



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

**Nunavut Leadership Forum:
Election of the Speaker, Premier and Ministers
of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly**

Official Report

Friday, November 14, 2008

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Members Present:

Ms. Eva Aariak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. James Arvaluk, Mr. Moses Aupaluktuq, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Ron Elliot, Mr. Adamee Komoartok, Mr. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Johnny Ningeonan, Mr. Paul Okalik, Mr. Eruk Pauloosie, Mr. Keith Peterson, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Mr. Fred Schell, Mr. Daniel Shewchuk, Mr. Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Peter Taptuna, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Prayer

Clerk (Mr. John Quirke): Good morning to all. I call this meeting of the Nunavut Leadership Forum to order. Before we proceed with today's proceedings, I will call upon Member for Nanulik to deliver the prayer.

>>*Opening Prayer*

Adoption of Agenda

Clerk: Thank you. I am pleased to convene today's proceedings of the Nunavut Leadership Forum for the selection of the Speaker, Premier and Members of the Executive Council.

In front of members, you will have a copy of the procedures for the leadership selection process, which were agreed to by Full Caucus. Also, a copy of today's agenda is in front of you. Do members agree to adopt the agenda?

Some Members: Agreed.

Nominations for Speaker

Clerk: Thank you. It's my pleasure now that I open the floor for nominations for the position of Speaker. I remind members that if you are nominated, you must immediately accept or decline the nomination. Are there nominations for Speaker? Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very honoured to nominate James Arreak for Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Clerk: Mr. Arreak, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I accept.

Clerk: Are there additional nominations for Speaker? Mr. Tapardjuk.

Acclamation of Speaker

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): I would like to move to close the nominations, Mr. Chairman.

Clerk: Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Clerk: Mr. Arreak, congratulations. Please proceed as the Chair.

>>*Applause*

Nominations for Premier

Chairman (Mr. Arreak)(interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank the member who nominated me. I would like to welcome you all to the House. As Speaker-elect, I am pleased to now open the floor for nominations for the position of Premier. (interpretation ends) I remind members that if you are nominated, you must immediately accept or decline the nomination. Are there any nominations for the Premier? Mr. Tapardjuk.

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to nominate Mr. Paul Okalik for Premier. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. I am the Chairman at this time. Mr. Okalik, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Yes. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. The member has accepted the nomination. Are there any other nominations? Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

Mr. Kusugak (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I would like to nominate Mr. Tagak Curley. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kusugak. Mr. Curley, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member who nominated me. I accept. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. The member has accepted the nomination. Nominations are still open, so are there any other nominations? Mr. Elliot.

Mr. Elliot: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate Eva Aariak, please.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The member has nominated Ms. Aariak. Ms. Aariak, do you accept?

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank Ron and I accept the nomination.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aariak. The member has accepted the nomination. Are there any other nominations? Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move to close the nominations for Premier. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. The member moved to close the nominations. Do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Please wait a moment while I check our Rules.

Thank you. (interpretation ends) Each candidate has up to 20 minutes to make remarks. We will proceed in alphabetical order by surname and Ms. Aariak will be the first speaker. You may proceed to the witness table, Ms. Aariak. The witness table is over there.

(interpretation) Thank you. You have 20 minutes to deliver your speech and no more than that. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): I would like to thank you all for this opportunity. Good morning and welcome. First of all, I wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to the people who elected me to the riding of Iqaluit East, both the residents of Iqaluit East and Apex. I received a lot of support and they encouraged me to run.

I am extremely thankful to all the people who supported me. I didn't specifically run for the position of Premier but due to the number of constituents supporting me, I decided to proceed with the nomination and I have accepted.

I would like to also thank my relatives and my children for the continuous support that they have offered. I first had to ask them if I ought to run as an MLA and it has now led to my being here in front of you.

As I stated earlier, my intention wasn't to run for the Premiership but due to the support of numerous people, I have put my name forward. I wish to also give Paul Okalik his due for having led Nunavut since the inception of the Nunavut government. Many initiatives have been undertaken. Many positions have opened up in our government and many departments are now running and operating as a government.

As well, I wish to extend my gratitude to the many elders who have passed along their advice to me and give me lessons with respect to *Inuit Qaujimajangit*. As well, they offer advice on the paths we must follow. Their advice has been instrumental in providing a

path for Inuit and they have identified the direction we must take. All Nunavummiut use the elders' knowledge as their foundation and to provide direction.

When I was preparing my speech, I had to brainstorm whether I would present my speech solely in Inuktitut or in English. I made the decision that I would speak in both languages. I will now revert to English.

(interpretation ends) I also want to thank Ron Elliot for nominating me. I do not take this lightly. I have given this much thought. I have thought about Nunavut and I have thought about our future, and I have seriously considered the path that lies ahead of us.

I have reflected on the responsibilities that we have, all of us, to our people. With all this support, I feel that I am ready to take on this very important responsibility.

The choice for the Premier of Nunavut should be based on more than words spoken here today. It should also be based on what you know about us as people, what you know about our abilities to work together, our commitments to the principles of the Government of Nunavut, including *Inuit Qaujimatugangit*, and our personal values.

In thinking about this decision, let us first reflect on how far we have come. Twenty years ago, there were many who said that Nunavut was an impossible dream. Yet, look around you. Here we stand today, in our own Legislative Assembly, debating the next step to be taken by our young and vibrant territory. We have overcome many obstacles and much nay-saying to be here.

Just ten years ago, our communities were buzzing with hope and optimism as we planned and dreamed the territory that would one day be ours. In those years, we had a vision. Our elders and community members imagined a future based on hope and promise for our children... we collectively made a commitment to our future.

The past eight years of government leadership has given us a solid foundation. I would like to acknowledge the good work done by Paul and the previous two Cabinets. They have given us a good start and this is not always easy.

When I look around me today, though, the energy and enthusiasm, which were so much part of us leading up to Nunavut, have apparently gone missing. Many Nunavummiut are moving away from their interests in government. Others are moving away from their personal hopes and dreams. Too many are moving away from their responsibilities. To reconnect with that vision and the spirit of hope, we need to re-engage people in building Nunavut.

Who leads this government is important. In talking to people during the election campaign, it became clear that many are looking for a change. I share this opinion. We need and deserve a strong Cabinet with focus and continuity, one that is stable and steady, one that is willing to hear what our communities have to say, and one that is filled with leaders who encourage each other to be the best that they can be.

What we do today will be the legacy we leave our children and grandchildren. This will take more than hard work. We need to work smart and we need to work together. We need a Premier who can inspire, encourage, and build our government into a team.

I bring a lot of valuable experience to this job - a combination of a good business sense, a strong community connection, and a track record of accomplishments in a wide range of organizations. With five plus years of being the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut, with my involvement with language legislation and reporting to the standing committee brings me a wealth of knowledge about the Legislative Assembly.

I know how to make sound decisions and I know how to listen, how to assess what I'm being told, and how to encourage people to share their ideas, thoughts and recommendations. I also know how to help build capacity and encourage Cabinet to utilize their unique and individual talents to form a strong team. I take pride in being a team player and will create a Cabinet that is open, accountable, and willing to learn; a Cabinet that could take a stand and be sure of what it is doing.

The needs of our communities are great. In terms of education, healthcare, and delivering quality government services, the work of building the Government of Nunavut has only begun. Some of its departments have had five or six ministers in as many years. Others have high vacancy rates in key positions.

It is very difficult to get things done if you are always in the state of transition or if you don't have the basics you need to do the job. As a government, we need to be more skilled at what we do and we should be clear about what we are aiming for and why.

One of the first things I would do as the Premier is to ask for a report card to look at how we are doing and what needs to change. I would ask my Cabinet colleagues and our communities to take a "snapshot" of where we are right now and ask the following questions:

1. What is working? (and let's recognize and build on it)
2. What needs improvement? (and we will seek ways to improve it)
3. What is not working at all? (and let's quit doing that)

It sounds simple doesn't it? But it takes cooperation, trust, and willingness within government and within communities. It also takes a two-way dialogue. We should be able to approach our leaders with confidence that we will be listened to in a respectful way.

We have done many things right in government these past eight years, but we have a long way to go on issues, such as:

- building government capacity to do its work, helping to empower individuals and communities to do theirs;
- creating an economy that will sustain itself over time;
- focusing on connections between health and social development;
- ensuring access to healthy and affordable food;
- ensuring that the government can communicate with the public in the official languages and that businesses can deliver quality services in Inuktitut;
- putting in place the people and programs needed for a healthy education system; providing continuity between education and the labour market; and
- reducing the issues that cause people to harm themselves and others.

In addition to the above, we are going to be engaged in three serious challenges in the next decade:

1. Arctic sovereignty and the position of the Inuit homelands, or *Inuit Nunaat*, within it. How will Nunavut take the lead on these issues and assert the role of Inuit and our unique way of life as guardians of the Arctic?
2. The economies on all levels. How will we ensure that all Nunavummiut have access to a quality of life that includes healthy food, shelter, regular income, and a healthy lifestyle so we won't overburden the health and medical system as we know it, social activities, and strong, healthy families?
3. Environmental and cultural stewardship. How do we, as people, care for ourselves, our land, and the legacy of wildlife and resources that we want to pass along to our generations to come?

These challenges are all connected. One is as important as the next - social, economic, environmental, cultural, infrastructure, education, and leadership. We need to keep up with our dreams, hopes and promises to each other.

Everything is connected but we have not, as a government, really worked at connecting things. Too often we work in isolation - one department or one program separated from the rest. Our solutions are bigger than that and rely on us being more holistic in our approaches.

We need to reconnect at the community level to find common sense solutions, to engage individuals, communities, regions, and the whole territory in the process, to stop being a top-down government.

All of us, Inuit and non-Inuit, have expectations that should not only be met but exceeded. We deserve the best in healthcare, education standards, language and culture, economic development, and environmental protection. We are on the leading edge of economic development, mining, fishing, tourism, and culture. We should also be on the leading edge of social and family development and services from government.

There's so much to do at this time when the economic future is looking very uncertain. We, of course, are faced with significant financial constraints. We will not be able to do everything all at once and we cannot keep doing things the way we have done in the past. Government can and should set an example, and tighten up where we can, without short-changing families and communities on their needs. So we have to be creative in how we address our financial challenges and use some good, old-fashioned common sense, not waste resources, time, or effort but be practical - spend what we need to spend on the priorities.

Having outlined some of the challenges, let me also say that I'm tired of Nunavut being described by our issues, failures and fears. I would rather be described by our accomplishments, our bright young people, our vibrant culture, and our way of being in harmony with our environment. While we need to be aware of the problems and limitations, we also should focus on the strengths we have and those that we are building.

When you raise a child or are in a relationship of any kind, you will erode confidence, interest, and trust if all you do is focus on what is not working or what is wrong. There needs to be a balance. We need to acknowledge the positive, the hopeful, and the strengths, while building on the weaknesses.

Our communities are getting stronger and better connected. We are using world-class technologies to keep in touch and we have many highly respected and accomplished individuals in our territory - some are artists and performers. Nunavut is stepping into the world stage in the creative sector and we should be proud of it and we should support it.

And while there's a wide range of talent building up in all age groups, we need to support our youth (interpretation) and listen to what they are telling us. We also need to focus our efforts on babies and the parents of babies. It is this generation and those yet to be born that will be the vision holders of our future. Our elders are willing to help and so should government.

(interpretation ends) Nunavut has attracted the world's curiosity. We are the world's largest land claims settlement containing some of the planet's only remaining pristine lands. We have a public government, elected by an Inuit majority that conducts much of its work in the Inuktitut language. Although I am speaking in English, the Inuktitut language is no less.

People around the world are asking, "How are Inuit taking back control of their identity? What is Nunavut all about? Where are we heading? What is happening here that the rest of the world needs?" Nunavummiut, in turn, are seeking and finding their positions in the national and global marketplaces.

Our connections to the rest of the world are better and more numerous than ever before. As these connections grow, both opportunities and issues are coming our way. We need to be ready. If we do not demonstrate solid leadership and clear direction, others may

start to make those decisions for us and that is not what we want to have happen in this big picture or here at home.

There are many models elsewhere that we can learn from. I have been looking at some interesting approaches in Labrador, Greenland, northern Saskatchewan, and Australia - all places that we have much in common with. Their priorities and issues are similar to ours. They are taking some risks and doing things differently, letting go of some of the government control.

And this sharing and learning is a two-way street. We can save a lot by learning from the experiences in other jurisdictions...

Chairman: Ms. Arreak, (interpretation) thank you. Your time has expired. You may return to your seat. We will proceed to the next candidate. Mr. Curley, you may proceed to the witness table. Thank you. Mr. Curley, you may proceed with your speech. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. First of all, I would like to thank the Member from Rankin Inlet North, Mr. Lorne Kusugak, for nominating me. I thank you for this opportunity to stand for this position. I would like to congratulate all the new Members of the Legislative Assembly. I would also like to tell the people of Nunavut, who are viewing today's proceedings on television, that this day is a landmark day and we will remember this day as one where we made history for Nunavut.

This day is the beginning for a change for Nunavut, an issue that was debated during some of the campaigns by the members who were elected to represent their ridings. Now that the elections for Members of the Legislative Assembly are over, we know who will represent the ridings and we need to empower a new government. Our people are expecting change and we have to start down the road for change in Nunavut.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, this is why, today, I am proud to stand before you as a candidate for the Premiership and I humbly ask each and every one of you for your support. I know that by working together in a new way, we accomplish great things for our peoples and for our communities.

