



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 224

1st Session

33rd Legislature

HANSARD

Wednesday, October 28, 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
---------------------	---------------------------------------

LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Floyd McCormick
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Rudy Couture
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Doris McLean
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, October 28, 2015 — 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 with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Kwanlin Dün and Carcross/Tagish First Nation final and self-government agreements 10th anniversary

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: It's an honour and a privilege today to rise in recognition of the Kwanlin Dün and Carcross/Tagish First Nations and the 10-year anniversary of their final and self-government agreements this year.

As many of you know, Kwanlin Dün First Nation held a celebration of the 10-year anniversary as part of their general assembly this past weekend. Additionally, October 22 was the 10-year anniversary of the signing of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation final and self-government agreements.

These 10-year anniversaries could not have been reached without the dedication of many remarkable leaders, and some of those leaders are with us here today. First, I would like to pay tribute to Kwanlin Dün Chief Doris Bill and Carcross/Tagish Khà Shàde Héni Dan Cresswell, who are here today.

I also would ask my fellow members and the public who are here today in the Legislative Assembly to join me in also welcoming from Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Roxanne Vallevand and Eileen Duchesne who are here — and then take the opportunity to also acknowledge the Assistant Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Relations, Stephen Mills, and his team who are also here today.

I would like to pay tribute to some of the many past leaders who may not be here today, but to whom we owe a great deal. Chief Jim Boss was known as the father of the Yukon land claims, as he was the first to petition the government for compensation for the loss of his peoples' land and hunting grounds in the early 1900s. There was also Elijah Smith, Dan Johnson, and Johnny Smith, who were instrumental in the development and the presentation of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*, which is considered to be the document that launched the land claims process; former Carcross/Tagish Khà Shàde Héni, Mark Wedge, who signed off on the agreements in 2005; Johnny Johns and the members of the final negotiating team for Carcross/Tagish First Nation — Art Johns, Ted Hall, Clara Schinkel, Anne Wally, Colleen James, Darrell Beattie, Beverley Sembsmoen and Frank James; Kwanlin Dün councillor Judy Gingell, who was the chair of the Council of Yukon First Nations during the negotiation of the final

agreement; former negotiator and former Kwanlin Dün Chief Mike Smith and former Chief Rick O'Brien. To all the leaders I have mentioned and the countless others who played a role, we thank you.

You have each played different roles over the years, but what was consistent throughout all of those roles was the dedication to the health and the well-being of your citizens. You and your commitment to strengthening not only your communities, but all of Yukon is greatly appreciative. From the presentation of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* in 1973 to the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* in 1993 to the settlement of your land claims and the signing of your agreements in 2005, the road to finalizing these agreements has been long and it has been at times challenging.

It involved years of difficult negotiation and hard work of many, many visionary leaders. When the delegation of Yukon First Nation chiefs presented *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* to Prime Minister Trudeau in 1973, Elijah Smith said, "We are not here for a handout. We are here with a plan." The final and self-government agreements are that plan. They provide all the governments in Yukon with a road map that frames our government-to-government relationships and charts the way to a better future for all citizens and all Yukoners. These agreements are the foundation of how we organize ourselves politically, how we work to build capacity and find innovative solutions to shared issues.

Although there are challenges, there is very much to celebrate. I had the honour of attending Kwanlin Dün's anniversary gala over the weekend and what an incredible celebration that was. It was symbolic to celebrate the milestone at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. The cultural centre, the wharf and the restoration of historic buildings are some of the 16 projects that have been completed since 2008 as part of the revitalization of the Whitehorse waterfront and are just some of the tangible examples of what was envisioned by the final and self-government agreements and the immense benefits that have come from these agreements and working together through partnerships.

The Single Track to Success mountain bike trails and the revitalizations of the Carcross waterfront, including the Carcross Commons, the Carcross pedestrian bridge, the waterfront landscaping, and the Bennett Lake viewing deck are further examples of community-driven economic development that creates employment, builds capacity and provides training and new opportunities for youth.

The positive impacts of the final and self-government agreements can be seen and felt across this territory. The return of community-level decision-making, the priority that is placed on education and health, and the increased economic opportunities are just some of the visible indicators.

The calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report highlighted for all Canadians that the settlement and implementation of land claims are an important step on the path to reconciliation with aboriginal people. Today, 11 of Yukon's 14 First Nations have final and self-

government agreements. Yukon accounts for almost half of all self-governing First Nations in this country. It is a great source of pride for Yukon to be seen as a leader in land claim implementation and self-government, both in Canada and internationally.

I would like to reaffirm the Yukon government's support of the final and self-government agreements. These agreements contribute to the principles of reconciliation. They bring us toward a more equitable and inclusive society by putting power and autonomy back in the hands of First Nation governments. They give us a framework to work together as governments to close the gaps in social, health and economic outcomes that exist between aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations. I believe that these agreements and the hard work of First Nation leaders have meant that the youth who are growing up today have a future that is full of opportunities. They are empowered to make decisions about their future and the future of their communities. They have a renewed sense of pride in their rich culture and their heritage. As governments, this is what drives us.

We want to ensure that Yukon continues to prosper and we want to build healthy and sustainable communities. To do that, we must continue to work together. Intergovernmental accords are just one of the ways that we have been working together as governments. I was very pleased to sign an intergovernmental accord with Carcross/Tagish First Nation in March of this year. That accord articulated several of our shared priorities and how we plan to move forward together to achieve the results.

These priorities include a new learning centre in Carcross, the negotiation of an education agreement to improve outcomes for Carcross/Tagish First Nation students, and support for training focused on mental health and on substance abuse.

I'm pleased to say that we are also very close to signing off an intergovernmental accord with Kwanlin Dün First Nation that outlines our shared priorities in health, education, justice and emergency management and commits us to work together to advance these important initiatives. I am confident that we are moving forward to successful outcomes and we are making positive strides forward together as governments.

I encourage people to have a look at the "Mapping the Way" display in the lobby, as it goes into more detail on Yukon's journey to self-government and truly pays tribute to some of the leaders who were instrumental in the journey. The "Mapping the Way" campaign is a joint initiative of the 11 self-governing First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Yukon government and the Government of Canada. The goal of this campaign is to celebrate and raise awareness of Yukon land claims and self-government. I encourage Yukoners to learn more about these agreements because they are a legacy for us all. The far-reaching benefits that flow from these agreements benefit each and every Yukoner.

When I look back at how much has been accomplished over the past 10 years, I am excited about what the next 10

years will bring, and that was echoed by Chief Bill on the weekend as well.

Once again, I would like to acknowledge the elders, chiefs, ladies and gentlemen. Congratulations on 10 years of self-government to Carcross-Tagish and Kwanlin Dün First Nations.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: On behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party Official Opposition, I am honoured to recognize the 10th anniversary of the February 19, 2005 signing of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation final and self-government agreement and the October 22, 2005 Carcross/Tagish final agreement signing. I also join in recognizing the many, many people who played a role in bringing the Kwanlin Dün and Carcross/Tagish First Nation agreements to successful ratification and signing.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when I was told this morning that this tribute would be on the Order Paper for today, I looked back at the signed agreements and, as I did so, I was flooded by many memories. The signatures of past First Nation leaders, premiers, former federal ministers, citizens and witnesses to those agreements brought back many, many memories — memories of: the tenacity of the former Council of Yukon Indians leader Mike Smith, whose role in the early days of land claim negotiations finally culminated some 30 years later in his signing of the final and self-government agreements as chief of the Kwanlin Dün; of Khà Shâde Héni Mark Wedge, who guided his First Nation through not one, but two ratification processes; of the often behind-the-scenes leadership of Judy Gingell, now a respected elder, but one whose political activist roots go way back, whose leadership was instrumental in the finalization of the original first four agreements and the legislation that recognizes both the final and self-government agreements. I thought also of the passion of the elders from the Kwanlin Dün and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation communities whose recollections of the history of their First Nations became etched in the minds and the memories of all who had the privilege of sitting at the negotiating tables.

I also reflected on the many, many people from government and First Nation sides who played key roles and who are no longer with us, and we honour them too.

On a personal level, Mr. Speaker, I recall the honour I felt as I signed the *Kwanlin Dün First Nation Self-Government Agreement* and the *Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement* as a witness to the signature of the federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Andy Scott, along with our then and now Member of Parliament Larry Bagnell. The signing of the Kwanlin Dün and Carcross/Tagish First Nations' agreements 10 years ago represented the end of many, many years of struggle by the people of both First Nations.

The signings also represented and represent the beginning of a new era. As we reflect on the significance of the signing of the Kwanlin Dün and Carcross-Tagish final and self-government agreements, the words that continue to come to mind are "perseverance" and "patience". There were many

milestones along the paths toward the completion of the Kwanlin Dün and Carcross/Tagish First Nation land claim and self-government agreements and many, many roadblocks. Someday, someone — perhaps one of the Kwanlin Dün or Carcross/Tagish First Nation citizens, now elders — will write the true inside story of the process. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it will have as many twists and turns as any good thriller.

Until that story is told, I acknowledge the perseverance and the determination that justice would and will prevail. The patience rooted in the deep knowledge that, by their willingness to enter into the solemn commitment set out in the agreements, history was and is being made — that a path to reconciliation is made possible by a people who have chosen to help create a Yukon society made up of peoples who have chosen freely to live and work together in a new relationship based on trust and respect.

I have said before that history does not cast a soft light on the treatment of Yukon First Nation people by the thousands of gold seekers who came north in the Klondike Gold Rush and the two First Nations we paid tribute to today — Kwanlin Dün and Carcross-Tagish — know full well that history.

There were no socioeconomic benefits or environmental impact assessments in those days. History tells a grim tale of how Yukon Indian people were treated and ignored. Mr. Speaker, there is no version of Yukon land claims history that speaks to it being an easy road.

Looking back at what was actually said in *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* shows the persistence and the patience that drove Yukon First Nations. They said that with a just settlement of our claims we feel we can participate as equals and then we will be able to live together as neighbours.

The 10th anniversary of the signing of the Kwanlin Dün and Carcross-Tagish final and self-government agreements is an opportunity to recognize — and I'll paraphrase a well-known First Nation architect of land claims in the Yukon, Dave Joe, who said that the signed agreements crystallized a moment in Yukon's history when the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Yukon's non-First Nation citizens joined in a shared vision of a future of Yukon where the institutions of public government would be open and inclusive and would incorporate Yukon First Nation interests and participation directly in governing the territory.

Today as we honour the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation we commit to reinvigorating and empowering public involvement in government decision-making using the framework established by the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation final and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation final and the Kwanlin Dün First Nation self-government and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation self-government agreements. The Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and their citizens have worked hard to have their presence and their governments recognized.

As leader of the New Democratic Party, I reiterate our commitment to live up to the challenges and the opportunities gifted to us all by the terms of the new relationship signified by the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation final and self-government agreements. We must collectively honour and give effect to this new relationship.

I would like to end with a quote from residential school survivor Dr. Robert Joseph, who said — and I quote: “Reconciliation includes anyone with an open heart and an open mind, who is willing to look to the future in a new way. Let us find a way to belong to this time and place together. Our future, and the well-being of all our children, rests with the kind of relationships we build today.”

Applause

Mr. Silver: I rise on behalf of the Liberal Party to also pay tribute to the 10th anniversary of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation for self-governing.

I would like to start today by welcoming our honoured guests here in the gallery. It was an absolute honour to participate in KDFN's “Celebrating Who We Are” last Friday at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. I had the honour of sitting with Chief Roberta Joseph from the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and, Mr. Speaker, we had chills as we watched the incredible performances that night, especially from our youth from across the territory. It was absolutely amazing.

I hope His Worship, Mayor Curtis, will forgive me — I am going to steal his lines from his speech that night — and I quote: Although we are standing here recognizing the anniversary of formal self-governing agreements, it is important to remember that Yukon First Nations have been governing themselves for tens of thousands of years.

Yukon First Nations have been leaders in implementing self-government agreements. Today, 11 of Yukon's First Nations have signed self-governing agreements. It was a great year in 2005 that saw two of Yukon's self-governing agreements signed: KDFN, which signed theirs on February 19, and CTFN, which signed theirs on October 22. These agreements are more than just legal frameworks that determine government-to-government relations. They have allowed Yukon First Nations to set the course of their own destinies, forming the cornerstones of our economic and social development for years to come. These monumental agreements have benefitted all Yukoners by providing a voice through boards, committees and councils and increasing communications among all levels of government.

Congratulations to the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Kwanlin Dün First Nation. I look forward to the many more achievements of the next 10 years and the ones that we have had so far in the last 10 years. Together in partnerships, we can all continue to make this territory an even better place to live.

Applause

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have a document entitled *New Whitehorse Continuing Care Facility Business Case Analysis* for tabling.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees?
Are there any petitions to be presented?
Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 90: *Land Titles Act, 2015* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I move that Bill No. 90, entitled *Land Titles Act, 2015*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 90, entitled *Land Titles Act, 2015*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 90 agreed to

Bill No. 93: *Act to Amend the Oil and Gas Act* — Introduction and First Reading

Hon. Mr. Kent: I move that Bill No. 93, entitled *Act to Amend the Oil and Gas Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that Bill No. 93, entitled *Act to Amend the Oil and Gas Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

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

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to table the Department of Economic Development's October 2015 economic forecast, which confirms:

- (1) Yukon is headed for a third straight year of negative economic growth; and
- (2) Yukon's GDP will drop by six percent this year alone.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: First Nations/government relations

Ms. Hanson: Today the Yukon Party will call a motion to discuss what the Yukon government is doing to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report is groundbreaking. It could pave the way for stronger relationships between First Nation, federal and territorial governments. Some of the report's 94 recommendations addressed programming, but the majority

recommend ways that we can honour and revitalize the relationship between governments.

One of the most important recommendations that I am proud to say the Alberta government has already committed to involves adopting the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for further relationship building.

Will the Premier commit today to the TRC recommendation 43 and adopt the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as Yukon's framework for reconciliation?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There has been a motion passed in this House unanimously after debate supporting Canada's statement on the UN's declaration on indigenous people. That was debated fully in this House and I'm proud to say that every member of this Legislative Assembly did support that motion.

Ms. Hanson: The motion endorsed the general concept. The United Nations declaration is a core element of the TRC recommendations. Reconciliation, we need to remind ourselves, is about doing more than boasting about what you have already done. It's fundamentally about respectful relationships and living up to what you have negotiated.

I'm very proud that an NDP government worked as partners with First Nation governments to negotiate the *Umbrella Final Agreement* that sets out the principles of Yukon's final and self-government agreements. These agreements are being diminished by this government's disrespect for First Nation governments. It's a fascinating irony. The Yukon Party talks about reconciliation, but only if they get their way.

If the government is serious about reconciliation, when will it respect its final agreement obligations and stop fighting First Nation governments in court on issues like Bill S-6 and the Peel watershed?

Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: On a day that leaders of all three parties have stood in this House and acknowledged the celebration of 10 years of final self-government agreements for Carcross/Tagish First Nation and for Kwanlin Dün First Nation, I am standing here to say proudly what an incredible achievement it is.

