



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 221

1st Session

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HANSARD

Thursday, October 22, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable David Laxton

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER — Hon. David Laxton, MLA, Porter Creek Centre

DEPUTY SPEAKER — Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME CONSTITUENCY PORTFOLIO

Hon. Darrell Pasloski	Mountainview	Premier Minister responsible for Finance; Executive Council Office
Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Tourism and Culture; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Minister responsible for Justice; Yukon Development Corporation/ Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Doug Graham	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Education
Hon. Scott Kent	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Highways and Public Works
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Community Services; Public Service Commission
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister responsible for Environment
Hon. Mike Nixon	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Party

Darius Elias	Government House Leader Vuntut Gwitchin
Hon. David Laxton	Porter Creek Centre
Patti McLeod	Watson Lake

OPPOSITION MEMBERS

New Democratic Party

Elizabeth Hanson	Leader of the Official Opposition Whitehorse Centre
Jan Stick	Official Opposition House Leader Riverdale South
Kevin Barr	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes
Lois Moorcroft	Copperbelt South
Jim Tredger	Mayo-Tatchun
Kate White	Takhini-Kopper King

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
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LEGISLATIVE STAFF

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Sergeant-at-Arms	Rudy Couture
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Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, October 22, 2015 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

Instead of a prayer: this morning, at the National War Memorial in Ottawa, the Governor General, the Hon. David Johnston, outgoing Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and the Prime Minister-designate, Justin Trudeau, as well as many others, gathered to commemorate the first anniversary of the shootings at the memorial and on Parliament Hill.

They gathered to remember Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who lost their lives on our homeland.

Let us take a moment of silence to reflect on this painful anniversary and also the importance of the work we are about to undertake.

Moment of silence observed

Speaker: We will remember them.
Please be seated.

I would like to welcome everybody back to the Legislature. You'll notice that I walked in this time instead of being wheeled in. I'm going to try to keep it that way.

INTRODUCTION OF PAGES

Speaker: It gives me great pleasure to announce that the following students will be serving the House as Legislative pages for the 2015 Fall Sitting. I'll try my best not to mess up their names. They are: Esther Huot, Abby Cuenza, Andrew Smyth and Naomi Duru from Vanier Catholic Secondary School; Sigourney Whipple-Grantham, Joe Parker and Tomas Tokic from F.H. Collins Secondary School; and Torsten Petersson and Connor Cottrell-Tribes from Porter Creek Secondary School.

Today we have with us Esther and Naomi, and I would like all members to give them a warm welcome in joining us.

Applause

Bills ordered dropped from Order Paper

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of changes that have been made to the Order Paper. There is a long list, so bear with me. Bill No. 105, entitled *Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act (No. 2)*, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt South, has been removed from the Order Paper as it is now outdated.

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as they are outdated: Motions No. 126, 901 and 987, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt South; Motions No. 441, 499, 623, 741, 803, 804, 946, 966, 978 and 982, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; Motions No. 448, 656 and 844, standing in the name of the Member for Riverdale South; Motions No. 764, 809 and 935, standing in the name of the Member for

Takhini-Kopper King; Motions No. 643 and 786, standing in the name of the Leader of the Official Opposition; Motions No. 788 and 984, standing in the name of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, and Motion No. 953, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin.

The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as the action requested in the motion has been taken in whole or in part: Motions No. 222, 284, 409, 770, 805, 844, 897, 898, 906 and 922, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake; Motions No. 267, 411, 480, 543 and 632, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party; Motion No. 482, standing in the name of the Member for Takhini-Kopper King; Motions No. 553, 895, 931 and 963, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin; Motion No. 821, standing in the name of the Leader of the Official Opposition.

The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper due to the dissolution of Parliament for a general election: Motions No. 357 and 490, standing in the name of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, and Motion No. 905, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party.

The following motions have been removed from the Order Paper as they refer to a bill that has passed the Parliament of Canada: Motions No. 715, 890 and 900, standing in the name of the Leader of the Official Opposition, and Motions No. 731, 777, 826, 827 and 996, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party. We're not quite done yet.

Motion No. 882, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake, has been removed from the Order Paper as it is the same as Motion No. 781. Motion No. 696, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party, has been removed from the Order Paper as it is similar to Motion No. 423, which was adopted by this House on April 24, 2013. Motions No. 180, 282, 301 and 321, standing in the name of the Leader of the Third Party, Motion No. 125, standing in the name of the Member for Copperbelt South, and Motion No. 343, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake, have been removed from the Order Paper at the request of those members.

Finally, Written Question No. 8, standing in the name of the Member for Riverdale South, has been removed from the Order Paper as it is outdated.

We will now proceed with the Order Paper.

DAILY ROUTINE

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Foster Family Week

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I rise in the House today on behalf of all members to acknowledge national foster family appreciation week, which is taking place this week, from October 18 to the 24.

