regulatory processes. So the work we're doing here ties in nicely with that. Of course, we're committed to ensuring that Yukoners have safe drinking water, have healthy watersheds and, of course, are committed to gathering information to do so.

**Mr. Elias:** It's important to recognize, for the minister's information, that the Northern Cross Ltd. oil and gas exploration project is not happening in the Eagle River watershed; it's happening close to the Porcupine River watershed. It's a very odd response because when you look at the minister's own highly touted [www.yukonwater.ca](http://www.yukonwater.ca) website, many, if not all, of the water monitoring stations have been decommissioned by Environment Canada and by this government.

There aren't any active stations on Eagle Plains. There are two that measure snow and one that measures weather. So if this government is going to be issuing permits for this industry to proceed in that area, they should also be issuing permits and developing a water strategy to ensure that surface and subsurface water is not being contaminated in concert with that.

Can the minister please explain why these important water bodies — which are at risk of contamination due to industrial activity in the region — are no longer being monitored and studied? How can the government claim to be responsible for a resource it no longer collects scientific data for?

**Speaker:** The member's time has elapsed. Minister of Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I have to correct the member opposite. As I just said, we plan on installing new stations in the Eagle Plains area this summer to monitor the water he's discussing. The importance of maintaining high-quality water to the community of Old Crow is a key priority of ours. That's why we made the decision to expand the project we're conducting with the Na Cho Nyäk Dun to the Eagle Plains area, specifically to include the oil and gas dispositions in that region. So I have to correct the member opposite on that one.

When it comes to a further plan, we're presently conducting public consultations on the development of a Yukon water strategy. It's our hope we'll have input from First Nations, like the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Na Cho Nyäk Dun, about how we can further work together to advance the cause of gathering information on water resources in the territory.

Of course, I'm always open to hearing from First Nations or communities as to their priorities with regard to water information gathering. We're always looking for partners, and

we're always willing to partner with First Nations or the communities to conduct those studies.

**Mr. Elias:** I thank the minister for his commitment to additional water studies in north Yukon, and I also would like to commend the minister on the preparation of the draft water strategy. I think it is headed in the right direction.

The Yukon government has a responsibility under 14.8 — it is the protection of quality, quantity and rate of flow of water in the First Nation final agreements and it says, "Subject to rights of Water users authorized in accordance with this chapter and Laws of General Application, a Yukon First Nation has the right to have Water which is on or flowing through or adjacent to its Settlement Land remain substantially unaltered at to quality, quantity and rate of flow, including seasonal rate of flow."

A thorough understanding of a resource is essential to managing and protecting it. It is in the best interest of government, industry and Yukon citizens alike and to our cultural, economic and recreational health and environmental values. How will this government fulfill its responsibility under the final agreements if they are not conducting a comprehensive water mapping exercise in the Eagle Plains region?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I have to say that I agree completely with the member opposite when he says that having the information is important to fulfilling our commitments under the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

That's why we are conducting a number of studies in the area. Of course, monitoring in the north Yukon is expensive due to the reliance on rotary wing aircraft and the cost of lab analysis. Of course, we are always looking for partners. We engage as best we can with Environment Canada, with the affected First Nations, with communities and are always looking to bolster the suite of information we have. We try our best to make sure it is available to the public on-line and available to proponents of development activity, as the member opposite referenced with Northern Cross. We are always trying to gather more information and make it available, and we are always trying to improve the methods through which we are able to gather that information. This is a priority for us, and we are going to continue the good work of developing a Yukon water strategy.

I thank the member opposite for his positive comments about the draft strategy and look forward to bringing that strategy to a conclusion as soon as the public consultation is completed. I look forward to the member opposite's input on that as we move forward.

#### **Question re: Catholic school sexual orientation policy**

**Mr. Tredger:** Yesterday the meeting of the Vanier Catholic Secondary School Council allowed us to hear what parents and the community had to say about unacceptable discrimination against GLBT students. While the minister has stated that he will ask for the law to be enforced, this doesn't solve the instances of bullying that have taken place at this school.

To truly ensure human rights are respected, we cannot ignore the need for restorative justice. Mr. Speaker, we need to remember that this story is not about a defaced locker; it is

about a student who was failed by the system and harmed by actions that have been left unaddressed.

What will the minister do to ensure that restorative justice is done for those who have been harmed by bullying and by the inaction of school authorities?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** I think all members in this House are aware of the work that the Department of Education and I, as well as the Bishop and the school council have put into this. There was the three-hour meeting that took place last night. The previous evening, I met with the bishop and school council for three hours to go through a number of different issues with respect to what is happening at Vanier, including, of course, the same-sex aspects that have been taking place and some of the incidents that have taken place. So again, I personally apologized, as the Minister of Education, to the student who was harmed. I know that apologies are forthcoming from the deputy minister as well when I spoke to her this morning.

We want to make sure that this type of incident doesn't take place again. We look forward to developing and improving upon the process on a go-forward basis.

**Mr. Tredger:** I thank the minister for that; however, students in our care can't be hung out to dry while we talk about policies. They need to know we have their back. The kind of behaviour we've heard of and the length of time it has been left unaddressed is alarming. This should not be tolerated in any school or work environment.

When students gather the courage to come forward with concerns, they need to know they are supported. Inaction in the face of bullying is not acceptable. Students need to know they are safe. What is the minister doing to ensure that all our schools provide a truly safe, welcoming and inclusive environment and that inaction is not tolerated when instances of bullying are reported?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** There needs to be zero tolerance for harassment or discrimination of any kind, whether it's at the Vanier Catholic Secondary School or any school in the Yukon, including harassment or discrimination against students with same-sex orientation. We can't tolerate that behaviour in our staff rooms or classrooms, in the hallways or anywhere on school property.

The action that has been undertaken so far I mentioned in my previous answer — meetings with the bishop on a couple of occasions now, as well as a meeting with school council and the broader school council/public meeting that took place last evening. As well, we're looking toward the end of April to have a workshop where we will deliver a new resource document, which will be entitled *One Heart: Ministering by Love*. I plan to attend that workshop as well and listen to the concerns of all those in the Vanier school community.

**Mr. Tredger:** I thank the minister for his answer, and I thank him for his apology and the work he has done on this issue.

Students need to know that the kind of discrimination and bullying we have heard of at Vanier will not be left unaddressed. Parents and students are legitimately concerned when they hear the bishop say that removing the discriminatory policy from their website won't change their behaviours. We need

those behaviours to change, and we need this change to happen now.

When can Vanier secondary school students, parents and teachers expect the full implementation of the Department of Education's policy on sexual orientation and gender identity?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** As I mentioned in the previous response, there is a resource document being developed. Again, the title of it is *One Heart: Ministering by Love*, and that's going to be the subject of a workshop that will be delivered in late April of this year.

Before we release that to the school community at that workshop, there is some policy work, as well as some legal review to be done on that document. As members know, in the letter that I sent to the bishop last week, I mentioned that policies and curriculum needed to be in compliance with the laws of the Yukon. That's why we want to make sure that that document lines up on the legal side.

I look forward to attending that workshop at the end of April. I'm hopeful that Bishop Gordon will be able to attend, as well. We look forward to hearing from the school community directly on that document.

#### **Question re: Social assistance rates**

**Ms. Stick:** The Yukon's social assistance program is meant to provide for the basic needs of Yukoners who are struggling to make ends meet. With the cost of rental units at a record high and a severe lack of affordable housing, poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. To make things worse, the cost of living is on the rise. We need an economy that benefits all Yukoners, but the reality today is that many are left behind.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health and Social Services confirm that the social assistance payments were increased in the fall to cover, at a minimum, the consumer price index?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Mr. Speaker, my recollection is that social assistance is tied to the CPI, but I'll have to go back and confirm it. I know rates were adjusted awhile back and increased substantially, but I'll check and confirm what I believe is the case.

**Ms. Stick:** I thank the minister for that. The current regulations established the cost of a two-bedroom apartment in Whitehorse at \$691. Everyone knows this is not even close to the reality of renting in Whitehorse. Hard-working individuals and families, the working poor and social assistance recipients are struggling to make ends meet. Can the minister tell us if his department is reviewing social assistance rates in light of current rents and cost-of-living increases?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Mr. Speaker, that's something that's ongoing as part of the budget process. We review, not only social assistance rates, but rates for almost every other service that we provide — or supplementary income that we provide — on an annual basis. So, yes, I can confirm that we do look at it each and every year.

**Ms. Stick:** Mr. Speaker, we are seeing record high numbers of people using the Whitehorse Food Bank, including some of those individuals on social assistance. This govern-

ment's 2012-13 budget had a surplus, while Yukoners have had to resort to the food bank to feed themselves and their families.

Can the minister tell us if the government plans to provide support or provide some funding to the Whitehorse Food Bank?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Mr. Speaker, we provide very minimal funding to the Whitehorse Food Bank at the current time, because, as part of our ongoing investigation into social assistance rates in the Yukon, we believe that the social assistance rates are adequate.

Having said that, I am in contact with folks at the food bank on an ongoing basis, and they provide us with a number of services as well. We work with them on an ongoing basis. We are working with them. As for providing assistance, we don't, other than a small stipend right now, and we don't have any plans in the future to increase that.

**Speaker:** Time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will proceed at this time with Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## GOVERNMENT BILLS

### Bill No. 9: *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2013-14* — Third Reading

**Clerk:** Third reading, Bill No. 9, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I move that Bill No. 9, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 9, entitled *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** The purpose of this bill is to seek the authority of this Legislature to approve interim spending for the government in an amount not to exceed \$407,383,000 for the two months ending May 31, 2013. This will permit government departments to make expenditures in order to provide public services to Yukoners until the main estimates are approved.

**Speaker:** Does any other member wish to be heard?  
Do you have any closing comments, Hon. Premier?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I guess, in closing, what we are looking for is funding until we have full debate on the mains. So this is funding for the first two months of the new fiscal year, April 1, 2013 through May 31, 2013. It is a sizable amount of money because on the front end of the fiscal year we are supplying money. There are some changes to the municipal grant, and giving the money up front to the municipalities is money going forward now instead of on a quarterly basis, which will provide opportunities for municipalities to use the money wisely and perhaps make some additional money as a result of it. I think it's another example of how this government has listened to municipalities, and we are working to the bene-

fit of all Yukoners. With the House's indulgence, we look forward to passing this bill.

*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 9 agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare that Bill No. 9 has passed this House.

We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, in his capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to give assent to the bill which has passed this House.

*Commissioner Phillips enters the Chamber, announced by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms*

## ASSENT TO BILLS

**Commissioner:** Please be seated.

**Speaker:** Mr. Commissioner, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed a certain bill to which, in the name of and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

**Clerk:** *Interim Supply Appropriation Act, 2013-14.*

**Commissioner:** I assent to the bill as enumerated by the Clerk.

Before I leave today, I have a little thing I'd like to talk about. I'd like you to recognize an individual who has made a significant contribution to Canada and the Yukon. Next week, my RCMP aide, Sergeant Major Al Hubley, next to me, will retire from the RCMP after 40 years of service. The first 20 years of his service were at five different detachments in the RCMP B Division in Newfoundland. For the last 20 years, Sergeant Major Hubley has been working in M Division in Yukon in a variety of supervisory and management functions. Al has been a volunteer aide-de-camp for former Commissioner Van Bibber from 2008-10 and my aide-de-camp from 2010 to present time.

I would like all of us here to join me in thanking Staff Sergeant Al Hubley for his dedicated and extremely professional service to our country and to our Yukon. As a long-time Yukoner, I am even more pleased that Al and his wife have chosen to remain in Yukon as they realize, like all of us, that there's no better place in the world to live. I'd like to personally wish Al and his wife, Marilyn, the very best of health and enjoyment in their future and in his retirement. Thank you, Al.

*Applause*

*Commissioner leaves the Chamber*

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

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chair (Ms. McLeod):** Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*. Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

*Recess*

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

### Bill No. 10: *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is general debate on Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I'm pleased to rise in Committee of the Whole today to present the introductory remarks for Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, more commonly referred to as the 2013-14 main estimates.

This is the fifth consecutive year that the Government of Yukon's expenditures have topped the \$1-billion mark. We continue to target balanced budgets, with 2013-14 projecting an annual surplus. We continue to maintain a very healthy financial resource position and avoid net debt.

In an environment where many other Canadian jurisdictions are working toward achieving balanced budgets and reducing net debt, Yukon is there. We may even consider Yukon to be a leader in this regard.

Our 2013-14 budget builds on our history of significant investment and provides a strong financial base to be responsive to emerging priorities and opportunities as they arise. Having managed the government's finances over a multi-year horizon — since 2003-04, in fact; a period of 11 years now — our government has delivered effective, responsible and disciplined spending initiatives and investments on behalf of Yukoners.

We do face some risks, some areas of uncertainty, and I am confident that our healthy financial position puts us in good stead to address these issues, should the need arise.

I don't own a crystal ball, and I do not possess such foresight that I am able to predict what will in fact happen in the future, but risk uncertainty does exist in all facets of life, and the same applies here.