Before I go on, I want to take a moment to thank the great people of Rankin Inlet. (interpretation) I am extremely grateful to the people of Rankin Inlet for returning me to the Legislative Assembly. I was acclaimed as a Member of the Legislative Assembly prior to the elections. I would also like to thank my wife, Sally, for supporting me and I would like to welcome her. I feel very honoured to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly, not only for myself but for all the new members.

Further, I would like to tell the elders of Rankin Inlet that I will not belittle or disappoint them. I will continue to support and assist them in every capacity that I can. Thank you to the constituency of Rankin Inlet for providing this opportunity.

As well, I wish to welcome all the Members of the Legislative Assembly who were elected and let them know that I'm proud of their accomplishments. This is for the oldest to the youngest members who were elected last month: your constituents voted you in, so you shall represent your constituency to the best of your ability. This government is still young as we are now in our Third Assembly. Although we are Members of the Third Assembly, we have to know our point of departure in order to proceed to our destination.

From 1999 to 2004, the people of Nunavut elected us to represent them and to form a good government that our people could be proud of, that would work for the best interests of Nunavummiut, and one that had respect for their people; a government with a heart, a government that supports the Inuit of Nunavut and bridges the cultures, supports businesses in Nunavut, and hires employees in the communities, even if they are far from Iqaluit. That's our mandate from the people of Nunavut: to work together to form a government that they can be proud of. However, not all initiatives seem to have these principles at heart.

Together, by cooperating towards a singular goal, we can face the defeatism inherent in our communities and we can beat it if we all work towards that goal. We have to recommit to our goals and work towards dealing with our many challenges. Let us try to resolve our problems. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, that is what I'm proposing today. Under my leadership, with consultations and consensus, we will aim higher and we will achieve more for Nunavut.

We have learned from our past mistakes. We don't need division, we need unity throughout Nunavut. We need to build teams and reach out and work in partnership with all members of our society here in Nunavut; men and women alike, social organizations, municipalities, Inuit organizations, and the public service. As MLAs, we can make a difference and we can lead by our example.

(interpretation) Being a leader in the government doesn't always go smoothly to support the people of Nunavut. From here on, this is a new day. We have to look ahead because the people of Nunavut have their needs.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, the people have spoken in the last election and they want change. With our vote today and by electing me as Premier, we can tell them that we have heard that loud and clear. People want hope. We have to provide this by working harder, by working together and delivering more. We must focus on delivering real and tangible programs and services that make life better in local communities today, not ten years down the road.

(interpretation) Our communities have expectations on the things they require; our children want new things as a stepping stone for the future; our elders require better services and more benefits. We can deal with all the needs of the people of Nunavut. We need to reorganize the government to make it operate more smoothly, and we have to work harder for a better government.

Sometimes we see the western provinces of Canada wanting more autonomy and we can also state that issues Nunavummiut face have to be recognized by Parliament in Ottawa. I would like to push this forward.

Today, as most of you are aware, I said the other day, I have ten points that I would like to deal with. Firstly, we see many hungry children that are going to school in the morning here in Nunavut. It should not be like that, we should help them to have a breakfast program.

Also, health has to be better managed and the airlines have to do better. There are also a lot of people without houses that have to be assisted. Last year, as we saw, there were numerous errors when construction materials were sent to the wrong places. With respect to training and education, as a government we have to work harder to address the training issues we face.

We can also improve the assistance programs we offer to businesses. Further, when talking about these issues, we have to remember the contractors who are being inundated with unnecessary red tape. Many of them are tired and frustrated due to the complexity of the contracting process and many businesses have given up on trying for contracts.

There are many communities without any roads to other communities, and our Nunavut government is too silent on this matter. We would like to grab this opportunity and move forward with it. Further, many airport buildings are getting too old and they require replacements. As well, the issue of lack of docking facilities has to be addressed. Currently, the sealift is offloaded directly onto the beaches in many communities. We should not be treated as second-class citizens here in Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, I could talk about a lot of things, but I want to say that if we are going to do bigger things for the people of Nunavut, then our thinking has to also become grander. I would like to say to the people of Nunavut that we can do better things for them because they are expecting changes.

For that reason, I recognize what the people of Nunavut want. They have been worried about the government in the last eight years. The elders have worried about many things and it is hard to sit still when you have a worried elder. I want to clarify this. I will commit to this with the whole of my being if I become a Premier. I would have an office that is open 24 hours a day because we want to hear what concerns Nunavummiut have.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, what I offer today is really, in short, three points: leadership, experience, and hope. We, as MLAs, cannot afford to experiment with leadership. We have tried that before.

A better way for Nunavut begins with change and change begins with your vote today for me as your next Premier. I thank all of you and I thank former Premier Paul for the service he has dedicated himself for the last eight years. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. You may return to your seat. We will proceed to the next candidate. Mr. Okalik, you may proceed to the witness table. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Good morning, esteemed elders and Members of the Legislative Assembly. I congratulate the Speaker-elect, Mr. Arreak, on his appointment. I know that members will respect your decisions and that we will have to work together to ensure that the Legislative Assembly is operating smoothly in the future.

I would like to extend my gratitude to my colleague from Amittuq for nominating me for this position. I know that he is quite wise and when he asked to nominate me for the Premiership, I believed wholeheartedly in his nomination. As well, I would like to ask my colleagues for their support as I seek the position of Premier.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, we have been put here to the legislature by our constituents. The constituents have placed us back into the legislature because they believe that we can support them and that we will work towards addressing some of their needs. We have been elected and we worked hard to campaign to get elected, and there were some disagreements during the campaign but this process is over.

We have to make a step to another important decision and we have to be able to represent our people of Nunavut for a better future. I know that we will experience hardships when we are trying to arrive at decisions, but some issues will be fairly simple to resolve. Sometimes the issues we try to resolve will not be satisfactory to all of our constituents and colleagues, but we have to try to listen to all of the concerns of our people.

I would like to ensure that adversarial attitudes don't crop up in our future. We will all experience problems in our lives, but we ought not to bring them into the House. Our constituents' wishes and needs are what we have to try to resolve on their behalf. I know that at the end of the day, we all work for the people of Nunavut and we have to remember that as our mantra.

(interpretation ends) Our consensus government guarantees that change comes with every legislature. The Premier and Cabinet doesn't implement their plan, they implement your plan. The change in our government comes from the members who set the agenda.

As Premier, I am your servant. My direction is set by you. It is up to me and whomever you select as your Cabinet ministers to do your work. Sometimes that means implementing unpopular decisions and facing public criticism. The people of Nunavut and this legislature need strong representation to advance our agenda and defend our interests locally, nationally, and internationally.

I have had the honour of representing our government in every community in our territory and in forums around the world. Sometimes the audience was warm and welcoming, other times, I had to fight to get our message across. Those of you who have

already held public office know how difficult it can be and the rest of you will soon experience those circumstances. You have to develop a bit of a thick skin. As I have learned the hard way, there's no room for error.

The job as Premier is demanding and you must always carry the honour and expectations of Nunavummiut on your shoulders. I have learned that the pressures and obligations of the Premier's office are responsibilities that must be borne all day, every day. No excuses. I believe a strong commitment to accomplishments and getting the job done is part of the Premier's job description. However, I have also learned that there is a need to listen and make sure that the process of moving forward is inclusive. No one of us knows more than all of us.

(interpretation) The people that were born before us knew that we have to support each other in order to survive. For that reason, I believe, as Members of the Legislative Assembly, we have to work together for the betterment of our future. I also know, as members, that we will have a learning curve as to how best to operate in this environment.

At the beginning, I recall that when we were first elected to the Assembly, many of us had big dreams and we had to brainstorm about many issues. However, due to our lack of experience, sometimes certain initiatives which the government wanted to undertake were not passed. I also know that when we first became Members of the Legislative Assembly, we went through periods of hardship. However, I have learned a lot more on how the government should operate.

We can now offer a dream that we envisioned as the last government, and many improvements have been made to line up with the dreams of many of our residents here in Nunavut. In making that dream a reality, the last government brought out infrastructure which was not previously available, such as new schools, health centres, housing, as well as protecting our Inuit language and culture, which have now been recognized in legislation.

Assistance for families under threat by abuse and the protection of the Inuit language have been recognized by the outside world. We have also been recognized as people that do arts and crafts, and filming. We have been teaching the world about our culture.

The new government that was elected in Ottawa has assisted us greatly for the people of Nunavut. We have been bringing new things that we would like to be able to try out. Those are the visible things that we have achieved as a government that could assist the people of Nunavut. However, there are also many things that we have not achieved for Nunavummiut. There are still too few Nunavummiut who graduate from their studies. Further, students with problems outnumber the ones that succeed.

(interpretation ends) However, during the election campaign, I had the honour of meeting young workers and their families who are struggling to better themselves and their

children through hard work. I want the government to stand with those inspirational young people who represent the best of our traditions.

This government must build a society that provides our citizens with the tools to help themselves. We have made advances but we have not yet caught up with the standards expected within our country. We must change the situation by making sure economic development and government services are built more deeply in our smaller communities. Implementing our strategy against domestic violence and facing the tragedies of suicides must be a shared priority.

None of us were elected to defend the status quo. We were elected to make change and change can come when we work together. That is why I appreciate the new ideas that you bring as new Members to this Third Assembly. It is the job of the Premier and Cabinet to implement the changes we want and the vision we develop.

I do not stand before you to tell you what I want. I am here to listen to what you want. I have paid close attention to the ideas that were expressed during the campaign and the discussions we've had together in the last ten days. I have heard the call from the good Member from Cambridge Bay who, in the last government, called for a comprehensive strategy to deal with poverty. I support making poverty reduction the overarching goal of this government.

I am committed to economic development so that our creative, industrious, and proud constituents can develop the skills to be self-sufficient. I want people to build their futures on the strength of their abilities, not on the size of their welfare cheques. I agree with my long-serving colleague from Rankin Inlet North that we must continue to do more to encourage Inuit training and employment opportunities.

(interpretation) Further, with respect to our children, we have to provide a meaningful future for them and provide leadership in that regard. I concur with the Member from Amittuq with respect to our Inuit cultural practices have to be retained and reused. We have to enact legislation that protects our children's future and to repatriate our Inuit practices.

(interpretation ends) Whether it be in the High Arctic, the Belcher Islands, the west coast of Hudson Bay, or the wide open space of our western communities, our government must hear and respond to your community concerns. I want to build an inclusive government and territory where nobody feels isolated from decision-making. That's why I want to hear from Kugluktuk's new representative on how we can forge a common vision and move our territory forward together.

As the Member for Natilik has stressed, our growing communities need the government to assist with a greater range of housing options. We have strong women in Nunavut and we can also take pride in the recent appointment of our former Nunavut Minister, Leona Aglukkaq, to the federal Cabinet. I will pay particular attention to the contributions from the good Member for Iqaluit East in this area.

While we have maintained an important distinctive voice with the election of our youngest member to our legislature from Baker Lake, the new member brings with him knowledge of economic development, as well as hopes and aspirations of the new generation of well trained and spoken Inuit. I know that the MLA for Quttiktuq has also done a lot of good work with the youth and I look forward to his valuable insight in this area.

I want to hear from all of you on how our government's investments in training and community infrastructure can prepare constituents for the future. This new legislature has brought change to Nunavut. Our challenge is to seize the initiatives of new ideas and marshal our strength to deliver for Nunavummiut. I offer you my experience and record of accomplishments in achieving what past legislatures have set out to do.

I can also stand before you with a mandate for my constituents. I told the good residents of Iqaluit West that I was running not only to be their MLA but also to be Premier. As they have in the past, my constituents and elders supported me. My supporters knew they were electing more than an advocate for certain issues. They knew they were electing someone with a record of governing for all Nunavummiut.

In the nine years and three elections I have fought, I have learned many lessons. The first is being straightforward with my constituents and Nunavummiut. My supporters know that I put Nunavut first and they have supported me when I have pushed hard to translate the wishes of this Assembly into government action. As Premier, I have also learned that humility and listening skills are the requirements of this job.

(interpretation) In closing, I would like speak to some of my personal challenges I have experienced to date. I have been raised from the ruins by my family and I am extremely thankful for their loving support. I am also quite proud of my upbringing.

As a young man, I would harvest seals, skin them, and sell them to support myself. However, I knew that our world was changing and the practices we utilized over millennia are no longer being practiced. For those reasons, I had to look for another career and I pondered what I would have to do to keep myself on my feet, especially with the opportunities that were opening up for us as Inuit.

I went for upgrading and took courses, knowing that I could utilize these new skills to assist my people. I was an adult when I went back to school and it was extremely demanding to undertake the courses, but I believed that even adults can continue to learn new things everyday. I went through these challenges as I was growing up. Sometimes it was beneficial and other times, it was clearly a mistake.

I also made mistakes even up to today, but most of my experiences have assisted me in my position as the Premier. I continue to be thankful daily for being returned to the Assembly to represent my riding and I wish to thank all of my relatives, friends and

colleagues for continuing to love me. Even though I know that we sometimes go through hardships, all of us, we eventually pass those hurdles.