Caring for children is society's most important job and foster families play an essential role by providing homes for children whose families, for whatever reasons, are temporarily unable to look after them. Fostering is challenging and

demanding. It requires love, patience and strong parenting skills.

I am asking that members of the Legislative Assembly join me in commending the approximately 75 Yukon foster parents for stepping up and caring for our next generation. We thank you for opening your hearts and homes to Yukon children and families needing support.

On this very special week, we would like to say how much you are appreciated and say thank you for your great service to our collective community.

Mr. Speaker, this morning we launched a new foster care awareness and recruitment campaign, entitled “fostering is inclusive”. We are using this campaign to dispel some of the misconceptions around fostering. We always need new foster homes and new foster parents who can offer a variety of skills and perspectives to better match children’s specific needs and specific characteristics. The campaign addresses the misconceptions about who is qualified to be a foster parent. A foster parent can be from many culturally diverse backgrounds. They can be single or married, same-sex couples, homeowners or home renters. An inclusive foster care force is truly key to a healthier foster care system for Yukon, and we continue to build just such a force with those who are fostering today and future foster parents.

In conclusion, I would like to extend this government’s sincere thanks to all of the foster families across Yukon, a thanks to those working as foster-care support workers in government and anyone who is involved in extended care with foster families, working with children and youth. Their work is extremely important and it makes a difference.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming two foster parents, Terry McCallum and Marilyn Lawrence, along with others involved in foster care in our amazing territory.

Applause

In recognition of democracy

Ms. Hanson: Across this vast country, the past three months have been a wild political ride. On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party, I would like to congratulate our new Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, and our new, yet familiar, Member of Parliament, Larry Bagnell.

Citizens in the Yukon have been through municipal elections, the federal election and contests for the leadership of the Ta’an Kwäch’än Council, on whose traditional territory this Legislature sits. I would like to congratulate Chief Kristina Kane on her re-election. I would also like to congratulate Whitehorse Mayor Dan Curtis on his re-election, along with all members of council.

Through these contests, Yukoners have exercised their right to participate in the democratic process of selecting the women and men who have earned their trust and their hopes for the future. There is a mix of old veterans and new faces. In fact, over 100 Yukoners put their names forward as candidates in the past few weeks.

In some contests, like the federal campaign, the winds of change have blown. In others, people have rallied around incumbents in whom they trust. Elections are hard work.

There is phone-calling, canvassing, fundraising, event planning, organizing to get out the vote. Elections are also about ideas, big and small, and who has delivered and who has captured the collective dream of voters. In the middle of a tough campaign, it can feel like a battle that all hopes and dreams are dependent on the outcome; but when it’s done and dusted and the people have spoken, there is the space to reflect and be thankful.

I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all those who put their name forward to be a representative of the public in some capacity. You know, as I ponder my own life in politics and what was going on in my mind when I decided to jump into the fray, I know that the decision to run for a First Nation government, for a local area council, for a municipal council, for a school council or for the Legislative Assembly or a Parliament is not taken easily or lightly. Politics disrupts one’s family life and routine. Quick jaunts to the grocery store can turn into hour-long discussions on issues. So, to all those of all political stripes who have put their names forward, thank you. You epitomize the value of public service and good government; and to those whose time in public office has passed for the moment, thank you for your service.

Of course the person with the name on the ballot is the publicly recognized figurehead, but no candidate can succeed without a team effort. So thank you to all the volunteers, the canvassers, the phone-callers, the folks who put up signs, the friends and family members who are always there in the background. Thanks to those who organize the elections and ensure the process is fair and that the public’s right to vote and participate in their democracy is safeguarded; and thank you, most especially, to the voters who tuned into the campaigns, attended debates, weighed the pros and cons, and cast ballots.

The turnout in the recent federal campaign defied expectations and has staunchly a declining voter turnout and allayed fears that the public was tuning out of politics. Canadian and Yukon democracy is revived and stronger now. This flourishing bodes well for our territory. I look forward to being part of the debates over the remaining months in this Legislative Assembly as we prepare to go before the Yukon public for the next major exercise of Yukon democracy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise to invite all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming a few people. Grand Chief Ruth Massie is here. Of course, she is also formerly the Chief of the Ta’an Kwäch’än Council. I would also like to recognize Bev Buckway, who is the executive director of the Association of Yukon Communities — a very well-known former mayor of the great City of Whitehorse and a constituent of mine.

I would also like to acknowledge Murray Martin, a local reporter and also a constituent of mine. Again, I would invite all members of this House to join me in welcoming them today.

Applause

Ms. McLeod: I invite all members today to join me in welcoming a constituent of mine, and certainly no stranger to this House, Diana Raketti.

Applause

Mr. Elias: With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming a good friend of mine, Mr. Joseph Binger, who is an instructor at Yukon College. Apparently his birthday is in the next coming days, so welcome.