I highlighted some potential emerging pressures during my budget speech last Thursday, including the expiry of the Building Canada fund in 2016 and the territorial health system sustainability initiative in 2014.

The absence of a long-term Shakwak agreement — funding has been provided only on a year-to-year basis, really, since 2009. Yukon's growing population will require the construction of more schools as well as the expansion of the Whitehorse General Hospital, and Yukon's expanding economy will require more government investment in energy, transportation and communication infrastructure.

Madam Chair, this is a good opportunity to revisit some general principles of our territorial financing, the TFF arrangement. Arguments may be presented that as the population increases, so does our territorial financing arrangement. Certainly our funding arrangement with Canada is escalated by population growth, but this is only one factor. The predominant factor determining growth of the TFF is the rate of growth in the provincial-local expenditures. As I noted earlier, many provincial jurisdictions are committed to being in the black. In the near future, one strategy to achieve this will be disciplined and conservative expenditure growth. Madam Chair, there is a very real possibility that the provincial-local, or PL, will flatten; that is, slower growth in the PL will occur and this will affect Yukon government's revenue stream through slower growth of the TFF.

Yukon's population is increasing and, yes, our TFF will be escalated to reflect the population growth. However, if I can turn the focus briefly to the infrastructure required to support Yukon's growing population, at some point Yukon's population will exceed the capacity of Yukon's existing infrastructure. I made reference to two examples a bit earlier: population growth will require supporting infrastructure, such as the expansion of the Whitehorse General Hospital and the construction of new schools.

Our TFF arrangements do not readily provide for these necessary one-time infrastructure investments. When we hit that tipping point and we need to build additional infrastructure and service capacity, we cannot rely on future funding programs that are unknown at this time. We must be prepared. We need to be planning and anticipating as a government — as Yukoners — to ensure that we have the wherewithal to maintain a strong financial position, allowing us to be responsive to our emerging and potential future needs. Our successive budgets have built financial capacity, and we continue to build on that capacity with our forward-looking financial plan.

We have a five-year mandate. We are committed to pursuing planned, disciplined and affordable expenditure initiatives on behalf of Yukoners. Our fiscal position provides us with the capacity to be responsive to Yukoners' needs and to be responsive to emerging pressures without breaking the bank as we move through our mandate.

There is much to talk about today with this budget. However, I would first like to speak a little bit about our recent history. I feel obligated to observe that in one very distinct way, history has just recently repeated itself. Members will recall that last year our government was accused of fudging the budget. This year, our government has been held out as liars — pretty strong words.

A phrase, by the way, that was widely popularized by Mr. Twain, but not necessarily directly attributable to him — our researchers have found access to Google as well — does not disguise the obvious inference. The full quote, I believe, is, "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics." As I said, there is no denying the inference.

Once again, I find that I am disappointed in and embarrassed for the member. In reality, when one is so dismissive of using factual data as the member opposite appears to be, you



can run the risk of both reinventing history and simply guessing what you think may happen in the future.

As I mentioned, I do not have a crystal ball. I prefer an approach that uses factual data to identify trends and analyze risks to support informed decision-making. When our government took office in 2002, we were in the midst of a trend where Yukoners were leaving the territory. From 1997, when the population of the Yukon was approximately 33,500, to 2003, our population was reduced by almost 4,000 people. The 2003 average was 29,967. Today our population sits at approximately 36,000 people, with the January to September 2012 average at 35,883.

I am confident that one thing that all members of this Legislature can agree on is that Yukon is a great place to live, work and raise a family. With a strong economy, more people have had the opportunity to move to Yukon and discover what Yukoners have always known to be true. In 2002, Yukon unemployment was 9.5 percent, and it increased to 10.1 in 2003.

There were approximately 15,200 persons employed with 9,300 identified as self-employed or working in the private sector. Unemployment for 2011 was 5.4 percent and for 2012 it was 6.9 percent — quite significant improvements over 2002 and 2003. For 2011, there were approximately 19,100 persons employed, of which 11,600 were either identified as self-employed or working in the private sector. Since 2003, Yukon has seen the creation of almost 4,000 jobs with approximately 2,300 generated in the private sector, an increase of approximately 25 percent.

Through 2002 and 2003, Yukon was in the midst of experiencing negative economic growth. Yukon's GDP for 2002 was minus 0.8 percent and 2003 followed with a growth rate of minus 1.9 percent. Economic times were not so rosy here in Yukon.

For every year since 2004, Yukon has experienced positive economic growth. With the exception of 2005, on average Yukon has experienced greater economic growth than Canada. We can look at a few other indicators that further inform how our economic fortunes have improved over the past 10 years.

For example, back in 2003, average weekly earnings for a Yukoner was \$740; for 2012, Yukoners have seen that increase to \$982. This represents an increase of 33 percent since 2002. Note that over that same period Canada saw an increase of around 30 percent.

On the retail sales front, 2003 had sales of approximately \$421 million — sandwiched between 2002 and 2004, both of which had retail sales of \$413 million. Retail sales in 2012 were almost \$674 million, a modest increase of more than \$250 million, or 60 percent since 2003.

Moving on to the construction sector, in 2002 we see a decade-low value of just over \$30 million, with 2003 showing an increase to \$50 million. For each of 2009 through 2012 — the past four years — Yukon has exceeded the \$100-million mark, with \$176 million as the high in 2011 and approximately \$101 million in 2012.

In 2002, the private sector represented 38.9 percent of the GDP, while construction represented 6.3 percent and mining, oil and gas represented only 4.3 percent.

In 2011, the public sector represented 25.4 percent of GDP, while construction represented 9.4 percent and mining, oil and gas represented between 22 percent and 23 percent.

Madam Chair, this is significant. The prevailing opinion often seems to identify Yukon as being economically supported by public sector expenditures and, no doubt, government spending is an important contributor to the Yukon economy; however, the shift in the mix is telling. Yukon has experienced a dramatic shift, with a much stronger, more diversified economy. Call these figures facts, call them statistics, but don't call them lies.

Yukoners are indeed on a much firmer economic footing today than back in 2002, when the Yukon Party first took office. With that, I conclude my observations on recent history with a quote from George Bernard Shaw, co-founder of the London School of Economics: "It is the mark of a truly intelligent person to be moved by statistics."

Madam Chair, if our government is able to repeat our recent historical economic performance, then this is one piece of history that I am willing to repeat.

Before I move on to the review of some of the expenditure highlights for the 2013-14 budget, allow me to provide an overview regarding the Yukon government's financial position. For the 2012-13 budget, I highlighted that the Yukon government was including consolidated financial information within the budget documents. This continues for the 2013-14 budget. I believe this to be a significant advancement toward achieving more transparency and accountability in government. Having said that, as I have stated in previous comments in the Legislature, the primary purpose of an appropriation bill and the accompanying estimates document is to provide disclosure regarding expenditures of unconsolidated entity — those departments and corporations that require spending authority to be approved by the Legislative Assembly through an appropriation act. As such, we will be considering, debating and voting on Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*.

I wish to reiterate that the inclusion of consolidated summary financial information is an important step forward. However, as Bill No. 10 will be the subject of debate by this Legislature, I will limit my comments here to the specifics identified in the subject bill and the accompanying summary financial information.

Members will find the supporting summary financial information for Bill No. 10, referred to as the "non-consolidated summaries", starting on page S-5 of the 2013-14 estimates document.

Focusing on the unconsolidated side, total expenditures or appropriations identified in the 2013-14 main estimates are \$1,230,122,000 — just over \$1.23 billion — of which, \$977.3 million is allocated to operation and maintenance and \$252.7 million represents our government's investment in capital. This is the fifth consecutive year that the Government of Yukon's expenditures have topped the \$1-billion mark.

Shortly, I will speak to some of the expenditure highlights contained in this budget. Suffice it to say, our government continues to make significant expenditures on behalf of all Yukon-

ers in the delivery of programs, services and capital investments. We have done this without breaking the bank.

With all things known today, all decisions to date considered, our 2013-14 budget forecasts an annual surplus of \$72.878 million, which means revenues for the Government of Yukon are projected to exceed expenses for the 2013-14 fiscal year. Of course, surplus is not the only indicator of our financial well-being that should be considered. Not to put a fine point on it, in fact, the pre-eminent measure of a government's financial strength is net debt. We have a net financial resource position of \$126.697 million forecast for the year-end March 31, 2014. The Yukon government continues to maintain a healthy financial position and avoid net debt. Most other Canadian jurisdictions are reporting net debt. This fact alone is significant, but let me phrase this in a different way. Net debt provides an indication of future revenue requirements for government. That is, net debt provides a measure of the future revenues required to pay for the past. The significance of this should be of comfort to Yukoners. As one of the only jurisdictions in Canada not in a net-debt position, it will not be necessary to allocate future revenues to offset or pay for past expenditures.

Our government can say we are paying as we go — and yes, we do have positive net financial resources to invest in future programs and services. As I have said, our strong net financial resource position is the most important indicator of our government's fiscal health.

As I'm being told, I will stop this portion of my remarks at this time.

**Ms. Hanson:** I think that rather than using the time for speeches, I would prefer that we could actually get into a discussion of the overview of the general budget and the general thrust of the Minister of Finance's views and his intentions with respect to overall management. I know that each of my colleagues — and I know the members opposite as ministers responsible for the territorial departments and agencies — will all be engaging in detailed discussions about every department and agency over the course of the budget time that's allocated to us.

As the Official Opposition, we want to use our time most effectively. We came pretty close last time to actually debating all of the departments and agencies. It would be a wonderful record if we were actually able to achieve what we were elected for, which is to provide that legislative scrutiny to all lines, to all departments and to all parts of this government, so we can at least say that we've heard and been involved in a thorough debate on what the intentions of this government are.

I appreciated the Minister of Finance setting into context his perspective with respect to how Yukon fits in and the implications for the territorial funding formula agreement. There often is a tendency to see this as an independent cash cow that just grows like magic from Ottawa. Both he and I know that's not true, so that little explanation for the record is helpful. I do acknowledge that, in his remarks, he spoke to the importance of developing a disciplined approach in response to the anticipated slower growth of the TFFA.

What it speaks to me about, particularly as we look to the changing mix in terms of the revenue sources for this territory, is the absolute importance that we as Yukon legislators are able to demonstrate that we are managing all of our resources for the best return for all Yukon citizens. It's with that respect that I will be interested in the minister's comments. We're not going to be relying upon the federal government so much in the future. We see a potential — reflecting his remarks also — slower growth of the TFFA. That, combined with emerging pressures on the health transfers and the Building Canada fund and whatever other possible federal transfers may emerge over time — and we can only hope that there will be some generally available federal sources of funds to support the kind of programs and services that Canadians across the country expect their federal government to support as part of the nation-building aspect of what the federal responsibilities are.

The minister made it clear to me that he does recognize the implications of the global economic stresses and what that does mean for the economy of Canada, the economy of provinces and then how that, in turn, reflects on the potential decreases in territorial formula financing arrangements and transfers to us.

So the question, then, becomes this: How does this Minister of Finance look to increasing and ensuring that Yukoners get a fair share of our natural resource wealth? One of the areas we look at in the main estimates — that there are some monies identified, but not a huge amount. So we now have — and I've heard the Minister of Finance speak to this — three operating mines in this territory. I recall last fall that there was some announcement of about \$330,000 of mineral resource royalties coming to the territory under the *Quartz Mining Act*. But I look at the main estimates and note also that we have — based on production, according to the department websites — 50,000 ounces of placer gold.

We have a royalty there of about \$25,000. I am wondering whether, as the Minister of Finance, he thinks that the placer gold rates set at the turn of the last century, which have remained unchanged at 37.5 cents an ounce, represent a fair rate of return to Yukoners, when gold is at an average of \$1,600 an ounce — some up, some down, but that's the average over the last year or two.

In a global view, what are the Minister of Finance's thoughts as we move forward, as we see a diminishing reliance upon the territorial formula financing arrangements between Canada and the Yukon, in terms of propping up our economy? What initiatives and what thoughts does he have with respect to how we ensure we have a fair share of our non-renewable resources — the resources that, once taken out of the ground, are no longer available to be re-mined? A notable exception, I suppose, is Whitehorse Copper, where we're taking magnetite out, but not getting any royalties out of that mining activity, either.

Could the minister just expand a little in terms of when he anticipates the royalty regime would start to kick in in a real way and how he would frame what is a fair rate of return for our non-renewable natural resource wealth, and how he would inter-link that with respect to the ability and the much-discussed — and many times announced over the last year — resource-revenue sharing arrangements that we have, the

blended oil and gas and the non-renewable resource revenues from the mining sector that were announced several times since the Prime Minister's visit here last August.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I do believe that I was asked this exact same question during our budget debate last year. Actually it was sort of a multi-faceted question. As I said in the speech, Yukon has risen two places in the Fraser Institute's survey of jurisdictions for mining, from 10<sup>th</sup> position to eighth position and there are reasons that that has actually occurred.