As we mentioned in the tribute to acknowledge the work and the vision — the vision of many great leaders going back now over 40 years — to get to an *Umbrella Final Agreement* and get to final self-government agreements for 11 out of 14 First Nations that have truly changed this territory for the better forever. I'm very proud of the work that has been done. I'm very proud of the work, and the building capacity and the partnerships that exist at all levels of government to make this territory the best place that it can be.

Ms. Hanson: There were many roadblocks getting to these agreements. There should not be roadblocks now.

It isn't just the NDP who is calling for a thaw between the Yukon Party and First Nation governments. First Nations themselves have been vocal about treaty rights and the relationship that this government seems determined to roll

back. Thanks to our final and self-government agreements, Yukon has a golden opportunity to be a national leader in acting on the TRC report. We could be developing long-lasting respectful government-to-government relationships with First Nations; instead, the Yukon Party government prefers fighting First Nation governments in court to limit the final agreements' negotiated rights of First Nations concerning environmental assessments and resource development processes.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Premier recognize that the reconciliation called for by the TRC also means living up to the agreements signed on behalf of all Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We have acknowledged — I certainly have acknowledged — not just the tremendous work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but the strength and the courage of all of those people who took the opportunity — who had the strength to be able to tell their stories to Canadians. Mr. Speaker, there are stories — and I believe that we will hear some of them later today in debate — that make us all ashamed of that period in time.

As a result of that good work, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has come out with 94 recommendations. Immediately following that report being tabled, I instructed the deputy ministers across this entire government to begin the work to produce a report to show us what work has been achieved and what work still needs to be done. That report has been completed. I have now reached out to all Yukon First Nation leaders to gather together with the Yukon government Cabinet to review the work that has been done and to begin to chart forward the path forward, to continue the work on reconciliation. There is a lot of work that still needs to be done, not just at the territorial or provincial level —

Speaker: Order, please.

Question re: Internet connectivity

Ms. White: Yesterday, we congratulated this government for finally making an announcement on a second fibre link. As many know, Internet connectivity is the highway many Yukon companies and residents use to conduct the daily business of northern life. We also asked the minister to tell this House the projected cost of the new fibre optic link. The minister was either unwilling or unable to respond and did not provide even a projected price tag to this Legislative Assembly.

Then this morning, the minister and Northwestel president and CEO were on CBC Radio. We finally learned Northwestel studies are telling them it will cost \$32 million for the project.

Can the minister confirm that the projected cost estimate of \$32 million is accurate and explain why this government was not able to provide this basic information to the House just yesterday?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: The \$32-million number obviously is a Northwestel number. They did the study on it so they know those numbers. I felt that it was only fair that, since

Northwestel came up with the number, they should be the one that gets to announce it.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, this government keeps trying to avoid discussing important issues on the floor of this House, preferring instead to rely on media communications and private meetings. Yesterday's refusal to provide the public with basic cost estimates for the new fibre optic route in this Assembly is just another example of this behaviour.

Yesterday, we also asked this government to make public the total cost-of-service and value-for-money assessments completed on the new fibre link and received no such commitment. These studies would provide the Yukon public with this government's justification for pursuing the selected route — something they have not been willing to provide to this House.

Mr. Speaker, as much as the Yukon NDP thinks the Dempster link has the potential to be a good choice, Yukoners deserve to know how this government is making its decisions. Will these reports be made available to the public and, if so, when?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: We spent two years in the process of coming to where we are today, and we're very proud of the work that has been done and we're very proud of the announcement, because we understand that fast, affordable and reliable Internet service is very important to the IT sector, it's very important to businesses and it's very important to just about every citizen here in the Yukon.

I'm very happy to say that we are here today and the department has done great work. We've had very good relationships with Northwestel and I look forward to moving forward in the future.

Ms. White: We aren't disagreeing about the importance of a second link. To date, this government has commissioned at least \$600,000 worth of reports from Stantec, including the total cost-of-service analysis, value for money assessment and an investment delivery models report released in February of 2015. In the February report, Stantec compared the different fibre routes and possible investment models and recommended a P3 model, or a public/private partnership, if the government chose the Juneau route. Now that the government has chosen the Dempster route, the public is left in the dark about who will be financing this project and how much the Yukon government will be contributing. Yukoners deserve to know the amount and source of financing for major public infrastructure investments, yet only one of the three publicly funded reports with this information is currently available to the public.

Will the minister tell Yukoners if the P3 model is still the preferred approach for building the new fibre route along the Dempster Highway, and will they release the value-for-money assessment?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: As I said before, we're very happy to move forward the way we are, and it'll be great to work with other governments on how we will finance this project, moving forward. As I said before, the Northwest Territories government is currently in election mode; the federal government just came out of election mode. When we have

the opportunity to speak to the people who are in the positions to make the decisions, we will have those discussions and we will continue to move forward.

We've spent two years, as I've said, and we've had various reports. Some of those reports contain proprietary information that I can't divulge here on the floor of the Legislature, but the department continues to go through those reports and, as we move through them, we do release the information that can be released.

I look forward to continuing this project.

Question re: Economic outlook

Mr. Silver: I have a question for the Premier. For many years the Yukon Party insisted that the upturn in our economy was due to its great management of our territory. The Yukon Party was very good at taking credit during the good times, but they have been unwilling, however, to accept blame for the current economic slowdown we're in.

A report in the spring confirmed our economic growth has stalled under this government. For a second year in a row, our economy actually shrunk. In 2014, it shrunk by 1.2 percent. The Yukon usually releases an updated economic forecast in the summer. Instead, this year, on October 20, as Yukoners were taking in the results of the federal election, the government's own forecast was finally released. It said our GDP is expected to contract for a third year — a third consecutive year — decreasing by six percent.

Will the Premier confirm that the Yukon is the only place in Canada where the economy will shrink for a third year in a row?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: What I will state to this House, and I have stated many times, is that the mining and the resource industry certainly is a cornerstone of our economy, an economy that comprises 37,000 people. We continue to strive at diversifying our economy, but in reality it is still growing in its infancy. We see other jurisdictions that rely on resource extraction for their revenue base experiencing the same downturn right now. I only have to look at the example of Newfoundland and Labrador, or in Alberta — what is happening there.

There are things that we can do. We focus on investing in infrastructure, we focus on looking at our permitting and regulatory processes, and we focus on training our youth and creating the training so that they are ready during the next time that the economy turns around. We are focused on what we can do because we do understand that there are things like commodity prices that unfortunately we don't have the ability to control.

Mr. Silver: We are on our way to a third year in a row of negative economic growth, all under the leadership of the Yukon Party government. Now that is what happens when you spend several years riding on high mineral prices and failing to plan for the inevitable slowdown when mineral prices drop.

The Yukon's own economic forecast released last week confirmed that the Yukon's economy will shrink for a third year in a row. We are the only place in Canada where this has happened. Our economic performance is worse than both

Nunavut and Northwest Territories in 2015. Yukon is the only place in Canada to record two consecutive years of negative GDP growth in both 2013 and 2014 and we had the second-worst GDP numbers in all of Canada in 2014, at minus 1.2 percent. The new forecast says the decline will continue for a third year in a row and our economy will shrink by six percent.

Does the Premier take any responsibility for leading the country in shrinking the economy?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: What the Leader of the Liberal Party doesn't want to talk about is what those forecasts project for 2016, seeing Yukon come back to growth. Sadly there are still some significant issues to deal with in the other two territories. What I can confirm is that through this economic downturn that has gone on now for the past couple of years, what you have seen is strong financial management of taxpayers' money.

We continue to be able to put out record capital budgets investing in infrastructure to be ready for when the economy turns, but also creating jobs and training today. We do this by managing the money. Unlike the other provinces and territories, by 2017, we will be the only jurisdiction left in this country that has no net debt — something to be loud and proud of.

As we hear today, in Alberta, Moody's is now predicting that the Alberta credit rating will fall due to the record deficits. That means higher interest rates and even more money to pay for interest charges. We are in a very enviable position managing Yukoners' money. They are very proud and they feel very comfortable knowing that we are at the helm looking after the money.

Mr. Silver: It's very disappointing to watch the government duck responsibility of having the worst economic performance of any jurisdiction in the country for the last 36 months.

In 2013 the government forecast — and I quote: "direction of growth and what we hope to be further prosperity for this territory". Instead this government has delivered a stalled economy.

Corporate tax revenues this year are half what they were two years ago — half. The prospects for 2015 are no better, with uncertainty hanging over the economy thanks to this government's ongoing court battles with Yukon First Nations.

The Conference Board of Canada says that our economy will shrink once again this year. The Yukon's own forecast says that it will shrink by six percent, leaving us at the back of the pack in Canada.

Why won't the government take any responsibility for the fact that we currently have the worst performing economy in Canada?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In spite of the decreased commodity prices that we have seen for the last few years, in spite of the decrease in revenues, this government continues to post modest surpluses and record capital budgets in this territory, unlike any other jurisdiction in the country.

Sound financial management — we continue to focus on areas that we have control of during this economic downturn,

focusing on things like diversifying our economy with the announcements made yesterday, with the creation of a redundant fibre line, the increased investment in the IT envelope and the investment in an independent power producing policy.

We continue to invest in infrastructure, telecommunications, transportation and education. We continue to invest in improving our regulatory processes with First Nations and industry.

As we come out of this downturn, this territory will be in the best position and we look forward to seeing how that engine will run.

Question re: Nurse shortages

Ms. Stick: Community health centres, with the exception of Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek, are supposed to be staffed by two nurses at all times, and these nurses are the primary health providers for our rural communities. In fact, in other jurisdictions across Canada, it would be unheard of to have a community nursing station that was staffed by any less than two nurses at all times.

The current understaffing and vacant positions in Yukon's community health centres put Yukoners at risk, as community nurses must work alone.

How will the minister ensure that Yukon communities reliant on the community health centres and those nurses are safe?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As I've indicated over the last number of days, this government is very concerned about the challenges facing staff throughout government — not to make an exception for the nurses. We are certainly interested in hearing their thoughts on a move-forward basis. In fact, the staff from the department has reached out to those nurses to find out how we move forward.

We are aware that there are negotiations with the union that will take place over the next several months and we will let those negotiations take place, but in the interim we will continue the dialogue with the nurses throughout the territory. We are interested in hearing what they have to say and we are interested in finding solutions for those individuals.

Ms. Stick: There have been solutions. There have been reports that this government has produced — one in 2010 called the community nursing services review and then, in 2014, the clinical services plan. Both of these spoke to appropriate work environments as a key to retaining staff and it explained then that those expectations were not being met. Nothing has happened.

Nursing turnover and vacancies have left many nurses working alone — a practice not seen elsewhere in Canada, and not asked of any other Yukon first responder. They're on call, as I mentioned before, 24 hours a day. They're not to be more than 15 minutes away from the community health centre. Overworking health professionals leave them at risk of increased odds of error.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister acknowledge that the real challenge is not recruitment —

Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do thank the member opposite for bringing this to the House's attention and thank her for her question. We do recognize, as I have mentioned before, that there are challenges when it comes to recruitment and retention of health care professionals throughout the territory — and regardless of what field they're practising in. The government has taken many steps with a number of different departments to address those recruitment and retention issues. With community nurses it is really no different from other areas of the department.

We are certainly open to sitting down with the YRNA and community nurses, nurses in the territory — even here in Whitehorse — to find what those challenges are that they face on a daily basis. We do understand that there are a number of vacant positions, but those vacant positions are being filled by auxiliaries on call throughout the territory, including Whitehorse.

On a recruitment basis, we have a number of different health bursaries that this government supports and will continue to support.

This is an issue that we will continue to work on. It's one that's very important to this government and we look forward to solutions.

Ms. Stick: I would recommend this minister go back to their own reports, to see those recommendations and how they need to be addressed if we are to improve those situations. The information is there. It has been shared by nurses and professionals, and it's in reports. We only need to look at it and act on those things.

If you have a lone community nurse working in a community — and it does happen and we have those stats — if they have to leave a community to accompany a patient to Whitehorse on a medevac or an ambulance, it leaves the community without a primary health care provider. The only option for an emergency situation in a community is that they call a nurse at the emergency room here in Whitehorse, but that is not adequate.

Mr. Speaker, how will this minister consider providing adequate — even good — health care in communities that face lone nurses?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Again, I thank the member opposite for her question. Certainly recruitment of nurses specifically is not an issue that's uncommon for Yukon; it's actually an issue right across this nation.

To meet these challenges, we've been certainly executing our plan to deliver health care across Yukon and keep Yukoners in their homes for as long as possible. Health and Social Services certainly works extensively with the nurses association, as I have indicated earlier, to attract and retain nurses on a long-term basis, and we're certainly committed to continuing that good work. We've also invested in significant resources toward that same goal — and, as I mentioned earlier, on a number of the different health bursaries that this government certainly supports.

Over the past decade, some of these also include: introducing the nurses program at Yukon College; licensing LPNs; introducing the Yukon medical and the nursing

bursaries, as I have indicated, for Yukon students; and building the nurses residence here in Whitehorse.

Certainly this Yukon Party team has a plan that will provide the sustainable and high-quality health care that Yukoners need and deserve now and into the future, but, on a recruitment basis, we do understand that it is an issue here and it is an issue across Canada.

Question re: Energy conservation programs

Mr. Tredger: Provinces are steadily reducing their fossil fuel reliance. We could be following their example. Canadian municipalities are saving money and reducing emissions with district energy systems. We could be learning from them. Yukon energy-use patterns clearly show where energy could be conserved and where energy use could get shifted off fossil fuels and on to renewables that we could produce locally.

The reports have been done; only the political will is lacking. In 2012, a review showed that electrical savings from energy-efficiency improvements could provide savings of up to 37,000 megawatt hours per year. What energy conservation and demand management targets will this government commit to meeting with energy conservation?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak about some of the incentives that we have put forward in recent months and over the past couple of years — of course, going back to the introduction of the microgeneration program. We have seen 20, mostly solar, PV systems installed in Yukon homes, assisted by up to a \$5,000 grant from the Yukon government, and the good energy rebate programs. The fridge buyback and energy-efficient appliances continues to be very successful. The other recent improvements that we have made on the residential and commercial side are also being very well-received.

In fact, we are revolutionizing the way homes are built here in the territory. In a typical year, we would see five to 10 SuperGreen homes built in Yukon. Since we put in the incentives to those new homebuilders, we are expecting upwards of 100 homes to meet those EnerGuide 85 standards. That is something that we should all be proud of. Just 10 months into that residential incentive program we are seeing results like that. Those are exciting results for the territory and our energy conservation.

Mr. Tredger: We were looking for targets and evaluation. There is no excuse for wasting energy. We are at a critical junction in human history where we can no longer delay in taking concrete steps to address climate change. The time to shift our reliance away from fossil fuels is now. This is not a radical view, but a global consensus view. The radicals are those who deny climate change is a problem, or who rationalize inaction. We, Yukoners, use unsustainable amounts of energy per person. Yukon's energy planning must include energy conservation. Demand-side management programs need to be implemented with targeted energy savings.