Applause

Mr. Silver: I would like everybody to help me in welcoming an ex-Klondiker and EMS paraprofessional, Devin Bailey.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would ask all members to join me in welcoming former deputy minister Jeff O'Farrell, a good friend of mine — welcome, Jeff.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I would like to welcome to the House today Tamara Goepfel and Dr. Fink, as well as Brad Halt, executive assistant to the Grand Chief.

Applause

Mr. Barr: I would ask the House to welcome Peter Percival, past chair for the Mount Lorne Hamlet Council. Thank you for all your work.

Applause

Speaker: In an effort not to be outdone, I would like to welcome Diane McLeod-McKay, our Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner.

Please also welcome a good friend of mine, Terri McLeod, who is a director with ICT, Department of Highways and Public Works.

Applause

Speaker: Anybody else?

Mr. Tredger: I would like to welcome to the Legislature, or should I say back to the Legislature, former MLA Don Roberts.

Applause

Speaker: Last chance.

All right; tabling returns and documents.

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: Under Tabling Returns and Documents, the Chair has for tabling the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's annual report for the period ending March 31, 2015. This

report is tabled pursuant to section 19 of the *Conflict of Interest (Members and Ministers) Act*. It was distributed to members and made public on June 23, 2015.

The Chair also has for tabling the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office 2014-15 annual report. This report is tabled pursuant to section 24 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*.

The Chair also has for tabling a report from the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly on the absence of members from sittings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees, dated October 22, 2015.

Are there any other returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I have for tabling the Yukon Public Accounts for 2014-15, fully audited by the Auditor General of Canada, with an unqualified opinion — meaning, in lay terms, a clean bill of health.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Hon. Mr. Hassard: I have for presentation the 17th report, as well as the 18th report, of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees.

Speaker: Are there any further reports of committees to be presented?

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 20: *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 20, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Honourable Premier that Bill No. 20, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2015-16*, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Bill No. 19: *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I move that Bill No. 19, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Honourable Premier that Bill No. 19, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2014-15*, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

Speaker: Are there any further bills to be introduced?
Notices of motions.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to:

(1) conduct a thorough review of the recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report that fall within Yukon's jurisdiction in relation to the current programs, actions and initiatives being undertaken by Yukon government departments in order to assess the work that has been done to date in meeting those recommendations and to identify areas where more work is required; and

(2) present this review to Yukon First Nation governments and Yukon communities as part of the engagement process to determine future steps that can be taken by the respective parties in implementing Yukon's response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report.

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

THAT this House urges the Premier and Yukon government Cabinet ministers to:

(1) meet with the Yukon First Nation leadership as soon as possible to discuss a report prepared by the Yukon government deputy ministers that reviewed the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that fall within Yukon's jurisdiction in order to assess the work that the Yukon government has done to date to implement these recommendations and to identify areas where more work is required; and

(2) engage with Yukon First Nation governments and Yukon communities to determine the next steps that can be taken by the respective parties and explore possible solutions that will promote the well-being of Yukon First Nations and all aboriginal Canadians within the Canadian family.

Ms. Hanson: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that in order to build a diversified Yukon economy with good jobs, opportunities for all, where no one is left behind, there are significant challenges to be addressed and opportunities to be pursued, including:

(1) ensuring the sustainable use of Yukon's land and minerals for economic development;

(2) fostering renewable and green sector industry development;

(3) building of the knowledge and ICT economy;

(4) developing and implementing a strategic plan for tourism;

(5) creating and implementing regional economic development plans;

(6) stimulating opportunities for local business, industry and First Nation development corporations through sound capital project management and progressive contracting rules; and

(7) engaging in sound economic decision-making, in the short, medium and long terms, guided by job, income, and economic analyses.

Ms. Stick: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that in order to create an inclusive, equitable and healthy society where all Yukoners can participate in meaningful community work and life, there are significant challenges to be addressed and opportunities to be pursued by the Government of Yukon, including:

(1) reducing poverty and increasing social inclusion and equity;

(2) adoption and implementation of Housing First and other policies of harm reduction;

(3) increasing access to safe, affordable, appropriate, accessible and supportive housing;

(4) developing coordinated and community-based mental health and addictions treatment and after-care;

(5) elimination of violence against women and children;

(6) creating more affordable and high-quality daycare;

(7) building on long-term wellness planning and the long-term sustainability of our public health system;

(8) providing a continuum of options and caregiver supports to enable Yukoners to age in place;

(9) addressing safety and quality controls related to adequate human resource and staffing levels; and

(10) collaborating with Yukon First Nations, local business and non-government organizations.

Ms. Moorcroft: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that in order to re-establish respectful, inclusive and democratic government-to-government relationships with Yukon First Nation governments, there are significant challenges to be addressed and opportunities to be pursued, including:

(1) pulling Yukon government support for the four unilateral amendments in Bill S-6 and encouraging the federal government to remove the four unilateral amendments to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*;

(2) accepting the Peel watershed final recommended land use plan;

(3) ensuring that discussion, consultation and good-faith negotiation happen first in order to avoid lengthy court battles;

(4) re-engaging the Yukon Forum;

(5) meeting the obligations set out in the *Corrections Act* to incorporate the cultural heritage and needs of Yukon First Nations people into the Whitehorse Correctional Centre's programs and services;

(6) implementing the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report; and

(7) expanding our K to 12 curriculum to include residential schools history, the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and land claim treaties, civics and human rights education.