We have a rich abundance of high-density minerals and a full suite of minerals — lead, zinc, gold, copper, tungsten, molybdenum — a very long list of both base metals and precious metals that are of interest to growing economies because there are a number of economies in the world that are strong. There are areas that we can identify, such as Greece or Cyprus, which have always sort of lived by that, as I have mentioned, analogy that we can have it all and live within our means. Unfortunately, Madam Chair, that's not the case, but having said that, there are markets in Asia and South America that are robust and expanding, that really have a large percentage of the world's population and as more of these people migrate into middle class, the demand for resources, the demand for technologies, continues to rise, and I feel confident that the demand for some of the natural resources that we do have here will remain strong for a long time.

We have a great suite of minerals; we have a government that supports responsible economic development; we have some good infrastructure already — over 5,000 kilometres of road; we have access to a year-round, ice-free port; and we have certainty around permitting and regulations. All of these combined have really helped to put us where we are today, and I have already spoken to some of the results.

When it comes to placer mining, the member opposite fails to equate or really acknowledge the value of all those jobs that are directly or indirectly attributable to the placer mining industry. We look at that industry as Yukon's family farms — a lot of families who have, through the generations, worked their claims and provided jobs for their families and for other people employed by them; but then indirectly as well, through many different aspects, from tires and fuel and groceries and lumber, but also all the way to car dealerships and stereo shops and — in fact, tertiary types of economies, such as the retail stores as well — the Wal-Marts and the Canadian Tires, the Real Canadian Superstores, the Shoppers Drug Marts, and many local businesses as well. I have also said that the majority of businesses in the Yukon are not incorporated. In fact, that is why we see the results of tremendous growth in personal income taxes because many businesses in the Yukon are not incorporated businesses and their taxes are actually in with personal taxes as well.

But the other thing that the NDP fails to recognize is that royalties are only a small portion of resource revenues. Resource revenues have grown tremendously in the Yukon: 2010-11 — exceeded \$5 million; 2011-12 — just under \$6 million.

Cumulative resource revenue summary — since the Yukon Party has come into power: in late 2002 — between \$23 million and \$24 million.

I fail to see how the NDP can't quantify the value and the impact that has on the economy.

What do we have to do to ensure that this continues to be a strong, viable place for companies to come to and invest their money? We have to look at those levers that we have. I talked about certainty in the regulatory process and the permitting with timelines. I've talked about the full suite of minerals. I've talked about the policies of the government. I've talked about infrastructure, as well.

But we also need to look where we can, because mining is global and that industry does not need to come to the Yukon, because they can go anywhere in the world. In fact, they do. So what are the levers that we have? How can we ensure that we can have those jobs and those benefits here in the Yukon? We have to look at all of those levers because working in the north comes with higher costs than there are in some other jurisdictions.

It's important that we look at all the levers we have because once we have that exploration and it moves through those processes to the point where we have, as an example, three producing mines in the last five years. I am hopeful and optimistic that we'll see another mine begin construction in the next fiscal year.

With the creation of those hundreds of jobs — and potentially thousands now — I think there are just under 1,000 direct mining jobs right now in the Yukon. If we add another mine — potentially Victoria Gold's Eagle project, which is about another 400 direct jobs — that is the gift that keeps on giving and continues to drive the Yukon economy.

**Ms. Hanson:** Unfortunately, the Minister of Finance — perhaps this is just the ring-around-the-rosy — does not seem to want to answer the question as posed. I wasn't trying to put him on the spot or anything. I was simply asking him about the approach he, as the Minister of Finance, will be taking to ensure that we increasingly see a return to Yukoners for the non-renewable resources as they are exploited and as we take them out of the ground and export them. He makes reference to how the NDP can't quantify this. Well, it's not the NDP alone that has raised this question.

If the Minister of Finance and his ministers had actually participated in a mining summit that occurred last November, he would have heard industry representatives saying exactly the same thing. This government doesn't have the substantive economic data to say more than anecdotally that there is a growth — you know, we have this and this and this. What the industry has been asking for is backup from this government to be able to demonstrate the true economic benefits to this territory from the mining sector and the resource extraction sector.

I have no problem with that; I think it's very important. As Official Opposition, we've said time and time again, that we believe in a robust and sustainable resource extraction industry, not at the cost of all else, but a sustainable approach. You know, the minister chastises the Official Opposition for raising the question with respect to whether or not 37.5 cents an ounce for gold is a fair rate of return, given the market value. He just throws it off and says we are questioning the valuable of all the jobs that are attributable. But you know in most industries — to

use the example of a family farm — people live on the farm year-round. What we see in most of the resource extraction industry is that people do not.

So when the minister opposite says that we have thousands of jobs, where are they living? Where are they paying their income tax? I wouldn't go there with that one.

There are lots of examples and the minister chooses to pick one or two — including his friends at the Fraser Institute — but if you look at some of the other countries that are up top there, they're not prepared to see their resources go at bargain basement prices. What industry will say to you is they do want that certainty and they will pay for the resources if you can give them that certainty.

We have an amazing environment here to allow the resource extraction industries to operate. There is no reason we cannot get a fair rate of return for all our natural resources, so that when they are taken out of the ground and exported, in the future we will have something in the bank for our children. If you follow the example of the Nordic countries that he referenced in his Budget Address — as opposed to Alberta, where we see the folly of spending as much or more than they've taken, of pinning all of their hopes on the resource extraction industries to support their economy — that's not sustainable, Madam Chair.

The minister spoke to the importance of the international scene. Certainly we see many — not just emerging markets — and they are the economic drivers in the world. One of the ones where this government has spent a significant amount of time and energy is in China. That's a very valid approach. We see the Chinese state-owned companies investing all around the world, including this territory. There has been significant — we've often heard the minister reference — and again in his budget speech — the importance of the Shaanxi agreement — this five-year agreement that Yukon and a province in China have entered into.

I would appreciate if the minister could do two things — it's a two-part question, so it shouldn't be too complicated, I hope. I'm asking if he will outline in some detail the elements of this agreement, which he identified in his speech as addressing trade, investment, resource exploration, mine development and tourism, and secondly to table this agreement in the Legislature so that all Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly would be informed as to the scope of this agreement and the implications so that, when asked — because, again, we are accountable to all Yukoners — all Legislative Assembly members would be equally apprised as to what that agreement does contain.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Quite a few statements, followed up at the end by a short question — but certainly when the Leader of the NDP talks about the mining conference and the lack of attendance — I believe I was there and made opening statements at that conference and, in fact, I know the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, and the Minister of Environment were all present during that day as well. When we talk about the political spin that she was so avid and rabid about — that it

should not be a part of the gamesmanship — we just, again, see another example of that present today.

The benefits of this industry that are out there for Yukoners are very difficult to discuss in a short period of time — how tremendous they are and some of their direct impacts.

Of course she fails to mention, for example, that the small community of Pelly Crossing and the Selkirk First Nation have received \$12.6 million in direct royalties over about four years as a result of an active, producing mine on their category A land. Over and above the \$12.6 million was the company's investment, through the government in lieu of royalties, of about \$1.4 million in early childhood development centres. They invested in their water system as well, I believe. Those are measurable benefits that the Capstone Mining Company has invested in the community, not only for today but for the long-term success of those Yukon people — early childhood development and safe drinking water.

I know the member opposite would like to belittle these things and try to say how little impact and benefit there is to Yukoners, but the list would go on and on.

When it comes to data, it is quite clear. The data is very clear as to what happens to this territory and what happens to the mining industry when the NDP is in power. We have living examples and real data to back that up and quantify that exactly.

The NDP can say what they want and they'll study it to death, but in the end, death is exactly what they'll do to the mining industry and to the thousands of jobs that go with the mining industry. When it comes to return on investment, let's look at it. Let's look at quartz mining. Quartz mining royalties in the Yukon are basically in the middle. They are not at the highest end in Canada; they are not in the lowest end in Canada, but if you take the royalties for base-metal companies and combine those royalties along with their corporate tax — combined, the highest rates in the country are here in the Yukon. As I also mentioned yesterday, our corporate tax rates at 15 percent are second highest in the country. We've seen the federal government encouraging people to get down to that 10-percent level; we are still in fact at 15 percent. I think that we are asking for our fair share and then some. And how do we measure this? In the last 10 years, 3,000 more jobs in the Yukon; 6,000 more people and this is after those years from 1997 to 2002 that the previous two parties were in power.

I found it interesting for the Leader of the NDP to imply that the government will actually set the prices for the resources, because it's the market that sets those prices, not the government. The market will determine how much a pound of copper will cost and how much an ounce of gold will cost, not the government. The government doesn't do that. This is not how markets run. I'm sorry that she doesn't understand how that works.

A comment about her progressive style of management: I guess we can look at a good example right now with some of those Scandinavian countries and their financial position. Or, even more acutely right now, look at what's happening in Australia with their progressive government and the massive exodus of capital, banks and companies coming and looking at

places like Yukon to invest because of the progressive style of governance that has been occurring in Australia. I know that they will certainly have an election coming up soon and we'll see what the people will say at that time.

As for the sister province agreement with the Province of Shaanxi, China, I don't have a copy of that agreement here. I do believe this is a public document. It certainly speaks to many things that are of mutual benefit to both the Yukon Territory and the Province of Shaanxi in central western China.

They have a resource-based economy, as well, but a tremendous history. With the Silk Road, the tourism aspects of that part of the country are tremendous. Certainly tourism is an important component of this agreement. Education and technology are all parts of a cooperative agreement on how we will try to continue to strengthen our relationship with that province. As we know, building relationships with the Chinese is a slow process. We have moved forward very quickly with the signing of an MOU back in 2009 and then a formal signing of a sister province agreement in 2012 that will see a benefit to Yukon and to Shaanxi province. I am excited and optimistic that there will be education opportunities that we'll be able to look at, as well.

I think, certainly, to see the exact details of that shouldn't be a problem, because I do believe that this is a public document.

**Ms. Hanson:** I would just like to thank the minister for his balanced comments. I would like to confirm also that in fact the minister was correct: his fellow ministers did attend the summit, but they left. The substantive conversation was only attended, in terms of elected members, by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and me.

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

**Ms. Hanson:** You weren't there the whole time, were you?

**Chair:** Order please.

**Ms. Hanson:** I'm sorry. I do apologize to the member of the Third Party who was there for most of the day as well.

I appreciate the minister saying that the Shaanxi agreement — I hope I'm not mispronouncing that; my language abilities other than English are not that great — but I have not been able to find it on a public site so if the minister opposite would make that available to this Legislative Assembly, rather than me having to comb through that, that would be very helpful and would be beneficial in terms of the edification of this House so that we too are apprised of what has been agreed to on behalf of all Yukoners.

On behalf of all Yukoners, there are a number of other areas that I think we should look at. The Minister of Finance takes himself up to the federal-provincial-territorial role that he plays representing this territory in all matters financial — and that includes working with the federal government on behalf of Yukoners.

One of the areas that I would like to explore with him a little bit is the area of trade deals. As we've seen over the course of the last year, Canada has continued to negotiate a number of what I would call sweeping trade and investor deals that have profound implications for Yukon industry and workers. We've

asked this government to be transparent and provide justification for its support of these agreements. This is a financial matter. We do need to be concerned about trade and investor deals that give away our ability as Yukoners to derive local benefit, to create good jobs and build the diversified economy that I heard the member opposite speaking to in his Budget Address.

There are a number of trade and investor deals being negotiated on our behalf. Now, they have been done with a great deal of secrecy and negotiated by the federal government. The question asked by the Yukon public — and asked increasingly as they have seen the implications of these trade deals over the last number of years and particularly in the last year and half — is the assurance that the Government of Yukon is an active voice, not necessarily because we know these are nation/state, but we have a role to make sure that Yukon's interests are respected.

There has been a fair amount of coverage in the last number of months about where we're at in the final stage of negotiations to reach what's called a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement — CETA — with the European Union. These negotiations, as well, are secret and we've heard the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, among others, raise concerns about the CETA negotiations, and some provinces have been raising some concerns as well. They reach well beyond the traditional focus of basically removing trade tariffs.

One of the areas that I have tried in the past to bring to the attention of the Minister of Finance — and I'm assuming that over the course of the year he has become more familiar with these as he has become more involved with the federal-provincial tables — is the fact that the European Union is targeting the removal of provincial and territorial restrictions on European Union investor access — we are talking about investors — to energy, mining and natural resource extraction in general. That phrase, "restrictions on investor access", may disguise what is actually at stake for Yukoners. Any disputes about restrictions on investor access are about public resources and public policy. The federal government, on our behalf, is proposing that CETA incorporate what they call the NAFTA investor-state dispute mechanism. What that means is, if a European Union investor comes to the Yukon, and should a dispute arise about investor access as a result of legislation that this government here decides to pass in the protection or interest of Yukon citizens — Yukon land, Yukon water — this dispute basically would be negotiated and resolved offshore. An arbitration panel would do it, not our courts.

Basically, the concern has been expressed at local, municipal and regional levels, including in this territory, that Yukon public goods and public policies are being secretly negotiated and that the dispute resolution could be secret as well. So I'm asking the Premier, in light as his role as the Minister of Finance, and as our preeminent representative at federal-provincial-territorial discussions, for assurance that once CETA is signed — because although there have been some hiccups in this, because apparently the European Union has asked for additional measures that Canada had been somewhat reluctant to go — can the minister assure Yukoners that the Yukon government will retain the important aspects of economic govern-

ance and stewardship in the energy, mining and natural resource extraction sectors? Will the Yukon retain the capacity to set local development requirements?

