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Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Jobie Nutarak, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

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(Akulliq)

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk

(Amittuq)

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Minister Responsible for
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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Tuesday February 22, 2005**

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Honourable Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Joe Allan Evyagotailak, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Mr. Patterk Netser, Honourable Jobie Nutarak, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Honourable Edward Picco, Honourable David Simailak, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): I would like to ask Mr. Netser to open the meeting with the prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Please be seated. Item 1 in our orders of the day.

I would like to welcome each and every one of you to the session. I wish to inform members that the Member for Sanikiluaq, Mr. Kattuk, is resting in the Baffin Regional Hospital here in Iqaluit. We expect to see him back in the House in a couple of days. On behalf of the members, I wish Mr. Kattuk best wishes for a fast and full recovery.

Speaker's Ruling

At the conclusion of our last sitting, I indicated to members that I would provide a ruling on the tabling of unidentified documents.

Concerns have been expressed regarding the priority of tabling a document which purports to list government sole-sourced contracts from 2000 to March 19, 2004.

The following specific issues were identified:

1. As the document is not signed, can it be tabled?
2. Are there privacy issues that preclude tabling of the document?

Can an unsigned document be tabled? A similar issue arose during the First Legislative Assembly when a Member attempted to table e-mailed correspondence which had the names of the sender and the recipient blacked out. Parliamentary precedents are clear that unsigned, unidentified correspondence may not be tabled unless the member is prepared to accept responsibility for its contents.

The issue under consideration is whether the same principle applies to information that is not in the form of correspondence, but in some other form. In considering this issue, it is important to review the reasons behind the rule. It is also important to keep in mind the nature of the information contained in the document itself, as information may be of a public nature, or it may be of a more private, personal nature.

The purpose of this rule is to allow the authenticity of documents and information contained in the documents to be verified. The ability to authenticate document ensures accountability for statements made in the House. Is the principle any less important if information is provided in a format other than correspondence? In my view it is not.

This is not to say that all tabled documents must be signed. Many documents are tabled without signature. Many of these documents are in the public domain and their source can be readily identified. For example, newspaper articles, brochures, and information from Internet Web sites all originate from identifiable sources. Further, documents which have an identifier on them to indicate their origin may be tabled.

As stated by the Speaker of the Manitoba legislature, “When a document is tabled, it seems to me only reasonable that there should be some identifying information going along with the document, indicating in some manner, either its source, its author, when or how it was published, or the nature of its publication, or how the member obtained possession of the document.” (Mr. Speaker Graham – 1980 – 81 Journals, Page 179)

At the time of tabling the document, the Member stated that he was tabling “a list of Government of Nunavut sole-sourced contracts that was provided to me by a concerned citizen.” (Hansard, November 30, 2004, page 40). Such an identifier is not attached to the document itself. The document is not identified as a government document. It is not clear if the document originated from a private citizen or from government.

The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba has considered this issue on a number of occasions. Their assembly has established a practice whereby the member tabling a document can sign and attach to a document, a declaration indicating the origin of the document.

Would such a declaration be sufficient identifying information to allow the document to be tabled? This consideration requires the balancing of the public interest in having regular Members call upon the government to account, and the interests of the government and all Members in assuring unsubstantiated allegations are not made without consideration for the consequences.

In this instance, the information contained in the document is of a primarily public nature and is a legitimate matter for debate in the house. If the document is identified as originating from government, then the government can confirm or deny this. If the document is identified as originating from some other source, then the government could not be held responsible for it. Certainly, the information contained within the document

can be verified by the government and indeed, this is what the Member asked the government to do when he tabled the document.

Accordingly, I find that in its present state, the document cannot be tabled. However, should the Member wish to provide further information as to the source of the document and how it came to be in the Member's possession, then it may be tabled. Such information should indicate in a general sense the manner by which the Member came in to possession of the document. For example, the document may have been provided by a constituent, published on a website or obtained pursuant a request under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

3. Are there privacy issues that preclude the tabling of the document?

The document lists project names, the entity the contract was awarded to and the value of the contract. There has been concern raised that the information disclosed is personal information and for that reason the document should not be tabled.

While it is the case that correspondence of a purely private nature will rarely be tabled, a document which might potentially be in the public interest may be tabled. The fact that a document may contain personal information, and I am not convinced that in this instance it does, will not necessarily render it unsuitable for tabling.

Clearly, it is open to, and arguably incumbent upon regular Members to hold the government to account for how it spends public money. Any entity contracting with a public entity accepts that the terms and value of the contract may become subject to scrutiny in a public forum.

Further, while the government may have policy and statutory limitations on the information it releases, there is no such constraint upon this assembly. While Members are expected to use good judgment and discretion in the release of information, the consequences for any abuse are largely political.

Accordingly, I find that there are no privacy issues in relation to the document which preclude it from being tabled. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Going back to Orders of the Day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 046 – 2(2): Notice of Budget Address

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back to all Members. I would like to inform the house that on February the 24th, on Thursday, I will be delivering the budget address. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' statements. Mr. Kilabuk.

Minister's Statement 047 – 2(2): Gas and Snowmobiles

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, PPD and Shell Canada are investigating complaints of spark plug fouling in snow machines at extremely low temperatures. This seems to be most common at temperatures at -35° and lower.

The gasoline supplied to Nunavut by Shell Canada has been tested at all stages of supply and delivery and after complaints. It complies with all Government of Nunavut and Canadian General Standards Board specifications.

Mr. Speaker, to better understand the concerns, the gasoline has undergone further extensive testing in Rankin Inlet in extreme winter conditions. In addition, tests were conducted at Alberta Research Council in Edmonton in a special cold box laboratory.

The cause of spark plug fouling has not yet been identified. However, it was found that an additive tested in the gas improves the performance of the fuel in two-stroke snowmobile engines in very cold temperatures. This additive is not called for in the Canadian or Nunavut specifications.

Mr. Speaker, providing initial tests are successful in Rankin Inlet, Shell and PPD will safely blend this additive into the existing gasoline supplies in affected communities.

Very cold temperatures are particularly hard on two-stroke engines. There are things that snowmobile operators can do to help reduce spark plug fouling. That includes using the right spark plugs; ensuring the engine is fully warmed before moving the machine; using an injection oil that meets the minimum outlined in the Owner's Manual; carefully adhering to the recommended fuel-oil ratio.

Mr. Speaker, the PPD, with assistance from Shell, are undertaking more research to look at the contributing factors and the specifications for fuel to determine a long-term solution. PPD will change the fuel specifications if that is required.

To address the ongoing concerns, representatives from PPD and Shell Canada will be available during the Community & Government Services' appearance before Committee of the Whole to answer any technical questions my honourable colleagues may have in relation to snowmobiles, and how the current gas is affecting them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' statements . Mr. Picco.

Minister's Statement 048 – 2(2): Federation Nunavut Conference

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Welcome back to Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, this week is a special one for the teachers of Nunavut. For the first time ever, they are gathered in one place – Iqaluit – for five intensive days of professional development.

This is a huge undertaking. The leadership and staff of the Federation of Nunavut Teachers are to be commended for their dedicated work over the past year:

- More than 540 of Nunavut's 617 teachers are attending
- Almost 180 sessions will be held at Inuksuk High School
- Facilitators have come from near and far, with the majority from the north...and the furthest from Rockford, New York

The Department of Education is pleased to be a major supporter of this conference. We see this as part of the 'fundamental change' that our education system is experiencing – where everyone involved in education works together to improve the learning experience for our students.

The Department of Education and the Federation of Nunavut Teachers actively promotes and encourages professional improvement. Each FNT member is entitled to five professional improvement days per year. Professional development is a requirement for re-certification.

This fiscal year, the Government of Nunavut has contributed \$1.8 million to the FNT for the purpose of professional development. The Nunavut Professional Improvement Committee, made up of representatives from the FNT and Government of Nunavut, sets out how this money will be spent. FNT members can apply for short-term assistance to complete certificate, non-certificate and university courses. One priority is helping members who are beneficiaries complete a degree.

The FNT is pleased to welcome Members of this House to visit the conference this week in the mornings, or during special events during the evening. This is a unique opportunity to see our teachers at their best. This government should find this event inspiring, and I believe everyone, both indirectly and directly, involved will too.