Why has the minister responsible not directed the Yukon Energy Corporation to meet energy-savings targets?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: In this area I want to begin by drawing to the member's attention that the goal we set out in the energy strategy done in 2009 for adding renewable energy to the Yukon power system has actually been more than met. That has been done through the investment in a third turbine at the Aishihik facility as well as the Mayo B plant — so again, significant investments in renewable energy as well as the investments that the Yukon government has made in the line to connect the two grids.

Other areas that we have been working on include the microgeneration policy, which has allowed Yukoners, for the first time, to connect to the grid and to sell energy produced by renewable sources at a slight premium. The independent power producers policy announced by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources will be another source of adding renewable energy. Also both the Yukon Energy Corporation, through its 20-year resource plan, and Yukon Development Corporation, in longer term planning, are doing work on planning for new renewable energy sources, including hydro, wind and solar.

We will continue to work in this area. I would also remind the member that there have been demand-side management programs put in place by Yukon Energy Corporation, as well as the good energy program run by the Energy branch, which —

Speaker: Order, please. The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 1014

Clerk: Motion No. 1014, standing in the name of Mr. Elias.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin:

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 Yukon government deputy ministers that reviewed the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 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 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.

Mr. Elias: Mr. Speaker, before I officially begin, let me just take a moment to acknowledge those in the gallery today and those who are listening and watching, many of whom have survived the residential school experience and have been dealing with the residual effects thereof, and those who are playing a vital role in the healing process and addressing some of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action already in our territory.

We are all in this together, Mr. Speaker. We all have much more work ahead of us. I salute you all and welcome you to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, my motion urges the Hon. Premier and our Yukon government Cabinet ministers to meet with 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, to engage with Yukon First Nation governments and Yukon communities to determine the next steps that can be taken by the respective parties, and to explore possible solutions that will promote the well-being of Yukon First Nations and all aboriginal Canadians within the Canadian family.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge that my colleagues and the opposition noted an issue with a specific sentence in this present motion. They were understandably concerned about voting on a report that they have not seen — in this case, a deputy minister's report. It is absolutely not my intention to put the opposition at a disadvantage in today's debate, and I should have worded my motion more carefully.

Out of respect for Yukon First Nation governments, the deputy minister's report is not being released to the public until First Nations have been able to review it. As a result, I have also adjusted my remarks today. I will be speaking to some of what the Yukon government is already doing. This information is already in the public sphere.

It was on June 2, 2015 that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission issued their press release about their executive summary. Our caucus felt that it was a priority to debate the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's historic work, findings and recommendations at the earliest possible opportunity. I would like to thank my fellow House Leaders and acknowledge their conciliatory approach in reaching an amicable solution for all in the upcoming proposed amendment that will be tabled today. It is my hope today that we reach unanimous support for this motion by all members on behalf of the people we represent. I look forward to this motion being fulfilled.

In preparing for today, thinking about this issue and looking inward at my own family's experiences, the thing that bothers me the most is the fact that people in positions of power back then — the federal government, all church officials, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the residential school officials, Indian agents and almost all people of

authority in those days — knew exactly what was happening to these poor little children — the rapes, the killings, the torture, the medical experiments, not revealing where children were buried, the mental, physical and psychological abuse — and, Mr. Speaker, they did not do everything in their power to stop it. All of this was under the stolid indifference and the watchful eye of the Crown. Even worse, many of them perpetuated this evil behaviour to continue. That still makes me very angry, but now, more so, it makes me feel sad.

I stand here today glad that we as people have the opportunity to discuss motions like this that reach the floor of the people's Assembly on behalf of our citizens. That makes me happy, because I know that there is hope in sight and the healing has begun.

I know now that part of my responsibility is to break the cycle for my children, understanding that I have to let go of those resentments and start to forgive, because the intergenerational impacts were very real growing up. I have come to understand and accept them for exactly what they are.

I will leave my opening remarks with this sentiment, Mr. Speaker: I believe that there was a deliberate attempt in our Canadian history to bury aboriginal peoples and their culture, but little did they know that we were seeds that they tried to bury and we are as alive and vibrant as ever.

[Member spoke in Gwich'in. Text unavailable.]

On June 2, 2015, the Hon. Justice Murray Sinclair, in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's press release to call for action, said: "Starting now, we all have an opportunity to show leadership, courage and conviction in helping heal the wounds of the past as we make a path towards a more just, more fair and more loving country".

That very same day, our Hon. Premier made a statement, and in that statement he said, "As Canadians, it is important that we fully come to terms with the magnitude of the effects that residential schools had upon individual Aboriginal Canadians and upon the Aboriginal community as a whole."

Four days later, on June 8, 2015, our Hon. Premier directed senior government leaders to review the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and the Premier said — and I quote: "Yukon has already made significant strides in some areas identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report, including the negotiation of modern-day treaties, development of curricula that address residential schools, and support for First Nations' involvement in the child welfare system, to name but a few. A thorough internal review will identify additional next steps our government can make towards reconciliation."

In Canada, residential schooling was closely linked to colonization and the missionary crusades. The first boarding school for aboriginal people in Canada was established in the early 17th century near a French trading post at what is now Quebec City. This Roman Catholic school hoped to civilize and Christianize young aboriginal boys. The school was a complete failure, because the boys ran away back home and their parents were then reluctant to send their children there again.

In the Yukon, we had residential schools in: Carcross, the Chootla, formerly the Forty Mile boarding school, which opened in 1891 and moved to Carcross in 1910; the Coudert Hall in Whitehorse, which was the predecessor to Yukon Hall; the St. Paul's hostel that operated in Dawson City from September 1920 to June 1943; at Shingle Point, which was the predecessor to the All Saints school in Aklavik, Northwest Territories; the Whitehorse Baptist Mission; and Yukon Hall in Whitehorse.

Residential schools have had many definitions over the years, so I'll use the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's definition. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission completed its work earlier this year on June 2, 2015 and it was presented and embraced as recognizing the aboriginal issues of the people of Canada. The summary of the final report alone is a 528-page document. Under 22 theme headings, the Commission suggested 94 recommendations or calls to action.

I'll take a minute to read from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's summary volume's preface into the public record — and I quote: “Canada's residential school system for Aboriginal children was an education system in name only for much of its existence. These residential schools were created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture — the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society, led by Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. The schools were in existence for well over 100 years, and many successive generations of children from the same communities and families endured the experience of them. That experience was hidden for most of Canada's history, until Survivors of the system were finally able to find the strength, courage, and support to bring their experiences to light in several thousand court cases that ultimately led to the largest class-action lawsuit in Canada's history.

“The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was a commission like no other in Canada. Constituted and created by the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, which settled the class actions, the Commission spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from the Aboriginal people who had been taken from their families as children, forcibly if necessary, and placed for much of their childhoods in residential schools.

“This volume is a summary of the discussion and findings contained in the Commission's final multi-volume report. The Final Report discusses what the Commission did and how it went about its work, as well as what it heard, read, and concluded about the schools and afterwards, based on all the evidence available to it. This summary must be read in conjunction with the Final Report.

“The Commission heard from more than 6,000 witnesses, most of whom survived the experience of living in the schools as students. The stories of that experience are sometimes difficult to accept as something that could have happened in a country such as Canada, which has long prided itself on being a bastion of democracy, peace, and kindness throughout the

world. Children were abused, physically and sexually, and they died in the schools in numbers that would not have been tolerated in any school system anywhere in the country, or in the world.

“But, shaming and pointing out wrongdoing were not the purpose of the Commission's mandate. Ultimately, the Commission's focus on truth determination was intended to lay the foundation for the important question of reconciliation. Now that we know about residential schools and their legacy, what do we do about it?

“Getting to the truth was hard, but getting to reconciliation will be harder. It requires that the paternalistic and racist foundations of the residential school system be rejected as the basis for an ongoing relationship. Reconciliation requires that a new vision, based on a commitment to mutual respect, be developed. It also requires an understanding that the most harmful impacts of residential schools have been the loss of pride and self-respect of Aboriginal people, and the lack of respect that non-Aboriginal people have been raised to have for their Aboriginal neighbours.

“Reconciliation is not an aboriginal problem; it is a Canadian one. Virtually all aspects of Canadian society may need to be reconsidered. This summary is intended to be the initial reference point in that important discussion. Reconciliation will take some time.”

In the 19th century, the Canadian government believed it was responsible for educating and caring for aboriginal people in Canada. They thought their best chance for success was to teach English and adopt Christianity and Canadian customs to the aboriginal children. Ideally, the government thought the children would grow up and would then pass their adopted lifestyle on to their children and native traditions would diminish or be completely abolished in a few generations. The Canadian government decided a policy called “aggressive assimilation” to be taught at church-run, government-funded industrial schools, later called residential schools. The federal government felt children were easier to mould than adults and the concept of a boarding school was the best way to prepare them for life in mainstream society.

Mr. Speaker, I will read again from the summary of the Truth and Reconciliation report from a segment of the history section — and I quote: “It can start with a knock on the door one morning. It is the local Indian agent or the parish priest, or, perhaps a Mounted Police officer. The bus for residential school leaves that morning. It is the day the parents have long been dreading. Even if the children have been warned in advance, the morning's events are still a shock. The officials have arrived and the children must go.

“For tens of thousands of Aboriginal children for over a century, this was the beginning of their residential schooling. They were torn from their parents, who often surrendered them only under threat of prosecution. Then, they were hurled into a strange and frightening place, one in which their parents and culture would be demeaned and oppressed.”

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report includes six years of testimony from over 7,000 survivors and

witnesses to Canada's residential schools. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission begins its report by stating — and I quote: “For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct, legal, social, cultural, religious and racial entities in Canada.”

I will speak more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work in a minute, Mr. Speaker.

Established in the 1880s under Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald, the goal of residential school was to civilize Canada's indigenous population, who were imagined as savages. As Duncan Campbell Scott, the deputy superintendent general of the Department of Indian Affairs between 1913 and 1931, who administered the government's assimilation policy, once noted — and I quote: “...the government will in time reach the end of its responsibility as the Indians progress into civilization and finally disappear as a separate and distinct people, not by race extinction but by gradual assimilation with their fellow-citizens.”

Today the Truth and Reconciliation Commission says this policy amounts to cultural genocide. They explain this in their introduction, where it says — and I quote: “The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as ‘cultural genocide.’

“*Physical genocide* is the mass killing of the members of a targeted group, and *biological genocide* is the destruction of the group's reproductive capacity. *Cultural genocide* is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.

“In its dealing with Aboriginal people, Canada did all these things.”

In the beginning, the residential program began with 69 schools, but it was eventually expanded in the 1930s reaching a total of 139 schools in the lifetime of the program, with the final school closing in 1996. Nearly two-thirds of Canada's residential schools were operated by the Roman Catholic Church. When the program started up in the 19th century, 1,110 students initially attended, but as the program was expanded in the early 20th century, over 150,000 First Nation, Métis and Inuit students would attend.

Approximately 80,000 students are still alive today. Over 6,000 students are known to have died. However, the full number may never be known. Students' deaths were so common, architects designing the schools actually planned for cemeteries to be incorporated into the school design.

Duncan Campbell Scott noted in 1913 that — and I quote: “It is quite within the mark to say that fifty per cent of the children who passed through these schools did not live to benefit from the education...”

As CBC news points out, the odds of a student dying during the life of the program was one in 25, which is greater than the one in 26 odds of a Canadian soldier dying during the Second World War. An astonishing 30,939 sexual assaults or serious physical abuse claims have been resolved by an independent assessment process awarding \$2.69 billion in compensation.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission also observed that these crimes have led to intergenerational effects for survivors and their families — and I quote: “Sexual and physical abuse, as well as separation from families and communities, caused lasting trauma for many others. The effects of this trauma were often passed on to the children of the residential school Survivors and sometimes to their grandchildren”.

Mr. Speaker, I found a definition of “intergenerational impacts” that has been generally accepted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and I think it's warranted that I read what the definition of “intergenerational impacts” is.

Intergenerational impacts, as defined, are: “The unresolved trauma of Aboriginal people who experienced or witnessed physical or sexual abuse in the residential school system is passed on from generation to generation. The ongoing cycle of intergenerational abuse in Aboriginal communities is the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in residential schools.

“The definition of intergenerational impacts and the legacy of residential schools abuse follows:

“‘Intergenerational Impacts’ refer to ‘the effects of physical and sexual abuse that were passed on to the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Aboriginal people who attended the residential school system’”.

A list of 32 — a numbered list — shows the impacts that many intergenerational survivors face on a day-to-day basis: alcohol and drug abuse; fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effect; sexual abuse, past and ongoing; physical abuse; psychological/emotional abuse; low self-esteem; dysfunctional families and interpersonal relationships; parenting issues such as emotional coldness, rigidity, neglect, poor communications and abandonment; suicide, or the threat thereof; teen pregnancy; chronic, widespread depression; chronic, widespread rage and anger; eating disorders; sleeping disorders; chronic physical illness related to spiritual and emotional states; layer upon layer of unresolved grief and loss; fear of personal growth, transformation and healing; unconscious internalization of residential school behaviours such as false politeness, not speaking out, passive compliance, excessive neatness, obedience without thought; post-residential school community environment, seen in patterns of paternalistic authority linked to passive dependency; patterns of misuse of power to control others, and community social patterns that foster whispering in the dark, but refusing to support and stand with those who speak out or challenge the

status quo; the breakdown of the social glue that holds families and communities together, such as trust, common ground, shared purpose and direction, a vibrant ceremonial and civic life, cooperative networks and associations working for the common good; disunity and conflict between individuals, families and factions within the community; flashbacks and associative trauma; educational blocks; spiritual confusion, involving alienation from one's own spiritual life and growth process, as well as conflicts and confusion over religion; internalized sense of inferiority or aversion in relation to white people, especially white people in positions of power; toxic communication — gossiping, criticism, put downs, personal attacks; becoming oppressors and abusers of others as a result of one's experience of abuse; dysfunctional family co-dependent behaviours replicated in the workplace; cultural identity issues; destruction of social support networks; disconnection from the natural world; voicelessness — a long list, Mr. Speaker.

Residential schools were federally run under the Department of Indian Affairs. Attendance was mandatory. Agents were employed by the government to ensure all native children attended. Furthermore, in the 1870s, the Government of Canada partnered with the Anglican, Catholic, United and Presbyterian churches to establish and operate boarding and residential schools for aboriginal, First Nation, Inuit and Métis children. The intent of the residential school system was to educate, assimilate and integrate aboriginal people into Canadian society. In the words of one government official, it was a system designed — and I quote: “to kill the Indian in the child”.

Attendance at residential schools was mandatory for aboriginal children across Canada, and failure to send children to residential school often resulted in punishment of the parents, including imprisonment. Many aboriginal children were taken from their homes, often forcibly removed, and separated from their families by long distances. Others who attended residential schools near their communities were often prohibited from seeing their families outside of occasional permitted visits.