For example, a specific portion of jobs created by the extractive industry investors must be for local workers. Will that be a priority for this territorial government? Will he be able to do that as Minister of Finance once these agreements are signed? Will he be able to assure Yukoners that a portion of the goods and services for any mine must be provided by local businesses? That's important for the development and diversification of this economy.

Another area that causes concern is that CETA opens procurement tenders to European Union investors, and by extension, to American corporations. It's important as we develop our diversified economy that we be able to ensure that local businesses — the Minister of Finance spoke to this: how important the growth of that is for that private sector, and I would agree. Will we be able to retain the capacity to set those local procurement requirements?

As the Minister of Finance, he knows and is well aware that one of the fastest growing components of our health care budget is drugs. One of the biggest concerns has been with respect to CETA — the Canada-European Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement — and its proposed extension of drug-patent protection in Canada. The Canadian Generic Pharmaceutical Association has estimated that the patent extension in CETA will result in an annual increase in drug costs that will cost this government another couple of million dollars a year. I'd be interested to hear the Minister of Finance's position with respect to the extent of drug-patent protection and how we protect against passing on those huge costs to an already escalating health care budget.

Over the course of the last number of months, there have been significant national discussions with respect to another one of these investor-state agreements that Canada has negotiated but has not yet ratified: the Foreign Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement between Canada and China. This is a whole new realm of foreign trade agreement; this one is an overarching one — the FIPPA.

If the Minister of Finance and his Minister of Economic Development, who is chipping in over there, have actually looked at it and looked at an independent analysis, as opposed to analysis done by either lawyers for investor states or lawyers for the companies that benefit from investor states, they would realize there is the potential for overriding the jurisdictions of this territorial government and, more importantly, the ability of the sovereign nature of decisions taken by both duly elected members of legislative assemblies and parliaments, as well as First Nation governments.

I can tell you, Madam Chair, that First Nation governments across this country are concerned about the implications of FIPPA. They've actually sought leave to seek a reference on this one.

As the Minister of Finance said, we are living in a global environment. We don't make decisions in isolation. What goes on is not simply having nice and friendly working relationships that materialize in generalized statements in memoranda of

understanding between us, another province and another sovereign country. Those are wonderful, and they're absolutely important in terms of facilitating a good and sound working relationship. Against that is a much larger backdrop. What Yukon citizens need to know is that their Minister of Finance — their Premier — has a good grounding on these agreements and that he has an active voice at federal-provincial tables in expressing and reflecting the views of citizens from this territory. So I'll leave it at that, and I'm interested in the views of the minister with respect to the matters I've just raised.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Well, again, I think we've seen a little bit of political spin and a little bit of political posturing. We started out general debate in Committee of the Whole with a statement by the Leader of the NDP saying, "Maybe this time we're going to be able to get right through that. We want good answers." Then, each time she stand up, she spends almost her entire time making statements, making accusations — really, spreading fear and speculation and almost not asking a question at all.

There were a whole lot of statements made, and I'm going to try to address as many of them as I can.

I will start off with one of the later ones, and that was with the FIPPA. We have the NDP again trying to spread fear and not necessarily unbiased information about these. Canada has signed more than 26 of the FIPPA agreements — "foreign investment promotion and protection agreements" is what the acronym stands for. I have a quote here that I brought up from a past throne speech. It says, "My government will also look beyond its borders and pursue relations with our Canadian and international trading partners through initiatives such as the upcoming Team Canada mission to southeast Asia." That throne speech was made in 1996. That was a throne speech by Piers McDonald and the New Democratic Party, excited about going to southeast Asia and doing business there. I thought it would be of interest for the Leader of the Official Opposition to note that one.

I will make some general comments about the trade deals; however, I will also inform the members opposite that the government's participation is through the Economic Development department. I'm sure that the Minister of Economic Development will be more than happy to provide additional information to the members opposite when he is answering their questions.

Again, about negotiations and that we don't know what has been going on — the member says nobody knows what has been going on, but she sure listed off a litany of things that were on the table, so I kind of see a bit of a paradox there. She seems to say that this is all in secret, but she seems to know all of these issues that are out there — yet it's all a big secret. I guess we could sort of compare this a bit to other negotiations. What about when the union is negotiating with an employer? Should all of those negotiations be in public? I guess I would ask how effective would that negotiation be if in fact it was all out in the public? Would there actually be any possible opportunity of reaching an agreement if everything were out in the public?

Hopefully that answers her question. Really, when it comes to these deals, of course the New Democratic Party is

just basically opposed to trade deals because they don't believe in trade. I just have to go back to more than 25 years ago and look at the NAFTA deal that was so vehemently opposed, and the tremendous benefit to this country and to the United States that has occurred as a result of the NAFTA deal. The New Democratic Party was so opposed to it at that time. It has literally resulted in the creation of hundreds of thousands — perhaps millions over 25 years — of jobs, as we have been able to come to an agreement to allow for the movement of people, products and services between our two great trading partners.

Talking about protection — this government gets it. We have a small economy. We are fostering it; we are helping; we're moving it along. We're continuing to try to diversify it as well. There is always a balance that we have to try to make.

We have to look even within our country and there is an agreement on internal trade — AIT — that allows for the free movement of goods and services throughout this country. We know that the NDP are protectionists and the sad point is that we don't live in a bubble in the Yukon. If we could just only deal with ourselves here, we would have no economy. We cannot grow if we're insulated and all of our financial, economical and our retail trade interactions are all within the Yukon and everything needs to be here. Where is the growth? How do we maintain a strong economy?

It's just a fundamental lack of understanding, I guess, and so I will leave it. But I do want to say for the record that the NDP has opposed every trade agreement that has ever existed in this country. I think these trade agreements have shown in the numbers — again, we can talk about the numbers.

Madam Chair, it is certainly a focus of this government to continue to provide opportunities to diversify this economy, to use this time to invest in such examples as we have mentioned, through the Yukon Research Centre, through cold climate innovation and climate change adaptation research. These are examples of moving forward with the mobile trades training, which will be able to go to all the communities to help Yukon people learn such trades as pipefitting and millwork and welding, so we are training Yukon people for Yukon jobs.

I know when that trailer pulls in to your riding of Watson Lake, Madam Chair, the people there will be pretty excited about the opportunity to learn these skills and trades so they can be ready to meet those demands we have today for jobs — qualified jobs, well-paying jobs. We'll also have to look for money from outside this territory and this country to grow this economy because we are small and we need investment from other parts of the world. We are open to talk to investors, to show them what a great place this is to invest and that, when they do, they are in fact doing so to the benefit of all of us.

We will continue to move along that path. I think it is very important that I also continue now to do my summary that I have started. I notice that you said my time was up, so I think I would like to continue on some of this because it's important that the message of the Finance minister is part of the record.

Our strong net financial resource position is the most important indicator that this government has of fiscal health. This indicator speaks to the future and, as I have observed previ-

ously, the 2013-14 main estimates forecast our net financial resource position to be a very healthy \$126.697 million.

One final comment on our financial health is that our government continues to manage the Yukon's finances over a multi-year horizon. Our government saves when it is prudent to do so, and our government makes expenditure investments when it is necessary. We do this on behalf of, and for the benefit of, all Yukoners. As legislators, we need to look beyond the short term and consider the long term.

Our government has done this to the benefit of all Yukoners. We have done this without mortgaging the future. As I have stated previously, our financial health is extremely strong. Our history of significant investments continues with our government's 2013-14 budget, as our strong fiscal framework provides us the flexibility to be responsive to emerging priorities and opportunities as they are presented to Yukon.

I noted in my earlier comments that this 2013-14 budget reflects the total expenditures of approximately \$1.23 billion, of which, just under \$253 million is directed toward significant capital investments for the benefit of all Yukoners, and approximately \$977 million is allocated for operation and maintenance programs and services for Yukoners. As I have repeated throughout, our commitment to fiscal responsibility remains strong while we continue to invest strategically in the Yukon and for the benefit of all Yukoners.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the more significant expenditure initiatives. Allow me to focus first on the capital investments identified in this budget. The government has had a string of significant capital budgets — six successive years where the capital investments have exceeded \$200 million and this year, 2013-14, is no exception.

As I noted earlier, the 2013-14 budget includes \$252.7 million for capital expenditures, covering a number of important investments across a number of sectors, including \$30.79 million allocated for land development; \$59.228 million in support of the territory's transportation infrastructure; \$77.063 million for the planning and construction of a number of facilities, including the continued support of our building maintenance program; and just under \$50 million to support a variety of investments in municipal and community infrastructure.

Economic activity in Yukon is robust, bringing a significant population growth and increased demand for developed land and housing. We continue to be proactive, planning and developing the necessary and appropriate infrastructure to meet those growing demands. Our commitment to land development is significant, totalling approximately \$152 million over the next four years, of which \$30.79 million is allocated in the 2013-14 fiscal year. Whistle Bend is one example of where government is addressing this need.

Our budget provides \$25 million to continue phases 1 and 2 of this important development, plus \$500,000 for the advanced planning and design of phases 3, 4 and 5; and \$165,000 for Habitat for Humanity — another program this government is committed to do through each phase of the Whistle Bend project. I mentioned our multi-year plan of approximately \$152 million over the next four years. Certainly, with the development of Whistle Bend, a significant amount is allocated to

Whitehorse. However, I also wish to highlight that just over \$30 million of the \$152 million is identified for various municipal and community developments throughout the territory. Clearly, our government has a significant commitment to developing and providing for developed land across this territory.

Yukon is a large territory, connected by an impressive network of transportation infrastructure managed by the Yukon government, including a highway system of just under 5,000 kilometres and a total of 132 bridges. We have two ferries, one national airport, 11 regional and/or community airports and 17 airstrips. Our investment in transportation-related infrastructure is indeed impressive, and it requires significant annual resources to continue to maintain our infrastructure to a satisfactory standard. For 2013-14, the budget includes just over \$59 million related to the transportation-related expenditures.

Significant reconstruction projects include \$17.5 million under Shakwak for Haines Road and the north Alaska Highway; \$10.34 million for reconstruction and surface repairs on the Robert Campbell Highway; \$2.805 million for improvements to the Atlin Road; \$6.85 million for the Tatchun Creek bridge replacement on the Klondike Highway; and \$2 million for the Takhini Hot Springs Road.

Our investment is not limited to significant reconstruction efforts. We also see \$4.35 million for the pavement rehabilitation program and \$870,000 allocated specifically toward rehabilitation of secondary roads.

Under airports, approximately just over \$5 million is allocated, of which \$2.703 million is targeted for work in community-based airports and airstrips. The balance of \$2.3 million provides for various projects at the Erik Nielsen International Airport.

I started this section with a summary inventory of some of the elements that make up our transportation network. Earlier, I spoke of some uncertainty related to the Shakwak funding. Including Shakwak, we have had success in leveraging funding from other sources, including the Building Canada fund. Yukon cannot count on these funding sources indefinitely.

Our transportation network is an integral part to the Yukon economy, to Yukon society. Should outside funding sources decrease or expire, Yukon will face significant challenges, perhaps requiring consideration of some difficult choices. In the meantime, our government continues to work with the Canadian and American governments in efforts to secure longer term and stable funding arrangements.

Turning to building construction, this budget provides for some much needed investment. In some cases, our 2013-14 investment will initiate a multi-year project, providing employment opportunities throughout Yukon communities. Our budget includes planning and design initiatives such as \$150,000 for replacement of the living quarters at Swift River; \$359,000 for the new Mayo seniors housing facility; \$900,000 for replacement of the Sarah Steele Building; new and/or continued construction such as \$6 million for the Ross River recreation centre; \$3.668 million for the replacement of the Beaver Creek fire hall; \$7.262 million for McDonald Lodge; \$7 million for the Whitehorse seniors housing project, the 207 Alexander Street replacement, which is a total of \$12.638 million

over three years; and over \$3 million for the arrest processing unit.

NGO support — specifically, projects in partnership with the NGOs to address some of the housing issues facing Yukoners: \$1.2 million for second-stage housing, which is \$4.5 million over two years to support Kaushee's Place and Betty's Haven; \$2.05 million for Options for Independence, which is a \$3.05 million over two years; and \$100,000 for the Salvation Army to support their planning of a new building. They are all significant projects that address a variety of needs across Yukon.

Here we are in the second year of our mandate and we have taken steps to address some of the housing issues facing Yukoners. Admittedly, more can and will be done. In this vein, the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation recently announced our government is moving ahead with a territorial housing strategy. As I have mentioned, we have a five-year mandate. While we are making steady process, it is not practical or even possible to tackle every issue with only our second budget.

Our government looks forward to building on these projects throughout our mandate, and assisting Yukoners with access to satisfactory and affordable housing.