Education is a key priority for the Government of Nunavut. The Nunavut Teachers' Conference is an important part of the process to reach our goal of quality education for all, so that we may all contribute to the future of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, for many educators, this will be their first opportunity to work with their counterparts from across Nunavut and I would like to welcome them all to Iqaluit.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this personal observation as Minister to say that last night while I was attending the conference, I performed some of my hit records and songs. Tonight the FNT are hosting a Karaoke, and I would invite the members to attend, and maybe try to compete with me for best singer in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' statements. Going back to the Orders of the Day, Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Mapsalak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 091 – 2(2): Repulse Bay Bowhead Whale Harvest

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to say how pleased my constituents and I are that Repulse Bay was successful in its quest to host the 2005 bowhead whale harvest. On behalf of my constituents and the people of Repulse Bay, I would like to thank the wildlife policy advisory committee, the Kitikmeot Hunters and Trappers Association, the Kivalliq Management Wildlife Board and the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Management Board for their decision to have the bowhead harvest in Repulse Bay.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, we would like to assure all Nunavumiut that this hunt will be carefully managed through traditional Inuit harvest methods. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statement's. Mr. Peterson.

Member's Statement 092 – 2(2): Kitikmeot Trade Show

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am please to rise today to the House to report to about the very successful trade show held in Cambridge Bay last week. Business leaders from across Canada and Nunavut gathered to hold business opportunities for the Kitikmeot and Nunavut.

More than 40 exhibitors and 120 delegates participated at the Killiniq High School gym. High school students were active participants. Many of them will be our future business leaders. I want to thank the Premier and the Minister of Economic Development for coming to be with us to speak to the delegates and participants.

The Kitikmeot is on the cusp of making great strides. Tahera Corporation recently took a major step forward in signing a land lease that jump-started the winter road to haul materials to start Nunavut's first diamond mine in the Kitikmeot.

Government of Nunavut, for its part, has been sending positive signals about making Nunavut attractive to mining companies in Canada. Mr. Speaker I was pleased to hear the Premier in Cambridge Bay that he wants see the private sector as the main engine of growth in jobs. In the Kitikmeot we've always said a healthy economy can't be dependent on government alone.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier told us that he is looking for ways to cut red tape. That is very good news. I look forward to discussions with him his ideas for specific initiatives in this regard.

On a less positive note, I am disappointed to hear that a former President of the World Wildlife Federation spoke to the teachers' conference this week.

I gather that this southerner had strong words to say about our priorities in putting people first. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that we want our teachers going back to the classroom and telling students that their dream of securing meaningful skills and employment should come second to the complaints of urban environmentalists.

It seems to me that many of the urban environmentalists don't care about people living in poverty

>>*Applause*

They have their own ideas of what the north should look like. A life on social assistance is not a life we wish for any of our children. The Kitikmeot Inuit Association and the Government of Nunavut have it right - our first responsibility is to create economic growth and opportunity in order to help our residents to have a standard of living at least equal to the rest of Canada. This is what we agreed to our Arviat retreat. I, for one, support our direction in this area and I urge the Government of Nunavut to hold the course. Koana Uqaqti.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Member's Statements. Mr. Evyagotailak

Member's Statement 093 – 2(2): 24-hour Elders' Care Facility for the Kitikmeot

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak once again for the need for a 24 hour care facility for the elders in the Kitikmeot. When we last met, I spoke about this issue and asked the Minister of Health and Social Services to give her consideration to a document presented by the elders' committee of Kugluktuk.

This document, which I will again bring forward, outlines the reasons for the elders' facility to be established in the community of Kugluktuk.

(interpretation ends here) Both the Baffin and the Kivalliq regions currently have 24 hour elders' care facilities. In all fairness, the elders in the Kitikmeot deserve no less. It is a great hardship and their families when they are sent out of the territories far away.

Once again, I urge the government to address the needs as soon as possible.

During our Arviat full caucus retreat, all Members reported expanded access to 24-hour care facilities for elders. In the throne speech, our government committed to opening one new 24-hour elders' care facility each year of its mandate, beginning this year in 2005. We all know that the capital planning project takes time, let's not waste any more of it.

I look forward to the ribbon cutting ceremony in the Kitikmeot region 24-hour care facility sometime before December 31, 2005. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Mr. Barnabas.

Member's Statement 094 – 2(2): Polar Bear Harvest Increase

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to express my support for the recent increases to Nunavut's total allowable harvest of polar bears.

I commend the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in the management of the polar bear population in our territory, and the Minister of Environment for accepting these decisions through a memorandum of understanding. I believe that all parties worked well together.

I am certain that my colleagues will agree with me when I say that there have been a large number of nuisance polar bears in our communities over the last couple of years.

The apparent increase in our polar bear population has become dangerous for Nunavumiut. In my constituency of Resolute Bay, residents have had to frequently chase polar bears away from the community, as was the case in other Nunavut communities.

Some outside lobby groups are not in support of this increase. They feel that Inuit don't have valid or scientific evidence that the polar bear population has increased. I am very proud that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit was used in decision making on the management of our polar bears.

I am concerned about recent news reports indicating that new scientific evidence has been presented. Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

Speaker (interpretation): The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays, please proceed Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues. I apologize for going over my two-minute limit.

(interpretation ends) I am concerned that recent news reports indicating that new scientific evidence have been presented showing that the polar bear population is in fact decreasing in Nunavut, while Nunavumiut indicate that the population is increasing.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the appropriate Minister some questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Mr. Arreak.

Member's Statement 095 – 2(2): Funding for Ilisaqsivik Society

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very good to be back in the house today, and I look forward to working hard with my colleagues in the coming weeks.

(Interpretation ends) For the past few months I spent time meeting and speaking with my constituents. As Members may recall from our full caucus retreat in Arviat, we reached consensus on supporting a new emphasis on community development, cultural strength and bring government closer to home.

Today I would like to share with you an example of the kind of community organization that works hard to support community, wellness and fulfill many of those our community has to strive for.

The Ilisaqsivik Society in the community of Clyde River provides community programs relating to health and wellness to mothers and children, community literacy, community access to computers and training in counselling. The society offers support in a number of community groups, including the men's healing group, the women's sewing circle, the elders' group, youth council and Sukkakut, the women's support group.

The Ilisaqsivik Society gets program funding from a number of sources, including government and Inuit organizations.

The society provides a community based support and counselling network, as well as providing employment and training to at least 50 full and part-time workers. It is one of the largest employees in an non-decentralized community with 72% unemployment.

Sadly, after ten years of operation, the lack of stable core funding means that Ilisaqsivik Society faces risk of closing down. I urge the government to give full consideration to providing core funding for the Clyde River Ilisaqsivik Society and I encourage business organizations and individuals to make donations to help keep the Ilisaqsivik family resource centre stay open.

At the appropriate time I will be tabling a package of information material relating to the good work performed by the Ilisaqsivik Society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): I must remind you that you have 2 and half minutes to make your member's statement. Mr. Simailak

Member's Statement 096 – 2(2): Thank Mother from Parka

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues and especially the people of Baker Lake, and my mother is always sewing, so they just gave me this outfit, what I am wearing today and first of all I would like to thank my mother at this time, thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Members' Statements. Netser.

Member's Statement 097 – 2(2): Crime in Communities

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Even though my wife is younger, she can sew a lot better than me and she just made this and I too would like to thank her.

(Interpretation ends) All eyes today again the issue of crime that is so prevalent in our communities these days. The RCMP's 2004 Annual Report for Nunavut's V-Division reveals some shocking facts about the situation facing our communities in Nunavut.

I think that other Members of this house should read the RCMP's Annual Report very carefully. Later today, I will be tabling this document.

In 2003, the RCMP recorded over 2,400 assaults, including sexual assault. By the end of today, February 22, an average of seven assaults will have taken place across Nunavut and this is unacceptable.

The RCMP's report makes for disturbing reading. There are over 1,000 liquor offences in 2003 alone. Over 1,000 break-in and enters, and just recently I have been receiving calls that there has been yet another murder in one of our communities and alcohol was involved.

In my communities of Coral Harbour and Chesterfield Inlet, there are less than half a dozen of police officers. In Coral Harbour, there is only one officer for every 411 residents. We need to do everything we can to work with the RCMP to secure adequate resources.

Our communities and constituents have a right to be safe. However, when this territory registers a total of 11,000 or so criminal code offences in one year alone, it's hard to say

that we are doing well. That figure works out to be over 32 crimes per day every single day of the year.

We all have our responsibilities to protect our society and I will continue to promote and support measures to make sure that Nunavut is a safer place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' statements. Mr. Curley.