Students were forbidden to speak their language or practise their culture and were often punished for doing so. Many students were forced to do manual labour and were fed poor-quality food, and there were many accounts of students provided with mouldy and maggot-infested food in these schools.

Other experiences reported from survivors of residential schools included sexual and mental abuse, beatings, severe punishments, overcrowding, illness, children forced to sleep outside in the wintertime, and forced wearing of soiled underwear on their head or wet bedsheets on their body, the use of students in medical experiments, and disease and, in many cases, death.

Many students received a substandard education, if any at all. As late as 1950, according to a study by the Department of Indian Affairs, over 40 percent of the teaching staff had no professional training whatsoever. Some students have spoken

of the positive experiences of residential schools and of receiving an adequate education. However, overall it was a negative experience, as indicated by various statements of apology issued by the churches and the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, residential schools and their impacts are far-reaching. In many cases, the abuse and even the common experiences of having attended residential school have caused impacts such as post-traumatic stress syndrome and have made it difficult for survivors to engage in family, social and professional circumstances.

Survivors were often away from their parents for long periods of time, and this prevented the discovery and learning of valuable parenting skills. This letter I'm about to read bothers me, but I'm going to read it. This letter was sent to parents.

It was written in English and it was dated November 18, 1948 — and I quote: “Dear Parents, It will be your privilege this year to have your children spend Christmas at home with you. The holidays will extend from December 18th to January 3rd. This is a privilege which is being granted if you observe the following regulations of the Indian Department.

“1. The transportation to the home and back to the school must be paid by the parent.

“The parents must come themselves to get their own children. If they are unable to come they must send a letter to the Principal of the school stating that the parents of other children from the same reserve may bring them home. The children will not be allowed to go home alone on the train or bus.

“2. The parents must bring the children back to school strictly on time.

“If the children are not returned to school on time they will not be allowed to go home for Christmas next year.

“I ask you to observe the above regulations in order that this privilege of going home for Christmas may be continued from year to year. It will be a joy for you to have your children with you for Christmas. It will be a joy also for your children and it will bring added cheer and happiness to your home.

“Yours sincerely, Reverend O'Grady, Principal”.

The removal of children from their homes also prevented the transmission of language and culture, resulting in the fact that many aboriginal people no longer spoke their language or are aware of traditional cultural practices.

I will just deviate from my script today, because I was in the sauna this morning up at the multiplex and my old art teacher was in there. We were talking about the address to the Assembly today and she said, “You know what? Way back when I was in England” — and she was a Welsh-speaking child. She said that when she went to an English school and tried to speak Welsh, they would put a chain with a big log around her neck. On it, it said, “I will speak English only.” I thought I would share that with the Assembly today because it was fortuitous that this type of information came to me and she wished me luck today in the Assembly.

Aboriginal communities are still in need of healing, with high rates of substance abuse, violence, crime, child

apprehension, disease and suicide. In the early 1990s as a result of escalating social problems in aboriginal communities throughout Canada, the federal government created the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples confirmed a link between social crisis in aboriginal communities, residential school and the legacy of intergenerational trauma.

In the report to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the federal government initiated the Gathering Strength initiative, which then led to the creation of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in 1998. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation funds community-based healing initiatives that address the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in the residential school system, including intergenerational impacts. Hundreds of healing initiatives and projects have been funded through the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, and many other independent programs and initiatives have been created throughout Canada to heed the healing objective.

In 2007, the Government of Canada implemented the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement*. This settlement agreement included: (1) a common experience payment to all former students of the federal administered residential schools; (2) the independent assessment process to address compensation for physical and sexual abuse; (3) the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; (4) healing initiatives; and (5) a fund for commemoration projects.

Mr. Speaker, the churches and the federal government have offered various statements of regret and condolence, sorrow and/or apology in their roles in administering residential schools, including the United Church of Canada in 1986, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1991, the Anglican Church in 1993, the Presbyterian Church in 1994, the Government of Canada in 2008, and the Roman Catholic Church in 2009.

On June 11, 2008, the day of the apology in our House of Commons — a day when Canada apologized for the harms caused by the residential school system — two quotes in that apology resonated with me, and I believe they are very relevant in today's debate. Prime Minister Stephen Harper said — and I quote: “The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on aboriginal culture, heritage and language.

“While some former students have spoken positively about their experiences at residential schools, these stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children, and their separation from powerless families and communities.

“The legacy of Indian residential schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today.”

The second was when Prime Minister Harper said — and I quote: “In moving toward healing, reconciliation and resolution of the sad legacy of Indian residential schools, the implementation of the Indian residential schools settlement

agreement began on September 19, 2007. Years of work by survivors, communities and aboriginal organizations culminated in an agreement that gives us a new beginning and an opportunity to move forward together in partnership.”

The Indian residential schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in 2008 with a mandate to inform all Canadians about what happened in residential schools. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has documented the truth of survivors, their families, communities and anyone personally affected by the residential school experience. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report hopes to guide and inspire First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and all Canadians in the process of truth and healing, leading toward reconciliation and renewed relationships based on mutual understanding and respect.

Mr. Speaker, what is reconciliation? “During the course of the Commission's work, it has become clear that the concept of reconciliation means different things to different people, communities, institutions, and organizations. The TRC mandate describes the reconciliation as ‘an ongoing individual and collective process, and will require commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada. Reconciliation may occur between any of the above groups.’

“The Commission defines *reconciliation* as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change.”

In response to the loss of language, there is a growing movement to revive and preserve unique aboriginal cultural beliefs, social structures and spiritual values. Through initiatives of the Legacy of Hope Foundation and the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation, Canadians are learning this history and understanding the impact that it has had and continues to have on their communities.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we are now at a point in time in our territory where there is a compelling desire to put the events of the past behind us so we can work toward a stronger and healthier future for our territory, a future that includes exposing the truth and implementing a reconciliation process here at home, and what all levels of government are willing to do, share and work to ensure that goal becomes reality.

This is a part of the national strategy and comprehensive response to the Indian residential school legacy.

Here is a prime example of just that. This letter was written 84 years ago — Comptroller's Office, Dawson City, Yukon, August 25, 1931: “Sir:

“I acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, enclosing a Petition from the parents of white children attending the Whitehorse Public School, protesting against the practice of permitting Indian children to attend school, and be in close contact with the white children.

"I do not approve of the continuance of such a policy, either in the case of the Whitehorse Public School, or in any other public school of the Territory, and I have wired to Mr. Hulland, the Principal, instructing him not to permit Indian children to attend the Public School.

"While in Carcross last June I gave instructions to the teacher, Mr. Tinney, not to permit Indian children to attend school, and was under the impression that I gave similar instructions to the Principal at Whitehorse in case Indian children presented themselves for admission. Apparently I must have overlooked bringing the matter to Mr. Hulland's attention.

"Yours truly, G.A. Jeckell".

Now, this is a Yukon government news release seven days ago, October 21, 2015: "Residential school curriculum to be taught in all Yukon schools this year."

"WHITEHORSE — Yukon's grade 10 social studies unit about residential schools will be introduced in all Yukon schools this school year. 'Yukon is committed to acknowledging the history, experiences and impacts of residential schools', Minister of Education Doug Graham said. 'This new unit educates young people about this difficult chapter in our country's history and is an important step in our journey toward reconciliation between First Nations and non-First Nations people.'

"Grand Chief Ruth Massie of Council of Yukon First Nations said, 'Yukon First Nations are pleased the history of residential schools is ready to be taught in the new Grade 10 unit. The residential school experience marks a dark side in Canadian history everyone should be educated on in order to move forward on the path of reconciliation.'

"The unit about the history and impact of residential schools was introduced in the 2014-15 school year at Robert Service School in Dawson City, Tantalus School in Carmacks, Del Van Gorder School in Faro and Vanier Catholic Secondary, Porter Creek Secondary and F.H. Collins Secondary in Whitehorse. In 2015-16, this unit will be taught in all Yukon schools in the Social Studies 10 course, a mandatory credit for graduation.

"This is an important step in bridging the knowledge gap between First Nations and non-First Nations peoples,' co-chair of the First Nations Education Commission Tosh Southwick said. 'It is exciting to see a part of our collective history finally being taught in our schools.'

"Yukon educators gathered in Whitehorse today for a two-day training session on how to implement this curriculum in a caring and sensitive way. They will learn about the unit, related resources, and how to build a community-based team approach to prepare schools and their communities for this curriculum. Participants include Grade 10 social studies teachers, former residential school students, Yukon First Nation heritage staff, community education liaison coordinators, education support workers, education outreach coordinators, cultural support workers and resolution health support workers.

"The curriculum and its resources were developed by the Department of Education's First Nations Program and

Partnerships Unit in collaboration with Yukon First Nations, elders, former residential school students, social studies teachers and historians. The new unit, called Our Stories of Residential Schools in Yukon and Canada: Seeking Understanding – Finding Our Way Together, focuses on the residential school experiences of Yukon First Nations students."

It has been an amazing 84 years.

Now I take this time to compliment our Premier on his sincere acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by our Yukon First Nation people and the need for continued healing. The immediate direction in the spring of 2015 to create a report prepared by his Yukon government deputy ministers who reviewed the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that fall within Yukon's jurisdiction in order to assess the work that the government has done to date, to implement these recommendations and to identify areas where more work is required — to me, that is leadership and a profound commitment to establishing new relationships embedded in mutual recognition and respect that will forge a brighter future for all citizens here in our territory. I thank you, Premier.

To quote an elder from Saskatchewan, who really resonated with me — he said that 100 years from now, our children's children and their children must know and still remember this history because they will inherit from us the responsibility of ensuring that it never happens again.

I see this as all of our pasts. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has 94 calls to action and it includes 22 sections titled: (1) Child Welfare; (2) Education; (3) Language and Culture; (4) Health; (5) Justice; (6) Canadian Governments and United Nations; (7) Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation; (8) Settlement Agreement Parties and the United Nations; (9) Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System; (10) National Council for Reconciliation, (11) Professional Development and Training for Public Servants; (12) Church Apologies and Reconciliation; (13) Education for Reconciliation; (14) Youth Programs; (15) Museum and Archives; (16) Missing Children and Burial Information — something that my family has experienced very intimately, because we don't know where some of my family members are buried; (17) National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation; (18) Commemoration; (19) Media and Reconciliation; and of particular interest, (20) Sports and Reconciliation; (21) Business and Reconciliation; and (22) Newcomers to Canada.

What are we doing as a territory in addressing the legacy of residential schools? My motion urges the Premier and Yukon government Cabinet ministers to meet with Yukon First Nations and I look forward to the results of those discussions, and I would imagine so does our general public.

I stand here today very impressed and encouraged, to say the least, with regard to what our government is already doing in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. I must say, in my opinion, we as a territory are walking side by side down the path of reconciliation with our citizens and have already started to address so many of the

Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action, 32 of which are specific to our territory.

Some of the accomplishments in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation recommendations I will be going over in a few minutes, but I won't be going over them all because of our agreement with the opposition.

I have adjusted, as I said, but I think it is appropriate here to begin by quoting our territory's Child and Youth Advocate, who is present in the gallery today, when she says — and I quote: "If leaders start by looking at the 94 recommendations and deciding what actions to take, programs and citizens can do the same. For me, reconciliation means acknowledging that children in residential schools did not have their views considered and did not have their rights upheld; it is my mission to ensure that children today have a different experience. I look forward to seeing how Yukon government decides to respond to the recommendations and implement actions that promote the best interest of the child through a child's rights lens."

It's also important to note, Mr. Speaker, that our Child and Youth Advocate and her office are proud members of the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates, and they also made a public declaration of reconciliation on June 1, 2015.

I'll touch on some of the things that are already in the public realm with regard to addressing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission by our Government of Yukon.

Under the theme heading of Child Welfare, the recommendation or action item is providing adequate resources to enable aboriginal communities and child welfare organizations to keep aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.

We have the *Child and Family Services Act* that outlines the priorities for out-of-home care placements — first priority to place the child with extended family. Where this is not possible, the priority is to place the child within their First Nation or another First Nation — section 89 of the *Child and Family Services Act*.

Health and Social Services works with families and First Nations to ensure children remain with their family whenever possible. First Nations are involved in planning and decision-making for families and children who are members of the First Nation. Every child in care has an individual plan for maintaining their cultural heritage.

Under the theme of Education, we call upon the federal government to develop with aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between aboriginal and non-aboriginal children, something that the Yukon is doing in partnership with Yukon College, and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in advanced education is working with them on a memorandum of understanding to expand the goals related to apprenticeship and trades, First Nation languages and culture, and support for disengaged students that were identified in the second report of 2014-15.

In addressing this call to action, the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre will receive \$935,925 between 2014 and 2017 to run a youth employment centre and community outreach service to provide youth, 16 to 30, with skills, knowledge and work experience to participate in the workforce.

Also under the theme of Education, between 2014 and 2016, the Women's Directorate provided \$100,000 in funding to the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle to deliver an aboriginal women's leadership program designed to coach and mentor aboriginal women in three key areas: education, career path and culture.

Also the Public Schools branch provides the funding for programs such as First Nation culture, elder in school, community orientation, and cultural inclusion. Yukon Education has funded the Northern Cultural Expressions Society to support carving programs for Yukon schools and the Public Schools branch has educational agreements and intergovernmental accords with First Nation governments and an experiential learning program that integrates First Nation knowledge and culture into their learning objectives.

Mr. Speaker, under the theme Language and Culture, the call to action was that we call upon the federal government to acknowledge that aboriginal rights include aboriginal language rights. For settled First Nations — for Yukon First Nations — the provision for the First Nation to enact the legislation on programs and services for citizens related to aboriginal languages is covered in their self-government agreements, section 13.2.2. The simple fact that we have comprehensive land claims agreements and self-governing agreements in our territory that are active, alive and flowing is, in itself, addressing many of the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Also, under Language and Culture, the call to action was that we call upon the federal government to enact an aboriginal languages act that incorporates the following principle: the federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for aboriginal language revitalization and preservation. This doesn't really apply to the Yukon government because, in 2005, First Nations drew down, as part of their self-governance, the Yukon government's portion of language funding, which was \$1.1 million directly from the Canadian Heritage department. In 2009-10, Education contributed \$2.872 million to the Yukon First Nation second languages program and, in 2009, the northern strategy provided \$2.5 million for a project on language revitalization in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to Health, the call to action was that we call upon the federal, provincial, territorial and aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of aboriginal people as identified in international law and constitutional law, and under the treaties.

A couple of actions that address this in our territory are that the Council of Yukon First Nations and all First Nations

are included in formal and informal consultations on legislation, regulations and other major health-planning initiatives in our territory. We have negotiated self-government agreements that contain a provision, giving First Nations law-making authority with respect to the provision of health care services to citizens — section 13.2.3.

Under the section Justice, the call to action was that we call upon the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to ensure that lawyers receive appropriate cultural competency training, which includes the history and legacy of residential schools. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, treaties and aboriginal rights, indigenous law and aboriginal/Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism. In response to this call for action, the Department of Justice staff and the RCMP have received Yukon First Nation history and cultural training through the Northern Institute of Social Justice, Yukon College. Lawyers can also attend this training if they so desire.