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

THAT it is the opinion of this House that in order for the Government of Yukon to practise open, transparent, responsible and democratic governance, there are significant challenges to be addressed and opportunities to be pursued including:

- (1) reforming our electoral system to change the first-past-the-post system;
- (2) reforming our Legislative Assembly to create a more productive space for important debates and foster public participation;
- (3) respecting Yukon First Nation governments;
- (4) respecting Yukon municipal governments, including local advisory councils, which are uniquely challenged to represent their citizens;
- (5) ensuring that public consultations are meaningful and inclusive, that the public is engaged and participates and that their contributions inform and shape government policy;
- (6) developing lobbying legislation that addresses concerns about who has access to decision-makers;
- (7) amending whistle-blower protection rules so they are stronger and provide greater protection to public servants who speak out in the public interest; and
- (8) including community participation in territorial budget making.

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

THAT it is the opinion of this House that in order to create a Yukon educational system that is first-class and prepares our children for success in life, there are significant challenges to be addressed and opportunities to be pursued, including:

- (1) planning the construction of new schools to meet the needs of students, teachers and parents and their communities;
- (2) maintaining and purposing existing schools so that they are functional places of learning and will last into the future;
- (3) living up to the spirit and intent of the widely consulted *Education Act*, New Horizons consultations and other public discussions which constitute Yukon's education vision;
- (4) supporting teachers to teach, empowering them to speak out in the best interests of students and the school community;
- (5) building inclusive, welcoming school environments where violence and bullying have no place;
- (6) learning from the positive examples of individual learning, experiential learning in arts, environmental science, in order to create more dynamic, cutting-edge pedagogy that will help children to graduate and succeed in life; and
- (7) expanding our curriculum to include residential schools history, the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and land claims agreements, civics and human rights education, and other matters of importance.

Ms. White: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT it is the opinion of this House that in order to secure the long-term health and sustainability of Yukon's land, communities, natural resources and wildlife, there are significant challenges to be addressed and opportunities to be pursued, including:

- (1) shifting our energy dependence away from fossil fuels;
- (2) developing and implementing aggressive climate change mitigation and adaptation policies;
- (3) setting ambitious territorial targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- (4) creating and implementing an independent power producer policy;
- (5) developing green, renewable and sustainable energy;
- (6) collecting adequate baseline water data and establishing an enforceable quality and quantity thresholds for water use; and
- (7) developing and implementing cumulative impact assessments.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure officials from the Yukon Development Corporation appear as witnesses during this Fall Sitting.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ensure officials from the Yukon Hospital Corporation appear as witnesses during this fall session.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: YESAA process

Ms. Hanson: Monday's federal election offers Yukon a new opportunity — a course correction for the Yukon Party government's approach to intergovernmental relations. The new federal government has promised that the contentious amendments to Yukon's environmental assessment act in Bill S-6 will be removed. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is clear: reconciliation is an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships at all levels of government.

This Yukon Party government talks about reconciliation. Now it has an opportunity to put words to action.

In the spirit of reconciliation, will the Premier support the withdrawal of the contentious amendments in Bill S-6, work with First Nation governments and Canada to re-establish the respectful and collaborative approach to decision-making set out in our final land claim agreements?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Both formally and informally, I have reached out to First Nation leadership, inviting them to get together, either bilaterally with Yukon government or

hopefully trilaterally with the Canadian government, to discuss the Bill S-6 amendments and how they could be implemented here in Yukon.

I'm proud to report to this House that Yukon First Nations have replied to that response and are willing to sit down and begin discussions on those amendments.

Ms. Hanson: This Premier's continued support for Bill S-6 is a rejection of reconciliation. The four unilateral amendments to YESAA weren't born of respectful and inclusive negotiations. Negotiations after the fact are not respectful or inclusive. The Premier does not seem to understand that the principle of reconciliation isn't just achieved by spending promises, but rather through an inclusive, respectful and democratic approach to governance, and this principle isn't unique to what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission said. Yukon's own final agreements were negotiated with an understanding that decisions about how we govern this territory will be shared in a respectful and inclusive manner.

The Premier's use of divisive politics is disrespectful. This week, Canadian's rejected divisive politics. Will the Premier do the same and drop his support for the contentious amendments and not try to sell them after the fact?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I have mentioned, I have reached out both through the House of Commons committee when they were here talking about Bill S-6 and formally by letter, and also informally, to ask First Nations, as leaders in this territory, to sit down and to have discussions on how we would be able to move forward with the implementation of Bill S-6.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to announce that Yukon First Nations have agreed to sit down. Their request is to include Canada, so it would in fact be a trilateral discussion. I have, in response, suggested to the Yukon First Nations that I would help them write that letter urging the Prime Minister-elect to join us in those deliberations.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, First Nations have been clear. They have gone to court. Reconciliation requires a shift away from the colonial mindset that is embedded in the culture of this government. He says words about reconciliations, but his actions contradict that language.