Member's Statement 098 – 2(2): Gasoline Problems in Rankin Inlet

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Nunavumiut and my constituents in Rankin Inlet.

As we heard from the Minister of Petroleum Products, the gasoline that we are using is okay and all of the appropriate additives are added there, but this has to be looked at more closely, especially gasoline, it is not suitable. The Minister has to listen to the people who are spending lots of money on spark plugs. The Government of Nunavut has bought bad gas, which is below standards.

So, for that reason, the gasoline that was supplied to Rankin Inlet was substandard. If it was Grade A, there wouldn't be any problems and it's called MMT, why it's not added to that, then how can they say that it's up to standard?

So, I am going to invite Shell Canada to come up if they can agree. Our fuel in the north, especially in the extreme cold, we have the right to know exactly what kind we have and not do the work after the fact.

We know in the Northwest Territories that the fuel is tested 22 times from where it originates to the time they are delivered to the community.

Lastly, the customers who buy the fuel are in danger because they have to get the Grade A fuel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Member's Statement 099 – 2(2): Iqaluit Community Initiatives

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to welcome back all members to our fair capital city of Iqaluit. I look forward to the next few weeks of productive debate. I would also like to welcome, as the Minister of Education did, all the teachers that are here in Iqaluit for their annual gathering this week.

Although members may not notice the difference over the few months that you have all been away in your home communities, your capital city has been taking some major new

steps towards growth and maturity. The Iqaluit community is coming together and solidarity. A home owners' association has been formed and active and have held meetings with City Council.

A grassroots greenhouse society is looking to build a community greenhouse which will contribute to the environmental health of our community. The city itself is looking at options to build a new aquatic centre with a swimming pool to meet the needs of our growing population.

As all Members know, kids from all across Nunavut have the opportunity to use the pool when they come here. The maturing of our city is a mature sign of our territory. As with capital cities from across the country, people from across Nunavut come here for conferences, for training, to visit friends and family and take part in the upcoming snow challenge, or Nunavut's first ever film gala, to sing in a karaoke contest against the Minister of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing support from the government to ensure that our capital city can meet the infrastructure demand of its steadily and rapidly growing population. I look forward to supporting the community in its efforts, and I ask Members to support me in saluting the efforts in the community and the council to work towards a capital city that all Nunavumiut can be proud of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Member's Statements. Mr. Alagalak.

Member's Statement 100 – 2(2): Kivalliq – Churchill Dog Race

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to welcome the teachers of Arviat and welcome them. I am sure that you will be helping, and to what Mr. Picco stated that we depend on education to help each other.

First of all, my wife and daughter are watching us over television and we pray for you. Other members are praying for you. At this time, I would like to announce that there will be a major event in the Kivalliq. It will be in Easter that the Kivalliq will be holding a snowmobile race to Churchill. I faxed you all the details because the Arviat residents are asking for donations or any financial donations that you might have and who to contact.

This dog team race will be getting people from all across the north and the dog team organizers are trying to gain global attention because this is a major event. I just wanted to inform you about this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Member's Statements. Mr. Okalik.

Member's Statement 101 – 2(2): 20 Year Anniversary with the Government

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome each and everyone of my colleagues for coming back to the house. On February 4th I was very pleased that for approximately 20 years, I've been working for the Inuit. On that same day, I received even better event with a new arrive and got a daughter.

>>Applause

Her name is Beatrice Makibi. I'm sure that my peers are becoming grandparents and here I am just starting to have children, so I felt a little bit younger than my peers when I got a brand new daughter. Her mother Isabelle and the baby were both healthy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Members' Statements. Back to the orders of the day, Item 4. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Barnabas.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize my older brother Paul Irngaut and also my niece whom I've seen for the first time, I would like to recognize Katherine Sarah Irngaut.

She is a student at Carleton University, but she's on her way to Iglulik to work for Isuma Productions, the film company. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize people from Kugluktuk, first of all, the teachers, my partner and wife Susie Evyagotailak, and besides Rosie Hinangnak is my constituency assistant Lucy Nivingalok from Kugluktuk.

Also, Lucy Taipana, Jimmy Hikok School principal. Also in Kugluktuk, Peggy Autut with KSO. I would like to also recognize Helen Laroque from Kugluktuk, she is the manager for the men's healing facility in Kugluktuk. The pages, Colleen Panuyak is here, and also, Cathy Anablak.

They will be here for one week helping us out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the teacher from Repulse Bay, Stan Meredyk. I apologize for mispronouncing your name. I would like to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly while I stay in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize one of my constituents, although they live in Chesterfield Inlet, Andre Tautu.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity first to welcome to the gallery some various former colleagues of mine when we were first members appointed to the Nunavut Arbitration Board many, many moons ago.

This quasi-judicial board was set up under the land claim agreement. First of all, my former colleague, one of the first Inuk lawyers ever, from Makkovik, Labrador, Ms. Violet Ford.

>> *Applause*

Just over from Violet, the very distinguished grey-haired gentlemen, well-known across Nunavut and the North, a former deputy mayor of Yellowknife, now a councillor on the Yellowknife city council: Mr. David McCann. He is also a very well-known businessman and owns the largest collection of Ed Picco memorabilia in the world, valued at over \$20.

Another former colleague of ours, he was on the arbitration board, the honourable Robert Stanbury, who all the members know. Mr. Stanbury, myself, Mr. McCann, Andrew Tagak, Anne Crawford, and Ms. Violet Ford were the first members of the Nunavut arbitration board appointed by the federal government, must be 10 or 12 years ago now.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome them to the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to take the pleasure in recognizing someone here in the gallery that shows an interest while we are here in session and throughout the year and that's Ms. Eva Onalik with Canadian North. I would like to welcome her to the gallery. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the gallery. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I forgot to recognize my cousin, whom I have not seen for many years: Violet Ford, I recognize her.

Also, André Tautu. We grew up in Chesterfield Inlet, and also Lucy and the other individuals such as Susie. I would like to welcome you here because you were very receptive in Kugluktuk. Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the gallery. I would like to welcome everyone to the Legislative Assembly's gallery. Orders of the day. Item 6. Oral questions. Mr. Curley.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 131 – 2(2): Gasoline Additive – MMT

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the minister, in regards to his minister's statement, because in Rankin Inlet, they are having a lot of problems with their gasoline and the dangers they're being subjected to as a result.

Last summer, I received correspondence from my constituency asking how they are going to be using their engines, they use their engines for business. The minister is aware that the gasoline is below standard because the federal government took out lead and replaced it with MMT.

Why did you purchase gasoline without the new additive? Perhaps you can start thinking about compensating the owners of the gasoline engines because they need them to run their businesses. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Community and Government Services. Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In regards to the affected communities with concerns about gasoline, we wanted to investigate those spark plugs. The research is ongoing to this day, and we want to find out why this gasoline isn't good for spark plugs.

My staff is dealing with this issue in an urgent manner, and Shell Canada has been very receptive in assisting us while we are looking for the problem. To date, we have not discussed compensation because we want to find out what the real reason is for the concerns. So, by the end of this week the research should be done.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kilabuk. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I want the minister to know that the department bought unleaded gasoline. According to the federal standards back in 1991, they stopped using the lead and replaced it with MMT. Apparently, Shell provided the fuel without MMT. Why did the government purchase the fuel without that additive?

Perhaps you can look for compensation from Shell Canada to compensate the owners. There are over 10 individuals whose snowmobiles and outboard motors broke down. Can the minister discuss this matter with Shell Canada? I am sure that they have liability insurance. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have stated, Shell Canada have been very co-operative in our research and investigation on this. We are working very hard to figure out what the cause of the problem is.

I just want to elaborate further about the gasoline that was purchased this summer that Shell Canada took that additive out of it because southern vehicle owners were concerned about it. That additive was not originally designed so that engines could operate better in cold weather.

I would like to let my colleagues know that we are not considering as of yet whether we should be providing compensation until this research have been completed. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the minister. I want to give the minister more support. We had previous experiences in 2001 with bad gasoline and those samples were sent overseas to Great Britain. Why can't we send our

samples over there? I believe we need independent investigators. Perhaps you can send it overseas to see what the problem is. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you. Just to go back further on the bad gas issue, we experienced it in the past. The Alberta Research Council determined the cause of the problems and when they sent it overseas, the European investigators arrived at the same conclusions. These findings validated your claims.