As an Inuk, I am extremely appreciative of the elders who continue to advise me, provide counselling for me and they prop me up here in the Assembly. I am so proud of our esteemed elders and further, we have to follow their advice and not cause our elders grief in our future.

To my colleagues who have been elected as Members of the Legislative Assembly, I would like your support to become Premier so that I can work on your behalf and continue to push for the completion of our initiatives in our immediate future. Thank you. *Merci.*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Prior to the question period for candidates, we will take a 15-minute recess. I invite all members to join me in the Lounge for light refreshments. Our guests and visitors are invited to help themselves to tea and coffee in the foyer. We will take a 15-minute recess.

>>Meeting recessed at 11:03 and resumed at 11:21

Questioning Candidates for Premier

Chairman: Order please. Thank you, Members. The Nunavut Leadership Forum has reconvened. I will now review the procedures for the question period for candidates for the position of Premier.

Each member not standing for the position of Premier may ask up to three questions. Each candidate may then respond in turn to the question. Questions need not be asked consecutively.

As Chair, I will exercise discretion with respect to varying the order in which candidates are invited to respond to questions, and I will enforce reasonable limitations on the length of questions and answers. Do any members have questions for the candidates? Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, thank you. I am very pleased to be able to ask the questions for the people running for Premier and again, and of course we will always use the elders for their advice and wisdom and while we're here as Inuit and non-Inuit, I am very pleased to see that there is fair representation.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the candidates about the collective agreement. What types of changes would you consider, for example, the Nunavut Employees Union? What kinds of questions would you ask the people of Nunavut? Under this Act, I believe, that the people out there know the contents. What kind of changes would you like to see in the collective agreement? Would you like to see changes or would you make it new altogether? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. I will now invite the candidates to respond. We will begin with Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): I apologize, Mr. Chairman, I didn't quite understand what the question was. Could the member elaborate or rephrase his question?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is in regard to human resources, for example, the Nunavut Employees Union. What types of changes, such as what provisions are adequate, what provisions require updating, and what has to be drafted, and what has to be fixed, and this is in reference to the *Public Service Act*? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Aupaluktuq. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the member for posing his question. The body is an independent one, that works at arms length from the government but we have to work cooperatively on these issues. We also let them know that one of our main priorities is to get more beneficiaries into the public service as a government and this continues to be our priority. Further, we will also continue to keep this as a priority.

However, we are also aware that changes need to be made to the *Public Service Act*. The last government conducted a study on the legislation and what should be revised or added. Once this has been completed, the study will be released to the members at our next sitting. I know that the legislation requires some changes and, as an example, this government has to incorporate the Inuit language into all the departments within Nunavut. The Inuktitut language has to be part and parcel of the public service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. I will now have Mr. Curley respond to the question.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an excellent question. The public service, as I alluded to in my earlier comments, have to be welcoming and friendly. They are employees of this government, and many of them work tirelessly in their positions. I believe that as a government, our employees ought not to have any other concerns other than to fulfill their duties to provide services and we have to support them as a government.

In response to the question posed by the Member for Baker Lake, when we talked about the public service, the agreement lapsed and at one point, an agreement was not completed for two years, so our employees worked without a contract. This is way too long to complete this process. We have to change the process and I know this for a fact.

An agreement that is being negotiated between two parties should not take over a year, if possible, and I would like to see a time limit placed on the negotiations. I noted that the September agreement that was reached took over two years to complete.

The other areas where I would like to make changes are the categories listed in the agreement for medical personnel and for health care professionals. Many of them are concerned about the inadequate housing allocated for medical service personnel. I would like to revisit this matter and discuss the issues with my colleagues as to what their thoughts are on the matter, as to what their opinions are with respect to the government offer for a new collective agreement.

I would like to leave this process open. I would not want to hinder the negotiators, but we should look at the issue first. If I'm elected as Premier, then I would look at the options that would allow the public service to fulfill their duties, but prior to the lapsing of the agreement, we have to renegotiate the agreement. Once the negotiations commence, we lose our ability to be involved and this can cause the negotiations to lag. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. I will now have Ms. Aariak respond to the question.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the issue of human resources and the union representing our employees, there has to be an understanding of where both parties are coming from. As well, we, as a government have to be aware of what the union's stance is and what their priorities are.

Further, we have to inform them what the Nunavut government's priorities are and what we wish to achieve. Only by having an understanding between the parties, which I consider a very important matter, can an agreement be reached during this process.

With regards to some of the concerns expressed by the Member, I concur with his concerns. We have to have an understanding of both parties, and where the direction of each party is headed, so that both parties can accommodate the other. I believe that this is a very important issue that we have to resolve. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Aupaluktuq, do you have another question? Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, with respect to the matter of economic development, I asked for their position with respect to the policies currently used today. Most Inuit are now aware of these programs, one that is the subject of questions or comments by our people who are learning about the opportunities in economic development, Inuit require assistance to become involved in development opportunities.

At times, the Inuit are not given the contracts and they are being left behind when development is occurring and non-Inuit companies are garnering most of these contracts.

What changes will you make to economic policies to ensure Inuit are given equal opportunities to participate in economic activities? What are your thoughts on this and what types of changes would you make to government economic policies?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I would like Mr. Curley to respond to the question first.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. That's an excellent question, Mr. Chairman, posed by the Member for Baker Lake. It was one of my ten point plan that I outlined in my speech.

In regard to economic development, we have to make sure that they are available to the companies out there, not only government contracts but to open it to exploration activities, mining development, and so on, because there's going to be a lot of economic opportunities available to the businesses out there, especially with the mining development and if all deposits were to be developed, the mining sector would become larger than the government contracts. As an example, here in the Baffin region, it was stated that the contracts are larger than what they had received from government contracts.

There are contracts available not only from the government but also from the private sector. I know that our governmental policies in Nunavut are out of date and are dated and primarily geared towards implementing *Article 24*, but it seems that these companies are only competing to get the highest number under the Inuit content requirements. We should be looking into the value of the contract, as well as the other provisions listed in the policy aside from the costs only. As I stated earlier, if Nunavut businesses are going to provide good competition out there in the business world, if we are willing to make them our partners, then we have to make changes to our contracting policies.

If I am elected the Premier, I will not only focus on *Article 24*, and I would ensure that this entire contracting process is reviewed, not just to focus solely on Article 24, but also emerging business opportunities that are exceeding our current expectations. This is going to be one of my first priorities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. I will now have Ms. Aariak respond.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As per my opening comments, I stated earlier my belief that economic development is becoming a top priority in Nunavut, in our near future.

With respect to the contracting issue and how contracts are let, I have heard concerns from business people, that the process is seemingly skewed. It is a priority to me, to try and consult with those businesses and hammer out the issues that are faced by our businesses when they are trying to get a contract.

I would gather together the companies that face these challenges and put together recommendations stemming from this conference and to work together to ensure that any changes required to our contracting policies be made from there collaboratively. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik may now respond.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This was one of the priorities of the previous government and I was very fortunate to have been a part of the process.

We opened a tax break, which was good for both sides of the table. It was a benefit to the people of Baker Lake but we have to do more as a government by using our taxation authority. This has proven to be of assistance to some of the people in Baker Lake, but we still have to create new opportunities.

We are looking at opening a trade school in our immediate future, so that we can train the people of Nunavut to work in the mines and other opportunities that will be made available, as mining development projects occur throughout Nunavut.

I would like to thank the Mayor of Rankin Inlet, who was involved as well as the Member for Rankin Inlet, who participated in the process. I was very pleased that we were able to help the people of Nunavut to further their education. There's a spinoff in the benefits and it also helps the people of Nunavut, and especially those Inuit who wish to hold a job. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Mr. Aupaluktuq, would you like to ask a final question? Mr. Aupaluktuq.

Mr. Aupaluktuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Nunavut has made progress in the last ten years with respect to implementing Inuit employment of *Article 23* of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*. What specific measures would you undertake in this area if elected Premier? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will have Ms. Aariak respond to the question first.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very important matter, this legislation pertaining to *Article 23*. It is becoming even more important as our government progresses. Many of our youth have to continue with their education, especially career oriented studies, that is one issue. Our current government employees are still understaffed, and this is primarily due to our limited labour force pool here in Nunavut.

Our young people have to commit to getting educated and this has to be one of our top priorities, especially those of us who would lead the territory. This is geared totally towards self-education. We have to offer more support for our existing staff, especially

those who are learning-on-the-job, and other employees of the Nunavut government require more support especially to further their training so that they can be promoted.

Many times, our government has lost staff, due to this lack of training and support. This is due to many reasons, some have given up, others are not being provided enough support and others move to higher paying positions, whether it be with the Nunavut government or organizations. They move on to other organizations where they will get the support to further their training and education because they're not getting the support from the government.

We have to look at improving the system, and how can we further our employees' careers via training and courses. We also have to look at the young people, and to ensure that their priority be furthering their education and how can we best support them in those endeavours? There are many issues that need to be reviewed when looking at this issue of employment within our government.

We can talk about this all day but these are the main points that I would like to focus on. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik may now respond.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Although we have made significant progress since we created our territory, we still have much to do in this area. I have been very active in trying to promote more education for Inuit and will continue to do so. I have also pressed our issues with our federal partners to help us out in this area, to get more Inuit working in Nunavut.

I am very pleased to report that I used my seniority and authority to open a First Ministers' Conference on this subject in the coming year. So I was able to succeed with my partners from the provinces and territories to put this on the national agenda and get the federal government to help us out in getting more Inuit trained to work in Nunavut and in the rest of the country. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Mr. Curley may now respond.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since he asked the question in English, I'm going to respond to the first part in English as well.

It's now been 15 years since the agreement was signed with the Inuit and the federal government, which includes *Article 23*. *Article 23* is a constitutionally protected affirmative action initiative and it has a specific goal that we are to increase the level of Inuit employment up to 85 percent population level.

During the last 15 years, I don't think we have done as much as we could have. So what specific measures would I do? I would ensure that we reach the level of 85 percent within

attainable years. I think that each year, we can improve it and not just hope for a 10 percent increase each year. I think 10 percent a year is achievable.

What specific categories of trades markets and labour markets would I start with? I think I would propose that Arctic College play a big role in that. We should have, in each region, a program to increase nurses so we don't have to look around internationally and try to get agency workers to come in and take the door out of the ones you appropriated and take them overseas. That's not acceptable.

And I would propose specific measures, not just for nurses but for the financial institutions and the senior levels of the government, that there be courses taken in each of the three regions to improve. So far, that has not been the case. The majority of the courses available are normally from one location and by the time our young people are trying to apply, all of the spaces have been filled.

So I propose that we can do better to reflect the Inuit employment levels. I'm quite familiar with *Article 23* as I was part of the negotiating team when that was settled. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Kusugak now has an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Kusugak.

Mr. Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am quite proud of the three of you, who are trying to be elected as the Premier and you are all very capable, in my eyes.

Every time there is an announcement from the Nunavut government, seemingly ever since our government was created, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* is always referenced. It seems that with every issue that is being talked about, a reference is always made to the fact that *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* will be followed. We keep hearing that term *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and we are told that this is something that is to be incorporated into the government.

However, to date, this term, after it has been spouted at the beginning of each announcement, is forgotten as soon as the program or initiative has been undertaken. To cite an example, when the government was trying to impose quotas in the Kivalliq for polar bears, *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* was stated as being the basis by which they would make their decision. But every time the government makes a decision, they are contradicting the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* recommendations.

They cut the number of tags, irrespective of the facts presented by Inuit and all Inuit get is further erosion of their hunting rights, especially when you look at the historical figures prior to government moving into Inuit homelands.

If any of you are successful in your pursuit of the Premiership, what is your position on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*, and not just use it as lip service? How are you going to have it incorporated into government operations? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kusugak. Mr. Okalik will now respond to the question first.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is an excellent question. I would like to be more visible with the pieces of legislation that we created within the previous government. We have included *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in the pieces of legislation that were passed, and we still have a lot of work to do and I know that we have to try to complete this initiative. If we look at child services, this is where we can utilize *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and in other pieces of legislation.

We have to include *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* within the government, and we have started that with the *Wildlife Act*. We do have a lot more work that we have to do, but I would like to assure the House that Inuit were included when we were talking about the wildlife issues; we also included the NWMB, where half of the membership is Inuit.

The RIAs can appoint three members, while our government only appoints one member. The legislation has to follow either the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement*, or the *Nunavut Act*. Our fellow Inuit are demanding that we incorporate our practices wherever we can in our government. There is a need out there to include our culture within all aspects of the government. The Inuit have to believe in their government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to give Mr. Curley an opportunity to respond.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the question that was posed by the Member from Rankin Inlet, this is not a simple matter nor is it a light subject. We can understand why people are asking about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*; it's embarrassing to be a part of the government when we're talking about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and not doing anything concrete.

You have to also know that there is not always agreement among the elders and some of us know about the hunting techniques and so on but there are elders, men and women who are very knowledgeable about the wildlife and what a man can or cannot do. I think we have to do a lot more work to implement *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and should I be elected to the Premier's position I would want to have a meeting with the people, but there are three regions.

I would like to see people getting together to talk about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in a few months at a time to take them to the capital so that they can be advisors to the Premier. I am well aware that there is a lot more we can do and what the *Qallunaat* call is IQ, we don't know what IQ is or what it means but we know the traditional societal values as Inuit.

I would talk to the elected members. I would talk to the regional members and see who would be the most knowledgeable to help us.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Ms. Arreak.