**Ms. Hanson:** I'm not sure where all that came from. I'd just like to say, thank God for Todd Hardy. Who would have thought that the only affordable housing to be made available in this territory would be as a result of him and a small core group of volunteers who took the initiative and established Habitat for Humanity and worked with those families, developed sweat-equity approaches to ensure that, one by one, homes were built? And I give credit to the Minister of Finance, the Premier's predecessor, when Premier Fentie agreed to make one lot available. It has been good, and it demonstrates that in fact this territory can, if it has the will, find ways to make affordable housing available. But it should not only be left to the non-government sector — NGOs and volunteers doing fundraising, to make sure that affordable housing is available. Anyway, my hat's off to my friend and predecessor, Mr. Hardy. I would suggest to the Premier, the Minister of Finance, that he double-checks with respect to his wholehearted support for the *Agreement on Internal Trade*. I do think that if he were to actually talk with and listen to his senior officials, there may be another story there.

Perhaps the Minister of Community Services could expand upon the implications of the *Agreement on Internal Trade* and the discussions with the Yukon Medical Council.

When I started off, I said I wanted to talk about some of the broader public policy issues, finance issues, that the Premier, as Minister of Finance, has the overall responsibility for in terms of guiding his caucus in the Cabinet. The Minister of Finance made reference to the fact that we are seeing changes — and we can't count indefinitely on the federal transfers or the transfers from the American government — in particular around the Building Canada fund that runs out in 2016. We know that the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has talked about — and raised and proposed to the federal government —



ways to address the significant infrastructure gap and has called for multi-billion dollar long-term plans to address these.

I'll be interested in hearing from the Premier, as he has worked with his northern counterparts — the northern premiers — what he is doing to ensure that Yukoners and Yukon receives its fair share of infrastructure funding into the future, not just between now and 2016 as that federal support eclipses.

It's equally important to note that the federal government has been moving away from the arrangements that are cost-shared, in terms of providing public services through federal transfers to the territorial governments or provincial governments to allow them to design them as they wish, and has put increased emphasis on public/private partnerships. This is the approach of designing, building, operating and maintaining infrastructure that essentially opens up public services, and all of the elements of it I have just outlined, to private industry. The federal government introduced the P3 Canada fund years back. It's a separate operating agency. I understand that the Yukon government has a P3 policy, and this is where I'm looking for the information from the Minister of Finance.

It's my understanding, at least from my checking of the websites — then again, I couldn't find the Shaanxi agreements so perhaps I haven't found the source here — the Yukon government has not yet embarked on a P3 project. I believe the Dawson bridge was going to be P3, but that was shelved.

There has been a fair amount of research done over the last while and I actually purchased a book by a fellow named John Loxley. He is an economics professor at the University of Manitoba who wrote a book called *Public Service, Private Profits*, which included a case study of major public/private partnerships, or P3s. He studied the economic and financial aspects of P3s and he included case studies — there are about six of them. They go from the Confederation bridge to the Abbotsford, to schools and others, so they are used for many things.

Oftentimes they are sold as being a cheaper alternative — cheaper to the taxpayers than the public sector doing it. Sometimes that's true and sometimes it's colossally wrong. So one of the things we want to ensure as Members of the Legislative Assembly is that when we make decisions about how we spend territorial money, we are really clear about what we are getting for our money.

My question would be to the Minister of Finance: What are the current plans of the Yukon government with respect to embarking on P3 projects? Does the Yukon government anticipate putting forward P3 projects as project delivery modes of operation this year? In the next year? In the five-year capital plan we have laid before us as part of the budget? If that's anticipated — because, again, we have a policy framework within the territorial government. What controls and oversight functions will be in place to ensure that the taxpayers effectively get value for money, get the most effective use of territorial resources, and that we're not replacing what is rightfully a public service with private profit?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Again, I'm a bit confused by some of the comments from Leader of the NDP — again, looking at some of the work that we have done and specifically

around affordable housing and social housing to help those people who are in need of housing.

Beginning in 2009, the Yukon Housing Corporation has enhanced and improved its existing social housing stock. Yukon Housing Corporation has also built a number of new social housing units with funding from Canada's economic action plan, along with some Yukon Housing Corporation funding.

Yukon Housing Corporation now has a total of 657 social housing units throughout this territory. Most of this new housing was completed by the fall of 2011. In order to utilize the remaining Canada economic action plan funds prior to the March 2012 program expiry, Yukon Housing Corporation purchased six mobile homes and had these installed — three in Carmacks and three in Ross River. With these six additional units, in total, through the Canada economic action plan funding program, 133 new Yukon Housing Corporation social housing units were created and a further 10 units were added in special needs housing — specifically, the children's receiving home, eight units for Health and Social Services and two units managed by Options for Independence.

Over 350 social housing units throughout Yukon have been repaired and upgraded. Upgrading the housing stock includes many different types of work — for example: safety features, interior or exterior retrofits, roofing repairs, flooring replacement, furniture and boiler upgrades, siding trim, air-barrier upgrades, bathroom and kitchen renovations, painting and, in some units, wheelchair lifts were added. We acknowledge and appreciate those contributions from CMHC, through which some of these upgrades have been possible.

So 350 upgrades — it will be over 150 new units here as we go forward, as we're building 34 more units at 207 Alexander Street; 657 social housing units where people do not pay more than 25 percent of their income. I am astounded that the NDP continue to say how little we have done in this area.

She talked about FCM. I have to say that the new president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities was up here and commented on what a great example of cooperation exists with this government and the Association of Yukon Communities and, as such, also with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. I'd like to acknowledge the Minister of Community Services and her department for that incredible work they do to ensure we really have one of the flagship examples of how we work together with our municipalities to the benefit of all Yukoners.

As it goes for infrastructure, I know that I have spoken in this House about — in fact, last year at the Western Premiers Conference, and again at the Council of the Federation, I led the discussions on infrastructure. From both of those conferences, part of the communication was talking about requesting the new Building Canada 2 program — whatever we want to call it — and we've seen now some indication of where this program is going to go, but certainly talking toward the commitment of predictable funding, flexible funding, that could be used and the importance of ensuring that the territories receive, for a better term, "base plus", meaning that there is a base amount that everybody will receive and then from that it would

also be based on the population, because if it was just simply based on population it would be a very small amount for a jurisdiction such as ourselves that has such a small amount. Have we spoken about it? Absolutely. Have we worked on it? Absolutely.

Just last month the Minister of Community Services was in Ottawa talking to her federal counterpart at that time as well. We have seen in the recent federal budget the commitments Canada has moving forward to ensure that we continue to address those needs that are identified. This territory was able to utilize the money of Building Canada effectively because we were ready to go. There was an assessment done of what the needs were. There was a focus put on those areas of greatest need, such as clean drinking water, dealing with waste water. We're very proud of the commitments and accomplishments that this government has made through that program and how wisely we used that money. Some of the jurisdictions spent all that money very quickly through this program, but we knew that we didn't have the capacity within our existing industries here in the Yukon to do a project of huge size without having the maximum benefit to our local industry. We divided up the money into realistic chunks. That prudent approach has allowed us to ensure there were ongoing capital projects through the entire period of the Building Canada program.

I found the comments on P3s by the leader to be interesting and it almost sounded like she was in support of P3s so I look forward to further clarification from the NDP on their position on private/public partnerships. What are they? What are they really but working together?

I think there was some memory of some of the significant investment that the public government in the Yukon made partnering with Northwestel in ensuring that we could enhance the telecommunication infrastructure that does exist in the Yukon today. We can call these whatever we want, but of course there will be things that need to be looked at in the future, and this is one of the options that we will have on the table. Large hydro projects or grid inter-ties would be examples of projects that we might want to entertain. Of course, we will also look at partnering with First Nation development corporations as well. We can call that a P3 as well.

I think there are ways to do things. Sometimes the best method isn't to pay cash up front because sometimes you can have more effective use of your money — especially when we're talking about large projects; especially if it's, for example, a utility that is regulated, there is always a requirement that money invested does have a return on investment as well. So if you pay cash for that, the Yukon Utilities Board will be looking for a rate of return on that investment, and that could be difficult for the ratepayer to bear.

I think there are a lot of ways to look at large projects. We will continue to move forward and look at what are the best options to provide the maximum benefit to Yukoners with the least amount of financial risk.

Our capital investment is not only about new construction. Yukon government owns and maintains a significant portfolio of buildings. As has been noted in the last few years, the Auditor General has identified some concerns about deferred main-

tenance, sometimes referred to as "infrastructure deficits". Our government is committed to ensuring effective and appropriate stabilization and management of our building portfolio. The Yukon government has 335 properties, with an estimated replacement value of \$1.5 billion.

This is a significant investment that requires continued, ongoing reinvestment to maintain these assets. For 2013-14, we have identified \$10.204 million in support of this program, with an ongoing commitment for future years of \$10.25 million. The Department of Highways and Public Works' Property Management division continues to work with all departments to identify maintenance priorities and immediate deliverables to ensure budgeted work will also be completed work.

On municipal infrastructure, bolstered by Building Canada, the investment by our government in municipal-based projects remains significant, providing basically \$50 million. Specifically, under the Building Canada fund, approximately 40 projects approved under the annual capital plans submitted to Canada totalling just over \$41.4 million are included in the 2013-14 budget. The bulk of these expenditures are directed toward community water, sewer and waste water, as well as road infrastructure upgrades — all very important investments for the respective communities. Examples include the following: \$5.525 million in Dawson to continue sewage treatment and district heating projects; \$2.965 million for Faro water and sewer and pumphouse projects; \$4.191 million to Haines Junction for water treatment, water reservoir and pump system projects; \$3.206 million to Mayo for water, sewer, well and road upgrades; and \$1.823 million for water and sewer pipe replacements in the beautiful Town of Watson Lake.

The complete list of projects is really quite impressive, truly spanning and delivering projects across this entire territory. I encourage members to refer to the 2013-14 capital budget and the multi-year plan for additional details.

Now, I'd like to just make a few observations about our multi-year plan. Management of the Yukon's fiscal framework over the long term requires that choices be made. Our government continues its work to be ahead of the curve by identifying, planning, and implementing long-term and multi-year expenditure plans. I recognize that the multi-year plan serves primarily as a guiding and planning tool, representing preliminary figures. These are plans continually under review and adjusted, as necessary, for emerging priorities and trends. Notwithstanding, all things equal, the multi-year plan highlights our government's undertaking to provide stable and predictable expenditure investments.

I am proud of our achievements on the capital side of the ledger. I am no less proud of what we have accomplished on the operations and maintenance side.

There are significant investments on the O&M side that reflect our government's commitment to providing the best service to Yukoners. As I noted earlier, the 2013-14 budget provides just over \$977 million for operation and maintenance.

I will limit my comments to just a few highlights. Yukoners deserve the very best health care and, where possible, Yukoners should be able to receive their services here in Yukon. This budget provides for increased capacity on a number of

fronts. Completing our commitment initiated last fiscal year, this budget provides \$2.376 million in support of the opening of 10 beds at the Thomson Centre, bringing the total of new beds to 29. Planning is in the works to open additional beds.

\$685,000 is allocated in support of a referred care clinic that will assist to reduce pressure on the Whitehorse emergency room. \$429,000 is allocated to enhance our home care program, and \$11.364 million is provided in support of operations for the Yukon Hospital Corporation.

This budget includes a number of initiatives designed to protect Yukon's environment. The Department of Community Services has budgeted \$1.098 million for various activities and initiatives under the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan*.

This investment on the O&M side supplements significant expenditures of \$3.723 million on the capital side of the ledger related to the solid waste plans, creation of transfer stations and recycling depots, and the purchase of composting and chipping equipment for landfill sites.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources identified \$27.039 million in expenditures related to type 2 sites. \$935,000 is provided for the Department of Environment and \$750,000 for the Department of Community Services to undertake remediation activities on a number of sites where environmental liabilities have previously been identified.

We talk about building vibrant Yukon communities. Through the Department of Community Services we see a number of initiatives that support our Yukon communities, including an increase to the comprehensive municipal grant of \$1.477 million — the largest single-year increase. On a go-forward basis, the comprehensive municipal grant will be indexed to ensure that funding provided to Yukon communities increases with a growing economy.

\$619,000 is provided to address additional costs in support of community water supply and delivery and waste-water operations, and \$772,000 related to enhancement of our rural fire services.

Good governance is a major pillar of our government. Governance covers many aspects of how a government engages and responds to the needs of its citizens. Governance is about partnerships. Governance is about appropriate legislation and regulations. Governance is about delivery of effective programs and services to Yukoners.

Allow me to touch on three initiatives that highlight our government's commitment to improve governance. Members will note that the French Language Services Directorate is now identified within a budget as its own vote. In addition, we have provided \$289,000 for FLSD to undertake the development of a French language service corporate plan and three pilot projects in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services to deliver French language services.

The Department of Highways and Public Works has been engaged in consultations with many private sector partners to review the Yukon government's procurement and contracting practices. The 2013-14 budget provides \$561,000 to establish a Yukon government procurement office.

The Department of Community Services includes \$376,000 for the creation of a residential tenancy office to re-

spond to inquiries arising from the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, including a framework to address dispute resolution and a more coordinated approach. Madam Chair, these are just a few areas where our government is making a difference.