What will it take for the Premier to pull his support — not try to re-sell them, but pull his support — for the four unilateral amendments that the former Prime Minister, the former minister and four MPs, and our former MP, all said this Premier has pushed?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, I have said on many occasions that the federal government has put forward legislation on multiple occasions and that, as leaders here in the territory, we have sat down and found a way to move forward together as leaders in this territory for the best of Yukoners. Yukon First Nations have said that they are willing to sit down and to discuss this issue and to talk about how we can move forward. They would also like to see Canada there and, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, so would I. I am willing to help First Nations in drafting that letter to Prime Minister-

elect Justin Trudeau, requesting his participation in those discussions.

Question re: Continuing care facilities

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, in September the Yukon NDP did what this government had not done. We invited all Yukoners to a conversation about the future of continuing care in the Yukon. Nearly 100 Yukoners showed up. A panel of experts spoke, and person after person stood to express frustration with this government and the process it is following to build the continuing care complex in Whistle Bend. Even the former Minister of Health attended and spoke out about the location.

Mr. Speaker, time and again Yukoners asked: "Where are our voices in these decisions?" On Tuesday I went to a public presentation by the director of the Whistle Bend facility. The public again asked for meaningful consultation with decision-makers, including the minister and the Premier.

Meaningful consultation relies on listening. When will this government listen to Yukoners about what they need to age in place?

Hon. Mr. Graham: Mr. Speaker, I have been graciously granted the opportunity to respond, in part because the member opposite, first of all, misquotes me. She did not tell the truth in the letter that she sent out to all MLAs —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker's statement

Speaker: You are not allowed to use props. Did you have a further point of order?

Point of order

Ms. Stick: I would suggest 19(h), where the member has accused another member of uttering a deliberate falsehood.

Speaker: Government House Leader, on the point of order.

Mr. Elias: I do believe that the Hon. Minister of Education has evidence to suggest that something was said out of order in the public domain.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: Enough. Opposition Leader, did you want to comment on the point of order?

Ms. Hanson: Only to say that it does violate the House rules. Thank you.

Unparliamentary language

Speaker: I will take this opportunity: the word "liar" is unparliamentary and if you're going to use it in here at all, whether heckling or not, it's still unparliamentary. So don't use it.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Speaker: He did not use the word; you did when you were heckling. I caution you right now not to use that word at all, even when you're heckling. It will still be out of order.

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: As for this point of order, this is a dispute between members about the facts of who said what. Members are free to — in this House and outside this House — represent the facts or portions thereof, in their own manner.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, I must rise on this. The member opposite said that my colleague here was not telling the truth. Is that not the same as saying that she's uttering a falsehood? Is that not against the Standing Orders?

Speaker: I will look at the exact wording in the Blues and give a further ruling, if required.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Mr. Speaker, once again, I'll quote from a letter given to all Members of the Legislative Assembly on September 14, 2015, signed by the member, Jan Stick, MLA for Riverdale South. In that letter, the Member for Riverdale South said respecting the continuing care facility in Whistle Bend: "in the absence of a needs assessment". Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely incorrect. On the Yukon Health and Social Services website, six months in advance of this letter sent by the member opposite, there were two needs assessments published, so that was very disconcerting to me as a member and then to have the member opposite misquote me by saying I was not in favour of the Whistle Bend location — I simply said that it was not our first choice.

If the members opposite are going to be this kinder, gentler Opposition, I wish they would first of all learn to give the facts.

Ms. Stick: A needs assessment, a population projection — these are two different things. Business case plans are different from a needs assessment, which looks at options and comes out with a variety of choices.

Mr. Speaker, the one thing I took from our public town hall is that continuing care is a deeply personal experience for seniors, elders and the communities and their families. We must keep those individuals at the centre when planning these services. Whether it's a loved one's involvement with home care or a profound experience helping a parent or a spouse have a dignified death, Yukoners spoke of a need for compassion. There was never a word said against the exemplary work of our front-line health care professionals. Everyone was supportive of them, but shouldn't meaningful consultation have happened prior to a decision to build a costly facility in Whistle Bend?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, since we have been elected, we have been engaging with Yukoners on continuing care and looking forward to the best-possible-case scenario to address the needs that we have here in the territory. Speaking of needs — there were two needs assessments completed, followed by the completion of a business case, which clearly demonstrated to us the need to build a facility in Whitehorse that could accommodate 150 people in the next couple of years. Looking forward and planning, there is the potential of an addition on to that building to accommodate a number of other beds.