Under the title of Education for Reconciliation, the call to action was that we call upon the federal, provincial and territorial governments in consultation and collaboration with survivors, aboriginal peoples and educators and to make appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties and aboriginal people's historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to grade 12 students.

I did cover this earlier — curriculum on residential schools and aboriginal history. Yukon's grade 10 social studies course includes a required unit on residential schools. This unit has digital Yukon stories, a Yukon history timeline, a teacher's guide and the "Finding Our Way Home" textbook. The grade 12 Yukon First Nation course covers treaties, Yukon First Nation history and Indian residential school information. The community, heritage, adventure, outdoors and skills grade 9 experiential learning program integrates First Nation traditional teachings, culture, knowledge and technologies when teaching English grade 9, social studies 9, ancestral technology grade 9, and outdoor education grade 9.

With regard to the theme Missing Children and Burial Information, we call upon all chief coroners and provincial vital statistics agencies that have not provided to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada their records on the deaths of aboriginal children in the care of residential school authorities to make these documents available to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

With regard to this, Vital Statistics provided all information requested and accessible to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission regarding the records of deaths of aboriginal children in the care of residential schools. Health and Social Services will continue to respond to requests from the federal government to support identification and documentation of burial sites. Under the *Historic Resources Act*, the Yukon government and First Nations jointly manage historic burial sites found on public lands outside of recognized cemeteries.

Because I know that many other members wish to stand and speak to this motion, this is the final point that I will cover until — or if — I get to my closing remarks. Under the theme of Sports and Reconciliation, the recommendation from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was that we call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events, such as the Olympics, Panamerican Games and Commonwealth Games to ensure that indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected and local indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events.

The Yukon government, the Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle and the work it does with the North American Indigenous Games and the national Aboriginal Sport Circle recognizes the importance of acknowledging and thanking First Nations where events are taking place within their traditional territory.

With that, again it is my hope that we receive unanimous support for this motion. I hope that the history that I have presented from the 1700s to present and a little bit of what the Yukon government is doing was helpful in debate today. I think that this — as members of the Assembly at the first opportunity that we have to debate this when the House is in session — is very valuable. I want to turn the floor over to the members opposite. I want to thank you all for listening and I also want to thank my Premier and my Cabinet colleagues for allowing me to put my name on this motion today.

Ms. Hanson: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to speak to the motion put forward by the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin. I want to thank the member for his eloquence and his clearly heartfelt passion for the issues contained in this motion. The subject matter and the history are difficult. But before I go on I would like to — as the member acknowledged in his opening remarks, the House Leaders had to have a conversation and agreed that this motion would be amended just to make it consistent and to make it possible for all members to really engage in a full discussion of the subject matter.

Amendment proposed

Ms. Hanson: I move:

THAT Motion No. 1014 be amended by replacing "to discuss a report prepared by Yukon government deputy ministers that reviewed" with "to review".

Speaker: The amendment is in order.

It is moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition:

THAT Motion No. 1014 be amended by replacing the phrase "to discuss a report prepared by Yukon government deputy ministers that reviewed" with "to review".

Ms. Hanson: I am speaking on the amendment, as the amendment addresses that we talk about those matters within reviewing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on matters that fall within Yukon's jurisdiction and to engage with First Nation governments in the communities to talk about next steps.

I think it is really important as we contemplate why it is appropriate for us not to be talking about — we have already acknowledged and the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin has already acknowledged that it is not possible for us to review a report that we have not been privy to.

I will speak to the importance of the broader issue here and the amendment, as it would be addressed by the amendment, and speak to the fact that, as the member opposite has said, the mandate of this Truth and Reconciliation Commission really goes beyond just simply a report from deputy ministers to the Government of Yukon. It was, in the first instance, to inform all Canadians about what happened in the 150-year history of the residential schools and, in so doing, by revealing the history of the residential schools, it also challenged us to peel back our blinders and be open to the truth of the history of this country — and to be open in that sense to the process of reconciliation and the renewed relationships that are based on mutual understanding and respect. So it's not simply about the report; it's about the relationships.

A guiding principle of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was that the truth of our common experiences will help set our spirits free and pave the way to reconciliation.

As I've said, and as the member opposite has pointed out very clearly, the truth of the residential schools is hard. Thanks to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, that truth can no longer be denied. That fact will be remembered. The next step, the biggest step, is the step of reconciliation. It goes beyond reports.

What is it? What is reconciliation? There is no one way to define it. We have quoted Justice Murray Sinclair before, who has a succinct way of expressing it. He says that reconciliation is about forging and maintaining respectful relationships. There are no shortcuts. Forging and maintaining respectful relationships — it bears repeating. Respect is relational. It's not simply telling people about the programs and services we are providing. Respect is relational. It is mutual. It is never unilateral.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we need to be truthful and acknowledge that here in the Yukon, we have a long way to go to maintain truly respectful relationships. Even before considering the calls to action in the summary report, we need to take a moment to reflect on our local situation. As the speaker opposite has mentioned, the *Umbrella Final Agreement* sets out a framework for respectful government-to-government relationships with First Nation governments. For reconciliation to be realized, substantial changes in how we resolve differences will need to be implemented. We have a long way to go.

I heard today about the 94 calls to action and the various groupings therein, but one of the things that I think is important and why we need to make sure that this motion is not simply restricted to a report from the deputy ministers — why it needs to be broader and allow the members of this Legislature to speak more broadly to the whole of what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission says — is that in their

summary, the report says that no Canadian can take pride in this country's treatment of aboriginals, and for that reason, all Canadians have a critical role to play in advancing reconciliation in ways that honour and revitalize the nation-to-nation treaty relationship.

I have spoken many times and again today about the importance of breathing life into and honouring the agreements entered into on behalf of us all, but I have to say that I found the language of the TRC most compelling. I will quote from it when they said, on page 238, that “Reconciliation not only requires apologies, reparations, the relearning of Canada's national history, and public commemoration, but also needs real social, political, and economic change.”

As the TRC put it, reconciliation begins with each and every one of us. It's not simply a report prepared by deputies. In re-reading the TRC summary report, I found myself personally challenged. The history I was taught, like many in this room, was supposed to be objective, balanced — in short, the truth. As the layers of the work and research done over the past number of years by both RCAP and now the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reveal, the history taught in the past and to this day is, as the TRC said on page 239, contains “notions of European superiority and Aboriginal inferiority that have tainted mainstream society's ideas about, and attitudes toward, Aboriginal peoples in ways that have been profoundly disrespectful and damaging. They too need to understand that Canada's history as a settler society and how assimilation policies have affected Aboriginal peoples.”

They said that this knowledge and understanding will lay the groundwork for establishing mutually respectful relationships. Nowhere — and this is why we need to expand the motion from what the honourable member opposite put forward in good faith, which was to bring forward the notion of discussion of the TRC. It's not simply related to reports to written by deputies. In my view, nowhere is the basis for those mutually respectful relationships more profoundly expressed than in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. We need to remind ourselves that the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was resisted, undermined, debased, debated and minimized by successful federal governments, Liberal or Conservative — it doesn't really matter.

Canada still only considers it an aspirational document. Despite this, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has said that it concurs with what the UN Special Rapporteur said on the rights of indigenous peoples. He said — and I quote: “It is perhaps best to understand the Declaration and the right of self-determination it affirms as instruments of reconciliation.”

We have heard echoes of federal resistance to the principles of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which is why it's so important to debate this issue broadly and not just as a point form of one to 94.

I would like to quote from a public statement made by indigenous leaders, said in support for the United Nations declaration in trying to address and trying to assuage

provincial, territorial and federal governments that have expressed concerns about support for the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

They said — and I quote: “... Canada’s concerns were unfounded ...” They said that the notion that governments have “... that the *Declaration* could be interpreted as conferring an absolute and unilateral veto power has been repeatedly raised by Canada as a justification for its continued opposition to the *Declaration*. This claim, however, has no basis either in the *UN Declaration* or in the wider body of international law. Like standards of accommodation and consent set out by the Supreme Court of Canada” — free prior informed consent — “in international law is applied in proportion to the potential for harm to the rights of Indigenous peoples and to the strength of these rights. The word ‘veto’ does not appear in the *UN Declaration*...” despite the fact that “Canada keeps insisting that Indigenous peoples don’t have a say in development on their lands.”

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission considers reconciliation to be an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships at all levels of our society. It’s not just restricted to the reports of deputy ministers. They call upon us as territorial legislators — not simply just as Cabinet, but as all legislators — to study the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, with a view to identifying its impacts on current government laws, policy and behaviour that would enable us to develop a holistic vision of reconciliation that embraces all aspects of the relationships between First Nation and non-First Nation Yukoners.

My colleague across the floor, the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, spoke of the role of churches in Canada’s harmful history with respect to residential schools. What many Canadians, myself included, have likely — at least not consciously — heard of is what is referred to in matters of law as the Doctrine of Discovery. As the issues of the reality of the abuses of the residential school was gaining public attention, the settlement churches — the churches that established those residential schools — began to realize that the issue of reconciliation and the issue of how we deal with this history that manifested itself in the abuses at residential schools was much more deeply rooted. That formed a major challenge and continues to form a challenge to us because it’s rooted in a historic legacy that goes back 500 years.

I wanted to quote from one of the people who was involved in the settlement, talking about it from the Roman Catholic foundations of their — a historian talked about why this doctrine remains relevant today. I will quote, she said: “Most non-Aboriginal Canadians are aware of the fact that Indigenous peoples commonly regard land rights as culturally and religiously significant. Fewer non-Natives, I suspect, would consider their own connection with property in the same light; and fewer still would regard the legal foundation of all land rights in Canada as conspicuously theological. In fact, however, it is. The relationship between law and land in Canada can be traced to a set of fifteenth century theological assumptions that have found their way into Canadian law ...

The Doctrine of Discovery was the legal means by which Europeans claimed rights of sovereignty, property, and trade in regions they allegedly discovered during the age of expansion. These claims were made without consultation or engagement of any sort with the resident populations in these territories — the people to whom, by any sensible account, the land actually belonged. The Doctrine of Discovery has been a critical component of historical relationships between Europeans, their descendants, and Indigenous peoples, and it underlies their legal relationships to this day, having smoothly and relatively uncritically transitioned from Roman Catholic to international law” — and to national law.

Not very many of us are conscious of that as we go about day, assuming that the laws that we have in our country are objective and have their roots in our current situation. In fact, many of the conflicts that we have around land and aboriginal rights go back much longer.

I raise this today because there is a relationship — again subconscious, but clearly ingrained — in how individuals and their governments continue to respond to aboriginal land rights, and without having that consciousness brought forward it makes it very difficult for us to really embrace reconciliation.

It’s important to note that it took until 2010 for the Vatican to refute the Doctrine of Discovery. In 2012 the World Council of Churches, representing over 500,000,000 Christians in more than 110 countries, denounced the Doctrine of Discovery and urged governments to dismantle the legal structures and policies based on the Doctrine of Discovery.

When we say in this Legislative Assembly that we embrace all 94 recommendations, we are making a profound statement. We are saying that we are prepared to dismantle the legal structures and policies that are based in that Doctrine for Discovery. If that is true, we should be very proud of ourselves. If it’s not true, then let’s talk about it and find out where the discrepancies are.

The TRC said it was not enough to simply repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. For example, while still maintaining the requirement for aboriginal people to prove the validity of their existence and territoriality, the TRC did not challenge the validity of the Crown’s sovereignty, which is why treaties — or land claim agreements, as we refer to them — are so important because, as the TRC points out, without treaties, Canada would have no legitimacy as a nation. Land claims established the legal and constitutional foundation of this country and of this territory.

I realize that my time is running short, but I wanted to quote from an elder — the father of a well-known author, Wab Kinew, elder Fred Kelly. He emphasized that treaty-making — or land claims, in our language — and aboriginal people’s way of resolving conflict must be central to reconciliation. It means that we have to be mindful of the other. We are so used to, as dominant governments, saying, “It’s ours.”

He said — and I quote: “There are those who believe that a generic reconciliation process is a Western-based concept to be imposed on the Aboriginal peoples without regard to their

own traditional practices of restoring personal and collective peace and harmony. We must therefore insist that the Aboriginal peoples have meaningful participation in the design, administration and evaluation of the reconciliation process so that it is based on their culture and language.

“Where government refuses to implement Aboriginal rights in the original spirit and intent of the treaties,” — read: land claims agreements — “the citizens of Canada must take direct actions to forcefully persuade its leadership. Treaties and memoranda of agreement are simply the stage-setting mechanisms for reconciliation. There must be action. All Canadians have treaty rights. It is upon these rights and obligations that our relationship is founded.”

Land claims agreements — and we have said this before — are a model of how Canadians as diverse peoples can live respectfully and peacefully together. The calls to action that the member opposite spoke to are incredibly important. They are concrete actions that would come to mind easily, but the challenge for us, in my mind, is to open our minds beyond what deputy ministers may be speaking about in terms of program changes. We are talking about — and I would really urge all members to look at the calls to action contained in: 43, which speaks to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*; 45, which speaks to the whole establishment of working together to develop a royal proclamation of reconciliation — that is going to be a challenge, Mr. Speaker; and 46, which will speak to the whole issue of working together to advance a covenant of reconciliation that would identify the principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society.

In closing, I just wanted to say that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission — the very last pages of this 380-some-page summary report — talked about how difficult the process of truth and determination has been.

It is going to take hard work. It calls for personal action but it calls for systemic action. Mr. Speaker, I urge all members to support the amendment to this good motion coming from the member opposite so that we can make sure that we have a full and comprehensive discussion about how we, as legislators, and how we, as citizens of the Yukon Territory, embrace, not just the language of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but the spirit and intent of those commissioners and every single witness who testified before that commission.

Speaker: Does any other member wish to be heard on the amendment?

Amendment to Motion No. 1014 agreed to

Speaker: Is there any further debate on the motion as amended?

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal caucus will be supporting the motion as amended today and I am pleased to see it here on the Order Paper. I am anxious to see the report prepared by the Yukon government deputy ministers that reviewed the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that fall within Yukon’s

jurisdiction that identified areas in which much more work must be required.

After years of acrimony at the federal level, I am pleased to see the new federal government has agreed to accept and move forward on the report of the TRC. I am glad to see the same commitment being echoed here today by the Government of Yukon.

There is so much to do, and the first step is to work with the Yukon First Nations in developing a joint plan to implement the recommendations. This will take policy change and funding for improvements into the health and well-being of aboriginal people in the Yukon — on education, childcare, corrections, supporting of federal legislation for matters like the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Yukon is no different than the rest of Canada. Yukon First Nation children in care are estimated at 80 percent of the children in care; 70 percent of those incarcerated are aboriginal people. Yukon First Nations leadership want to know absolutely when the Yukon government plans on beginning the process of implementing these recommendations and look forward to this dialogue starting after our deliberations here today.