Before I conclude, allow me a final observation regarding the Government of Yukon's finances. Our government's commitment to sound financial management remains strong. As a result, we have net financial resources. This speaks to our future and highlights that we are not relying on future revenues to fund past and current expenditures. We have an accumulated surplus. This speaks to our future and highlights our economic resources — both financial and physical — available for the provision of future programs and services. We have an annual surplus. This speaks to where we are now and highlights the fact that the revenues exceed expenditures, allowing us to build the bank and to save.

As it has in recent years, our savings account will allow us the flexibility to be responsive on behalf of Yukoners when it is needed the most. I'm extremely proud of the efforts of our government to provide for a wide range of program, service and capital investments on behalf of all Yukoners, while maintaining a very healthy long-term fiscal position.

Looking to our multi-year forecast tabled with this budget, future years remain extremely positive with revenues projected to exceed expenses for each of the next four years.

This forward-looking, healthy fiscal framework is what Yukoners can take great comfort in. Indeed, the Yukon remains financially well positioned for the future.

**Chair:** I see members look like they might be ready for a break. Would the members like to take a 15-minute recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** We will recess for 15 minutes.

*Recess*

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Are there any other members who would like to speak?

**Mr. Tredger:** It's a pleasure to rise to speak in Committee of the Whole to Bill No. 10. I'd like to thank the official from the Department of Finance for attending this afternoon's sessions, and I'd like to thank him and his colleagues for the briefing that he gave us — I guess it was last week. It was much appreciated and very informative.

I would like to begin my part of this by thanking the people of Mayo-Tatchun. I'm honoured to represent and learn from such stalwart people. I'm humbled by the trust they have placed in me. That trust provides me with their strength and resolve. I want to thank the many volunteers who work so diligently to make our communities safer, friendlier and healthier — great places to live, work, and raise our families. The volunteer coaches, leaders, instructors and guides — those who volunteer on boards and councils, those who are Rangers, those who serve as first responders, firefighters and ambulance crews.

I would especially like to thank those who sit on village councils and on our First Nation governments. You have made our communities the best. I would also mention the seniors and elders who have met with me, given me guidance and shared their stories with me.

I am enjoying my time visiting in living rooms, offices, and communities with the people of Mayo-Tatchun, learning from their stories, creating friendships, carrying their stories, ideas and concerns to the Legislative Assembly. They have much to offer and we have much to learn from them.

I find my visits to the communities grounding, invigorating and, for me, an important dose of reality, and I look forward to getting there tomorrow.

The strength and vitality, the resourcefulness and ingenuity and resilience of people in our communities never ceases to inspire me. We can all learn from each other. We can learn and respect together.

I would like to highlight an example of community action. One Billion Rising is a movement to bring attention and to join with others around the world in an effort to end gender-based violence, particularly against women. An event was held in Carmacks where the men began marching at Heritage Hall and the women began at Tantalus School. Symbolically and actually, they met at the bridge. This was followed by a community feast. What a great example for the young people there. What a statement for the men, women, elders and youth who participated and took a stand, especially in light of recent statistics that show Yukon as having rates four times the national average in regard to violent crimes against women. I would also like to thank the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Leader of the Official Opposition — the Member for Whitehorse Centre — for their presence and participation in that march.

Last year's budget was a disappointment, a lost opportunity. This year's budget is more of the same. I found it an uninspiring document, and I find myself asking: Where are the people and what is the vision?

An NDP government would make it a priority to ensure that people have safe, affordable housing, that we get a fair deal for our resources, that the Peel River watershed final recommended plan was accepted and that all Yukon children can go to good schools, and that there is adequate and accessible daycare. An NDP government would ensure Yukon had an affordable patient- and family-centred health care system.

Yes, as we have in the past, an NDP government would support responsible resource extraction. An NDP government would ensure that we have an economy that is based on a renewable energy, not yesterday's fossil fuels. An NDP government would be responsible stewards of our land. An NDP government knows government's responsibility is to work with rural communities to help them grow and prosper. A New Democratic budget would inspire and lead Yukon people. An NDP government would engage with all Yukon people, not a select few.

This government purports to listen; it purports to respond; it purports to plan; but it goes for political one-offs and ad hoc

plans for the public purse. This government bogs down in a quagmire of contradictions when faced with reality.

I am deeply concerned the Premier's second budget speech was so divisive. Its whole tone sets one Yukoner against another; it sets the Yukon against the world and sets mining against the environment. The Yukon Party budget is not about building a future; it is about protecting a very narrow economic view of the Yukon and demanding that Yukon people either get aboard or we are the enemy — very sad, Madam Chair. I am disappointed and embarrassed.

As politicians, we must act with dignity. If we are to provide better government for all citizens, we must rise above pettiness and personal comments to represent all Yukon people, and we expect our Premier, especially in his Budget Address, to set an example and represent all Yukon people.

Yet what we saw was hyperbole and exaggeration and the selective use of terminology and examples, disregard for volunteer, non-profit organizations, and grandiose financial schemes out of touch with reality — a Premier spreading fear and speculation.

It is one thing to disagree with each other — to hold differing viewpoints. However, the Premier's attack on the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, CPAWS, and the Yukon Conservation Society, YCS, was unprecedented, personal and very inappropriate. Attacks like this only belittle the attacker. CPAWS volunteers and staff have worked in our communities, respectfully found ways to speak up for wilderness and work with everyone, particularly in our communities.

Since 1968, the Yukon Conservation Society has been advocating, educating, and conducting research on Yukon environmental issues. What started as a cadre of active volunteers focusing on the Alaska Highway pipeline has blossomed into a vibrant and diverse organization that works on mining, energy, wildlife and municipal issues.

This work includes extensive involvement in the development of public policy and legislation, such as the current draft water strategy and participation in the upcoming oil and gas consultations. The Yukon Conservation Society, like most Yukon people, is not against resource extraction. They just want it done right. Never again must a Faro, a Clinton Creek, a Mount Nansen or a Keno leave an enormous economic and environmental liability to be paid for by future generations and taxpayers.

The Yukon Conservation Society has worked 45 years to maintain healthy Yukon communities based on healthy land, water and wildlife. If you value rivers you can drink out of, hunting, fishing, berry-picking, hiking, cycling, boating and skiing in real wilderness, the Yukon Conservation Society is working for you, including if you are a member of the Yukon Party. The Yukon Conservation Society promotes long-term livelihoods that will keep you and your children here.

The Raven Recycling Society was born out of the Yukon Conservation Society recycling committee. These two groups have helped create a composting and recycling program for Whitehorse, tougher beverage-container legislation and composting and recycling opportunities for rural Yukon communities.

For more than 25 years, YCS has provided free interpretive hikes in the Whitehorse area to tourists and residents, encouraging tourists to stay another day and local people to appreciate our environmental and historical heritage. CPAWS and YCS have had a presence in Yukon for many years. Their staff members are Yukon people. They live, work and play in Yukon and pay taxes in Yukon. I'm proud of these Yukon advocates and their supporters who have stood strong as stewards of the land and water. They've been principled, passionate, but most of all, reasonable. Maybe the Yukon Party government could take a lesson in civility from them. I am proud to have them as my neighbours and friends and I thank them for their efforts on behalf of all Yukon people.

What steps will the Premier take to restore relationships with these two outstanding non-profit organizations?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** It was interesting to listen to that speech from the Member for Mayo-Tatchun. Actually, I think the first half of his speech — he just clipped that from last year's speech he gave during the Budget Address. But then we had an opportunity to listen to all the wonderful things that an NDP budget would include. Unfortunately, to have such a budget you would need an enormous amount of pixie dust, as well, to be able to come and allow such a thing to materialize. Unfortunately, we don't live in a fairy-tale world.

We live in a reality where we need to ensure that we can have a strong, responsible, growing economy that allows the government the opportunity to deliver programs and services and capital investments for the benefit of all Yukoners. That occurs through having people in a robust economy paying personal taxes, and corporations and businesses paying business taxes to then allow this government to pay for its employees and to provide those goods and services and capital investments that spur on more training and more growth and more businesses and more competition to continue to ensure that we can deliver to Yukoners in the most economically responsible way we can.

Y2Y is an international organization with offices in Canmore, Alberta, and also in Missoula, Montana, with the goal of conserving the biodiversity of an area of 500,000 square miles. That's 1.3 million square kilometres. Between 1997 and 2012, this organization has raised \$46.5 million. This is an organization, with its partners in the Yukon, that was bringing thousands of voices and substantial money to influence the outcome of land use planning. As we have said on this side of the House, while we do listen and consider everyone's voice, when it comes to making decisions about Yukon, we listen to Yukoners the most. The best example of that is devolution. Since Yukon assumed the responsibility for the management of the land, the water and the resources 10 years ago, look at Yukon go.

Of course, it wasn't just devolution, but it was also with final and self-government agreements and a Yukon Party government that was focused on creating policies for economic development. When you put all that stuff together, look at what happens when you allow for the local management and local decisions. So yes, we will consider all views, but we consider

the views within Yukon greater than we do someone who lives in Hong Kong or Düsseldorf or in Sacramento.

Y2Y is not done. They're not done. That's just the one piece. They also have listed the Wolf Lake ecosystem, which includes all of south central Yukon, including the Village of Teslin. It also includes the Upper Liard Basin and the entire southeast Yukon, including the town — your hometown, Madam Chair — of Watson Lake.

Y2Y is not trying to save Yukon for Yukoners. It's trying to save Yukon from Yukoners. The success of Yukon Party governance has done more to protect and preserve Yukon's environment and wildlife, more than any previous governments.

We have over 12.68 percent of the Yukon protected, second only to British Columbia in this great country of ours. We've identified six territorial parks. We've identified seven habitat protected areas and we intend through the Peel land use plan to protect even more space. As we heard through the member opposite's statements, the NDP would live in this panacea where, as we heard from the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, we can have it all and live within our means. As I have pointed out, that is a motto that has been followed by some countries such as Greece and the island of Cyprus as well, and we know where that has gone.

**Mr. Tredger:** The Premier certainly knows how to use hyperbole and to spread fear. The Premier takes credit for land claims yet attempts to divide the First Nation governments — sets one against the other; sets First Nations against Yukon people. We've seen a series of missed meetings, letters of ultimatum, vague promises and unnecessary court cases and lawsuits, all the while proclaiming their respect for and willingness to work with First Nation governments. We just heard the Premier take credit for the parks and the habitat protection areas. Those were negotiated through land claims and are part of our obligation that we made when we signed our land claim.

The Yukon Party is dismissing the spirit and intent of our land claim agreements. This is having a serious impact on our relationships. Long after today's arguments and debates, long after the mines have closed, the people will have to live and work together. Our ancestors, our children and our children's children — that was the intent and the spirit of land claims, to develop a way that we could live together on the land. It is a shame that First Nations and their governments must now spend money defending their rights, ensuring their people are treated fairly, their land and water is protected and their rights are respected. They would much rather spend their money improving their communities.

Throughout the budget we are treated to a whole show of smoke and mirrors. Yukon people will not be fooled by such shenanigans. The government claims it will protect the environment, but on the other hand it wants to open up over 90 percent of the Peel for roads and resource development — smoke and mirrors.

The government says it will protect the environment, but instead it only talks about infrastructure, speculative projects, and attacks or discounts Yukoners who wish to protect and benefit from our wild places — smoke and mirrors. This gov-

ernment has never really engaged in the Peel River planning process. What they did provide to the planning commission was so vague that the planning commission and planning council said it was unhelpful and did not contribute much to the plan. In fact, the planning commission could not figure out what the government really wanted — more smoke and mirrors. When a governing body starts to publicly pick and choose who they will listen to, it is usually a sign that they have made up their mind and are looking to ensure they get the result they want — more smoke and mirrors.

Madam Chair, I had the pleasure a number of years ago of travelling to New Zealand. New Zealand is, in many ways, similar to the Yukon — a distant corner of the earth endowed with abundant natural resources, many wild places and a dependence on nearby neighbours.

During a financial crash in the 1980s, New Zealand realized the need to diversify their economy. New Zealand resolved to build a tourist-focused economy. When I visited, one could see the fruits of that labour. Much of their economy was derived from the tourist industry. When I was there, Madam Chair, they made me feel welcome. They asked me questions. They were interested. How can we do a better job? My opinion counted even though I was a foreigner, even though I was a visitor. They recognized that by my being there or hearing of it, as a citizen of a global economy that we like to talk about, my voice was important. Tourism Yukon spends thousands of dollars in an attempt to do the same. Unfortunately they are undetermined by the Premier's statements in his Budget Address and the newly revealed waiting system for consultation on the Peel River watershed.

The message the Premier is sending to our foreign visitors — to those who are interested in the Yukon, to those who want to support the affected First Nations or Yukon people in their endeavours to protect the jewel that is the Peel River watershed — is that their voice doesn't count — "We want your money but not your opinion."

This brings to mind George Orwell's comments in *Animal Farm*: All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others. It's more smoke and mirrors.

We've had an extensive consultation — at least it's referred to as such — but now after the results are in, the government is discounting some of the respondents, changing the rules once again.