Really, everyone here should consider the real needs of Yukoners. We are building a continuing care facility in

Whistle Bend. This will be a home for people with a sense of community and a pride of community, but also a real, true home environment that provides that high level of care for people who are the best fit for this facility will need.

As part of our work of engaging with Yukoners, the information sessions that the member speaks of are very important in moving forward. If there are questions or concerns arising from those discussions, certainly department officials will follow up with those.

Ms. Stick: I heard from the people, from the public, from families and from caregivers that they want meaningful consultation. They wanted it before these decisions were made. This is a small territory. We have many wonderful and creative families and people out there who have many ideas about how this could have been presented. Instead, initially it was presented as a 300-bed facility and now it's a 150-bed facility with maybe some extra beds later. Yukoners wanted the consultation before the decisions had already been made. That is the part they are not happy about.

What is this government going to do to have meaningful consultation and not present plans and say it's a done deal, it's in Whistle Bend, it's this big and this is who it is for? It has not happened. When will there be meaningful consultation?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite really does need to pay attention to the facts. Since we were elected in 2011, we have clearly demonstrated a desire to reach out to Yukoners to discuss the needs of continuing care and the facilities. I indicated earlier that we conducted two needs assessments followed by a business case that supports our plan moving forward for the continuing care facility. In fact, the continuing care facility is part of our plan for sustainable, quality health care in our amazing territory.

In addition to providing this kind of high-level care, we are also focused on helping Yukoners stay in their communities and in their homes as long as possible. One only needs to look at the investments we've made in home care — some 350 percent over the last number of years — and we are doing just that. When it is possible for individuals to stay in their homes, home care can step in. But at a point in time, when people require a high acuity of care, the Whistle Bend facility is very important to them. That's what we hear from Yukoners.

Question re: Government relations with Yukoners

Mr. Silver: For many years, the Government of Yukon, no matter which party was in charge, held community fall tours to engage with citizens and gather input for the spring budget. That practice was scrapped in 2010 and not revived with this government when they came into office, until now — sort of.

I'm pleased with the Yukon Party announcement that it's actually going to consult some Yukoners in the upcoming election-year budget. After four years in office, the Yukon Party is finally admitting that they are out of touch and they want to start listening to Yukoners. The good people of the north are smarter than that, and this death-bed conversion

from the Yukon Party is a hard pill to swallow and it begs many, many questions.

The government released a press release saying it had a local consultant hired to develop a list of potential participants who will be invited to take part in these discussions. Why did the government have to hire a consultant to tell them that it's a good idea to talk to Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: This government, to a man and a woman, meets and talks and listens to Yukoners on a daily basis. In this community and every other community, that has not changed. That will continue to go forward as we listen to Yukoners, and we deliver on what we hear. In 2011, after listening to Yukoners, we put forward to the citizens of this territory what our platform was, what we had heard from Yukoners, and I'm proud to report, Mr. Speaker, that we have essentially almost completely delivered, or are currently delivering, everything in that platform. We've worked hard, we've been responsible with taxpayers' money, and we've done it responsibly. I enjoy speaking about the fact that other jurisdictions like to talk about deficits and surpluses and live within the moment of that current fiscal year — the reason being is that those other provinces, territories and the federal government carry billions of dollars of debt that they have to pay interest on. They don't talk about that debt because they have that debt.

I am proud to report that this jurisdiction does not have that debt. We have not mortgaged our children's and our grandchildren's futures to pay for things today — and we'll continue to do that.

Mr. Silver: We're forgetting to talk about the corporations' debts, but we'll leave that for another day.

Mr. Speaker, this news release announcement reads more like an admission of guilt than an exercise in diplomacy. The Yukon Party, as an organization, has isolated and alienated so much of the general public over the years — they have finally looked around the room and realized they're alone. The room is empty because people are so sick and tired of not being heard and nobody believes this government genuinely wants to hear their views — from the Peel consultations to the fracking committee report to education reform to Bill S-6. When the Yukon Party says, "We really want to hear from you", nobody is listening anymore and they have themselves to blame for this.

Why is the government making these meetings invite-only and refusing to hold public meetings?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: What we've heard from Yukoners is what their priorities are, and those are our priorities: focusing on jobs, focusing on opportunities for youth, training opportunities, focusing on education with our new vision that is focused on successful outcomes for students in health care. Those are this party's focuses because that's exactly what we heard from Yukoners.

All people have the opportunity to provide their input to this budget process that we are doing, simply by going to community.conversations@gov.yk.ca. I invite all people who have thoughts or suggestions on how we should continue to move forward to send their emails and their thoughts to us.

We'll continue to listen to Yukoners, as we have from the beginning. The good news is that Yukoners know that, when this government says they're going to do something, they get it done.

Mr. Silver: Entering the 14th year of office, at least the Yukon Party has finally admitted that they are only listening to a select group of Yukoners behind closed doors. Yukoners who aren't on the Yukon Party's hand-picked, secretive list should be asking themselves why the Premier doesn't want to hear their opinions. Meetings behind closed doors with secretly selected Yukoners are not the kind of public consultation that encourages more people to get involved in politics. It only breeds the kind of mistrust and scepticism in the political process that causes people to give up, to disengage.