The fuels that were distributed this summer and the bad gasoline which was distributed back then are totally different. Researchers are continually providing their findings as they come out. We have not identified what conclusions to draw from the findings.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your last supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): As I stated earlier, I would like to ask the minister to send out a sample to an independent entity. You stated that you sent it to the Canadian Research Council, but there is always a question. He is also a member of the Alberta Research Council and I believe that the only way that we can resolve this issue is by sending it to an independent research council. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could talk to Shell Canada, to consider this. I will also have my staff look into the matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 132 – 2(2): Utility Rates Review Council Secret Report

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister responsible for the Power Corporation.

First, I would like to commend the minister on the timing of things. I noticed that the last major press release that was relating to the Qulliq Energy Corporation was put out at 5:07 p.m. yesterday.

And, Mr. Speaker, yesterday it improved: it came out at 4:53 p.m. from the minister's office. The minister, in that press release that came out yesterday, announced that the report of the Utility Rates Review Council would not be released until next Monday, when the minister announced what his rate hikes were going to be.

My question to the minister is why he is keeping the Utility Rates Review Council's report a secret. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My father used to tell me that three could keep a secret if two were dead.

>>*Laughter*

There aren't many secrets, Mr. Speaker, in a small jurisdiction like Nunavut. There is leakage at every level. There is no secret; there is no trying to hide things.

The federal Minister of Finance is bringing down their budget on Wednesday. The Minister of Finance will be bringing down our budget on Thursday, and on Monday we will be releasing the Utility Rate Review Council recommendations, tabling the report and bringing forward the recommendations of the Utility Rate Review Council at that time. There is no secret. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there is no secret, why won't the minister table it today or tomorrow or whenever? I'm just wondering why they've chosen that members of the Legislative Assembly in here have not been given the opportunity to review the report and the recommendations of the Utility Rates Review Council until after the announcement on the decision that the government has taken, to act on those, has been done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process is very clear: the Utility Rates Review Council responded, and I should say and compliment Mr. Mercer and his group for the good work they did. It's actually before time, before the schedule, that they were supposed to bring it forward to me.

Mr. Speaker, we have had the opportunity to review it, and as I said earlier there are issues in the budget that the finance minister will be revealing on Thursday in her speech, and on Friday, and therefore the Utility Rates Review Council recommendations will be made the following Monday.

Mr. Speaker, the process is that the government receives it and it's been accountable, it's been transparent. We've continued to say the same things over and over again: we would receive them, make the recommendations, and then table them.

So, there is no delay here. The only delay is that the federal budget is on Wednesday, ours is on Thursday, and we'll table the Utility Rates Review Council recommendations and the response to it on Monday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I would like to report the ministers received the report as he has indicated and the process that he has outlined requires the government to act on those recommendations and make a decision. So, the government, the Executive Council, and the ministers have the final say on what's going to come out of those recommendations.

The report is a different matter. Why is the minister not giving us that report if he had it earlier than he had anticipated? From his press release, I assume that they have already come to their conclusion as to what they want to do with the recommendations. Why won't he release the report? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How many times, how many different ways, or how many times do I keep repeating that same answer?

The report has been received. There is work around the translation of the report: it's a technical document. There are issues around this, in conjunction with the Minister of Finance's budget, which is not coming down until Thursday.

Originally we were going to try to do the budget on Wednesday, and I would have tabled the report on Friday. The federal budget is on Wednesday, our budget is on Thursday, and we will table the report on Monday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, we always seem to hear that around budget time: "I don't know, we can't release that information because it's budget related; we can't release that information because it's not translated."

Is the minister saying that he got the report from the Utility Rates Review Council just in one language and they had to translate it themselves? Is that the delay that he is talking about, that there are budget secrets in this report and that is the reason why he can't let us have this information now?

I know myself, and all Nunavummiut are waiting to see, what the Utility Rates Review Council has had to say in reviewing the General Rate Application of the Power Corporation. We are anxious to see it and would love to see it, again, prior to an announcement of what the rates are going to be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The final report of the Utility Rates Review Council is over 100 pages long; there is a lot of technical detail there. As I said earlier, I would be in the position to table the report on Monday. Before the report is tabled and made public, I will meet with the members of the caucus, with all of the members, to go through the recommendations with them, and we will do a briefing of what increases are proposed and what the findings of the Utility Rates Review Council were, and then that information would be made known to the public on Monday.

The members will be briefed. I would hope to be able to do that some time in the next couple of days, probably after Thursday when the Finance minister releases her budgets and move forward from that position.

So, there is no delay or delaying or whatever. There are some logistics, as well as administrative and financial issues, around the Utility Rates Review Council report. It will be in the hands of the public by Monday and the information will be given to the members and embargoed, as is usually the case in these matters, some time in the next 48- to 72 hours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Arreak.

Question 133 – 2(2): Core Funding for Ilisaqsivik Society

Mr. Arreak: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Earlier today, I spoke about important work being done by the Ilisaqsivik Society of Clyde River. Although its programs are well funded, the society is struggling to cover its core administrative and operating costs. As we all know, the cost of electricity may soon go up nearly 30 percent in Clyde River. Will the minister commit to providing core funding for the Ilisaqsivik Society, yes or no?

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is an excellent question and I would like to thank you for bringing it up.

Again, the contribution agreements are different from community to community. Some come from the hamlet councils and some come from the Government of Nunavut. At this time, I can't respond to whether we can give you core funding or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The minister will not be responding at this time, and I'm sure that she'll take it as notice. Oral questions. Mr. Barnabas.

Question 134 – 2(2): Polar Bear Population

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Environment. Earlier in my statement, I talked about polar bear populations and quotas.

My question is this: has the minister been provided with new evidence that the population is indeed shrinking and not increasing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Akesuk.

Mr. Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for posing that question.

In regard to the polar bear population, we are working closely with the wildlife divisions in the Nunavut communities and also the departments. At this time there have been increases in the polar bear population, but not in all communities. The quota increases have happened in some communities and some are status quo in others.

As you probably know, the studies were mostly done by southern institutions, and now we're starting to implement Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Very likely, and because of this change, the studies will probably take longer to complete. But again, if there was a decrease we will have to do something about it, because very likely there will have to be further studies done to validate the numbers. But it seems that there has been an increase in the polar bear population. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has been quoted in the news reports saying that he will not back down on the recent increases to the total allowable harvest for polar bears. Can the minister confirm this to all the members, that the department will continue to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit to collect population data? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Mr. Akesuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important for us to make sure that we respect both sides of the research, from Inuit traditional knowledge and also from the Western knowledge that we've been using for the last 30 years as a government or as the previous Northwest Territories.

I think it's important for us that we continue to monitor the polar bears in our territory. Once we get the results of the population from each of the boundaries, it's going to be a decision that we will make with the communities involved and also with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board.

It's important that we concentrate to make sure that we work closely with the communities. With the recent increase of 115 polar bears, we will stick with that, and if

we think that there is a decrease from one of the populations, we will always consider decreasing the quota or keeping it the same. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Evyagotailak.

Question 135 – 2(2): Kugluktuk Men’s Healing Facility Opening

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice.

When will the Kugluktuk men’s healing facility have its official opening? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The latest that I have is mid-March. I don’t know if that date has been set yet. Work is still continuing on upgrading the current facility and making sure it meets standards. That is what has been happening so far. All the employees are waiting, but the facility needs to be in a good condition before it is utilized for inmates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Evyagotailak

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During my time in Kugluktuk, I held a constituency meeting. Community residents expressed concerns about their safety and noticed that the facility has no fence around it. What specific measures are being taken to ensure the security of the community? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All the employees were trained for their work at the current correctional facility here, so that they know what to expect. That was the foremost in our consideration that the community and all the inmates of the facility will be screened, and if there is a threat they will not be held in that facility.

We are quite satisfied with what is going on so far. We also make sure that there are enough RCMP officers on the ground to make sure that in any event where there has to be support at that level, then the support will be there. So, that is why we have chosen Kugluktuk, to ensure sufficient support at the community level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister direct his officials to have an open house for the community so that the people of Kugluktuk will see the facility and have an opportunity to ask questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the opening in mid-March and I look forward to going to the community, along with the member, and hosting a wonderful event celebrating the opening of the facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Alagalak

Question 136 – 2(2): Update on Drivers’ Licences

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure our colleague, Mr. Kattuk, is watching these proceedings: I wish him well and we miss you in the House.