Ms. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Lorne, for your questions. This is a very important issue and always has been. Ever since Nunavut was established, *Inuit Qaujimajatugangit* was also introduced into our government and there were a lot of people out there who started asking what IQ meant from the general public and they wanted to have something in writing explaining what *Inuit Qaujimajatugangit* is and to have it written down on a piece of paper.

So when our elders are talking to us about *Inuit Qaujimajatugangit*, what it means is that the Inuit culture and Inuit traditional knowledge is intertwined, sometimes we separate them and try to explain it that way even though it is a holistic approach that *Inuit Qaujimajatugangit* is interconnected to the culture.

The government runs their departments through departmental policies and the separate departments that implement policies in the departments, when you look at *Inuit Qaujimajatugangit* we have to include IQ in the policies as well but we haven't implemented anything to date within our policies and now I think we will have to include IQ in our departmental policies the way Lorne asked the question. That's going to be one of my priorities in the future. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Arreak. Mr. Kusugak, do you have anything else to add?

Mr. Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My other question is, there are a lot of communities where the demographics are different and there are smaller communities and larger communities. Sometimes the smaller communities say that they're always the last priority when they have to make cuts within the funding departments. So as a Premier, how will you empower the smaller communities when you implement your policies or funding so that they can be in line with the other communities? Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. With respect to this issue, many of the smaller communities are grateful to hear this question posed to us and are listening to our responses. What I can state, is that when the government is looking at positions, they forego certain applicants due to the costs and there is an identified budget for each PY.

What I am thinking, is if I were to become the Premier, I would ask all the departments not to just look at their positions, but to look at ways to provide better service for their clients in the smaller communities, whether it be programs or services. As an example,

how best can we provide economic opportunities? Would it be fisheries, country food sales, or if it is a smaller communities in close proximity to a larger government, how can we best assist them?

We should budget funds over a longer term, to look at developing roads between communities. If they are not on an island, these types of initiatives ought to be discussed and looked into. I think that we have to look at creative ways to include these longer term plans into our government. We cannot only make plans to look at developments outside of the communities.

Some of these developments are within reach of the smaller communities, as an example, Chesterfield Inlet is close to that new mine. Further, I know that the community of Whale Cove suffers hardship due to the extreme high cost of living. Why is it expensive when it is south of Rankin Inlet? It is primarily due to the costs of generating power, and if you look at electricity bills, Whale Cove is the second most expensive community, immediately behind Grise Fiord.

It is the second most expensive community behind Grise Fiord, although it is south of Rankin Inlet and this is unacceptable. I would try to change that since smaller communities should not be paying more for electricity or fuel than larger communities. We have to plan for ways to resolve some of these problems. I would want to canvass my colleagues to see if we can provide subsidies for the communities, both for fuel or electricity. I would like to add your concerns if I were to be elected as the Premier. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Ms. Aariak can now respond to the question.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the decentralized communities, some of the perceptions of the smaller communities are that these communities are the only ones benefiting from Nunavut. They perceive that the smaller communities are receiving very little. This seems to be the case, since these communities are geared more towards government operations at the regional headquarters.

However, as I stated earlier during my opening comments, I think listening to the general public is extremely important and this is my immediate priority - to listen to the people of Nunavut - because our constituents have elected us as representatives to express their concerns and to represent our constituencies, and to hear of the concerns stemming from those smaller communities, and especially ideas of resolving the issues they face as well as their needs. We have to ensure that we listen closely to their needs and priorities, and in particular, you as the community representatives, who come to voice their concerns and you are the lifeline to the communities.

Further, I will keep the decentralized communities in mind when dealing with these issues, but when listening to the media, I hear tons of complaints about the exclusion of the smaller communities from programs and services available to the decentralized

communities. I would want to hear from every member as to what their constituency needs and wishes are, and their plans for the future. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not a new issue and we have been working on it for quite some time. We haven't forgotten the smaller communities because they are one of the most fundamental foundations of our government operations.

As a Nunavut government, we have been setting budgets and include all communities in those budgets, but more specifically, we have created new initiatives geared towards benefiting the smaller communities. However, even with those initiatives, we still have not caught up with all of the shortfalls in our communities.

It is good to learn about mineral development occurring within the proximity of some of these communities, and we are starting to offer more training. By doing so, we will have to introduce more training and educational programs to better serve the smaller communities, especially when a new mining development project is identified in their areas. These are all jobs created outside of government.

Looking at the fishing industry in the regions, we have to encourage organizations to better serve the smaller communities. It was introduced just recently by the federal government, the 50 million plus goes into revenue; into the shrimp fishing industry and we only get a fraction of that money that is made through fishing.

So I am going to try my best to encourage the communities if they're adjacent to the oceans that they're working on. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Mr. Kusugak, is that is? Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is similar to Mr. Kusugak's question here, but I'm dealing with infrastructure money. There are 25 communities in Nunavut, and of course, some decentralized communities, and some big communities that aren't decentralized, and some small communities. It seems like certain communities get a lot of infrastructure money and other ones don't.

I would like to know is how you are going to have a better, balanced approach on spending the money in all 25 communities.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Ms. Aariak will go first. Ms. Aariak.

Mr. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think I can say right off the bat that it's not going to be easy. It is a topic that will be very important to be discussed amongst us, especially within the new Cabinet membership, once we decide upon them later on. It's a very important issue and I think we will have to look at

that in a very creative way of trying to allocate certain dollars in one place, and make it up in the other.

So I am thinking that there will be a lot of dialogue, a lot of discussion on that and try and come up with the best possible solution to that, as the Legislative Assembly.
(interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This area is an ongoing challenge for any government. It takes creativity sometimes to stretch our dollars. At the same time, we have to invest wisely as a lot of communities require basic infrastructure, and we have to prioritize in those areas where areas such as sewage lagoon treatment and schools are competing. We often have to make choices, unfortunately, that other parts in the country never have to make.

So it's an area that we have worked hard on, and we have received additional dollars from the federal government through the Building Canada Fund, so that will help us in stretching our dollars. This will be an ongoing discussion with all members. Whenever we have to decide on capital projects, it goes to this House and debated.

I have always tried to be fair to all communities and keep an open mind, because I don't want any of our communities struggling with basic requirements anywhere in Nunavut. That will be my ongoing guidance and I appreciate ongoing discussions with members that have been elected recently, on what they expect in their communities. A lot of them are unique and refreshing. I look forward to ongoing discussions in this area.
(interpretation) Thank you.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that was one of the most important questions that you raised because it not only affects your constituency, or the two communities that you represent, but it has an impact on all of Nunavut.

I think the federal government recently has had very good initiatives, including the Gas Tax Fund and the Building Canada Fund, and I can honestly tell you that one is close to \$25 million a year. Now, where is that money going to go to? Should there be an allocation policy throughout Nunavut? I believe so.

As the Premier, I would insist that we do that, so that we have more equitable distribution of those special funds, because after all, or workers, our communities and people that live in them are tax paying Canadians. They deserve to see those extra money. These are over and above our own capital allocation that we normally appropriate through this Assembly.

I'm not satisfied with the current free-for-all, it's not free-for-all right now. They normally allocate for projects that are ongoing. For instance, some airports put in equity to qualify for other federal cost shared programs.

So what I propose, should I earn your trust, is that I would want to review and establish a fair distribution of these special funds, infrastructure money, as well as the Gas Tax Fund and the Building Canada Fund with you and have a guideline that is fair to all because we have been told that people want change.

And one other thing that we see is: would you believe that this government has no recreational facilities' policies? And I believe, unless we have a program, we will never catch up with those facilities badly needed. So I think we can do creative work with it and have fair program that is acceptable, not only to municipalities but with your input, I would want to do that as quickly as possible. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Schell, would you like to ask another question?

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the nursing situation here in Nunavut, and I realize that you have plans down the road to get nurses trained in three different centres, what will you do immediately to try to solve that problem of these agency nurses?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think, wherever possible, we're trying to hire nurses locally. We have been training our own nurses since we created Nunavut and that's a marked improvement from what we had before.

We have nurses trained now that are delivering services in Inuktitut but we would love to see more. I am very pleased to see there's a plan to expand the program to other communities in Nunavut so we can see more Inuit nurses throughout Nunavut. I think we have to make sure that those basic needs continue to be delivered throughout Nunavut.

And I'm quite open, if we have to hire agency nurses again, to keep that door open because every Nunavummiut deserves basic health assistance throughout Nunavut, it doesn't matter where. So that's something that I will the press the time blessed to get my job. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley may now respond.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) That was unexpected. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, again another very important question. As an MLA for one of the second largest community, I have heard that many of our local nurses have spent a whole lot of time trying to get agency nurses, instead of providing for care and services needed to

patients. Many of the nurses in those communities where there are agencies and nurses are being recruited are frustrated and I have personally heard that.

So what I would propose is that, I think we could establish a better policy, a policy that will continue to recruit and retain nurses, either from our territory, including the ones that I mentioned earlier, that we would have to have a more affirmative action program for nurses throughout regions.

Secondly, I can honestly tell you that I'm not in favour of this policy. I think we can today, and I would propose that, that we put a sunset clause on those agreements with the three years that we eliminated altogether and during that course of time that we establish a recruitment and retention of our own nursing professions to make sure that they stay up here. That would mean that incentives and compensation have to be reviewed and improved up on.

I think our compensating would probably be a wee bit better than southerners, but I think it could be improved a lot more so that they have at least the knowledge that they can be up here for a while and not have to worry about whether they going be able to be able to pay for their leases and rent and for all that matter. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Arreak.

Ms. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. just last week somebody came over to see us from the Department of Health and Social Services on how many more nurse trainees there are for our hospitals and it was really good to hear their report. I think there are about 40 applicants that wanted to go into the nursing program and that was very interesting to hear and I think there are a lot of shortages of nurses all over Canada and I don't think it is just within our territory and now we are going to have to be creative and think of ways to retain nurses within Nunavut.

What should we do to retain nurses? How can we recruit and retain and there is going to be different ways that we encourage nurses to stay or make them offers that make them want to stay. I think the nursing program should be one of our priorities by open dialogue. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Any other questions, Mr. Schell? Before we proceed to other questions, we are going to break for lunch and be back here at 1:30.

>>Meeting recessed at 12:07 and resumed at 13:38

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you for returning, Members. We will continue of with what we did this morning. At this time the members are asking questions to the candidates for Premier. I still have names on my list, Mr. Tootoo, Mr. Ningeonan, Mr. Rumbolt, Mr. Arvaluk, Mr. Komoartok, and Mr. Taptuna. Those are the names that I have on my list. The first person will be Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question, I think its quite evident as a result of the election of the people in this room, and one of the biggest, one of the two biggest issues that I heard throughout the campaign period was that people wanted change and that was one of the biggest issues that I heard out there. The other issue was that people wanted the culture of fear and intimidation and fear of retribution to be gone in the government.

So, my question to the candidates is one, first, how will you deal with those situations with the issue of that fact that people want change and also the fact that people want the culture of fear and intimidation, fear of retribution to be gone out of the government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I would like Mr. Curley to respond to the question first.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. I appreciate the question. I know this is a complex issue and a very serious one. I think all of us have heard that we want a government that is accountable and more transparent, and also the fact that the Second Assembly tried very hard, at least from the regular members' side, that we want transparency and be very clear with how the government operates.

But we also learned from a certain individual that there was a real situation that Mr. Tootoo just explained. So what I propose in my approach is that, once the deputy ministers are in place, by the Premier, and I would want the concurrence of the minister appointed to that department, to have a say or at least approve of my recommendation for a deputy minister, and if they concur with that, then I want to be completely left alone as the Premier.

I would like to see the ministers responsible have complete working ability and build a team that they think is best to deal with the challenges that their departments are facing. That's how I would propose it and I believe that would relieve the Premier's office of having any control over that.

And I would only want to deal with the ministers and not the officials' level. I would have no business interfering whatsoever or trying to control anything. I think that would eliminate fear because right now, I think there's a bit of a feeling that the executives or the people in charge are not really aware of who they're accountable to and we need to sort that out.

So I would propose that, in order to improve the culture of fear that the minister himself would be responsible for retaining the best possible teamwork and partnership with their department and if we do that then I would only have to be responsible for asking the minister exactly what is going on.

So I think that, in a way, would relieve that situation and we would want to continue to consult with the MLAs and how they feel about it and the minister would be asked to

always consult with the MLAs from the region, not just because they are minister but they must work together also with the MLAs from a particular region. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Ms. Arreak could now respond to the question.

Ms. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this is one of the very important things that was talked about during my campaign here in Iqaluit. We have to listen to the people and we have to be involved in their job in English. Our door would be open at all times. I would like to be able to have two-way communication, to be able to have teamwork.

If I become the Premier, I would say to all my staff that they could come in at any time and not be afraid to approach me. I would also say to the staff of the GN that they should be comfortable in voicing their opinions at any time and they should be able to approach the Premier without fear of retribution to be able to talk about whatever they want to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think I alluded to in my speech that there will be change with new members before the House and the direction of the government will change. I was reassured upon my election that people want me to remain where I'm at, but at the same time, they want their issues addressed.

So I'm quite open to working with all members in making sure that there is change. That there are improvements made for all our constituents. I have done that in the past, but as I said, my job is not finished. I would like to continue work as hard as I can to improve the conditions of our territory for the people of Nunavut.