When I went on-site, nowhere did I see it put forth that, if you were from outside the territory or outside Canada, your voice didn't count — or as much, we're being told. It didn't say that. It said, "Please give us your opinion. We need to consider it." I should note for the Premier that the final agreements state that land use plans are to take into account the interests of Canadians.

Pasadena, Düsseldorf, Toronto — we live in a global world. The Internet makes us a small community. Word of mouth has a lot to say. Before I go travelling, I get on the blog sites. I look at the comments. The government spends countless thousands of dollars on marketing the Yukon brand. Comments like this undermine that value and that brand.

We are indeed fortunate to live in the Yukon. It is a special place. I think we're a strong-enough people and sure enough of ourselves that we can share it. The Premier's comments show complete disregard for one of Yukon's most important economic sectors. Yukon people, as well as affected First Nations, invested six years and hundreds of hours of volunteer time and over a million dollars developing and putting input into the Peel watershed land use planning process to come up with a compromise position: the *Final Recommended Peel Watershed Regional Land Use Plan*. The Yukon Party throws it out. Yes, this minister changes the rules, invents some new concepts, and begins a four-month process, calling it the longest consultation process ever undertaken by a Yukon government. I thought the other one was over six years long — smoke and mirrors. Extending a flawed process for four months doesn't make it right. Now we hear there have been no meaningful consultations with the affected First Nations to date, despite the Premier's promises to have consultation completed by March 25.

In the Peel planning process, there are four affected Yukon First Nations: the Vuntut Gwitchin government, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun and the Tetlit Gwitch'in Council. All of those communities and governments have spent a lot of time and put in a lot of effort. They've included elders and youth. They've included business and labour. They've worked with each other, and they put a lot of time and effort into that plan, like many other Yukoners. They are feeling dismissed. Where are we now? What is the next scheme? Yukoners have been clear all along. They want the Peel River watershed protected. They support the final recommended plan. Please, no more smoke and mirrors. Your smoke and mirrors are not working. Yukoners will not be swayed. Now that the public submissions are finished and in, we hear of a new scheme from the Premier and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources.

I want to paint a picture. The Peel River watershed is an internationally recognized jewel. It is one of the largest intact river ecosystems in the world. It is a pristine jewel, an ecosystem unparalleled anywhere in the world. It is a spiritual, biological, recreational and traditional haven of immense beauty and diversity. The Peel River watershed and its basin have enthralled people from time immemorial. People from around the world are discovering, what the First Nations have known all along. Today we see First Nations using it. It's their book. It's their way of passing their culture. It's a way of showing their children how life was. We see tourists and potential tourists.

As we live in a world of climate change, spaces and places like the Peel River watershed are of increasing global importance; hence the increasing involvement of citizens from around the world. Yet the Premier in his speech referred to a deposit that was last looked at some 10 or 15 years ago. He appeared to be quite enamoured with it — the Crest iron ore deposit. This mineral deposit is a low-grade source of iron ore. It's far from the market, it is difficult to access and process the materials, and difficult to get to market. These are the kinds of things that speculators on the stock market get burned on. This is a kind of mineral development that costs huge amounts of money in a speculative way.

This is the kind of mine that we see international money increasingly flowing into and out of in order to play the stock market. It is certainly not something to jeopardize the jewel that is the Bonnet Plume and the Wind River —

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

**Mr. Tredger:** Snake, thank you, and the Wind. The Wind is part of it and it is certainly not one to build our future on. Such idle speculation has no place in a budget. It is irresponsible.

When we look at what it means and how do we reconcile this? In broad terms, and I quote from a report: "... the project would involve 1.5 million ton per year iron ore mine with on site tailings storage and substantial water exports; permitting a 1.0 million ton per year coal mine..." taken from the nearby Wind River.

That means permitting a slurry pipeline from the Crest site to the Illtyd Creek site, a power line, and an access road from Illtyd Creek to Crest, a facility having characteristics equivalent to a power station consuming one million ton of coal per year with respect to air emissions and ash storage. The project would permit a facility having characteristics equivalent to a 1.2 million ton per year electric furnace steel mill with respect to air emissions, water emissions, on-site slag, dust and waste storage. There would be permitting for an all-weather, high-capacity, high-quality road, some 165 kilometres to the vicinity of Elsa to handle upwards of one hundred, 40-ton capacity tractor-trailer units per day on a 360-day-per-year basis. There would be permitting for residential amenities for upwards of 1,200 people and potential permitting of a product marshalling and shipping facility at Skagway as well as permitting of air-strips and helipads at both operating sites.

A large coal mine — strip mine. A large iron mine — strip mine. All of this in the heart of the Peel River.

Minimal impact? I think not. How will the government's plan protect the Peel, when this is what the Premier has in mind? This is not protection. It is destruction and smoke and mirrors.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I guess, for the record, we just listened to another 20 minutes where not a single question was asked by the Member for Mayo-Tatchun. There was not even a non-budget-related question asked. There was no question asked. This is general debate about the financial mains for 2012-13 —

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

#### Point of order

**Chair:** Mr. Tredger, on a point of order.

**Mr. Tredger:** I think the Premier is incorrect. My last three sentences were a question. I can repeat them for him, if he likes. How will the government's plan protect the Peel when this is what the Premier has in mind?

#### Chair's ruling

**Chair:** There is no point of order here.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** It was an opportunity to make a statement for 20 minutes, so I know that we will hear from the NDP later about how this government is not allowing for de-

bate on the budget, and we can't get through the budget, but what we have heard — for the record — this entire afternoon is a political statement and is really nothing related to the budget itself. I'll ensure that we remind the NDP about this going through the session when we get there.

Madam Chair, Yukon resources belong to all Yukon people. I have said that many times, and I will continue to say that. This government was elected by Yukon people to make decisions for Yukoners. We were elected to deliver on a platform that we put out to Yukoners prior to the election, and that is to whom we are responsible and accountable.

Tourism has grown, in fact, every year since this government — three successive Yukon Party governments — much of that time under the leadership of the now Minister of Community Services and now our current Minister of Tourism and Culture. Every year in 10 years, tourism continues to grow.

It's now a \$200-million revenue business in the territory. Thirty percent of Yukon businesses benefit. Some of their revenue is a result of the tourism business. We are very proud of that record and we continue to invest and are very bullish — very optimistic — on our growth in the tourism business.

Yukon is between 490,000 kilometres and 500,000 square kilometres. We have 36,000 people here. I think that mining and tourism can get along. That is an area as we described — for example, the Peel watershed region — the size of Scotland, the size of New Brunswick; you could put Nova Scotia and Prince Edward inside of that area — and that is 67,000 square kilometres. The Yukon is almost 500,000 square kilometers and there are only 36,000 people here.

We think that this is something that is attainable. It has been in the past and continues to be so. We believe that environmental protection starts with effective regulations that set high standards while allowing responsible use, and this balanced approach is the best way to manage most areas of the Yukon, including the Peel planning area.

The Member for Mayo-Tatchun touched on the Crest deposit. Somebody said that the Crest deposit, if developed, would provide economic benefit for 100 years. Madam Chair, do you know who said that? It was the Peel planning commission.

What would be the financial cost to Yukoners, to all Yukon people, if such a deposit — which the commission said would provide an economic benefit to the Yukon for a century — was either directly or indirectly expropriated from the owners? Unfortunately the NDP don't believe that financial costs should be part of the consideration of how we move forward with land use planning. I think it must again go back to the philosophy that they can manage a budget with pixie dust, and we can sprinkle it and isn't everything wonderful, and we can live within our means and have everything that we want.

Unfortunately that's not how it works. It's my responsibility to make sure that we have money to pay for doctors, that we have money to pay for teachers and to build new schools like F.H. Collins, to build and upgrade roads and bridges and provide all of those wonderful services, many of which we have already begun to talk about in this budget.

I could go on and talk about many of the things that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun was talking about — the lack of cooperation between First Nations and this government. I can tell you nothing could be further from the truth. Just last week the signing of a new forest management resource plan for the Klondike region with the Chief of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is just another example. I could stand here and talk for today and the rest of the next day on examples, department by department, of how we continue to work together to foster the relationship to build capacity for First Nations, to ensure that going forward we can be equal partners in the economy and we will continue to do so, but I'm not going to do that because this was about budget debate. So I look forward to the next question from the NDP to see exactly how relevant that is to the budget.

**Ms. White:** I'll see the Premier's challenge. When you refer to our savings account in the surplus budget, can you tell us what interest rate that earns?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Of course all the money isn't sitting in one lump sum, but I would estimate that we've received an interest rate on the money in the bank at about 1.25 percent. If you go to the bank today and put some money in, I suspect that the interest rate will be less than one percent. Right now, of course, you see where the Bank of Canada prime rate currently is. So that money is earning money and it's in a safe and secure investment, as we do have a very strong policy on investment of Yukon's assets that we do have in force.

**Ms. White:** In 2006, the federal government transferred \$50 million to the territory, earmarked for affordable housing. \$32.5 million went to the First Nations, which left \$17.5 million in the bank. Where was that money kept? Was that \$17.5 million part of the savings account?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** The Member for Takhini-Kopper King is correct. It is money in the bank in general revenues.

**Ms. White:** My math number was wrong. I did it at two percent because I had no idea what a savings account would earn. But if we had \$17.5 million in that general savings account from 2006 into 2012, before we spent the \$4.5 million on Betty's Haven, at two percent compounded interest we would have gained \$1.9 million. Understanding that would be less because I was three-quarters of a percent too high, is that money — the \$17.5 million — going to be rolled over into the last \$13 million that we have left? Even if I dropped it down and said that, in six years, \$17 million could have earned \$1 million, does that mean that \$1 million also gets added into the affordable housing fund? Would that bring us up to about \$14 million right now?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I would say that we have certainly far exceeded our investment with Yukon Housing Corporation of the difference on the interest paid during that period of time of between \$1 million and \$2 million. That's not the only money that the Yukon government has applied for housing. I mean, she's almost implying that we're doing nothing and that we have this money sitting there growing and accruing interest. The money is in general revenues and has accrued some interest. We continue to invest in housing through the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation and the previous ministers and delivering on housing throughout

the continuum. So, yes, while that money has sat there, it's not like it's doing nothing. We continue to invest money every day in housing. I described earlier the hundreds of houses that have been renovated and the new houses that have been built. Over 600 houses/units are now in social housing that we provide to people, who only pay 25 percent of their income.

The net operating grant — actual amounts or what we're looking at for an operating grant for Yukon Housing Corporation — is \$3.378 million just in one year, far exceeding the interest at two percent on \$17.5 million.

**Ms. White:** So in the 2013-14 budget, has that \$13 million remaining from the federal government's affordable housing money been earmarked for any projects? So has the \$13 million that is left over from 2006 been earmarked for any projects?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Of course, we continue to look at options. We have looked at ways where we might be able to leverage that money to make that money, in fact, even more. There are a number of projects, as you're aware, that we have gone forward with, but those were projects that were deemed where we couldn't double-dip, for lack of a better term. For example, if we were getting money from CMHC for units for low cost housing, we couldn't also use the northern housing money.

We have many examples since this northern housing money came to us where we have the option to use other money as well. We also have to remember that during this time there was a tremendous amount of construction that was going on. Building Canada money — there was a lot of investment. If you throw it all out there at the same time when the contractors have as much work as they can do already — they'll put a bid in for that, but the prices would be astronomical.

You could spend the money and not really get a lot for it. It was a very prudent decision to say that there was a huge amount of investment going on in the Yukon already in public sector capital investment and that we could get more for that money by waiting until there was a time when there wasn't such a massive amount. The Building Canada money, as we are aware, had time sensitivities and some other federal money over the years also had specific commitments to it and timelines, whereas the northern housing money was more flexible. We look forward to identifying projects that we will utilize the northern housing money for and announcing that in due course.

**Ms. White:** So just to confirm — the \$13 million is not earmarked for spending in this fiscal year and it's going to continue to sit in the savings account? So it is not earmarked — that \$13 million will not be spent this year. Is that right?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** What I've said is that it's not in the budget mains. As we know, moving forward, depending upon opportunities or pressures that occur, the government has the flexibility because we have the money in the bank that, while it's not in the budget mains, I did not say that we are not committed to constantly look for opportunities. If we feel that the time is right to go forward with this, we will. As I have mentioned on many occasions, a budget is exactly that: it is a budget; it is a plan. However, those plans do change — sometimes because of opportunity, sometimes because of things that



happen. For example, the flood off the Liard River last summer — Upper Liard. So, because of such a situation, we were in a financial position to be able to do that and still not have to worry about where we're going to get the money from. No, we haven't earmarked the money specifically in this budget, but that doesn't mean at some point in this year we may be able to announce that we're going to move forward with some.

**Mr. Tredger:** The Premier speaks of development of mines as a certainty, yet his ministers are telling us they cannot proceed with infrastructure until a need is proven. We know that with each new development comes increasing traffic on our roads. Now is the time to prepare. Carmacks has been promised a bypass road for several years, yet despite an obvious need, increasing traffic and danger, with safety at stake, there is no indication of it in the budget.