I will direct my question to the Minister of Justice. Last year, we were going to revamp drivers’ licenses in Kivalliq, especially in Arviat. I’ve learned that many residents are still holding short term licenses or temporary licenses. Some have been using these temporary licenses for over a year. Those who travel south are experiencing problems renting vehicles as a result. Could you give us an update on what is happening with this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had directed our staff in Rankin Inlet and Gjoa Haven to resolve this issue, and we were told that is in the works. This is the first time that I hear that it has not been resolved. I will look into the matter, but I had directed my staff to resolve this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Supplementary, Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize. I was just following last year’s rules. I would like to urge the minister, because we were told that they were going to resolve this issue and that an individual or an employee was going to be coming to Arviat with new licenses, and I think he brought two.

I figured that the department, I figured that there was nobody else left with temporary licenses. Its kind of embarrassing when you go into a community and you have a temporary license and you want to rent a vehicle. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Yes, I understand exactly where you are coming from. We had a meeting in Arviat and I had a meeting with the hamlet and I told the hamlet council that I would look into the matter right away. I will make sure that some direction is taken if they can. Thank you.

Speaker: Oral questions. Mr. Netser

Question 137 – 2(2): Decriminalizing Marijuana Possession

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Justice.

(interpretation ends) Just recently, he attended a national meeting with the federal, provincial, and territorial ministers of justice. According to the official announcement from this meeting, some minister of justice, and I quote, “expressed concerns about de-criminalization for the possession of small amounts of marijuana.”

My question to the minister is this: Did our Minister of Justice support or oppose the federal government’s plan to de-criminalize dope possession? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our position is that it is not being de-criminalized. The level of possession is the focus on this issue, so the federal government doesn’t plan on de-criminalizing marijuana possession for larger amounts.

So, we are in support of the federal government that the focus should be on the traffickers of marijuana. That’s where we should be pooling our resources. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Netser

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do we understand that we can now carry drugs in our pockets, drugs that are destructive to people? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Okalik

Hon. Paul Okalik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No. They will still be expected to pay or we can go through court, but they will not get a criminal record. They will have to pay an amount for possession of small amounts, but we are mainly targeting the traffickers. We are aiming at those traffickers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I were to buy a small amount, they wouldn’t be able to do much to me, but the person who is trafficking, how are they going to be dealt with? I fail to understand, when they can’t do much to the other one who possesses a small amount. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Okalik

Hon. Paul Okalik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Either they will still have to go to court, or if the person possesses a small amount they will still have to pay a fine. For those traffickers, drug dealers, they will be concentrated on; they will have a criminal record whether it’s a small amount or a big amount. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Your last supplementary, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): When will the Nunavummiut be able to see how long they will be incarcerated? I think that most of the time they just seem to tease the authorities like the RCMP. When are they going to set a specific time for those drug traffickers to be incarcerated? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister Okalik.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is still in the planning stage and we have not completed it yet. Once it's enacted, it should specify how long they will have to stay in prison, for those criminals. It should not be a light sentence, but a heavy one. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Peterson.

Question 138 – 2(2): Tabling of KPMG Report

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the minister of health. It's a question that I have asked the minister quite often concerning the KPMG medical transportation report.

I asked for it in May of 2004, but she said was that it wasn't translated then. And then when I asked again in November of 2004; I had to go into the access to information, through that process. I consider that report important to the business of the House, particularly when we are discussing main estimates.

So, I ask the minister: will the minister commit to tabling that report this week before we get into Committee of the Whole, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of health, Ms. Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A little heavy on the yes or no. That KPMG report, I checked up on it. It's quite lengthy, 100 and-some pages long, and it has to be translated. To date, it has not been translated yet.

So, I can't promise you that it will be revealed this week, but when it is ready it will be revealed. I can't say when, that is for sure, because we had a problem with the translators.

They are very, very in demand, the interpreters and the translators, but we did find somebody to do it. Once that is done, it will be tabled here at the Legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister could just table it in English with the promise to table it in Inuinnaqtun or Inuktitut when it's complete. I think that it's very important that we receive this document before we go into the Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't say yes at this time because I want to table it both in English and Inuktitut. I thought we had a rule where if we table a document that we have to do it in both languages, and we have to abide by that rule if it's the case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have done some checking on my own on this and consulted with some of the officials of the Legislature. I don't believe there is a rule that prevents the minister from tabling that document.

In fact, a precedent was established last year by the minister of the housing corporation when he tabled some lease inspection reports in English with a promise that the documents would be translated for the House later on. It worked quite fine.

So I will ask the minister again: will she be able the report KPMG report in English with the promise for the translated documents to follow? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Brown.

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If that is the rule, I have to, no problem, but I was just concerned about the unilingual people who might want to read in Inuktitut. Yes, I believe I can agree to that, if it is possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. It is possible to table a document only in English, as long as you promise to table it in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun once they are available.

Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can I get a commitment from the minister? I ask her again: will she table that document this week before we get into the Committee of the Whole on health and social services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Brown

Hon. Levinia Brown. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Oral questions. Mr. Peterson, that was your last supplementary.

Mr. Curley.

Question 139 – 2(2): Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Group and Researchers

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address the minister responsible for economic development.

He responded to some of it, but my concern is that Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is not a scientific knowledge, so it is not categorized as such. To me, the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and the scientists cannot seem to connect. Why are they like that? I wonder if they can work hand-in-hand.

Speaker (interpretation): You were addressing the minister of economic development and it seems to be directed to the Minister of Environment. Which one are you referring it to?

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I was trying to say the Minister of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not Economic Development.

Within the last five years we have tried to reveal the research of how we can incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, because it has been around for a long time. But before that it wasn't recognized, but nowadays it seems to be more recognized.

As the government, and you, the members of the Legislative Assembly, maybe we can promote to the international community Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and work maybe to incorporate it with scientific knowledge. Because they do research wildlife, for example, in the McClintock Channel, when they use scientific knowledge to decide not to hunt polar bear.

We were able to get three more, so I wonder how this will be able to improve in Nunavut? The Greenpeace people... Especially if it is going to affect us, I wonder how it is going to be looked at by the global community. We'll try, along with NTI and other organizations, to work closely together on how we can work on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): The same question to the Minister of Environment. The reason I asked is that Inuit who know the wildlife... The wildlife in Canada, that is quite new in Canada, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, it is not even 100 years. They say that even when the Inuit say when the population of different species has increased.

But scientific knowledge indicates that they might be at risk. They may not be true because we don't see them. A lot of them have not seen polar bears, only in a zoo, and they have not stepped foot on the snow, and yet they are saying that Inuit traditional knowledge is misleading and that is not true.

Can the minister concentrate on where the Inuit know about wildlife, so they know when they say that the population of the polar bear is increasing. According to me, I believe that. Do you believe that, Minister Akesuk? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do believe in the knowledge of Inuit and that traditional knowledge has to be recognized, because Inuit have been managing their wildlife all their lives. Also, in regards to Western science, we do have our own polar bear biologist.

Along with the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board we do receive polar bear biologists, and we do want to work together with them to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, because they are the holders of the knowledge of our wildlife. I personally, as the minister, would like to recognize Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister, because we need to close the gap between our government and wildlife management. We say we want to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, the knowledge of Inuit. The lawyers and the biologists don't believe in these facts because they are not scientific knowledge, because they are Inuit knowledge. When scientists don't believe Inuit knowledge it means that we don't have to ask questions to Inuit people.

Perhaps your partners should work together to recognize the bearers of Inuit knowledge. We should pinpoint the individuals who have the traditional knowledge and identify them.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Hon. Olayuk Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Inuit knowledge. We are now dealing with this a lot more than our first Legislative Assembly. As I have stated, in McClintock Channel, there was a polar bear moratorium.

At that time we started recognizing Inuit traditional knowledge, because they were telling us their knowledge. That is why we want to use the knowledge of the Inuit, especially when we are doing a wildlife survey, because they are holders of the knowledge. According to my knowledge, I believe and trust their knowledge of the wildlife.

We have directed our staff to work closely with the communities, especially when they are going to have an impact in the community with the wildlife survey, no matter what the species is. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Your final supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the minister for his response, and I'm sure that his response is very well taken by the Inuit people.

My question is they don't identify down in the United States... I'm sure at CNN.com on February 17, they said that the polar bear population in the states... They wanted to put polar bears under the Endangered Species Act.

Would that put our polar bears under the Endangered Species Act? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk.