In terms of the culture of fear, I don't know why there is such fear. I have governed for over nine years and I have been quite open. I try to work with as many people as I can and I enjoy my job very much. I have worked with a lot of different people. One of my attributes, I must say, is that I am always fair. Those are the comments that I have received in the past with my colleagues, and that I will remain open to new ideas that come our way. I look forward to the new challenges in the coming Assembly with all the members. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ningeonan can ask the following question.

Mr. Ningeonan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a little while ago Prime Minister Harper's government just returned. I would like to ask the candidates for premiership if they will be helping out with the federal government about gun control. What kinds of things would you do in order for the people of Nunavut to have better gun control?

Chairman (interpretation): Ms. Aariak will be the first to respond.

Mr. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the Conservative Government returned as a government in Ottawa after being a minority government, but before that I don't think that they were really aware of what the people of the North have concerns about. They are now a little more aware of Nunavut and Northern issues. They are also more open to negotiations and they have a better system.

As for me, I want to be able to work with the present government in working with them in regard to gun control. I would also like to have the support and assistance of Leona Aglukkaq, who is now the one of the ministers of the Harper Government. I feel that she will be giving more information to the government in Ottawa on how to represent the people of the North. What I'm saying is that all of the problems we have here in the north will be understood by the present government in Ottawa if only we could work together. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been a Premier for a long time and I also know the federal government's ministers and I have used their assistance and I have talked to them numerous times and I know Mr. Harper.

We have to be able to help the people of the north. It's very good to have good support from the other governments, whether it's provincial or federal. We have to resolve the issues in the north.

The present government in Ottawa knows about the gun control that we are having problems with here in the north. They have not resolved those to date because of being a minority government.

I know there are a lot of people in the north that have problems with the gun control and we will keep pushing the federal government in order for them to assist us with those types of things.

I would like to work with the present government in Ottawa in the future because there are a lot more issues that have not been resolved. The federal government seems to agree that they would like to be able to help us and start talks about devolution. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) The question posed by Johnny Ningeonan is very important. First of all, I wrote a letter to the MP to let her know that we were very happy for her to get elected to the federal Cabinet because she is the first Inuk to be

elected as one of the federal ministers. She is very open to talking with her government about the residential schools issue as well.

Quite some time ago, I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister that if he's going to become the Prime Minister, he has to be able to be open to the people of Nunavut. I told him that he might not become the Prime Minister when I was an MLA over here because the aboriginal people, Inuit, First Nations, and Métis are the hosts here in the north. We host the people from Canada for people who have not been here, they are our guests.

He responded to me by thanking me and if I'm ever in Ottawa, he invited me to meet with him. Quite recently, I wrote him a letter asking how we are supposed to feel when we get an apology. He also said that he thanked me for asking that question.

I wanted him to talk with the people of Nunavut about the issues that we are facing in Nunavut. I know that the Conservative Government has a minority government but and they might not resolve this gun control thing, but like we as Nunavummiut, we use the guns and the firearms, we don't do sport hunting, we hunt for our livelihood and I would also support the office bringing in an office from the government here in Nunavut so whoever applies for some licenses can get some assistance right here in their homeland.

I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that we can resolve this gun control and I will try that when I am elected as Premier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Ningeonan.

Mr. Ningeonan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask another question. There has been, such as organizations as NTI, for example, we have heard that they are working with the government a lot more but they are not really working together with the Nunavut government, as Mr. Kusugak stated, how will you as Premier have an understanding and working relationship with the various organizations, Inuit organizations in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik, will be first.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): I'm always very pleased to work with people and we all know that we are a little bit behind. We all have the same goal but how do we achieve our goals? That's one of the concerns we have at times and that's where we disagree at times. We can look at education as an example, starting from kindergarten to grade 12; we have to make sure that they achieve their education and to seek higher education outside of Nunavut if it's necessary.

We have to make sure that we achieve that goal and to make sure that we preserve our language, but at times some people out there think that the government is moving too slow. And we're aware of that and we agree that we want to achieve our goals as expeditiously as we can but we have to make sure that we look at our students that ongoing education will be a party and if we can do that then we can achieve our goals.

Of course there is going to be disagreements along the way but I can tell you that we have a come to an agreement on more cases than not and that means we'll have to work together to achieve those.

We have an annual meeting and this is going to be, what we're going to be doing again for the upcoming years. I will want cooperation from our parties from the people of Nunavut because we have to make sure that we build that foundation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the government has a working relationship with Nunavut Tunngavik and the other organizations. We have to look at new initiatives. We have tried for eight years to work together with the other organizations.

We have also seen the Thomas Berger report on education in *Article 23*. Once that report was shelved, they never opened it again. We have to put out the Thomas Berger Report once again so that we can achieve some of the suggestions and recommendations that were made and face the federal government again. We all have to look at new initiatives.

Quite awhile ago there was a question during our orientation about the governments and aboriginal people. How can we work closer together? We are a public government. We represent all people in Nunavut, not just Inuit. Due to that we always have to try to reach an agreement with the entities out there during the negotiations stages.

There was a program that was set up, which was the Hunter Support Program. It's not a right, it's a program, and for other issues like housing, family values, and there are organizations that are dealing with those. There has to be a closer partnership and to pool our financial resources in order to achieve our goals. Once we start that, and not only focusing on the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, we can achieve our goals.

As Premier we'll have to look at how we can have a close working relationship with the organizations and entities out there. This is one initiative that I would like to take on as Premier. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Ms. Aariak.

Mr. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nunavut Tunngavik and the Nunavut government have to have a closer working relationship. It's very true what Mr. Curley stated, we are looking at a two-tier system. We have the Nunavut government that is a public government, and Nunavut Tunngavik represents the Inuit beneficiaries. Even though they are only working for the beneficiaries, we have to look how we can have a closer working relationship between the two parties. How they can negotiate and cooperate on similar issues. There has to be better understanding between the two parties.

There is room for improvement and we have to look at what the public government should be responsible for and what Nunavut Tunngavik should be doing so that we don't overlap on what we're doing. Then again both of them are working to better the situation up here. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Your final question, Mr. Ningeonan.

Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all know that there is a shortage of public housing and it is a major problem throughout Nunavut and the \$200 million federal fund is nearly extinguished.

As Premier, what steps do you feel need to be taken to ensure that public housing continues being built throughout Nunavut. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley, first of all.

Mr. Curley: It's an important question and I think all Nunavummiut appreciate you for raising that issue. I know that because in one of my points that I raised, that ten point plan I did, I think we need to be bold with our negotiations in Ottawa.

I think the previous government, as well as Inuit organizations and NTI, did take a bold step. But let us not be fooled that they negotiated with the different government when this current agreement was entered into. So I think we do have an opportunity to negotiation with a new arrangement. That's what I would do, I would step up the need to come into a new arrangement with the Government of Canada to try and ensure that all Nunavummiut, the housing needs addressed and put into reality.

I know that we do have a very difficult time up here to try and introduce the private housing for the public to do. But we also need to look at our own funding, whether or not we could increase public housing by way of using the P3 approach, provided that the costs are not greater than the public housing costs. I think it's attainable.

I think we should set aside a certain amount of funding from our capital pool to encourage the private sector to take part in providing public housing. We do it as citizens. Those of us that cannot afford to pay for our own housing enter into long-term agreements with the banks. We can do that proportionately, not 100 percent of the needs of the housing, but a portion of it, let's say 30 percent annually.

I appreciate the Premier and his Cabinet did issue a policy, a P3 approach and I am strong believer in that and that is one way, I think, to achieve some of the crucial shortages of housing in Nunavut. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not a new issue. We have been discussing this for many, many years now by different of government, starting from the community government, local housing organizations, Housing Corporation, and the federal government.

It costs a lot of money to build more houses and, of course, we have financial constraints. But we have to keep working on it and to keep negotiating with the federal government to get money to build houses.

We should also work with the other organizations like, different organizations, to lobby the federal government with one voice because, of course, they have the same situations and we also have to work together with the other stakeholders that have the same interest. Working together and partnering with different organizations is a very important component of lobbying the federal government.

When I was campaigning, the Elders' houses and even the homeowners, and because they're getting on in years, they know that they can't maintain their houses. So, they're looking at different housing systems. Whether they should be moving into the homes or to the Elders' centre, they're looking into the future on and they are, there is an aging population of private home owners out there who are on fixed incomes and who cannot maintain or operate their homes.

So there are a lot of different options that we can look at especially accessing more funds to build more houses and to partner up with different organizations to lobby the federal government with us. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I am very proud of my record in succeeding to get \$200 million for housing in Nunavut. It was by far the largest allocation for any government in the country at the time, and at the time I also said with my minister that this is not enough, we will need more and that day is coming and I will continue to press this matter with our colleagues.

I must say, in our last First Ministers' meeting that we have good support from our colleagues from southern Canada because they will stand to benefit. When more houses are being built in Nunavut, we are spending money and buying lumber from the forestry industry where it has been suffering very much because of a slow down in the economy in the rest of North America, so we are getting very good support in this area from the rest of our colleagues.

But I must also say that we want to move as many of our good constituents to their own homes and tackle poverty that way. When we do that we open up more opportunities for those that are waiting on the waiting list for social housing.

So I think one way to pursue it ourselves as well is to make sure that we do our part in moving our constituents along from social housing to rent premises or their own homes by training them and getting them out of welfare. That is one area that we can do ourselves in the meantime but it is something that we will continue to tackle as a government and as a territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When it comes to youth and teenagers in smaller have-not communities that are some distance from regional centres like Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, it seems that athletes in these communities don't get many opportunities to participate in sporting events that occur. As Premier, what steps would you take to ensure that athletes from all communities get an equal chance to participate in these regional sporting events? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will get Ms. Arreak to respond first.

Ms. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank the member for posing that question.

We know in Nunavut that we have a very large youth population and their percentages are more than the adults. Recreation and activities are very important at the community level and because I just got elected I haven't looked or studied on exactly what kind of recreational activities are being made available by the Government of Nunavut, but I will make sure that I look at the whole component of it and I would also want to learn more about what the youth of Nunavut would like to see at the community level.

It seems like we focus more on our Elders but we still need to hear the voices of the youth and to see what their needs are or what their wants are. I would make sure that I look into this issue as a whole. Thank you very much for your question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I outlined in my speech that I want an inclusive government and I would commit to my colleague that every Nunavut youth should be given the opportunity to take part in the Arctic Winter Games. It should be a Team Nunavut reflective of our territory regardless of where they may be from.

So I will commit to my colleague that I would direct our department that deals with this matter to fix it because we can do better. Our Team Nunavut should be representative of the entire territory, and not pockets of where is most convenient to bring our athletes forward for these games, and other games throughout the country.

I thank my colleague for raising this matter because it is something that has to be fixed. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the question as well. I know that what you just said is a reality, not only in your Deep South riding but throughout the Nunavut territory.

I remember one particular example when the Arctic Winter Games trials start coming up. Even the bigger communities and some families that have very good athletes are not normally on those tickets because they lack a bit of old time friends that are around who can put them in those positions, let alone being isolated.

But what I would propose as Premier is that I would instruct the Minister responsible for Sport North that he review all of these programs, particularly when it gets to competition, that there will be a fair opportunity for small communities to be included in regional travels. But in the end, the people who run these sports organizations have to build the best team possible.

As the Premier, if I were to enjoy that position, I would ask the minister responsible to overhaul the selection process to ensure that small communities have an equal opportunity to participate. That I will pledge to the member. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Your last question, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question is; I've had many phone calls from residents from across Nunavut this past week, and it seems that people are not happy with the way our government is ran.

As Premier, what changes do you feel is needed to gain back the people's trust in this government? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I must say that we are continuing to tackle very difficult matters before us and it has not been easy. I must say that we have made significant progress for the rest of our territory but it is a real challenge trying to lead this territory. I must say that with continued hard work we could have a real impact.

The last term was very successful because we were focused. We set out what we wanted to do as a government, and we accomplished them. I look forward to your new ideas and reviewing them as a government and making sure that we implement them. That has been my role and will continue to be so. I will always continue to reflect what the people's wishes are, and hopefully, they'll regain confidence in our territory, in our government, in particular. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. As I said, that's a very serious question, and one that should not be taken lightly. There was an earlier question that there appears to be an appearance of culture of fear and intimidation. That kind of thing has no role in the government. There should be no room for that in the government.

You asked the question, what would I do? I will reverse the question, what will you do now that you have been mandated to change? The public has spoken. It's time for change.

So I think with your vote to me, as the Premier, I will change the attitude of the government. The minister will be accountable to continue development and perform services for Nunavummiut. The Premier's role is to support every minister carry out their responsibility. We must have the best civil service in place that is not worried about intimidation from the Premier's office. I would instruct the political staff not to have a direct relation, or contact with the deputy minister because I feel that that responsibility lies with the Premier and the minister.

So in order to have trust, confidence, and teamwork, the Premier's office must back away from intimidation or appearance of intimidation, and the policy should be very clear and transparent that no political staff will have a direct relationship or contact allowed from the Premier's office, other than the Intergovernmental Affairs group of people that do certain coordination with all of the departments.

That I would ensure but it starts with your vote, not mine. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think I covered quite a lot of that in my earlier speech this morning.