So why did the government have to hire a consultant to tell them that they should be talking to the public? Why did the Premier make the decision to have invite-only discussions? How did they decide who gets to speak to their deaf ears?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Who we are engaging with is a broad spectrum of people from all sectors of our society here in the territory. We are going out to communities as well and talking to a broad range of people, as we will continue to listen to Yukoners, both in community conversations that we're having across this territory and on a day-to-day basis — as we've heard in the grocery store, in our offices and in the communities. We'll continue to listen to Yukoners — Yukoners who have told us that they are focused on jobs, they're focused on education and health care. We will continue to keep our focus there and do it in a responsible and fiscally responsible manner.

Question re: Climate change

Ms. White: Climate change is the single biggest challenge facing future generations. Planetary weather systems and ocean currents are rapidly shifting and we need to shift as well. This human cost situation will require human solutions — jobs, the economy and our very lives depend on healthy ecosystems. Per capita, Canadians — Yukoners included — use unsustainable amounts of fossil fuels.

In just under three weeks, leaders from around the globe will be meeting in Paris for the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or COP21. In 2009, the previous Yukon Party government sent a delegation to Copenhagen for COP15. Is the Government of Yukon planning on sending representatives to COP21 in Paris?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: This government here does have a plan. The member opposite spoke to it. In our 2009 climate change action plan, our government has demonstrated leadership and commitment to the issue of climate change. The Yukon is currently preparing a progress report on the climate change action plan that we have been doing. There are 33 priority actions in our climate change action plan, and just about all of them are complete.

I had the opportunity, when I took over as the Environment minister in June, to be down with the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. When we were down, one of the things that we all established there with climate change is that it is a huge issue in Canada and there are a number of subcommittees on that. So we worked together and we created a new subcommittee with all the ministers, called the climate change committee. I have a meeting coming up here — a phone call meeting with all the ministers again — to talk about moving forward when it comes to COP21 over in Paris.

One of the things that I did find talking to the other ministers, our southern jurisdictions understand that we in the north are a little bit different. I think our three premiers have spoken to that in the past. For us, carbon — sometimes it's not a luxury; it's a necessity.

What I will say is, recognizing that we need to use energy and that climate change is very important to us — and they're closely linked — we have a climate change action plan we're working on and this will also be coordinated with our energy strategy for Yukon.

Ms. White: Our northern reality is the very reason we should be attending the COP conference in Paris. Imagine sitting in a room of climate change advocates and experts and learning from other experiences around the world. Imagine what we're missing out on right now by not attending. Yukon should participate in Paris to ensure there is no delay in doing our part in the international agreement. COP21 will be a crucial conference as it needs to achieve a new international agreement on the climate, applicable to all countries, with the aim of keeping global warming below two degrees Celsius. Political direction is an essential part of the solution, but it's going to take effective teamwork to adapt well to the new climate realities.

Yukon is blessed with talent and expertise that can help elected representatives make the right choices. Whether they are individuals in the private sector or staff in the Climate Change Secretariat and the Yukon Energy Solutions Centre, Yukon has champions.

Mr. Speaker, why isn't the government sending a delegation of Yukon climate change —

Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Kent: This gives me an opportunity just to respond to one of the things that the member opposite addressed in her first question, and that's energy and what we're deriving from renewable sources.

We have a great story to tell here in the Yukon. Last year, 99 percent of the electricity generated on our grid was from renewable sources. The Yukon Energy Corporation and Yukon Development Corporation, of course, are working on that longer-term bookend, which is the next-gen hydro. We've put in place a micro-gen program. During this current Sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I am pleased to be introducing an independent power producers program that we will be able to debate on the floor of this House. Mr. Speaker, even the energy efficiency measures that we introduced earlier this year are already paying dividends.

Of the 269 incentives that have been put in place, we see annual cost savings of close to \$70,000 and 176 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions displaced. We do have a great story to tell in the north, as far as our renewable power and the energy efficiency programs that we have in place, and we have a great story to tell within Canada. We do not have legacy coal projects, like they do in Alberta, that we're combatting. We have a good renewable energy story to tell here in the Yukon and we should all be very proud of that.

Question re: Oil and gas development

Mr. Tredger: Currently, the Yukon Party is directing that two fully separate energy consultations occur on projects that will not proceed any time soon. There is a \$2-million-and-counting consultation about a big next-generation megadam being hosted by YDC. Then there's yet another 20-year resource planning consultation being housed by YEC. The NDP is all for meaningful consultation and informed consent. We also believe the energy projects this Yukon Party government most supports and that have active applications should also be consulted on and have social licence. There are active applications that are likely to involve the development of unconventional gas — that is, fracked gas.

Why is there no consultation on the oil and gas agenda the Yukon Party government is promoting?