Mr. Speaker, the TRC report was a massive undertaking. The commission has painstakingly documented the impacts of the residential school system on First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in Canada, and the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin did an eloquent job of recording some of that into the record here today. By recording the experiences of thousands of survivors, the TRC has ensured that all Canadians can gain a deeper understanding of this dark chapter of our collective history and of the devastating and lasting legacy that it has left on aboriginal peoples, communities, culture and language, and health, education, and welfare.

We owe it to the drafters of the report — and, more importantly, to the thousands of people who shared their experiences — to act on their recommendations. The good work done by the Department of Education announced recently is a good example of concretely addressing one of these recommendations. There are other areas that the Government of Yukon can act on, including child welfare, education, language, culture and health — just to mention a few.

The commission’s work has now ended, but the work for governments across our country are just beginning. There are 94 recommendations in total, as we know, that cut across all aspects of our daily life in the various jurisdictions of all different governments. It’s time to act without delay to advance the process of reconciliation and to rebuild the relationship with First Nation people based upon rights, respect and cooperation. Meaningful reconciliation will only come when we live up to our past promises and ensure the equality of opportunity required to create a fair and prosperous shared future.

As legislators and leaders, we have the responsibility to act. The truth of what occurred has been established. We must

now all commit to the important work of reconciliation going forward.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting this motion as amended.

Ms. Stick: I rise today in support of this motion, and I would like to thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing this forward into the House. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission report and the recommendations that flow from it are a clear path for governments, for communities and for people to follow. There are no easy paths, but there is a map and there is a journey that we can take together.

I want to start this off on a personal note and a bit of my own story. When I moved to the Yukon, I knew nothing about residential schools. I was not taught about it in school. It was something that I was not aware of, and then I met my husband-to-be at that time, and I heard a bit — just a small bit — of his story. It reminds me of veterans who have been to war and who do not want to talk about their experiences. I have discovered that this was the way in my husband's family. You might hear, "Yes, that happened to me." But that is all you heard. There was not a discussion. There was no conversation. It was not talked about at the dining table initially, and it was something that nobody talked about.

I remember my husband's two younger brothers at different times in their high school days who were attending Yukon Hall and wanted to come live with us. I thought that was really strange. I did not understand why they wanted to live with their brother and me. They came to live with us, but even then I did not understand that them being at Yukon Hall was part of this residential school experience.

It was over the years with my husband and with my husband's family that I started to hear stories and there were more topics and more conversation about it, especially when it became headline news.

When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission came to Whitehorse and set up at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, it was really important for me to attend. By then my husband was dead, but I wanted to go and hear more stories. I wanted to be a witness to other people. I had family members there and I wanted to be a support to them, so I volunteered and, through that process and — let's go back a step. When clearing out a computer I had come across this story that my husband had written about his experience at residential school. He was a residential school survivor. He went to St. Agnes. Now it was not included in residential school compensations and whatnot, but he never lived at home again, from the age of five, with his mom.

I shared his story as a witness because it's my story, it's my children's story, it's my husband's family's story and that was very important to do. So I thank the member opposite for this and I'll move on.

This reconciliation to me is the big part. We have worked on the truth part; we need to work on the reconciliation. One of the things that I find that still amazes me is the people who don't know about residential schools. We are all, I think,

pretty familiar with it in the Yukon, but even in the Yukon there are people who don't seem to be aware of the realities of what happened here.

Certainly across Canada when I go home and visit friends or family, it always amazes me when I bring it up how little people still know. There's that whole education piece that has to go on and there's that whole piece — and I'm a terrible person for this — not a terrible person, but I have a terrible habit of reading comments in newspaper articles or news reports and it always shocks me — the reactions some people have to residential school, in terms of "pull up your boots, get over it, this happened long ago" — and to me it is still present here today and that's the piece that I will always speak to when I meet people with those attitudes or those beliefs or those who don't have that knowledge, because it is an important part of our history.

As a government, as legislators, we need to look at these recommendations and recognize that there is work to do and it's ongoing. It's not a one-shot deal. This is how we need to move forward as Canadians across this country.

I was really pleased to see that the very first subtitle under the recommendations was about our children, because it's the residential schools that impacted children and it's our children today who are our best hope to keep moving forward in telling this story, in educating and providing that healing and everything that goes with reconciliation. So I was pleased when I saw that the children come first in the recommendations.

The member across the way spoke to those. We need to reduce the number of children, aboriginal children, in care. We know that's true here; we know it's true across Canada. We've had terrible headlines in the last year from different provinces of situations where aboriginal children in care do not survive. That is wrong, Mr. Speaker. We need to look at these recommendations across this country and in this territory and see how we can make changes with our First Nation partners, with other governments, to remedy these.

I liked that in the recommendations it talked about needing to know the numbers. We need to make those comparisons. Otherwise, how do we know if we are succeeding?

It spoke to causes. It talked about spending, preventive measures, care services and it talked about those important pieces: culturally appropriate; supporting families, not just apprehending children, but supporting families; and providing parenting programs. It talked about the Jordan's Principle, which is a child-first principle used in Canada to resolve jurisdictional disputes within and between governments regarding payment for government services provided to First Nation children. At first, when I read this, I was thinking between federal and provinces or between federal and territories — this is what Jordan's Principle is about, but I realized that it needs to be all governments.

Another topic area of interest to me is health. Again, it points out the differences — the discrepancies — how it is not equal. It recommends that the federal government, in consultation with First Nations, implement measureable goals.

While recognizing that there are different jurisdictional roles around health, I think it is something that all health ministers, all health care practitioners — whether federal, provincial, territorial, First Nation — we need to be able to work on this and to look at those indicators where we see such gaps now — infant mortality, suicide, mental health and addictions, life expectancy, chronic diseases, illness, injury and the availability of appropriate health services.

We all have roles in this, whether we are a community, a government, a First Nation government, a public servant or a neighbour. We all have a part in the reconciliation, and that is the part that we need to move ahead on. It's the part that is going to, presumably, go on forever. We can't put a deadline on it and say, "Okay, in 10 years let's have reconciliation completed." It will be ongoing. There will be more people to educate, more children coming up through the system to learn our true history in Canada. Hopefully in 10 years there will be a new chapter about what we have done to make amends, to reconcile, to be able to work together and to address the whole purpose of this truth and reconciliation.

So again I thank the member opposite for bringing the motion forward. I want to acknowledge the work and dedication of all those involved in the truth and reconciliation hearings, not just here in the Yukon, but across Canada. There was an amazing set of volunteers who were there to help people, to supply emotional support, to give comfort. There were those who listened. There were those who bore witness. All of them deserve thanks and they certainly get my heartfelt thanks.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Mr. Speaker, I too am honoured to rise today to speak on the motion before the House on the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I want to first acknowledge and thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing this motion forward. I will start by personally acknowledging the tremendously moving statement the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin provided, not only to this House, but to this territory, and really to Canada. To be honest, I have very little to add to such a great statement that our Member for Vuntut Gwitchin made for us today. I thank him.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to acknowledge the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It was a monumental task across this country. We really need to pause and reflect on the courage it took for thousands of people who came forward and shared their stories. As you read some of the testimonies, it's hard to fathom that these things could occur in this great country we live in. The pain, the loss — the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin's own family not knowing where some of their relatives are — I can only say from my heart how difficult that would be.

Yukon is very proud of the work that has been done to this date, and a lot of that really revolves around the accomplishments of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the final and self-government agreements, and it has created that relationship and the responsibility to work together. I would

like to acknowledge that, but I also want to acknowledge that there is still much work to be done.

I look forward to a meeting of Yukon First Nation chiefs and the Yukon government Cabinet to share the work that has been prepared by the deputy ministers — to review that work, to look at where the opportunities still exist and then look for options to move forward on how we can continue to move toward reconciliation.

I look forward to being able to share that information with Yukoners and really having that dialogue occur, not just at government levels, but at community levels. Personal relationships are how we continue to move on the path forward because, the responsibility for reconciliation exists, not just with governments or certain levels of government; it exists for all governments and it exists for all of us — all of our communities and us as individuals. A big part of the job that must be ongoing is to ensure — as the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin talked about the quote from the elder from Saskatchewan — that these things are never to be able to have that opportunity to happen again.

I would also like to say that as Premier, I take my role and responsibilities of this government very seriously when it comes to addressing these concerns and ensuring that collectively we move forward on a path of reconciliation.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Barr: First, I would like to thank the member from Old Crow for bringing forward this motion and I want to acknowledge that speaking to something that is dear to the heart can often be a difficult thing — to do it in a way that's not emotional but with the way he presented it — to be able to bring forward all this information — when we think of the centuries in a couple hours — to make sense of some of the history and where we were or what has happened and where we are now. I do thank him for bringing forward this motion.

I rise to speak to the motion as it is amended as I want to continue to share — I use the word "share" because this is a motion debate and I think that when we say the word "debate", we think of winners and losers, so I prefer to — even us as legislators — move from debate and into sharing. Then there are no winners and losers; it's really a sharing of our own individual truths as we have to come to understand our own selves as we move in our own individual lives and where we find ourselves today as people — as MLAs representing the people from our respective areas — that we can do it in a good way with each other and that we can do it to the best of our abilities.

When we speak of something that has been so long hidden or suppressed — oppressed — in this country of Canada, I will try to do what I can do in this short amount of time to share my truth on the importance of us moving forward together and in recognizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the 94 recommended calls to action — which I'm not going to go into. They have been spoken of very eloquently by the member opposite.

I would like to acknowledge Bengie Clethero, who is Deputy Child and Youth Advocate here with us today. I got to know Bengie working at Sundog carving studio before it became the Northern Cultural Expressions Society — to see he is still working and to know that all of us here today are working for the betterment of all and all things. I just wanted to honour you with that and congratulate you and your work. That was a position that wasn't in the territory. I believe it arose from the lack of — or the misunderstandings. I mean no disrespect to anyone on this journey or in this House or where we're going to go to with my words. It's not my intent. I just want to make that very clear. As the previous Child and Youth Advocate, Andy Nieman — from his own personal journey from the streets of Vancouver and my own personal journey from the streets of Vancouver, many years ago, that have led us both to this place, fighting for youth — and to know that as a direct result of what I see as my truth of the truth and reconciliation of residential schools and from what I listened to and talked about, it is really all about the truth and reconciliation of colonization. It is also to understand that residential schools were one of the tools of colonization really. What we're really dealing with today is the ongoing awareness or unawareness — or just the way we humans go forward in trying to be the best we can be, not knowing really that we could be contributing harm to each other. We're just doing what we believe.

So recognizing all the work that has come to play — and I remember sitting in Edmonton at the Truth and Reconciliation when the words were that we have to move forward to reconciliation, going down for gatherings in my days at CAIRS — all the chiefs, all the workers and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation were all sitting there. I think of Elder Agnes Mills saying, "We're not ready for reconciliation yet. We haven't even acknowledged that our youth are dying on our streets in Whitehorse. How can we talk about reconciliation when we haven't even dealt with people who are dying here? It's too fast."

Now that was several years ago and here we are at a point which we are finally discussing calls to action — 94 calls. I would think that our ability to actually have action put into practice — I read a long time ago that knowledge without action is the greatest sin. I hope that expresses what I am trying to say here. This action requires each of us to have inner knowledge — to be able to share together how we are best going to grow together, not only in Canada, but globally in this world as humans.

When we were in caucus today and asking who is going to speak today, I didn't know if I really wanted to speak. Then, when we got the understanding from the House Leaders that there would be a few speakers — not all of us. All of us wanted to say something, so I acknowledge all of us who have passion for this who aren't able to speak today, because it means so much to everyone. When I speak of truth and reconciliation and residential schools, my truth is really the truth and reconciliation of colonization. Intergenerationally, we are all affected by colonization.

To know how far back that goes — when the member opposite spoke of the definition of intergenerational effects — I am an intergenerational survivor of the effects of residential school. Back in my work, the children of the survivors came and said, "What about us?" We hadn't even been talking about intergenerational effects. It hadn't even been thought about at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation meetings we would go to. It only became something when that personal growth happened for the youth who were saying, "Yeah, what about my part in this? How do we even put a name to this stuff?"

I know there is not a lot of time for me to talk about all the things that we have done, the programs that are in place and the work that all governments have done. We have to acknowledge it all. I want to say that, in order for us to move forward as people that are charged with making decisions on the programs and the money spent — whether it's good or not good — it's my truth that we must be well enough ourselves to be the best we can be.

By no means am I the well guy. I'm not saying that at all. What I'm saying is that in my journey, when I came here to the Yukon, to be aboriginal was only something we talked about under the covers growing up. When I got here and started to work at CAIRS and started to really understand what the words "residential school" meant — here I am the director — the counsellor, listening to the stories that the member talked about, the abuses. They're not abuses. We've learned something new today: they're crimes. We have to use the right terminology. Rape is a crime. Kidnapping is a crime. Murder and assault — they're crimes. As we grow, all of us — it's important for me to continue to grow and I'm going to continue to do that.

I wanted to read something — and I'm going to quote this because as I was wondering what I was even going to say today only knowing that I wanted to — that I have an opportunity — it is kind of just flowing out of me now. But as I was praying and smudging earlier today for some guidance — because we believe that we first must pray. Don't forget, that practice of even how we pray was outlawed. It was against the law. So today I'm in my office praying in the way that I understand, with my native ancestry and with my sweetgrass, and I'm asking the Creator for direction here. I turned around and I looked on the wall — and I will quote — first of all, and this is a quote from Denise, our front end guru in our office — the NDP Caucus office. She writes here — and I quote: "Hey Kevin, I found this... it's lovely and you might need ... at some point ... one day... whenever ... 'D'".

When I was thinking about how much it's important for us to be well — all of us in Canada; all of us globally — to hear our own truth as to what we need to do to be the best we can be. For my understanding that this is really about colonization and I'll speak really briefly about colonization.

I had the privilege of going down to South America several years ago to engage in the prophecy of the condor and the eagle. That in a nutshell is that indigenous people from North America and South America would finally come together to be able to understand and appreciate how we can

support each other for truth and reconciliation in this area — as I mentioned, residential school was a tool of colonization.

Coming back from there and seeing how far we have come in Canada, knowing how far it still needs to go in South America where when they still teach in schools — and curriculum is very important, because in the curriculum there, when there were Spanish exchange students coming here to do work experience at CAIRS, I asked, “What about the indigenous people in South America?” “Well, we don’t have any” — that was the response of these 19-year olds. It made me know — to go down there and meet with all the indigenous people who, for the first time, were allowed to gather in public only approximately 12 years ago, with guards — and they handed us an apple as we were all herded around.

I need to move on, because there’s only enough time, really, to get back to the quote.

I ask all of us and I invite all of us here, as human beings sharing — I’m just sharing my truth. I want to quote Black Elk, the Oglala Sioux spiritual leader, born in 1863 and passed in 1950. I quote these words, and I invite you to listen and take with it what you will. I quote: “The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells Wakan-Taka (the Great Spirit), and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.