I strongly believe that we need to re-inspire the government at all levels so that they will want to stay in Nunavut and so that they will want to stay in government departments and work for the Government of Nunavut, instead of leaving and going on to other things.

We need to eliminate, the famous words by Hunter Tootoo now, eliminate the fear and intimidation, and I think I heard a lot about that during my campaign. And re-inspiring of the government is one area that I will really pay close attention to in working with all of the MLAs and, of course, the deputy ministers and the ministers alike. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Shewchuck may now proceed with questions.

Mr. Shewchuck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the environment, with the wonderful resources Nunavut has, and the land, water, and wildlife, it forms the basis of

Inuit culture. My question is: with the increase in land use activities and development, what kind of approach would you have to protect these very important resources?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley will respond to the question first.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) That was unexpected. I would like to respond in Inuktitut first of all. I think Mr. Shewchuck knows where I come from. People grew up on the land and know the land, water, and everything around their environment. To this day, the aboriginal people have been using everything, even the air. They are the best caregivers of their environment.

What would I do? If that was the question, I would respond by saying that there are more activities going on out there. We have to keep in mind that the Inuit are very knowledgeable about their environment and now, there are some clashes between scientific and traditional knowledge.

In one article, it says biology and they are called scientists, but some Inuit are more knowledgeable than the scientists that put their views out there. So there has to be a closer working relationship between scientific and traditional knowledge, not only from the government's side but from all aspects. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak may now proceed with a response.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That will be a constant topic that we will be dealing with in the years to come and it will only increase with the mining activities that are being discussed. Although the mining situation is on a downfall at this point, there is no doubt that there will be a renewed interest later on.

We have our expertise within our own homeland, the Inuit knowledge. We also have the expertise of the western culture, the scientific culture. We have to merge the two knowledge's together and come up with the right solutions to the problems that we may be facing when it comes to potential damage of our renewable resources and our environment.

I think, we need to establish good and trusting and understanding between the Inuit, the hunters, the environment and the industrial culture. We need to find a balance as to how that can work, as to how we can move towards keeping the pristine nature of our land and at the same time accommodating the forces that we are coming up against, in terms of industrial development or mining and so on.

So I guess finding the balance between the two is crucial. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) a challenge that hasn't come to the floor as much yet. We have been fortunate with not a lot of activity but its something that will be coming.

I must say that we have quite a few instruments to try and assist us in managing our environment. We have the Language Planning Commission, we have the Nunavut Impact Review Board but I must say that we have been behind in through the Language Planning Commission, for example.

It would be great to have a plan for whole territory. There has been some plans for some parts of the territory that has allowed us to develop certain parts of our territory and, at the same time, protect some sensitive areas.

So, I look forward to working vigorously with my, our partners, NTI and the federal government to, hopefully, to push for more planning during the downturn of the mining activity so that we can have concrete plans to allow for; whether it should be mining or oil and gas activity in a given area and when it can take place.

So, this is something that should be worked on fairly quickly so that we can allow for control, development in the territory, that's called for in the Land Claims Agreement. We need those jobs in the mining sector. We don't want to scare them away. But at the same time, we have to ensure that our future generation knows particular areas that are very significant to our past and require protection. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Second question, Mr. Shewchuk.

Mr. Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Being a previous Government of Nunavut employee, what kind of policies would you look at to decrease the number of vacancies in GN staff and also, how would you strengthen staff retention. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. We will have Ms. Aariak to respond to that question.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. It's been quite some time now that there is always a concern that the Nunavut Government employees are not many in numbers. I feel education is very important, from the time you are a child to the time the time you're growing up.

We have to be able to support those people who want to take training in a way of funding, whatever they want to pursue from the time they're very small to grade 12 and beyond, such as universities.

We want to be seeing a lot of people from Nunavut attaining the highest education that they can get and we have to try to push the students for them to complete their high school education and beyond. This is a long term commitment that we have to pursue.

If we try to resolve it right away, we could pursue training on jobs because we are not using it too much as a government presently and we have to make sure that we encourage people to take on the job training. There are a lot of young people in our communities that should be taking on the job training and they are not doing that.

As well, the employees of Government of Nunavut are not trained or are not oriented and they are not given any professional training. If that was the case then they would be in a better position to know what is expected of them and for them to climb to the top even though they have just been employees, they can go into management fields. As well, we have to look at the staff housing of the government because the price of housing is rising all the time and we noticed not too long ago that as soon as the staff housing price went up that gives the employees hardship.

I think that would be put in policy from the beginning of the school age to management fields.

Chairman (interpretation): At this time Mr. Okalik will respond to the question.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, I have heard this before and in the past year I have taken some steps along with my Cabinet colleagues to try and respond to this matter.

First we froze rent and at the same time we introduced an allowance for those employees that are in private accommodations or in their own homes to retain their expertise in our government. We also provide a very generous package to all our employees in the recent agreement to try and assist us in retaining those employees that we value very much throughout our bureaucracy.

At the same time, as one of my colleagues mentioned, we hope to see more Inuit in our government. We are at 52 percent today, our goal is 85. The more vacancies there are, the more opportunities there are for our Inuit population to take on some of those challenges within our government, and I look forward to introducing more training programs and more assistance for our students in trying to pursue a career in our bureaucracy or wherever they may want to work.

So this is an ongoing file that I hope that we can change and improve for all of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you and I appreciate the question from the Member for Arviat. I know this is a very crucial question. I think the Human Resources Department has to do a thorough assessment and actually updated the whole vacancy throughout all the levels of government because it is staggering and quite significant.

I know that in my constituency they are probably close to 100 or more vacancies as well as the casual staff. So we have not done all that well. The permanent positions continue to be staffed by casual positions for years and really, I think the record that we see publicly from time to time are not totally accurate because some of these positions are not funded and therefore they continue to be vacant according to government records.

So there needs to be complete cleanup of the system so that we have a base to work with. One of the things that I would propose is that we establish a recruitment policy that is in tune with the local community, local culture. That includes that, even if we have outsiders coming in or new comers coming in, we have to make sure that they become part of the community.

I know that question is important to many because we need their services, whether they be voluntary or not. And that will not happen unless we recognize them as members of the community, whether they be teachers, nurses, or the justice officials, police officials.

But in larger communities it begins to work, in a place like Rankin Inlet. There are many non-local people that do play a big part in volunteer services but with respect to the long-term, we really need to tighten up the incentives for nurses, the nursing profession, as well as, doctors and teachers. These I would deem to be essential services. I think these essential services, if I were Premier, I would want to make sure that compensation or benefits are geared to having them in Nunavut for a long time.

And that will take a bit of work and I would ensure that the minister responsible would do a thorough review rather than just reacting to crisis at situations. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Last question, Mr. Shewchuk.

Mr. Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. An important issue to the Kivalliq Region of Nunavut is a proposed all weather road between Manitoba and the Kivalliq communities to the south. Can you give me your views on this project including negative impacts and benefits to Nunavut? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The first person to answer the question is Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This is one project that, I have kept a very close eye on because it's a dream.

Its a dream for, plus Nunavummiut to be able to access the outside world by other than air or by sea. We have to connect to the rest of the country and the world and I'm pleased that there has been a lot of good work done between our government and the Manitoba and I think they're down to selecting routes. So, the studies have been done, and I hope that we can move forward.

I just renewed our agreement with Manitoba last summer and we agreed that this is one area that we have to focus on because it can't be built just by ourselves. We will require help from our national governments and I agreed with my colleague in Manitoba that we have to strengthen our ties and, keeping with that, I'll be hosting the Manitoba premier in the coming year and we agreed that we will take turns in hosting each other in the coming years to strengthen our ties and to work on major deposits such as this road.

And yes, there will be a careful study on the negative impacts, whether it be environment or the people but its something that we would love to see for the whole territory. It will benefit not just Kivalliq but the whole territory when it opens up opportunities for our citizens in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At this time, you can respond Mr. Curley

Mr. Curley: And again, another very important, very serious question as well because transportation is somewhat limited throughout all of Nunavut.

The question that you raised that I think that it should be answered specifically, what are the negative impacts and benefits. I know as a member of the Kivalliq region, where an all weather road is being planned, for Manitoba and Nunavut connection. I know there are many constituents particularly in my riding as well, and other parts of Kivalliq, Arviat and so on, they are concerned about the negative impacts.

Negative impacts are real. I think that people are afraid that the influence of the illegal drug trade will increase, and that will destroy the fabric of families, starting from the youth, and there will be no doubt that the flow of drugs will increase as a result of an all-weather road.

So these are the negatives of it. Some say with respect to environment, yes, but at the same time, I think the benefits should also be considered along with the negative issues.

Throughout all of Nunavut, and I think our Member from Cambridge Bay has been an advocate of trying to develop a port in the Kitikmeot region, we need these facilities and we need these ports. We also need a long-term beachhead in Hudson Bay with a route connection.

But the question I think Nunavummiut need to address is should these route connections connect our communities or should we be satisfied with leaving them far enough so that the cost of marine transportation can at least reduce the flow of construction materials and all the goods needed to supply the mining industry.

So, really, as the Premier, I would propose a broader examination, not just an all-weather roads, one single road, one-track system in Manitoba. I think it's important that we discuss that with the Prime Minister of the country. The Canadian government owes it to Nunavummiut that they not be left out of the transportation infrastructure. After all, that's

how Canada was built, with the public funds, connecting roads, railroads, even airlines, including ships.

When you look at the transportation players in Nunavut, are they subsidized by government? No. All the airlines that are serving us are Inuit-owned. Canada wasn't built that way. Canada was built with Canadian funds and provincial governments joining together. So they owe it to us to participate in developing a transportation strategy.

I would broaden those ideas to include not just the selective groups that are doing the studies now but the public as a whole. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I understand that there are studies done. First of all, I would have to study the studies and go from there. The feasibility studies and impact reviews, and all that sort of stuff, the cost implications of the roads and so on, would of course be coming into play. So I would really be working with you as a representative in the affected area.

Again, at this point in time, I would really have to find out what it is all about and what has been done to date and what is still to be done, and what the public wants from both ends in the Kivalliq area as well as in Manitoba. So I really would have to study the study. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk may now proceed with questions.

Mr. Arvaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is about the land claims agreement. When the mining companies are developing projects, for example Baffinland, and surrounding communities in the High Arctic, the negotiation takes place between Baffinland and QIA, but Pond Inlet is left out of it, other than through QIA employees who come from there.

The previous government has not been active in those negotiations and as a result, there will be no benefits. Under the land claims agreement, it says the Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement that is to be negotiated for Nunavummiut, especially for surrounding communities.

If you become a Premier, would you get the Nunavut Government to be more active in those Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement negotiations? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The first individual to respond is Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is again a very, very important question because the economy is very important to Nunavut. I know that the member has raised a number of questions in the House on that issue.

I think it's important to lay out before the members that we have very important groups that participate in negotiating benefit agreements. Some of which are very clearly stipulated should be done prior to any development that's actually taking place. These include the Nunavut Economic Benefits Agreement, which has been negotiated by land holding groups, whether it be NTI, or the regional organization; whoever holds the surface rights to those lands or sub-surface rights. I believe they have done well with these Economic Benefit Agreements.

What I feel, and I share the member's point, as a government, during the last eight years, it has not done as well as it should, because it's claiming that it has no jurisdiction to enter into those issues; in negotiations with the mining companies, and what not.

I say, and I have said this, I think we have a pretty influential elbow. We could use that leverage, despite the fact that we don't have a resource control. We can insist that, for instance, the benefits that should come to this government are the taxes paid by whether or not these are mining companies or employees if the development goes ahead. Since the workers are not 100 percent, or whether or not they are residents, the government should look at whether taxes remain up here or if they should be transferred by the federal Department of Finance.

So all of these kinds of interests can be reviewed and looked at, but what I propose as the Premier is that the government, because the economic activities are enormous, the potential for participation of local businesses in places like Pond Inlet. The government should do whatever it can; even increasing the loan programs and incentives for businesses increase so that business groups in Pond Inlet can actually provide services to those sites.

That I would propose and I would not rest until people, like the Member from Tunnunig, and so on, if he a minister, that would be a welcome one, but even if he's just an MLA, they should be consulted and be a part of the negotiating team of the government, as we attempt to establish a benefit agreement. The NWT government used to have an impact benefits agreement. Even though they were called toothless, but at least there were guidelines that mining companies were pleased to work with.

Before the resource control is transferred I don't think we should keep our hands up in the air and wait till it eventually comes down sometime. We need to begin now. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The person who asked the question stated that QIA and Baffinland did the negotiations amongst themselves and excluded Pond Inlet residents.

The inclusion is in part in employment and I believe that including the communities that are adjacent to the mining companies should be included and is part of the training

program. I expect that in Rankin Inlet, the proposed trade school in Rankin Inlet for apprenticeship programs like electricians and housing maintainers, that trade school will include all kinds of journeymen programs.

What I would like to see included in that school is the trades program that is geared towards mining exploration and other employment opportunities because mining and exploration is not forever, it has limits. For example, if a person finished a journeymen program in the mining company, they should be able to transfer their skills to another employment opportunity within the government or the business sector, and I think that program will really help Inuit. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik will now answer the question.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We cannot change the terms of the land claims agreement but we can work towards making it more beneficial for Nunavummiut.