Hon. Mr. Kent: When it comes to oil and gas development in the territory, I think we've been very clear. It's part of the economic diversification plan that we have. We certainly see the development of oil and gas being able to provide opportunities for Yukoners, whether it's those working directly in the industry or those benefiting indirectly from the industry.

Just to remind members, the government introduced a motion at the time to establish the all-party select committee that spent time reviewing conventional gas opportunities, the risks and benefits. We have accepted all 21 recommendations made by the committee in that report and we are making great progress on a number of the recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, very recently the Minister of Economic Development, the MLA for Vuntut Gwitchin and I were accompanied by First Nations leaders and industry leaders to Calgary to take part in energy innovation discussions. We received a number of presentations on solar and wind energy as well as oil and gas and the opportunities in the energy sector. So what we would like to do is emulate that trip and the successes of that trip here in the Yukon sometime in the coming months so that other Yukoners get an opportunity to participate.

Again, we see opportunities for a strong and diverse energy sector as paramount to diversifying the economy and providing much-needed jobs and opportunities to Yukoners.

Mr. Tredger: Outside the territory, the Premier and the Deputy Premier have been promoting fracking in Yukon, but they are ignoring the lack of social licence at home. There is no scientific evidence that fracking can be done safely or responsibly. Fossil fuel development also does not make economic sense. There is an over-supply of LNG in North

America and transportation is problematic. Developing renewable energy brings more local jobs and generates income for local communities. This government's oil and gas agenda is at odds with the renewable energy future Yukon needs.

Mr. Speaker, the minister knows full well that socially, economically and environmentally, proposals to frack Yukon will not stand up to scrutiny. Is that why he does not want to listen to Yukoners on oil and gas development?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As a government, it is our responsibility to effectively regulate, but also consider the potential benefits of a Yukon oil and gas industry. Ultimately, we want to promote economic prosperity and job creation; therefore, we remain open to responsible development opportunities in the Yukon. When it comes to shale gas, of course we have looked at the Liard Basin, which represents a very small portion of the territory.

We want Yukoners to have jobs, successful businesses and opportunities that occur from a robust and diverse energy sector. Parts of the select committee recommendations also include public education and information. Mr. Speaker, we certainly want Yukoners to be equipped with knowledge, so that they can combat the misinformation and fear that is out there with respect to this type of oil and gas development. We want to adopt a rule of zero tolerance for misinformation and that's what we will do in the coming months. We are looking forward to ensuring that Yukoners have all the facts and all the information they need to make an informed decision on oil and gas development in this territory.

Mr. Tredger: We can adopt that policy by now admitting that this government has not met the recommendations of the Select Committee Regarding the Risks and Benefits of Hydraulic Fracturing. Owing to Yukon's geology and location, oil and gas development in Yukon will necessarily involve fracking. More than 8,000 signatures in opposition to fracking show there is no social licence for this controversial practice. Many Yukon First Nations have also clearly stated their opposition.

Mr. Speaker, Yukoners do not want consultation to be a cynical game of smoke and mirrors. There is no social licence or economic rationale for the Yukon government's oil and gas agenda. The Yukon Party is not listening to Yukoners. Who is the Yukon Party listening to?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As members will recall from the Spring Sitting of this Legislature, this government was completely transparent about our intentions for developing Yukon's oil and gas industry in our response to the select committee's report. We have accepted all 21 recommendations made by the committee in the report and we're making great progress on a number of those recommendations, whether it's baseline water data or seismic opportunities. Public education and the economic analysis, as well as the resource assessment, also continue.

Members also need to recall that no projects will go forward without the engagement and support of affected First Nations. When it comes to the Liard Basin, of course, it's the

Liard First Nation, as well as the Acho Dene Koe, who have asserted traditional territory in that area of the Yukon.

As I mentioned in my earlier response, it's our responsibility to effectively regulate, but also to consider, the potential benefits of a Yukon oil and gas industry. Again, Mr. Speaker, we want to equip Yukoners with the knowledge and information they need to overcome some of the fear that has been out there with respect to oil and gas development.

Again, I'll repeat: we have zero tolerance for misinformation.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. Elias: I move that the House do now adjourn.

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

The following sessional papers were tabled October 22, 2015:

33-1-170

Yukon Conflict of Interest Commission Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly for the Period from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 (June 23, 2015) (Speaker Laxton)

33-1-171

Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office — Young People Have a Voice — 2010-2015 (Speaker Laxton)

33-1-172

Report from the Clerk of the Yukon Legislative Assembly on the Absence of Members from Sitzings of the Legislative Assembly and its Committees (October 22, 2015) (Speaker Laxton)

33-1-173

Public Accounts 2014-2015 of the Government of Yukon for the year ended March 31, 2015 (Pasloski)

33-1-174

Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees Seventeenth Report (June 8, 2015) (Hassard)

33-1-175

Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees Eighteenth Report (October 15, 2015) (Hassard)