“This is the real peace, and the others are but reflections of this. The second peace is that which is made between two individuals, and the third is that which is made between two nations. But above all you should understand that there can never be peace between nations until there is known that true peace, which, as I have often said, is within the souls of men.” Black Elk, Oglala Sioux and spiritual leader, 1863 to 1950.

This is what was on my wall that Denise had put there, who wrote: “Someday you might ... whatever ...” — I thought, what a perfect thing to be able to share today when we, as human beings, are talking about something that is so much larger than all our minds in this room can even fathom, because we’re not there yet. We don’t know enough to really know what we need to do. We’re learning as we go.

I am, I guess, hoping that we continue to be the best we can be. I know I will continue to do so. I know that, as I think of Andy Nieman, I think of me on the streets in the early 1970s in Vancouver. Never for one moment did I think I would be standing in a room like this. However, more will be revealed when we are ready.

I’m looking forward to when I can know a little bit more about life and my part to play in it. I just give thanks for the opportunity to speak here today in this Legislature, and I thank the member for bringing forward this motion and the amendments that were brought forward. I will be supporting this motion.

Ms. Moorcroft: I want to thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing forward this motion and for his remarks. I rise to support the motion.

I want to highlight a few of the recommendations that are directed to territorial governments that I trust the Yukon Party government will address. There are 32 of the 94 recommendations made in the call for action published by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that are directed toward the territorial as well as federal and provincial governments.

I’m encouraged by the support of the Premier and the government for the member opposite’s motion. Yukon First Nation people have stood up for their rights and they have resisted the colonial practices of stealing indigenous lands, of stealing children from their families and communities, and of criminalizing the cultural practices of First Nation people. As the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin noted so eloquently, First Nations stand proud in their culture today as they have since time immemorial. I think they can have a lot to teach us.

I want to address a few of the recommendations in the area of the justice field. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has called upon federal, provincial and territorial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of aboriginal people in custody over the next decade and to provide detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate the progress in doing that.

The Auditor General of Canada, in his report of 2015, addressed similar concerns. He pointed out: “70 to 90 percent of offenders in Yukon are members of a Yukon First Nation. The *Corrections Act* states that the Corrections Branch works in collaboration with Yukon First Nations in developing and delivering correctional services and programs that incorporate the cultural heritage of Yukon First Nations and address the needs of offenders who are First Nation persons.”

Many of those people who are incarcerated in our correctional system are survivors of Indian residential school or are affected with the intergenerational effects of residential school.

The recommendation of the Auditor General to provide for training of probation officers — and of all public servants, in fact — on the heritage of Yukon First Nations is important to consider in the context of what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has also recommended. There is a need to provide training in Yukon First Nation cultural heritage to all probation officers. That is one of the calls for action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report that we need to take note of.

The TRC calls on all governments to provide education to public servants on the history of aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, treaties and aboriginal rights, indigenous law and aboriginal/Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism. There is a need to reduce the overrepresentation of aboriginal people in the justice and correctional systems, and that is one of the most serious issues that we need to address here in the Yukon government response.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission also calls for a report on the progress of reconciliation. It calls for support for

education and post-secondary education. We need to encourage more First Nation graduates from high school, and to support those graduates to then go on to college and university to become engineers, teachers, social workers, and leaders.

There needs to be funding to provide for teachers to be educated to integrate indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms.

As part of reconciliation and part of respect, we must acknowledge that, before settlers took the land and the children, First Nations were self-governing. First Nations had governments and laws. First Nations educated their children. We must work to build our students' capacity today for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect. Like most of us in this Chamber, I didn't learn about residential schools in the school system, so I am pleased to acknowledge the work of the government recently in increasing the amount of residential school curriculum in our schools and also increasing the education on the strengths, the governments and the cultural practices of First Nations, increasing the education that is offered on the history of First Nation governments and on what our land claim agreements and treaties provide for. Implementing those land claim agreements in a respectful way is what will bring about a reconciliation.

I know we want to move on to another important motion for debate today. Before I close, I do want to refer to the recommendations that were made on business and reconciliation, because the Truth and Reconciliation Commission didn't only call upon governments to take action. They talked about sport and reconciliation. They addressed the church apology and reconciliation. They spoke to business and reconciliation. They are very similar actions that they are looking for from people in our roles as legislators and people in leadership in the business community. They call for a reconciliation framework that adopts the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and incorporates operational activities in any actions that involve indigenous peoples, their lands and resources.

So *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future* is only a summary of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. They have yet to release a more detailed report. I want to quote from the Truth and Reconciliation summary report before I end, because I think they are words of simple wisdom and lessons we need to learn.

"On September 22, 2013, the day after the British Columbia National Event, the Commissioners joined 70,000 people gathered in the pouring rain to participate in a Walk for Reconciliation, organized by Reconciliation Canada, a non-profit organization. If one was looking down Georgia Street in downtown Vancouver, a sea of multicoloured umbrellas was visible as far as the eye could see. Traditional ceremonies and protocols began the walk. Chiefs in regalia, women wrapped in button blankets and cedar capes, and drumming, dancing and singing accompanied Survivors, their families, and people from multiple faith traditions and all walks of life, who

marched together in solidarity. We walked for Survivors and all that they have done to bring the long-hidden story of residential schools to the country's attention. We walked to remember the thousands of children who died in residential schools. We walked to honour all Indigenous peoples as they reclaim and restore their identity, equality, and dignity. We walked to stand up for the transformative social change that is so urgently needed in Canada."

"Reconciliation is going to take hard work. People of all walks of life and at all levels of society will need to be willingly engaged.

"Reconciliation calls for personal action. People need to get to know each other. They need to learn how to speak to, and about, each other respectfully. They need to learn how to speak knowledgeably about the history of this country. And they need to ensure that their children learn how to do so as well.

"Reconciliation calls for group action."

I know that this will not be the last time that we debate the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the actions that we're looking forward to seeing the Government of Yukon take in coordination with Yukon First Nations.

I look forward to seeing the report that has been prepared by the deputy ministers across the Yukon government, after it has been shared with and discussed with Yukon First Nations. I look forward to the work that we will all take in the coming days to implement the hard work of reconciliation in Yukon.

Thank you.

Mr. Tredger: I would like to thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing forward this motion. I will speak in favour of it. As most of you know, I have been an educator for most of my life — taught First Nations on a reserve in Alberta, here in Pelly Crossing, where I also had the good fortune to live in the community, and in Whitehorse.

I attended some of the TRC hearings at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre and I found reading the Truth and Reconciliation report very hard. It was shocking; it was tragic and it was a shameful time for education and for Canada. As I was reading, I made excuses. I tried to justify some of the actions. I said: "That was then; this is now," but as the Truth and Reconciliation report emphasized again and again and again — education and educators; legislation and legislators — our leaders did not serve First Nations or Canada honourably or well.

Today, First Nations and indeed all Canadians are living with the consequences. I wish to thank all those who worked so hard for so many years, who gathered the courage to tell their stories, and who supported those who told their stories. I encourage all of us, all Canadians, to work together in planning our next steps. I look to myself. What beliefs do I have to change? What parts of the status quo? What parts of education, what parts of legislation, what parts of my relationships do I need to change to move forward, to help myself, to help my family, help my territory, help my country ensure that something like this never happens again?

Mr. Speaker, reconciliation is a process. It is a call to action, but it is not a photo op or an afternoon of debate in the Legislature. It is not a course or an event, but it is a way of life; it is a world view. It is an acceptance of what has occurred and a resolution to look to ourselves to move together to build a more inclusive and democratic society.

Mr. Speaker, we can't wait for meetings or agreements. We can act now — each of us — to look to ourselves and our neighbours. We can educate ourselves. We can have conversations. We can become friends. We can hear the stories of the grandmothers, the children in our schools, the young mothers. We can take the lead from the courageous survivors who spoke up — who, as the Member for Copperbelt South said, were silent, much like the veterans when encountering the horrors of almost incomprehensible experiences, remained silent — because there weren't words for it; there aren't words for it.

Yet we had courageous survivors step forth to tell their stories and to begin those conversations. We cannot let those conversations drop. There are things we can do as individuals. There are things we can do as a Legislature. I do hope that the Premier moves ahead with the meetings. I would suggest that the Yukon Forum might be a good way to begin to bring some structure and some substance to the discussions so there are directions and so that we can move forward.

I would encourage the Premier to include the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Leader of the Third Party in those discussions and in those efforts to move forward, so that we can show a non-partisan, open relationship to our First Nation counterparts, to breathe new relationships into that and show that we take this seriously and that we as legislators — whatever our stripe — will move forward with it.

I would hope or look forward to this as an opportunity to take a breath, to renew relationships and implement the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and self-government agreements in the spirit and intent of reconciliation.

Wouldn't it be nice for our First Nation governments and our government to take the money we are currently using in legal battles and posturing and to spend it on reconciliation and on community wellness?

I want to congratulate those responsible for implementing a residential school curriculum — the grade 10 one. It's an important step. We can be justifiably proud of it.

But I think reconciliation calls on us for a little more — to incorporate the spirit, the knowledge and the truth into all of our curriculum so that when a principal works with a child, he is aware of some of our history.

There have been some efforts to have professional development for many of our public servants in the history of land claims agreements and the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. I think we should redouble our efforts so that all of our public servants and all of our administrators are aware of the land claims agreements, our obligations and our opportunities, and so that all of them are aware of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation report and of our history around residential schools.

We must ensure that all government employees receive training on history and the impacts of residential schools. When I look to myself as a legislator — perhaps at the beginning of every new Legislative Assembly, there should be some training for the legislators coming in on the impacts and repercussions from residential schools and on our obligations under the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and self-government agreements.

I say that in all honesty because I, as a principal, went to a community that was in the throes of signing their self-government agreements and, as a principal responsible, representing the Yukon government, I never received any training in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. I never received any training in residential schools. I was fortunate — sometimes I didn't appreciate my good fortune. I was taught by the elders in my community about residential schools and about self-government agreements. How much further ahead would I have been? How much further ahead would we, as legislators, be if we took a day at the beginning of our term and learned some of our so important history — because we're making decisions on it, and much of that is left not to chance, but to us to ferret it out. I think we could all benefit from that and set an example for all Yukon government employees to use and appreciate what we have in the Yukon — our local resources, our stories — and to let First Nations tell us their history, their dreams, their hopes and their expectations.

I did want to speak to language, because language — when I was in Pelly Crossing and in other communities — is core to the culture. Action 14 calls upon the federal government. I would also encourage the territorial government to take that as well. It calls on the federal government to enact an aboriginal languages act that incorporates the following principles — and I'll let you read it, but it speaks to the importance of language to First Nations, to First Nation cultures. I can't emphasize enough how important language is to culture. You only need to sit in a native language class or attend a fish camp when Grandma Rachel is cutting fish and talking — to know the importance of that language.

I will finish there. I ask all of us to open our hearts, to open our minds, to work one with another, neighbour to neighbour, to work together as legislators, but also as community members and in our communities, to respect the spirit and intent of our treaties and our agreements, to follow and use the example, the spirit and the intent of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to honour the truth and work together.

I thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for bringing forward this motion and thank you for honouring the truth.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Mr. Elias: First of all, I want to thank all members of the Assembly in expressing support for this important motion. It is a courageous effort to sometimes talk about these types of difficult things. I've heard members who have read the

summary report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

I thought I knew what went on across this country, and I didn't, in reading the submissions to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In saying that, Yukoners also look to this Assembly for leadership on issues like these that are difficult to discuss among ourselves and among our constituents. Thank you everybody for not shying away from this type of discussion. In saying that, we do have other motions today that are very important as well for our territory's healing process. To all of our citizens out there, there is more to come. All I can say to that is stay tuned.

When I spoke today, I was envisioning speaking to the younger generation so that they can also know not only what our territory has gone through, but the journey that our whole country has gone through. When I say that, I can see hope — I can see hope in reconciliation. I thank everybody for that.

I will end with some closing comments. The term "residential school" is a misnomer. They were certainly residences or buildings, despite their poorly built quality. However, they were nowhere near being able to be called schools. It was a system built on fear, strict discipline, hard physical labour and created fearful, beaten children who in many cases grew into fearful, beaten adults. It is not so today. In my opinion, we are thriving compared to those days, but we have more work to do.

As far back as 120 years, the federal government funded and the church ran schools that operated as a revenue maker for the churches. The more children they could bring in, the more money the government would give them. To take the Indian out of the child proved much harder than anticipated, and today we can proudly say they did not succeed. Although it did create havoc, as an attempt at cultural genocide, in my opinion they did not succeed.

In Yukon, there were six large residential schools and through the years there were group homes, boarding schools, hostels and many other combinations to house aboriginal students. The common experience payouts and other payments made to abused children — now adults — have proven to be a heart-wrenching journey for many citizens in our territory. In many cases — I know this by personal experience — the payments created another layer of grief and many did not survive because they did not have the mechanisms in place to protect themselves.

It is heartwarming to see over the decades the success that our communities have had in their goals to regain their identities and continue to learn ways to show how their culture has survived and is thriving and is living throughout our territory. Just last week, my home First Nation of the Vuntut Gwitchin passed a resolution at their GA a few weeks ago that said — and I quote:

"Therefore Be It Resolved:

"That the VGG provide education and awareness on the 94 recommendations set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

"That the VGG provide education and awareness on the Residential School Legacy in order to begin the process of

residential school healing" — a prime example of other levels of government in our territory taking responsibility for their part in this journey — and it is my opinion that residential school is not only a Yukon issue or an aboriginal issue, it is a piece of our Canadian history that all Canadians need to learn about and determine their own actions for reconciliation, because just the other day, I was told, actually to my face, "You people should get over it already," and so today's discussion is going to be hand-delivered to that person who told me to "get over it." So thank you to everybody here today.

For years, our elders and knowledgeable people were pushed aside because they were just "Indian" and therefore did not know the right ways of acceptable society. Now we, aboriginal and non-aboriginal alike, rush to their side and listen when they speak. Many try to emulate some of their ways and gain their knowledge and stories before it's too late. But several generations brought us here and it might be several generations for some to regain their pride and for all of us to walk with our heads high. In this modern world, it's not any more about one leading the other — it's about us walking side by side. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's effort is not to pit people against government or the churches or each other; it is so that we can mend and move freely and easily through society as equal contributing members of Canada.

The monumental task of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was undertaken and was successful in achieving their mandate in recognizing the hurts of the past and shows a possible way forward to the future for all Canadians. Reconciliation or settlement or understanding or pact can mean many things to many different peoples or groups. It's the ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships.

I ask myself: Was this done so that we forget or ignore the past? Absolutely not. I believe it is to understand and learn what happened to our aboriginal peoples and why there is for so many an inherent distrust of government, the church, and in our education system. As a people, each of us — status, non-status, Métis, Inuit — will all provide different stories of what we have experienced. As with all groups of people, there are good stories, there are bad stories and there are very ugly stories. There is not a turn-back-the-clock magic button or even a formal document that can adjust the wrongs, but what we've done here today, to me, is very valuable in this new chapter that we are helping to right in our territory.