Mr. Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The species that are put under the endangered list are written down by people from outside of Nunavut.

As a government minister, I'm going to protect Nunavut to protect our wildlife. If they want to put them on a special or endangered list, I will continue to protect our wildlife and not to put them on such a list and to utilize the traditional knowledge of Inuit. Because the Inuit have lived in this homeland for thousands of years and they are very knowledgeable about their wildlife and their environment.

So, I'm going to continue to work hard to protect our wildlife on behalf of Inuit. I would like to work closely with the federal government, especially when the Americans start considering that polar bears be put on their endangered list. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 140 – 2(2): Providing Accurate Information

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question, again, is for the minister responsible for Power Corporation, and it relates to something I'm sure he vividly remembers from our last sitting. That was the revelation that there was inaccurate information put out by the corporation in their General Rate Application.

I know that the minister was surprised by that information at the time. He's had quite a bit of time now to probably figure out what happened. I would like to ask the minister if

he could update the members of this House and the public on exactly why that information was not provided to public prior to their consultations taking place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Power Corporation, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member is correct, this occurred during the GRA process during the month of November 2004.

Indeed, at that time, I rose here in the House and apologized to the public at large because of the information on the street lights, which was the amount of revenue throughout Nunavut that was missing in the information. There were some logistic as well as administrative problems with the information compiled, and that was the reason.

However, Mr. Speaker, the Utility Rates Review Council was able to bring forward all the information available to them and indeed next week, on Monday, I believe it's the 28th of February, we'll table that in the House. All will become clear at that time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister: it is not so much on the details of the information, but I guess what surprised me, and I'm sure it surprised the minister himself, is that he wasn't even aware of that information.

So, my question is, has he determined why? Was it a logistical or technical reason why he wasn't aware of that information when it happened and not until it came out publicly that he became aware of it? So, I would like to ask the minister if he could explain exactly how or why it was that he was not made aware, as the minister responsible, of that error? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the process for the General Rate Application, in this case, there is something called interrogatory. What the interrogatory has done is this: the information is brought forward by the GRA and then the people who are trying to ask questions of the Power Corporation through that GRA process, they write a letter and they say, for example, "What is the amount of revenue on street lights?" in this case.

The Power Corporation would write back to the interrogatory through the funnel of the Utility Rates Review Council committee, and they provide that information. In this case, the funnel, being me as the minister, that information did not come down through the funnel. Indeed, the information was provided but it wasn't included in the package that was given to the public.

It was an error in judgment on behalf of the Power Corporation. It did not reflect the work that had to go forward by the Utility Rates Review Council in determining what the rate structure was; again, I apologized back in November for that. The reason why I didn't find out was because the information had been put in the book.

I don't think that there was any secretive, clandestine, hidden agenda, paranoia on my part or the members' part or the people of Nunavut's part, that they didn't provide that information. I think that they just missed it.

So, I take it at face value. We move on from there. I am not in the process of blaming, or saying this should have been done, that should have been done. Let us be proactive. Let us move forward. I believe that that is what is occurring here now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister makes reference to a funnel, but some might consider it is something that you need a plunger for. As the minister had indicated, that was a poor judgment call by the Power Corporation not to inform him of that information.

Has the minister given any directives to make sure that he is kept informed, as the minister responsible, and that the buck stops with him, as with any other minister, that any and all information is provided to his office? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this case the plunger was expunged. The member will remember on the expunging of that plunger that I actually said, when the member raised a question in the House, I will bring the CEO of the Power Corporation in immediately and we will discuss at the break, and that is what occurred that day. Question period was over. The CEO came over and went to my office. I asked the questions. We went through the funnel analogy. We went through the expunction of the plunger. At the end of the day it really did not impact on the report of the Utility Rates Review Council. An apology was put in place.

In all seriousness to the people of Nunavut, the Utility Rates Review Council report will be made public and known on Monday. The logistic and administrative issues were dealt with by the minister in November. We moved forward from that with, I think, some of the announcements that have been made over the last couple of days by the Power Corporation.

When the people of Nunavut see the Utility Rates Review Council recommendations they are going to be quite pleased. There is no hidden, as that wonderful movie that just was released a few weeks ago, there are no hidden boogeymen out there on the power rates.

I think that that is something that the people of Nunavut should feel safe and secure on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker (interpretation): Your last supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the minister for all his boogeying tunes that he like to sing on this. I know that the minister still gave a very nice, eloquent reply but it was definitely not an answer to my question. My question was, has he given any directives or taken any corrective action to ensure that appropriate information and all the information is conveyed to the minister, so that it is the minister's call to determine whether it is in the public's interest and the members' interest to decide whether to release that information or not.

I am not arguing the fact that it impeded the work of the Utility Rates Review Council. What it did publicly was jeopardize the integrity, in the public's view, of the information and the process that happened.

What I am looking for is, in the press release that he put out yesterday, it says the Energy Corporation enhances accountability: how are the people going to be able to trust the information if we know in the past that we haven't got that information before?

So, again, I would like to ask the minister: has any directive been given to ensure that all information will be provided to him, and it would be his call as a minister to decide whether the public has a right to know or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): That was the last supplementary, Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On that November afternoon of 2004, a couple of months ago, when I brought the CEO in here to the Legislative Assembly and into my office, and the revelation came out about the information that the member is talking about... . Yes, the minister did say, "Look, I need to have access to information."

The announcement that I made yesterday or today concerning the Power Corporation, the appointment of Cecilia White to the internal audit division of the corporation, the appointment of Mr. Philip Clark, who will be working for the corporation in the audit service, a long-time Northerner, 12 years in the North, a certified accountant, this will be part of that accountability process.

So, the answer is yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Alagalak.

Question 141 – 2(2): Training Needs in Mining

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be brief and I will probably make a further supplementary at a later date. I am not sure exactly who I should be directing this to, but I would like to direct it to the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

We know that there are a lot of mining developments going on in the Keewatin Region and also development works. We can see their working and not just hearing about it. We know that with *mivviujait*, my father would not call them sisters, but they are ants, (interpretation ends) every one of them is trying to do a certain job in their colony (interpretation) and they are extremely hard workers, like little ants, and they know exactly what to do when it comes to their specialized field.

We don't even have one specialized or trained person in Nunavut. I know that there are going to be over 300 people employed by these mining companies. I think it's something that we have to talk about.

It's becoming very urgent to train people who would work in the mining sector. It's up to the government departments to work together to make sure that we have qualified people who can find employment in the mining sector.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been working on it on an ongoing basis, and I have the Minister of Education spearheading the training of these individuals who will work in the mining sector.

Speaker (interpretation): Question period is now over. Going back to the orders of the day. Item 7. Item 8. Returns to written questions. Mr. Quirke.

Item 8: Returns to Written Questions

**Return to WQ 002 – 2(2) Staffing in the Government of Nunavut's Departments,
Crown Corporations, Boards and Other Entities**

Return to WQ 003 – 2(2) Petroleum Products Subsidies

Return to WQ 004 – 2(2) Loan Application Reviews

Return to WQ 005 – 2(2) Murders in Nunavut

Return to WQ 006 – 2(2) Public Housing Construction in Nunavut

Return to WQ 007 – 2(2) Recidivism Rates and Rehabilitation Programs

Return to WQ 008 – 2(2) Dropouts and Truancy Rates in Nunavut Schools

Return to WQ 010 – 2(2) Staff Housing

Return to WQ 012 – 2(2) Rental Arrears and Tenant Damages

Return to WQ 013 – 2(2) Status of Nanisivik File

Return to WQ 014 – 2(2) Human Resources Statistics

Return to WQ 016 – 2(2) Salary Ranges for Senior Executives of Government of Nunavut Crown Corporations

Return to WQ 017 – 2(2) Water Sewer Services Subsidy Policy

Return to WQ 018 – 2(2) Social Assistance Payments

Return to WQ 019 – 2(2) Eyewear and Related Services

Return to WQ 020 – 2(2) Trades Training

Return to WQ 021 – 2(2) Medical Travel Costs

Return to WQ 022 – 2(2) Fuel Delivery

Return to WQ 023 – 2(2) Activities Conducted under the Fire Prevention Act

Return to WQ 024 – 2(2) 2004 Fuel Resupply

Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am tabling the following 20 replies to written questions that were filed with the Clerk's Office. Replies to Written Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the rules of the House require that such responses be written in the Hansard and this will accordingly be done so by means of a special appendix Hansard publication. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Returns to Written Questions. Going back to Orders of the Day. Item 9. Item 10. Item 11. Item 12. Item 13. Tabling of Documents.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 058 – 2(2): Report to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut by the Chief Electoral Officer

Tabled Document 059 – 2(2): Statutory Requirements for Tabling of Reports and Other Documents in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker (interpretation): I will be Tabling 2 Documents. I am pleased to table the Chief Electoral Officer report. And the second one today I wish to table, the Statutory Tabling requirements. The list is updated regularly by the Legislative Assembly and tracks the status of legally tabling of required documents for government annual reports, financial statements and documents.