Stewart Crossing, Pelly and now Carmacks all have inadequate highway lighting and traffic warning signs, yet the Klondike Road and the Silver Trail are main transportation arteries. When can they expect this to be rectified? We are aware that there are increasing demands on our roads, yet when will our hard-working highway crews get funding to support those increasing demands? When will we see passing and turning lanes on major haul roads? How long before tourists quit driving the Alaska Highway and the Klondike Highway like they've quit driving the Silver Road to Keno?

How much upgrading will be required so our citizens don't have to ride the speed bumps each spring as heavier traffic, the melting permafrost and frost heaves play out.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Certainly these are all things that a growing, strong economy needs to worry about. Again, if the NDP were in — and with their record with mining — these wouldn't be concerns. We wouldn't have to worry about what we would have to do with increased traffic on the roads. We wouldn't have to worry about the energy problem that we have right now, and we certainly wouldn't have to worry about a housing problem. The NDP would fix all of those problems immediately by putting a full-brake stop on our economy.

The Silver Trail — again this year we are adding additional monies to that road. We know that there is a tremendous amount of due diligence that goes into putting a mine in place, and we are optimistic that the fourth mine in six years will hopefully begin construction this year with the Victoria Gold project. As the member knows full well, when he wants to ask a specific question regarding roads, he will be able to ask that in detail when it comes time to discuss Highways and Public Works with the good minister.

**Mr. Tredger:** I thank the Premier for his answer. I raised it last year and have several times — this is a health and safety issue of great concern to my constituents in Pelly Crossing. Emergency Medical Services cannot land their plane at the Pelly airport. What this means is that when somebody gets critically ill in Pelly Crossing, they are taken to the health centre. From the health centre, they are transported by ambulance to Stewart Crossing. At Stewart Crossing, they're transported from one ambulance to the Mayo ambulance crew. The Mayo ambulance crew takes them to Mayo. In Mayo, they're taken to

the hospital, where they're again taken out of the ambulance and discharged to the hospital.

The hospital takes care of them until they can get a medical flight from Whitehorse. When the plane arrives in Mayo, they are taken by ambulance from the hospital to the plane, where they are again transferred. The plane flies to Whitehorse. They are then transferred from the plane to an ambulance, which takes them down to the hospital, through the doors and into Emergency. We are talking about critically ill people. Today we heard that perhaps the doctors won't be on those flights or be available for those flights. I've asked about this several times in the House, and I see the Premier has taken a line from his last year's budget.

I'll read it: "...\$2.353 million will be invested in Yukon-wide aerodromes to address air-side deficiencies. Projects include airfield levelling, brushing, safety and security improvements, as well as lighting, navigational aid upgrades, installation of run-up pads, and application of EK35 runway enhancements at Burwash, Dawson and Mayo."

I'm sure those communities needed this. I would like to ask the Premier if indeed that was done last year, in which case, why would it be in the budget this year? If it wasn't done last year, would he consider moving the money to ensure that the people of Pelly Crossing have an airfield that will cater to their needs when they're critically ill and take them by direct flight from Pelly Crossing to Whitehorse?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Madam Chair, I am certainly proud of the health care we do have and provide in this territory and certainly, while I don't have the same opportunity now as I did when I was in the drug store, in the private sector business, I still hear from people who go Outside and come back and talk about the wonderful people we have in our health care system and the great services we provide.

To the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, I will again say that during departmental debate on the budget, you can ask your specific question of the appropriate minister, and he will be willing to answer that question for you.

**Mr. Tredger:** I believe we have a very good health system, and I'd like to commend the health care people who provide that too, both in the communities and in the city, but I also think that it can be improved. I think the scenario that I just described should be of major concern. This isn't a comment on the health care providers in our territory. They do yeoman work, and they do very good work.

I'd like to turn my attention to upgrading and our emergency response services.

We are spending, as I noted in the budget, a fair bit of money doing that. One of my concerns: Have we considered the highways and what will be necessary, should there be an accident involving one of the increasing number of dangerous goods being transported to our communities from Watson Lake, Teslin, Whitehorse, Carmacks, Mayo and Dawson.

There is a need, when I went to several of the communities, for a coordination of our emergency response teams. In Whitehorse it's often segmented or siloed, but in the communities it's important that our responders have the ability and capability of working together. I would ask this government that

they take a careful look at our emergency responder systems, and put MOUs in place so that emergency responders can work together to respond to a situation so that our conservation officers, our RCMP, our highways crew, our search and rescue, our firefighters and our emergency responders can all, when necessary, if possible, work together without fear of whether they are stepping in someone's department or not.

In the communities, people have learned to work together. It's economical, it's necessary, and it makes a lot of sense. I am sure that any of the MLAs from the communities can attest to that. When I went around, it seemed there was a fair bit of confusion. While we are spending money, it's important that the local providers be involved and consulted.

The other thing that came up — I was reading in the budget — is that our government is investing in a review of 911 services to determine the feasibility of expanding the service beyond the existing coverage areas to improve emergency response capabilities. This has been reviewed and studied since 1993. We have the technology, we have the capability, it is cost effective, and there is no excuse for it not being done. It would provide a very valuable service to our local communities if there were a centralized 911 call number.

Currently, if I'm in an accident or I have a problem and need somebody in a community, I have to remember the call number for that community — whether it be 537 or 993, or whatever — I have to remember the specific number for whatever service it is — whether it be RCMP at 5555, I believe, health or fire. This slows the whole process down. We could have a trained person in Whitehorse taking a 911 call from wherever they are in the Yukon and immediately contacting and dispensing the required information. That technology is there. It is not overly expensive and we need to have it in place as soon as possible. We don't need another study. We need action on this one.

I'm pleased to see the work being done to improve our solid-waste management and various water treatment plants in rural communities, and I commend the Minister of Community Services for the work she had done on that.

I hope that the government continues to work with local providers to ensure that their unique situations are accommodated. I also hope that the increasing demands on local resources of industry are also being considered. It is also important for the Yukon government to remain an active partner, providing expertise and finances where necessary and retaining the environmental liability, as local governments do not have the resources to do so. Community resources are being strained to keep up with this input and oversight. I know there isn't a question in that, but it is a concern that I hear from the communities.

Does this government have a plan — not a study, but a plan — and a timeline to put a 911 centralized system into being?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I would invite the Member for Mayo-Tatchun to ask the appropriate minister when we're in department debate. The appropriate minister has the support of their officials with them and they will be more than happy to answer the question.

**Mr. Tredger:** Statistics and all indicators show that the number of seniors in Whitehorse and in the Yukon is one of the fastest growing segments of our population. Are we ready? I think 10 years ago, when we could see a housing crisis coming, there was no strategy, resulting in a crisis and pushing us into a corner where we had few alternatives. We need a comprehensive senior strategy now to avoid a crisis in the future. We need to ensure there is a coordinated strategy to allow our citizens to age with dignity. As we grow older, our transportation needs change; our need for housing changes; our health care needs change.

As I go through my communities, there is increasing concern that seniors and elders will not be able to remain in their communities and live with the dignity and respect that they deserve. Elders and seniors I talk to speak of the need for transportation, for an opportunity to visit and for opportunities to contribute and to share. They want to be involved. They speak of isolation. They speak of preparing their own meals. I know many of these services are provided in some of the communities and in Whitehorse. It's important that they be provided as part of an overall strategy.

I commend the ministers opposite for their commitment to the people of Mayo and their promises to work on a new seniors complex with the Village of Mayo council, with the Na Cho Nyäk Dun and the seniors of Mayo to provide housing for the seniors and elders of Mayo and that area. I was heartened to hear the minister met with residents and their representatives in Mayo.

I hope this will become part of a coordinated strategy that will support the continuum of services to support changing needs. These may range from community-based home care to assisted living to long-term care. Let us hope that the new money provided for planning in the budget in Mayo will provide some answers and solutions to complex problems.

Can the minister assure Yukoners that he and his colleagues will have a comprehensive strategy for seniors in the near future, and can he give us a timeline on that?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** The Member for Mayo-Tatchun talked about housing for seniors and a strategy. I think we have done a tremendous job when it comes to seniors housing, especially for people with a lower income. There's the completed complex that we did by Earl's, in what was called Spook Creek, and we are currently building 34 units at 207 Alexander Street.

We have built a seniors complex in Haines Junction. We also built a seniors residence in Teslin. We built a seniors residence in your community of Watson Lake, Madam Chair. We built a seniors residence in Faro and, yes, we are building a seniors residence in the Member for Mayo-Tatchun's riding — in the community of Mayo.

I think — I don't think, I know — that this is the only party in the campaign — the last campaign — that identified the need for a seniors complex in Mayo. The NDP and the Liberals did not identify that need, did not have that in their platform. Obviously it wasn't important to them, but it was in fact in our platform and we are very proud to stand here today and say there is planning money in this budget to move forward.

We are very excited about meeting another one of the commitments we made in our platform and delivering, again, for the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and his riding.

Talking about seniors, we have just increased the Yukon seniors income supplement that was doubled in 2008. There was a recent change in the federal guaranteed income supplement that had some Yukon seniors impacted by it, because our income supplement is tied to the guaranteed income supplement. As a result, some of them had a loss. We had recently increased this supplement for seniors by \$25 a month, not only making up for those few seniors who lost out, but having a positive impact on many other seniors as well.

This government continues to focus on those people who are in the twilight years of their life. Most of them have given and spent most of their lives here in the Yukon and have made Yukon what it is today — a hard-working place. We are very proud to be in the financial position to be able to continue to support these programs, build these facilities for seniors — having the money to do it, because you can't build a budget based on pixie dust; you need to be able to have a strong economy. That's exactly what this government intends to continue to do so that we can continue to look at how we can enhance programs and services for individuals like seniors who deserve our recognition and acknowledgment for what they have done for this country and for this territory over the years.

**Mr. Tredger:** Last year, in the Budget Address, the Premier announced a land-based treatment program with much fanfare. He announced giving \$1 million to land-based treatment. This is a matter that is very important to people in my area because it is a proven and effective way of delivering services to local people. The land-based treatment program has had many successes and I know, particularly in Pelly Crossing, in their Tatlain Lake program, they have worked very hard and are struggling for funding and spending a lot of time putting together requests for funding. So they were quite excited when they heard about the million dollars. I understand that the minister then said that the million dollars would be spent over five years.

Could I ask the Premier to give us an update on the spending of that? We're now a year into the program. How has it been spent? What are the plans for the project in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** As the member opposite is aware, this was part of our vision in the last election. It was part of our campaign, part of our platform. Leadership of the Yukon First Nations have shared that vision of creating a facility that would be recognized by other governments across this country, coming out with a unique form of after-treatment here in the Yukon that would be land-based. Right now, there are individuals who leave the territory to institutions down south for an after-care program.

The idea is to create a program here that would be land-based — not institution-based, but a land-based program that would be run by First Nations and that, in fact, could be recognized and not only could serve Yukon individuals who are going through the cycle of addiction — trying to break that cycle, needing that after-care program — but perhaps we could see this as a facility to which we could bring people from other

territories and other provinces as well. This is something that I have spoken about with the Hon. Minister Leona Aglukkaq, federal Minister of Health and Social Services. She has been very supportive and excited about this program as well. I have met, though Yukon Forum and in fact in personal conversations with chiefs, and we've had officials working on it. I'm looking forward to report on progress the next time we get together a Yukon Forum on how we can move forward with this program.

We did commit \$1 million to this program, and I will also say that while we haven't worked out those details yet on how we can establish this program and how we can ensure that it would be recognized and be able to then leverage more funds, perhaps from other levels of government as well, but we have also continued to support the land-based treatment centre at Jackson Lake that has been created and run by Kwanlin Dun First Nation. I think there was \$100,000 or \$150,000 last year as well. We were very excited to do that, but I still believe this is a program that could be run by First Nations, that could be acknowledged by other governments, and could not only benefit Yukoners, but we could also share that knowledge and programming that has been developed or would be developed with people from other jurisdictions.

I know that there will still be a need for after-care programming within the communities, because at some point people have to come home. This is part of what continues to be addressed and discussed with First Nations in individual communities. We are certainly not limiting those First Nations from being able to look at creative ways to provide that support within their communities when people, for example, come out of a detox program and then go through an after-care program and go home — and how they want to ensure they can help these individuals with the supports they need so they can, in fact, break this cycle of addictions. As we have stated many times, we feel certain it is a health issue, not a justice issue. This is an issue that impacts us at many different levels. It ties up our court system and it ties up our peace officers. This affects children who could be essentially left at home, parentless, because the parents may have addiction problems. It has a profound impact on families and individuals, and on our society as well. We are still optimistic that we can continue to do the diligence that needs to be done to be able to move forward and see this program come to fruition.

Seeing the time, I would like to move that you report progress.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that the Chair report progress.

*Motion agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

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

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

**Chair's report**

**Ms. McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 10, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, and directed me to report progress.

**Speaker:** You have heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I declare the report carried.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

*Motion agreed to*

**Speaker:** Have a happy Easter. Those who are driving and snowmobiling — play safe and have fun.

This House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 2.

*The House adjourned at 5:29 p.m.*