The land claims agreement requires the developer and the Inuit organization to negotiate these agreements where they are Inuit land. What we have done is create a fuel rebate program for these companies that want to do work in the territory and the condition that we provide is that they have to negotiate benefit agreements with communities that are affected by this development.

One case in particular was in Baker Lake where we created real tangible benefits for that community and I look forward to seeing many more of those as development increases throughout the territory, and as my colleague mentioned there is the trades' school that will be coming and that will create opportunities for all Nunavummiut to become qualified to take on the jobs that are coming with more development.

I see more roles, perhaps coming from our government, once the federal government joins us at the table to devolve responsibility to our government, and that is another vehicle we can use in the future; to control activity, and at the same time, to make sure that there's benefits flowing to the communities throughout Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Okalik. We will have a short break for 15 minutes before we go back to our question and you can go to the lounge for a coffee and refreshments. Please return in 15 minutes.

>>Meeting recessed at 14:53 and resumed at 15:18

Chairman: Can we have order in the House, please. (interpretation) We can resume question period. Mr. Komoartok will now ask questions.

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I'd like to recognize the people in the gallery who have been here since this morning and thank you

for coming back this afternoon because I believe that its very important that we're going through this process to select our premier and that is why they came back and I also would like to thank the candidates for putting their names forward.

It's a big and tough position; they have put their names put forward and thank you to the interpreters who have been providing interpreting services in both languages and thank you to the staff, the clerks, the office of the clerk, the deputy clerk, and your staff who have helped us tremendously in getting to orientate ourselves in the House.

In Pangnirtung, the Departments of Education and Health have decentralized health and education services. Sometimes when there is a supervisory position that is opened in the ads and whenever they're interviewed and selected for those positions, sometimes they don't really get to know the people in their community and really involve themselves within our communities and the only time we seem to see them is about a year later or a few months later when we see them at the airport or at the store and I feel that these people who work in these supervisory should include themselves within the community, get to know people and at least communicate with our local residents because there is no communication at all sometimes.

For those of us who live in the community have no idea what they are doing within their positions because we don't hear from them and I really feel that there should be some sort of an orientation program or some way to get to know the people that they are living with in the community because they don't give much credit to the people at the local level when they are put in those positions. So what are you going to do to have inclusiveness in the communities? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Komoartok. Ms. Arreak will answer the question first.

Ms. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you. That is a very good question. Not just in the smaller communities, in Iqaluit as well, I really believe that new staff within the public service, when they are selected they should be oriented with Inuit culture, in particular where we come from, especially for the people who are selected from the southern communities or cities.

We should have culture orientation for these new positions. That has been one of my priorities ever since I started working with the Government of Nunavut, and that's what I want to see is the cultural orientation program within the public service. When there is cultural orientation of the Inuit culture and northern atmosphere they feel comfortable and they feel like they are home and they are part of the community when they do the orientation program.

Also, within the hamlets, perhaps in the municipalities they should have some sort of orientation program and introduce them to the general public of the municipalities and to let them know that this person will now be working in their community. Orientation is a very integral part of the process especially with new employees within the government.

Although they give you a package when you become a public servant about how much you'll make, about what kind of rent you'll pay, or what kind of subsidies there are but we exclude the orientation process in these packages and I think it should be included.

(interpretation ends) If it is integrated, if the benefits information to the employees and all the other stuff that are regularly offered to new employees, if cultural orientation program is incorporated with that, I think it would greatly benefit the new employees that are coming up to the north in terms of appreciating the culture and language of the communities so that they feel that they are part of the community more. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik will now answer the question.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was part of the decentralization process where we have cultural orientation programs within the hamlet. We did talk about it initially to welcome GN employees to the departments and to include them at the local level and I don't know why it was never practiced as a regular orientation package. It does really help the employees who have to get to know the community and these orientation packages are very important and when we're doing the implementation of the official language in the *Inuktitut Language Protection Act*, I think its very important that we include this cultural orientation packages to anyone who starts working within the government.

This is an ongoing process of decentralization review and we're going to have to review this item as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with my colleagues that they GN employees have to be included within the community level or get to know the community. Especially the people who work in the health department and right up to the doctors where there is specialist who go to the communities.

It's almost Christmas and so this and other orientation packages where new employees go to the communities and they get to know the hamlet and also the elders are now being recognized as part that orientation process. It's already been in place for some time. And the RCMP does the orientation as well, especially for those people who really need help at the local level who are home-bound and we should not just think about our work, hours from nine-to-five, we should at least go out and volunteer after five o'clock, even if you're a GN employee.

There is always room for improvement and there is a lot of opportunities to help through volunteering. I really want to stress that we should help the municipalities, the hamlets to set up these volunteer programs. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Komoartok, second question.

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In 1999, when the territory was separated from the GNWT and we were given the impression that every Inuit will be given an opportunity to work within the government even if they're unilingual and there wouldn't be any barriers in attaining these jobs within the GN but right now, the way the system is working, that if you don't have a certification that you cannot enter the public service unless you're certified to that particular job.

So, because of that, there is a lot of people out there who have given up trying to apply for these because they don't have the certification. I know that these people who live at the local level, we know their capabilities, even though they don't have a certification and we know they can do the government jobs and it's just that piece of paper that stops them from attaining that job.

So, I think we would have more encouragement. It's their land, it's their home and they're always going to home and they won't leave their communities. So, I'd like to hear from the candidates for premier on how they can help at the local level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to thank the member and my colleague representing Amittuq because he was able to pass the two pieces of language legislation during his tenure. The people who are unilingual will be able to service employees within this government. We still have quite a ways to go. Even though that the case, we will have to make sure that the language legislations are fully implemented.

As I said earlier, we are behind and we have to reach our goal and be on par with the rest of Canada. We have a ways to go. If there is orientation required, we have to get the support that's needed as a government. It shouldn't be a hindrance to the people who are interested in becoming employees of the government. We now have two pieces of legislation that we can work with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I agree with them wholeheartedly. I can say the same thing. The previous minister made quite an improvement during his tenure we see something tangible, but again, we are a little bit behind.

What I would like to say is that we have to reach a goal but there is a requirement to recognize the official languages of Canada. What I would to see in Nunavut is see able employees within the government. As I stated earlier, there has been an improvement. It's not going to be achieved overnight, but we will gradually have to work at it, and as I said earlier, we have to reach the 85 percent Inuit presentation within the government. We do

want to welcome people from outside but there is the issue of integrating into the communities. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am happy to see the language legislation that was passed includes being able to work in Inuktitut and the protection of the Inuit, and the two language acts. I was very pleased to see them enacted with the previous government. What we want to see is unilingual Inuit, which was initiated by this government. For example, the Department of Justice had the late Lucien Ukaliannuk, who worked with the Department of Justice, even though he was unilingual. He was the advisor on Inuit culture.

We can also look at the Department of Education where for quite a number of years they had Elisapee Ootoovak as one of their employees based out of Pond Inlet. She was unilingual.

There has been some implementation in bits and pieces within the government, but there is again room for improvement to see how we can increase the number of unilingual people working within the government and also orientating new employees that are coming in. We have very good teachers out there who are very knowledgeable about the Inuit culture and language.

We can look at improving and integrating more of those types of programs within this government. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Taptuna.

Mr. Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I want to congratulate the nominated candidates.

The question that I have is with the uncertain global economic situation, unstable and an ever increasing cost of fuel prices which have put a major burden on this government, all Nunavummiut, community harvesters, how do you envision to deal with this issue in an effective, efficient and expedient manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is a very complex question. Nunavut certainly is not immune to the global credit crises. I think we're already seeing it with those that are applying mortgages and other business loans, they are already taxed.

So, we see that, even though the federal government may be saying, you know, our case is slightly different from the US, but the private financial institutions are going to be

holding their strings a little tighter and the credit crunches will come and impact on Nunavummiut. That is a fact and we see that having an impact before too long.

With respect to the, I know that the mining companies are already scaling down their activities. So, we're going to be seeing within a year the impact is going to become a quite real in Nunavut.

So, as premier, you know that I would initiate it a high-level steady group, you know to prepare for what might happen. I don't think we could let the sky fall and start acting later. We need to stand for these options now.

I welcomed the federal announcement the other day that the Prime Minister and the first ministers agreed that we should speed up the infrastructure projects throughout Nunavut. I believe we also need to prepare up here. So, that is one thing that I would do as premier is to get a group, a high-level group within our government, to begin planning for that slow down immediately.

We may have to start scaling back immediately also. I see quite a lot of ways in public funds that we can immediately take control. We have to slow down the travel significantly by our civil servants. There is a tremendous amount of travel going on that could probably be deferred until better days are ahead of us.

So, in terms of energy, we have a real continuing crisis because we live in Nunavut where we are fairly well, I think, connected with the market. Everything that we do is for sale. We don't get much way of, other than the public housing, social assistance or subsidy, other than the ones that qualify through our regular power subsidies and so on.

So, in terms of the federal government, I think we should discuss and negotiate with Canada to try and see whether or not they would invest into long term energy assistance for Nunavut.

How? That remains to be seen. It would require input from you guys. I would propose as a premier that there be a real debate, not only with the politicians in this House, as well as in the private sector to bring forth ideas how best to cope with this energy crisis that is frightening in some respects.

So, we could do a lot more. So far we have contained discussions on energy related issues. We need to broaden that discussion in Nunavut and I believe the opportunity we're getting some ideas that are out there and its about this government plays a part in bringing them together. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will now give Ms. Aariak an opportunity to respond.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think we have been really proactive instead of reactive, especially when we were in a situation of a volatile economic situation as we are today, to some degree.

What I said earlier this morning, is that we need to take a check list. What is working within the government system? What is working in the communities? What is not working so well? And, what can we do without. These are the kinds of things that we need to look at in order to look at the situation we are in.

Take advantage of the opportunities. (interpretation) For example, if we look at the gasoline or fossil fuel, this spring, the price of gasoline was astronomical but it's gone down and if we look at gasoline, can we buy it? Can we buy it today? Can we do some hedging so that we can buy it at the best price any time during the year?

So, there are some options that we can look at. And also, as I stated earlier, we have to look at all the options and as I called it earlier, I called it a report card this morning. For example, the decentralized communities, some of the offices have been vacant for quite a while and some employees do not want to move to the smaller communities. So, we have to look at the present situation and what is working and what isn't.

We have to be more prepared to make the required changes to our advantage. And I stated earlier, we have to be proactive instead of reactive. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I've had the benefit of some past experience in dealing with some conditions that come our way. The current situation we say is that we buy our fuel once a year and the last tanker is out there filling up our tanks and once we get that finalized we'll know how much overall the cost of fuel, we will have been charged.

And from there, I'd like to provide a discount, for homeowners in particular, that will be feeling the impact over the winter months. That's one thing that I must say that, I will do to make sure that we help our homeowners and perhaps we can look at our hunters as well. We provide a tax break right now for our hunters and see if we can do more. So, once we get a clear idea of how much we'll pay for this fuel, hopefully we'll know it before, by the end of this week we'll know. And that's one area that I can assure you that I will deal with.

We also got assurances, thanks to our finance minister, my colleague from Amittuq that formula financing that will remain in place. We will not be impacted in that way. So, our finance, at least as a government, won't be impacted negatively by the conditions that we face today. That's reassurance. But looking to our federal partners to speed up the development agency so that we can plan for the future, for the private sector to see how we can find alternate ways to create employment opportunities because there will be a

slow down in the mining sector, with junior companies being impacted negatively by the current markets.

So, we have to find ways to compensate for that, throughout Nunavut and help our smaller communities in particular. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Your second question, Mr. Taptuna.

Mr. Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The second question I have is on education. We've all seen dropout statistics throughout Nunavut. It's very high, in fact in some cases, unacceptable. What do you propose to, what kind of strategy are you proposing to setup out there to get these dropout numbers down in Nunavut schools? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The first to respond will be Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been an ongoing problem in Nunavut, especially when the students go up to the high school. That's where you see the dropout rate. It's at the high school level. For example, we do look at the numbers of students that are going to the universities.

It's good to see that we now have a new *Education Act*, which hasn't been implemented yet. I think it's going to give more opportunities because the *Education Act* is Nunavut-made and it's going to make an improvement once it's implemented. We hope to see a change in the present situation. Again, we have to work more closely together with the community DEAs and look at how we can improve the situation.

With the issue of dropouts and not completing high school there are a lot of factors; there is the home environment that affects their wanting to continue their education; lack of teachers and instructors; and different scenarios.

I would like to see more educational institutions that are geared towards the people who haven't completed their education. It's a way of keeping them out of committing crimes, or having lifestyle problems later on. Again, we can look at different scenarios. If I say it in English; to have upgrading programs, or what works is taking the students out on-the-land to teach them cultural values, and techniques, and so on. Usually when that program is introduced to the dropouts it gives them the desire to go back to school and to improve their lifestyle.

We definitely have to look at the situation as a government during this government to work closely with the Department of Education, and also look at educational laws and to work with the other communities, and the community leaders, and the school system set up in the communities. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I am one of those dropouts, but I decided to go back to school and get myself educated. So there is hope, even though our dropout rate might be quite high. There is always hope for young people to continue education, regardless of why they may have dropped out.

I must say that I have seen a lot of encouraging signs in this area. Our graduation rates are up by 50 percent since we were created as a government. When I first became Premier I went around communities and learned that young children study in hallways, and I said, "If we're going to succeed, we have to change the conditions." We have built new schools and those statistics are showing that was a good investment. We just recently passed our *Education Act*, which will require a bilingual system. No longer will these young people learn more about other people than themselves.