The current version of this document indicates what documents have to be tabled as of February 22, 2005. I trust that all Members will find it useful in monitoring of timely production of Tabling of Legally required documents in this house. Thank you.

Tabling of Documents. Mr. Netser

Tabled Document 060 – 2(2): 2004 Annual Report of the RCMP “V” Division

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to Table 2004 annual report RCMP “V” Division and I urge all Members to review it carefully. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Mr. Evyagotailak

Tabled Document 061 – 2(2): Tabled Document 012 – 2(2) A Need for a Senior Citizens' Home

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am once again tabling a letter from the Elders' Committee of Kugluktuk which outlines for the elders' facility to be established in our community. I am also enclosing original signatures to the resolutions. The resolution was made by Sam Kikkak and also seconded by Becky Hayokuk. Sam Kikkak was one of the movers at that time and he also said the opening prayer at our opening ceremony here in Iqaluit.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the needs expressed in this document will be addressed by the Minister of Health and Social Services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Mr. Clerk.

Tabled Document 062 – 2(2): Response to Petition 003 – 2(2) Demand for More Public Housing

Tabled Document 063 – 2(2): Returns to OQ 018, 067, 0105 and 111 –2(2)

Mr. Quirke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following response to Petition 003 - 2(2), filed with the clerk's office. In addition, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Returns to Oral Questions 018, 067, 105 and 111, which were also filed with the clerk's office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Tabling of Documents. Mr. Arreak.

Tabled Document 064 – 2(2): Package of Materials on Ilisaqsivik Society

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document that is in regards to Ilisaqsivik Society and the work well done by that society. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): All tabled documents will have to be handed over to the clerk's table. Tabling of Documents. Going back to orders of the day, Item 14, Notices of Motions. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 14: Notices of Motions

Motion 007 – 2(2): Referral of Tabled Document 053 – 2(2) to COW – Notice

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 24, 2005, I will move the following motion;

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Cambridge Bay that Tabled Document 053 - 2 (2) be referred to Committee of the Whole for discussion and Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be asking to deal with my motion today. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Notices of Motions. Notices of Motions.

Item 15, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Hon. Leona Aglukkaq.

Item 15: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

Bill 8 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2005-2006 – Notice

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, February 24, 2005, that Bill 8, Appropriations, Operations and Maintenance Act 2005/06 be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll start off with the notice of motion that I seek consent of this assembly to deal with that motion today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is seeking unanimous consent to deal with his motion today. Are there any nays. There are no nays. Wait. Mr. Okalik. There was a nay. We can't proceed with it at this time. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We might find out that we have two other motions to do anyways, it just makes it more fun when that does get through to the Committee of the Whole despite the strong tactics displayed by some Members of this House.

Motion 005 – 2(2): Referral of Tabled Document 052 – 2(2) to COW

My next motion, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Cambridge Bay, that Tabled Document 52-2(2) be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. A question being called. All in favour. Opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried. Motions. Mr. Tootoo.

Motion 006 – 2(2): Request for Comprehensive Audit of QEC and its Subsidiaries

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Whereas the Auditor General of Canada has reported findings that significant concern to the Legislative Assembly with respect to the Nunavut Power Corporation, a subsidiary of Qulliq Energy Corporation;

And whereas the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability has reported its findings to the House;

And whereas concern has been expressed by individual Nunavummiut, community leaders, the business sector and Members of this Assembly, with respect to the performance and accountability of Qulliq Energy Corporation;

And whereas the *Qulliq Energy Corporation Act* provides that one of the Corporation's objects is to plan and provide for Nunavut's long-term needs for affordable energy, taking into consideration Nunavut's desire to enhance energy self-reliance and to conserve energy and energy resources;

And whereas the *Qulliq Energy Corporation Act* provides for the establishment in the accounts of Nunavut and accounts to be known as the "Affordable Energy Fund";

And whereas the Government has previously stated its intention to transfer the functions of Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services to the Qulliq Fuel Corporation, a subsidiary of Qulliq Energy Corporation;

And whereas the authorized limit of Petroleum Products Revolving Fund was increased to \$110 million in 2004;

And whereas the Legislative Assembly has approved \$10 million in funding in 2004 to be provided by the Government of Nunavut to Qulliq Energy Corporation in the form of Conditional Contribution Agreement;

And whereas an independent and comprehensive audit of Qulliq Energy Corporation and its subsidiaries can reasonably be expected to provide information vitally necessary for sound decision-making in the area of energy policy;

Now therefore I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Quttiktuq, that the Executive Council of Nunavut, pursuant to Section 47 of the *Nunavut Act*, advise the Commissioner of Nunavut to request that the Auditor General of Canada conduct a comprehensive audit of Qulliq Energy Corporation and its subsidiaries and to report the findings to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut;

And further that the audit include an examination of the Government of Nunavut's Petroleum Products Revolving Fund, the Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund, and the Affordable Energy Fund. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. To the motion. Questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak to my motion today, and I would like to state my appreciation for those members who have expressed support for it.

All members of the house are well aware of the degree to which the QEC's financial situation and management problems have put severe pressure on our government's overall fiscal health.

As we all know, a significant proportion of the GN's available borrowing capacity has been eaten up by loan guarantees for the power corporation.

We are all well aware of the serious issues that were revealed in the Auditor General's 2004 Report to this house. We are all aware of the strong stance that this assembly's standing committee took in its report of last November, the Government response to which is due very shortly, I would note.

I am certain that nobody would bet against me if I were to predict that we will be asked as a legislative assembly to provide yet more bail-out funding for the QEC in the coming months through another supplementary appropriation.

During the First Assembly, the government sought and received approval for major legislation to create the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

On March 28, 2003, the Minister of Energy told this House, and I quote, "Bill 29 is a beacon, it is a light to the people of Nunavut."

Mr. Speaker, despite what the government told us at that time, the fact of the matter is that the power corporation has come to symbolize to the public at large a black, bottomless pit into which their tax dollars are being sunk.

The minister's press release of January 27 of this year would appear to suggest that there might be a light at the end of tunnel.

Even though the announcement admits that the corporation is still in violation of its own laws with respect to its debt limit, and even though the announcement concedes that the corporation still faces significant financial challenges, the announcement does constitute some progress.

I think that this announcement might just be the first time ever that the government has ever stated honestly that things were less than perfect.

The minister deserves to be acknowledged for this deathbed conversion to transparency. He also deserves to be acknowledged for his announcement of yesterday, in which he responded positively to the recommendation made by the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability with respect to the need to hold off on the PPD transfer at least until such time as the QEC gets a clean audit.

Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today provides us with a unique opportunity to demonstrate that we as Members of the Legislative Assembly will not stand by while one

infected organ of government threatens the overall health of the rest of the body. We have an opportunity to act responsibly.

Until this point, we have never exercised our ability to request Nunavut's auditor to undertake a rigorous, comprehensive audit of a single body. When we look at the tens of millions of dollars involved in the GN's energy-related expenditures, it is clear that we need an independent, objective examination of what is going on.

Mr. Speaker, despite the major problems facing the corporation, the government is racing to move the multi-million dollar PPD function to a new subsidiary of the corporation. The legislation establishing the QEC specifically provided for the establishment of an "Affordable Energy Fund" and we need to think carefully about this.

I believe that a comprehensive, top to bottom audit of the QEC will enable us as a legislative assembly to make sound decisions and choices. It will reveal where action needs to be focused, expose what needs to be cut in the corporation's administrative operations and help to identify and clarify what our best long-term energy policy options are.

It will also give us accurate information that we call all count on in making those decisions. Mr. Speaker, I would urge all members to support this motion. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): You can talk for 20 minutes to the motion. The mover can go first and the seconder. You have 20 minutes. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a seconder of this motion, I am pleased to have the chance to speak to it today. I was one of the members of the legislative assembly who reviewed the Auditor General's report last year. At that time, we raised a number of concerns and many of these are before us today.