Through the information, through education and through communications, we will begin to understand, reconcile and heal. Across all of Canada, in my opinion, Yukon has been the most progressive in settling of comprehensive land claims. Eleven out of 14 First Nations have land claim and self-government agreements in place and some have been operating for more than 20 years. Yukon is our home and I believe it is the most accommodating and incredible place to live, work, play and raise a family. We are proud Yukoners. As we begin another chapter in this residential school legacy, we know Yukon is a leader in many areas through forward-

thinking ideas and vision and addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 calls to action.

I will conclude by saying this. Make no mistake: it is the strength to endure pain and hardship and the resiliency of aboriginal people in our territory and across the country that made sure that I, for one, am speaking to you today.

Mahsi' cho. Merçi beaucoup. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question on the motion, as amended?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 17 yeas, nil nays.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion, as amended, carried.

Motion No. 1014, as amended, agreed to

Motion No. 1023

Clerk: Motion No. 1023, standing in the name of Ms. McLeod.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Watson Lake:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support:

(1) the creation of a Yukon regional roundtable for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls to be held in February 2016, which will include family members of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, elders and youth, government leaders, Yukon aboriginal women's organizations, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Assembly of First Nations, the Association of Yukon Communities and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to share information on the Yukon context and culturally relevant best practices, and to collaborate on initiatives to

improve safety and support for indigenous women and girls in Yukon; and

(2) the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle in hosting a Yukon family gathering, in December 2015 that will include family members of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Ms. McLeod: I rise today in support of the creation of a Yukon regional roundtable for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls to be held in February 2016. The roundtable will include family members of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls, elders and youth, government leaders, Yukon aboriginal women's organizations, Council of Yukon First Nations, Assembly of First Nations, the Association of Yukon Communities and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to share information on the Yukon context and culturally relevant best practices, and to collaborate on initiatives to improve safety and support for indigenous women and girls in the territory.

I also rise in support of the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle in hosting a Yukon family gathering, which will include family members of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls to be held on December 12, 2015.

I would like to start my remarks by addressing the Yukon family gathering. On Saturday, December 12, 2015, the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle will host the family gathering at the Old Fire Hall on Main Street in Whitehorse. The gathering will be a place for families to come together in a safe environment to share stories about their loved ones and their experiences of loss and grief. Families will share the impact that loss of those beloved indigenous women has had on them personally, their own communities and on the territory as a whole.

The gathering is for family members who want to attend. Families may request that a family support person attend, but observers will not be allowed. Families will be supported in finding a collective voice to develop and share the recommendations for the Yukon regional roundtable to be held in 2016. Additional support workers such as elders, cultural facilitators and professional counsellors will be available during the gathering.

I would like to commend the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle for their work in organizing this important gathering and for keeping families at the forefront. Those who wish to attend the family gathering should call Katie Johnson at (867) 332-5283. The Yukon regional roundtable will then inform the second National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls. Guided by the input from families at the family gathering, the regional roundtable will bring together a wider group of concerned community leaders. This will be the first time that territorial leaders, First Nation leaders, aboriginal women's organization leaders, Assembly of First Nations, and municipal leaders will all gather to address the issue.

Little by little it seems that Canadians are waking up to the national tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and asking themselves what they can do personally to

end this epidemic of violence. No leader, no family member, no organization can find the missing, solve unsolved murders, or prevent violence on their own. I commend all those who have worked hard, and indeed are still working hard, to organize the Yukon regional roundtable. It is truly a collective effort.

With 39 known cases of missing and murdered indigenous women right here in the Yukon, it is not an abstract matter or something to be resolved somewhere else. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I again commend all the organizers of the family gathering and of the regional roundtable for their dedication and for their efforts. I am sure I am joined by every member of this House, and indeed by every Yukoner, in my support and respect for the family members who will be gathering privately on December 12. We wish every participant in the regional roundtable well, as they gather to deliberate over recommendations and actions to be taken going forward.

Ms. Moorcroft: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to support the motion and would like to thank the member opposite for bringing it forward.

This motion urges the Government of Yukon to support the creation of a Yukon regional roundtable for missing and murdered indigenous women and girls to be held in February 2016, which will include family members of missing and murdered indigenous women, to share information on the Yukon context and culturally relevant best practices and to collaborate on initiatives to improve safety and support for indigenous women and girls in Yukon and support for the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle in hosting a Yukon family gathering in December 2015 that will include family members of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

This motion speaks to the need to listen and to take action.

I have been privileged over the years to hear from many aboriginal women and men who have spoken about the loss of their sisters or their mothers because they have been murdered. It is hard to listen; it is even harder to speak. I want to express my respect for those who do speak out.

We have just concluded debate on supporting government action on the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which deals with these same matters.

The creation of a Yukon regional roundtable is another step in an ongoing journey of reconciliation. It is an opportunity for our community, for women and girls, elders and youth, government leaders, Yukon aboriginal women's organizations, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Assembly of First Nations, the Association of Yukon Communities and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to share information and recommend actions to deal with the northern and the national tragedy of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

I want to note that this Legislature has taken other steps during the 33rd Legislative Assembly. This House

unanimously passed a motion to call upon the Government of Canada to appoint a public inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women with aboriginal women's groups taking a leadership role.

The incoming federal government has promised a national public inquiry. This will be an opportunity to implement recommendation 41 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. It calls upon the federal government in consultation with aboriginal organizations to appoint a public inquiry into the causes of and remedies for the disproportionate victimization of aboriginal women and girls. The inquiry's mandate would include investigating missing aboriginal women and girls and also links to the intergenerational legacy of residential schools.

For many years, aboriginal women's groups like the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society and Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle have told their stories and spoken about their experiences of violence and loss. They have worked to deliver language and cultural programs in their communities, to celebrate their resistance and their strength, to advocate for First Nation language and cultural programs in the public school system and our colleges, and to recognize the harm of the historical abuse in residential schools. Indeed, aboriginal peoples resisted government's historical abuses from the time they first began. Parents and leaders appealed for the return of their children from what we call residential schools. First Nations protested the theft of their land and their game and asserted their treaty rights.

I want to acknowledge that respect and reconciliation are occurring in our community. On the wall of the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre on the banks of the Yukon River in Whitehorse, there are 35 Grandmother Moon masks called "Yukon Sisters in Spirit" to represent the 35 indigenous women and girls from Yukon who we know of who are missing or murdered.

A sign accompanying the carvings representing grandmother moon explained that — and I quote: "Grandmother Moon provides us direction, strength, knowledge and wisdom in taking our sacred place in our families, communities and beyond. She teaches us about our sacred role as the life-givers and the heart of our nations — for without women, our nations cannot go on."

Another step toward reconciliation is the Walking with our Sisters memorial exhibition that is travelling across Canada for a total of seven years. This commemorative art installation was installed in Whitehorse at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre from April 11 to 25.

A large number of Whitehorse community members met to discuss protocols and community participation. A large number of sewers put together vamps and a blanket for that installation. It's a very large collaborative art piece. The tops of moccasins — which are called vamps, tongues or uppers — are intentionally not sewn into moccasins and represent the unfinished lives of murdered or missing indigenous women, exhibited on a pathway to represent their path or journey that

was ended violently and too soon. Sewing circles occurred every week and were a key part of a process that allowed for discussion, healing and community bonding.

The aboriginal women's groups in the Yukon have also been strong in their assertion of the need to recognize the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, not just as a guiding document but as a call for action.

I want to refer to just two of those recommendations that relate to the motion before us. Article 12 speaks to indigenous peoples' right to manifest, practice, develop and teach their spiritual and religious traditions, customs and ceremonies; the right to maintain, protect and have access and privacy to their religious and cultural sites; the right to the use and control of their ceremonial objects; and the right to the repatriation of their human remains.

Article 13 acknowledges that indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion on a roundtable and a family gathering, I think we must also acknowledge the words of aboriginal women from the past in the Yukon. In 2010, the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council presented a report and recommendations to the review of Yukon's police force, 2010. The RCMP has a critical role to play in these ongoing discussions. Aboriginal women spoke about the lack of trust and the need for personal safety. They openly shared their concern about the stereotyping that they had heard.

The Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council put this quote in their report: "I do not want the RCMP to be seen at my house and I will not be seen at Social Services asking for any help, so I live with my abuse. I will not live with the anxiety of court hanging over my head, this will bring shame to me, my family, my community, then everyone treats me bad and I am alone. I will not ask for help, I'll live with it."

I think that illustrates just how important it is that we do take action to respond to the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous people.

The Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council has recommended community-based policing structures and recruiting aboriginal women as police officers for Yukon communities. They are willing participants, as are all members of the community in a roundtable. The Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle is planning an inclusive gathering. So today we are debating an issue on which we have common ground. All of us are affected; all of us have a responsibility to listen and to take action.

To close, I look forward to continuing to be part of the response in our community and to participate in a regional roundtable to continue the important work of listening to the families of missing and murdered indigenous women. We all look forward to taking part in improving relations within our community and in honouring and respecting the families of indigenous women and girls.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I am going to be somewhat abbreviated in my remarks here this afternoon because I want to ensure that other members opposite also have a word to say regarding this very important issue.

First, I just want to thank the Official Opposition for their support and thank my colleague, the MLA for Watson Lake for bringing forth this really important motion. This motion, which calls for a Yukon regional roundtable and Yukon family gathering really originated — first, I suppose I want to say that for many, many years, women's organizations across this good country have been working to raise awareness regarding this very issue. They have been pushing at the forefront for a national inquiry. They have been calling for action from all levels and orders of governments and organizations and individuals across the nation to address this national tragedy.

It was about a year ago that there were the first discussions about coming up with this national roundtable as a way to engage individuals and governments across the country and engage the Government of Canada and all the provinces and territories with the national aboriginal organizations. From that, we had a delegation — our Premier participated and headed up that delegation with Chief Bill from the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Chief Carl Sidney from the Teslin Tlingit Council and many others — family members and aboriginal women's organizations from Yukon. Following that, there were a couple of key recommendations. One was to form our own Yukon regional roundtable; the second one was to have a Yukon family gathering.

We were really pleased to be able to work — I have personally and as the minister responsible — to really go to work with Yukon First Nation government and our aboriginal women's organizations over the past couple months on this very matter.

The family gathering is a key opportunity for families to share their stories and honour the impact that this loss has had on all of our communities. It's really the hope that those families are acknowledged, honoured, and their voices are meaningfully integrated at the Yukon regional roundtable in February so that current and future actions will take that into account. What I was reminded of by Doris Anderson, president of the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, who is one of the three co-chairs spearheading the regional roundtable, is that this is really an acknowledgement of the work of those organizations for many years that has been undertaken to address this very matter.

It has already been said; we know first-hand the tragic scope of this issue. In Yukon alone there are some 39 known cases of murdered and missing indigenous women and this loss has very much indeed affected every single Yukon community.

The prevalence of violence against aboriginal women and girls is a national tragedy. It requires a collective approach involving a multitude of stakeholders, and so the aim of the roundtable is to create that dialogue between governments, communities, family members, and all the agencies involved,

so that we can collectively look at what has been done. I take back to all of the recommendations that have flowed out of the National Aboriginal Women's Summit since 2007 that I attended back in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador, and all of the three subsequent National Aboriginal Women's Summits to the two Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits and the recommendations and all the work that we have supported as a government to enable those organizations to bring the Together for Justice initiative as but one initiative to address this ongoing issue of utmost importance.

I want to just thank — I want to say that, just to reiterate what my colleague across the way also stated, we have called for a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and we've included supporting the motion unanimously in this Legislature in support of that national inquiry.

I think that obviously with the change in government just recently, we welcome the opportunity to engage Canada on this very file and to see how we can work collectively with all levels and orders of government, with those most affected by this issue, and so when we are able to find out who is sitting in those respective seats next week on November 4, when that government is sworn in officially, we will be reaching out to the Government of Canada to join with us at this roundtable as well. This is a priority for every one of us and for every Yukoner and the work we do together over the next few months is going to be critical to today's work but to our shared future.

I just want to say thank you to my co-chairs. I want to say thank you to the organizations that are undertaking this very important work on behalf of all Yukoners. I want to thank the members in the Assembly for their ongoing support.

Mr. Silver: I too will be brief as we are getting to the end of the day here and just in case anybody else wants to get up and speak to this motion. Thank you to the Member for Watson Lake for bringing it forward today and to my colleagues. It looks like we are going to get unanimous consent here.

The case of murdered and missing aboriginal women is a crisis in our country, and I am glad that the Government of Yukon is at the table and recognizes this. There has been consensus, as we have mentioned here, from members on both sides of the House in this Legislature on this issue for much time. It was back in the spring of 2013 that we unanimously supported the motion calling for the national inquiry. It is very positive to see the government wanting to take action and that all stakeholders will be invited to that table. I commend this government on their approach.

The Yukon is not immune to our national tragedy. As mentioned, 39 missing and murdered women and girls are from here in the Yukon. A roundtable will provide an opportunity for the families of the victims to come together and to attempt to find comfort, and it will hopefully lead to some closure and some justice. A similar roundtable was held in Ottawa earlier this year and I know the regional roundtables were a recommendation that came out of that meeting.

I think that it is important as we move forward on this that we work in partnership with the federal government. Prime Minister-designate Trudeau has committed to calling a national inquiry on murdered and missing aboriginal and indigenous women in the early stages of his mandate. It is one of the priorities of his government. The process by which it will be established will be fully inclusive, designed to find justice for the victims and healing for their families. This inquiry will seek to recommend concrete actions that government, law enforcement and others can take to solve these crimes and to avoid further ones. By not ignoring uncomfortable truths, but by understanding and taking actions to deal with the root causes of this tragedy, we will be able to eliminate these all-too-common devastating events for First Nation women, girls and their families.

I think it is important that we work locally and that the work that we do here locally be complementary to the national inquiry, as it is a national tragedy and we have an opportunity to prevent further cases across Canada.

I will be absolutely supporting this motion.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I won't take long in speaking to the motion here in recognition of the comments that have already been provided by other speakers. I would just like to, as Minister of Justice, rise and acknowledge the importance of this area and give credit as well to the minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, the Premier and all of the Yukoners who have taken part in this, including Chief Doris Bill and the leadership of Yukon aboriginal women's organizations for their work that has been done so far.

I would also like to acknowledge the work as well as department officials from several departments that have been involved in the work that has been done to date. For those of us who have been fortunate enough to not have had this type of tragedy affect our own family, we can only imagine what it must be like for those families who have lost a loved sister, wife, daughter, cousin, et cetera who have gone missing under suspicious circumstances and whose whereabouts are unknown. My heart goes out to the families.

I will conclude my remarks and again commend all of the many partners, levels of governments and organizations who have played a role in the work done so far and acknowledge that the next steps are important to take. This roundtable will hopefully be a very positive step for families in dealing with the tragedy that has occurred.

Speaker: If the member now speaks, she will close debate.

Does any other member wish to be heard?

Ms. McLeod: I want to thank all the members for their support on this motion and I look forward to its passing.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 16 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion No. 1023 agreed to

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. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:13 p.m.