(interpretation ends) This legislative assembly has been asked to in the past by the government to approve millions of dollars for direct funding for QEC. Our constituents want to know and to be assured that this is being used wisely and in an accountable manner. I believe that this motion is a positive step forward and I am pleased to have this opportunity to urge all members to support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Any more comments to the motion. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to the motion and I don't have to read off notes and stuff because I wasn't prepared to do that. I am going to speak basically on what has been said.

I know we have 20 minutes to speak to the motion. I will begin with the opening comments by the member to introduce the motion. He talked about the death bed transparency and the awakening of the minister.

And this has history and I take offences by those comments. First of all, for every member of the legislative assembly and if I am wrong, you can correct me, the Minister of Finance can correct me or the member can correct me.

If I am wrong, Mr. Speaker, as my understanding and I can point this out. There have been several things that have been accomplished and done by the Power Corporation over the last several months since the audit of the Auditor General.

Mr. Speaker, last week the Auditor General of Canada met with the board of directors of the Power Corporation. The board of directors consist of Mr. Simon Merkosak, the chair, and many other people well known in Nunavut, and now have been joined by Mr. Phillip Clark, who will head up the audit committee, as well as Cecilia White, a former banker now who is doing an internal audit of the power corporation, all recommendations of the Auditor General for Canada.

When the Auditor General of Canada met through teleconference with the board of directors last week, they went through what is called a management letter. Many of the members here are in business; all the Co-ops, they understand the process for the management letter..

The member's motion makes a couple of points. First of all, it talks about transfer of PPD to the Qulliq Fuel Corporation. As I said earlier, we reviewed recommendation number eight in the Standing Committee and we have been listening to what the members have said.

Mr. Speaker, I did announce in a press release, and I'll do a statement on it tomorrow, about the decision not to move forward with the amalgamation of integration of PPD to the Qulliq Fuel Corporation because we have heard what the members have said in the recommendations.

So that has been delayed and postponed put on hold until the power corporation is on firm financial footing. Everything what we said we would do; we have done. So at that point the motion is moot because it is not occurring.

Mr. Speaker, the second part is an independent audit of the energy corporation and its subsidiaries. The Auditor General of Canada does that right now. That is what the Auditor General of Canada does, a comprehensive audits on the financial payable, accounts receivable and PPD revolving fund.

Now if I am wrong, the Minister of Finance can correct me. If I am wrong, you can correct me. That comprehensive audit is done right now.

So what the member is asking for has already been done. We have put in the motion and we have put the PPD transfer on hold. It's not happening and we've filed the recommendations of the committee, Mr. Speaker.

Recommendation number eight, that is not occurring. The motion asks for a comprehensive of the Petroleum Products revolving fund and as well, the motion asks for a comprehensive audit of the power corporation.

Mr. Speaker, am I asleep or something? What happened last year when the members sat in this house and then in the meeting room upstairs, and had the Auditor General for Canada in the meeting room. A lot of the members were here and went through the report of the Auditor General for Canada because it was a comprehensive audit.

Now, if you want to go and ask the Auditor General at some point, if I can ask the Minister of Finance, if you will write a letter to the Auditor General, tabled in this house and say are you performing a comprehensive audit? That's what's occurring.

What the motion is doing in my opinion is that it is window dressing. You've caused a motion to do something that we're already doing. It's on hold, it's not going forward, and we've followed the recommendations. A comprehensive audit of the power corporation has just occurred and that's why all this information that has come out publicly and transparently, we're not trying to hide anything.

The member is rambling that this is a secretive world or something. As soon as we were made aware of some of these issues, we brought them forward. The only thing we haven't done is probably react a bit faster on the GRA process, but we've gone through that.

Next week, I will announce the rate increases and then that will deal with the fiscal problem from April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006 and the Utility Rates Review Council report and the members will have an opportunity to look at it and debate it over the next six weeks in the House, it will point out some more observations and we will follow those up.

Mr. Speaker, I take offence to think that the member representing constituents and elected by the people and elected by the members in the House, that somehow there is something is going on that is misleading. Every one of the cabinet ministers has had an opportunity to see this and on Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday of this week, I will brief all the members on the Utility Rates Review Council report and go through the whole process.

So, in my mind, the motion is redundant because the comprehensive audit of the PPD, the comprehensive audit of the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the issues around moving the PPD into the Qulliq Fuel Corporation are moot because either they have occurred, they are occurring or they've been put on hold, they've been postponed for a year. I did that announcement.

So my point, in conclusion on the motion, I appreciate the member bringing forward the motion and the seconder, but most of the issues are already being covered so why would you stand up and try move a motion if that's already occurring.

It seems to me to be a little more than window dressing. But if after the Utility Rates Review Council report comes forward and if there's other documentation, then the House could have a motion like that. The Auditor General is doing the job of the Auditor General, Ms. Sheila Fraser, I believe will be here again, in a couple of months and you will have the opportunity to question to her.

The Auditor General for Canada is above repute. They are performing a comprehensive audit on the Power Corporation's financial audit. And indeed, one of the complaints of the Auditor General is that they are actually putting the books together for the power corporation. You can't ask for any better for that. The Petroleum Products revolving fund is part of the framework of government that gets audited when the Auditor General does its complete work on the books of the Government of Nunavut.

So, that's my point. I appreciate what the members bring forward, but why are we debating something that's already occurring. If I'm wrong, the Finance Minister can correct me. I will table the Qulliq Energy Corporation annual report on Friday. I made it public several weeks ago. Any person in the public can get a copy of it and I will table it in the House.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I understand the principle behind the motion, but all the things that are being asked for are already being done. I can only go by what I have. So I don't know why we would be doing it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): To the motion. I don't think there are any more comments to the motion. I don't have anybody else on my list. The mover to the motion, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make it very, very clear for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation that the audit that the Auditor General has done was on Nunavut Power Corporation, not Qulliq Energy Corporation, and that's what the motion is asking for.

The Minister has also said; I can only go by what I have and what they have given me. He has said that in the past and used that in the past with the information provided to him by members of the corporation that after a while it is found out that it isn't as accurate as it could have been.

That is the reason why I feel, and other members here feel, that it's important on an energy function that's something that is eating up a huge, substantial portion of our dollars that we need to ensure, we owe it to our constituents to ensure that we have accurate information as the Minister himself said: beyond repute.

The information and the audit done by the Auditor General of Canada will be above repute, not like what the Minister says: well, I can only go by with what I have with this information. That's what we have gotten from them in the past.

We need to know that we are looking at the right numbers and the right information so that we can make the best decision about our energy policy for Nunavummiut in the future. We can only do that if we know that we have accurate information.

I think the example that I used earlier that wrong information was provided, again, that was not intentional, I am not saying that it's intentional, but the fact, but it was a separate process, but that does tell you that that does happen. I am not talking about the audit.

I was just wondering if you could ask the member opposite, let me finish what I am saying? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Please stay to the motion, the topic for the motion because I think you are going outside of the motion. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess what I am saying is we need to feel comfortable that we have accurate information to look at and who better to ask for an accurate picture of what's going on than the Auditor General because if past predicts future, there have been mistakes made in the past and we can't afford to make another one. Again, I urge all Members to support this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): To the motion. We will take a vote to the motion. We will vote on this for favour, opposed, or abstentions. First of all, all those in favour of the motion, please raise your hands. Thank you. All those opposed, please raise your hands. Thank you. All those abstaining, please raise your hand. Thank you. There was a count. All those in favour and all opposed. It was a tie. I might be able to break it tomorrow. I don't know, maybe not. I will be supporting those opposed because we haven't had time to discuss it. I am sorry. This motion is defeated. Thank you.

Going back to Orders of the Day. Item 17. Item 18. Item 19. Consideration of Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Sorry I didn't hear that. I was having a meeting with my colleague from Cambridge Bay.

Speaker (interpretation): Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Mr. Tootoo.

Motion 008 – 2(2): Adjournment for the Day

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry about that. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Rule 46 I move, seconded by the Member for Nattilik, that the House adjourn for the day. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): The motion is in order. All those in favour. Opposed. Abstentions. The motion is carried. Orders of the day. Item 22. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Mr. Quirke: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the Day for Wednesday, February 23rd.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers Statements
3. Members Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees.
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration for Committee of the Whole and Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 52-2(2)
20. Report to Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Wednesday, February 23, 2005 at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:10*