So I think by creating more pride in who they are, which is what took me, brought me back to school is learning more about myself, that we can do better and we have done better, and we'll only get better because we have nowhere else to go. We're going up and we're not going to turn back.

I see young people that are graduating for the first time in their families. None of them in their own families have graduated before and that is truly inspiring and other young people are seeing that and they are following suit. So I see very positive signs and a lot of hope coming out of our school system. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley will now respond.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. Another very important question that affects every household and families in Nunavut. I know that my colleagues said that from the Second Assembly continue to reap the very serious statistics with respect to the failure rates, not only the dropout rates of students going to school but our high school graduation statistics is only about 25 percent of our students graduate from high school. That's alarming.

Where do the other 75 percent of students go? Do they go into the labour market or do they just become another statistic with the unemployment statistics? So I think as a government we need to do a lot more. We need to deal with this as a serious issue.

I think the education officials have tried their best to improve that but I think more needs to be done. As the Premier I would ask the Minister of Education to set up a division that would focus on not passing the problem to the local DEAs but to create a division that would focus on keeping students in schools and to continue to find ways to keep high school students in school so they can graduate.

The 25 percent high school graduation level is not acceptable. We are in a global competitive market. Everything that we do is dependant on the free market system up here. Even the cost of living continues to be quite high because our vendors up here require that they pass that cost back to the consumers. Families cannot cope with the

problems anymore, so I believe that our education could do slightly better. We need a division in there that concentrates fully on keeping students in school.

Secondly, the other part of the mandate would be that this division or officials find ways to speak directly to parents because it is not just the students' problems anymore. There are some parents throughout Nunavut, and many of us know that, that don't take education seriously and we need to change that attitude because we are not always going to be around to care and protect our kids. So I welcome that question as a very important one and I believe we could incorporate a division or groups throughout the regions so that they can actually begin to have a mandate to face the problem head on. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. We will now have Mr. Peterson ask a question.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect. Congratulations to all the Premier candidates, you're doing a fine job holding up on our withering questions. It'll be a couple more hours.

Initiatives that will most directly benefit women and children sections in form of the maintenance enforcement programs and child health welfare legislation, an expanded provision of family law services and funding for affordable housing seem to have been placed on the back burner in Nunavut.

As Premier, what would you do to ensure that issues most central to these important groups of our society receive their share of government attention and resources in the Third Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will have Mr. Okalik respond to that question first.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.(interpretation ends) I share your concerns in terms of maintenance enforcement. We made amendments during our First Assembly with the rest of the country to make it easier for single parents to claim maintenance enforcement from the rest of the country, but that requires more updating so that it will be easier for single parents to access. I look forward to more opportunities to address the issue of affordable housing.

We have made some progress but as I said, we are still very much in short supply of housing throughout our territory and I am working with our federal partners to make sure that we can get more dollars for this very important matter for everyone in the territory. We have made some progress in terms of family violence, we passed our law thanks to your support and we have made some headway in the *Midwifery Act*, to accommodate more culturally appropriate midwifery throughout the territory.

But I hear the call for more work in accommodating children, for example, and in my speech I made a commitment that we have to look at child welfare legislation to make

sure that it is culturally reflective of our traditional practices and reform because we have to improve the system to reflect our territory and improve it for the families that are affected and we will continue to lobby on legal aid for family law.

That's one area that Nunavut is not alone on. Our territorial and provincial colleagues in the rest of the country have been pushing for this very hard throughout the territories and the rest of the country and they have passed resolutions in their own Houses and perhaps we could do that as well. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley will answer the question next.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that my colleague has advocated continuing improvements on this particular that he raised. It is very complex sometimes with families with conflicts or whatnot have no place to go to and so on, and I think our whole social programs really have not been improved upon for too long. I think it is about time that there be a full consultation, not only with the politicians but social welfare groups and agencies and groups in communities.

I would also insist that the families must be involved in finding solutions because I could tell you that my culture and my people sometimes feel that they are completely left out. They have no business in resolving conflict and whatnot for family situations when they occur and it is really quite complex because the laws that govern that stuff are very complex because of the legal issues and other stuff, but I believe that we could wade through all that if we mandate enough as a Premier to the Minister responsible because I think the Premier should initiate a direction and seek consultation from all groups that have had an impact.

Our welfare system is really outdated and it was not too in tune with Nunavut. Our traditional family value system is really quite ideal and one that I think worked in the past. I am very close to an Elder who had had a very strong family connection. Even though he is a widower now I spend time with him. When I visit with him my nature is, when I visit with him I don't make a time appointment, I am there for an hour or two if he wants me there.

So we need to find a way for bringing back the families together. In terms of providing facilities and services, I believe it's possible to find more affordable housing. I remember when I was a MLA for NWT, the first ever single housing unit that the government invested in were as a result of my pushing the government at that time to establish single-bedroom units for younger families. They had never done that before; they never thought about it before.

And yet, in a place like Rankin Inlet it was crucial because many people migrate to Rankin Inlet and we cannot even accommodate people that are moved there by the justice system. They normally are left out on the street. They move there and we don't have shelter homes, or anything that can adequately facilitate these people.

As the Premier, I can only promise that I would want to see an improvement on how we deal with those things. In terms of making public housing more affordable, it may be a challenge, but I believe that through consultations with the business partners and entering into a long-term agreement with them, we may be able to solve some of the immediate pressures on social housing. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. This is a long-term goal that we are going to try to resolve. Sometimes the grandparents are the ones that look after the children. I agree with Mr. Okalik and Mr. Curley that the grandparents have to always look after the grandchildren, but there should be a child advocacy department to look after those children, and to also amend the existing legislation to make sure that they are adequate for our territory, and to amend them, and to have more funding available for those families that have inadequate housing. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My second question of a similar related topic. It's amazing statistic in Nunavut, it's probably unlike anywhere else in Canada, more than 50 percent of our population is under the age of 22. The population of Nunavut is 31,000 people, so it's an amazing statistic. Hundreds of our young children and youth that are facing difficulties are in government care.

We've talked about this in the Second Assembly. Many of them do not have voice representing them when they are in trouble when dealing with the Government of Nunavut social services, or dealing with the police, or schools, or that they're in foster care.

I've done a lot of research over the years and Nunavut is currently one of three provinces and territories without a child advocate that reports directly to the minister, or directly to the Legislative Assembly on behalf of children. The Yukon is currently working on a child advocate, and it will probably up and running in two years.

My question for the candidates: what would you do as the Premier to support the establishment of a culturally appropriate independent child advocate that reports directly to the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At this time I would like to have Mr. Curley respond to that question.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would thank the member for raising that important question. I know he tried to urge the government to proceed with this particular spokesman for the child advocacy. I appreciate the member raising it again because with this connection, with a culturally experienced representative, I think we must not delay that vacuum any longer.

Too many of our young people are going through very complex state right now. I have had a number of these young people come to my office. I remember my heart was touched is that he came in said he slept under the house last night. That was in November. In a place like Rankin Inlet it shocked me and it really touched my heart. I appreciate that.

I think as the Premier I would commit to working with the member that we establish that program that representative provided that the family units of our community are involved in finding solutions to people that are in a very serious situation. I will commit and I would want to work with that member as we craft the legislation and regulation to establish that position. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Arreak will respond to that question next.

Ms. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business of looking after social issues in Nunavut is a very huge project. The children and teenagers all have to have someone to look after them.

If we're going to look at getting a child advocacy legislation, that would be one of the things that I would do as a Premier. Anything to do with social issues that are very large here in Nunavut because of high unemployment, lack of housing, and lack of jobs, I feel that as a Premier that we would have to look after a child advocacy act for that. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would commit to my colleagues that I would introduce legislation and reform the child welfare system during our term. It cannot wait.

We have to make it reflective of our society and our traditional practices. We have made some progress but in this area children have waited long enough, so I will commit to my colleagues that there will be legislation on this. To reform it and to make it reflective of the challenges we face as a territory and make it work better. What we have today is not working and we have to fix it. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Your third and final question, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the candidates for those answers. Mr. Chairman, coming from the Kitikmeot it is a fair distance from Iqaluit and I have heard over the years in the floor as MLA and during my years as mayor and just as a citizen of the community of Cambridge Bay that people often feel like they are left out of the decision-making that goes on in Iqaluit in the Legislative Assembly, and they've told me over the years that you don't use the word alienated but that is a word that often comes out, western alienation. I'm sure my colleagues will confirm what I am talking about.

People feel like they are not being adequately represented by the government on their concerns and issues aren't being heard and being dealt with. I know I talked about it in the Second Assembly and I tried to get commitments from the ministers to spend more time and deputy ministers to spend more time in the Kitikmeot to explain how the government helps people recognize their issues and concerns so that they could be more adequately reflected in the policies and legislation that we pass here in the House.

My question for the candidates; as the Premier what would you do to engage the Kitikmeot region and make them become more fully part of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak will respond at this time.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. When I was the Languages Commissioner, that's what the people were saying, that the Kitikmeot region felt kind of alienated from the Nunavut government. I would like to say that I would consult with the people in the Kitikmeot. If I'm going to be elected Premier, I would go to the Kitikmeot region because I haven't been there for quite some time. I would go there to hear from the public what kinds of concerns that they have.

If you feel that you are being alienated, you should have more voice and bring your concerns. There's an English saying, 'Squeaky wheel gets the grease.' You should be more vocal because you will be noticed that way. Because the Kitikmeot region is quite far away, it's probably the reason why they don't get as much as the other communities.

As the Premier, I would look at the communities in Nunavut fairly and not leave out any community because their needs are different. There are people in the east, in the Baffin region, in Sanikiluaq, the Kivalliq region and the Kitikmeot region have different needs, unique circumstances, concerns, and requests.

I would look at the Kitikmeot region the way I see the Baffin and the Kivalliq regions because we have to look at all of the communities and all of the regions in the same way and their different and unique needs. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik will now respond.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The issue of feeling alienated is something that is of real concern to me as Premier and as the one serving, let me know what else I should be doing.

And at the same time, I commit that I go to those wonderful communities in the far west at least two or three times a year and I will continue to do that, and check up on what else can we do for those communities and how can we do better. It's something that is going to be an ongoing question for our government. We will try and respond; we have tried to

respond in the past. For example, when the mines went under, unfortunately, we responded with a program to try and accommodate those displaced employees.

So I'm very sensitive to our borders, whether it be the west, the High Arctic, or in the southern part of our borders, because we have to be a government for everyone and be sensitive to their expectations. When you're further away, it's a lot harder to feel the impacts of the government. So it's one area that I will continue to pay very close attention to and be more sensitive to, so I appreciate that question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley will now respond.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, member, for raising that because it a real, you know the ongoing feeling that's been developing out in that region. But one thing that we did during the last federal election is that we now have a direct, I call it a direct pipeline to the Prime Minister's office. At least from that point, I think it's a real improvement, significant improvement for the region of Kitikmeot.

Kitikmeot, compared to the other two regions, has gone through tremendous challenges throughout the history because of the early Europeans coming in and so on, very much different from the two regions.

Having said that, and I understand my colleague's question, I would propose a number of measures to improve that. Failing to move the region closer, I would propose that all the ministers be directed to have better communication with the MLAs, the municipalities, and economic groups.

I can give you an example: I live in Rankin Inlet, which is quite a large community. It has regular communication systems and flight connections with headquarters. There are times the ministers are in town and I'm not even aware that they were in town, even the Premier for all that matter, a number of occasions. I think we can improve that and I would improve that.

Any minister or Premier travelling must communicate ahead of time that he's coming in, whether or not the MLAs are in this particular list or not. It should be wide open, that they should be consulted. I would propose that be the policy.

Secondly, I think the Premier can certainly improve communications. I'm thinking, and I've been thinking that, would I be successful in attaining that position. I would have a, sort of like a hotline telephone for either Nunavummiut to propose ideas to the government, that can be printed out and shared amongst the Cabinet ministers.

I also would propose that I at least would have as a premier by-weekly radio show so that we improve in reporting exactly what the government is doing and explain, do a part of an accountability to Nunavummiut and in hopes of getting a feedback from our communities, municipalities, and mayors and whatnot from Nunavut.

The communication should not be restricted only to the economic group that, or the, what I call the ones that are established and means of traveling to the headquarters. So, I believe that question is so important that it should be also applied to the ministers in their performance in serving Nunavummiut. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At this time I will ask Mr. Elliot to ask a question.

Mr. Elliot (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As the light here gets brighter I feel like my intelligence gets less. All the questions that I was going to ask have actually been asked but a couple have come up. It's nice to hear each of the candidates talk because, as it is, I know it's being recorded so we can throw it back it them later, in terms of their commitments to us. So, thank you very much and it seems like one of the platforms that I had when I was running in youth are definitely an issue.

Something that hasn't been mentioned and it's definitely a tough issue all across Nunavut is the statistics that we see and that's the suicide hasn't been raised yet today but it's definitely some of the social issues. I know every community, when something happens in a community involving suicide it kind of stops the community for a day or so and I'm just wondering, there has been so many different studies done across Nunavut and it feels like we're being studied to death.

To me, what needs to happen is there needs to be an implementation plan come up and actually followed. So, if you were in the position of premier, what would your role in having that happen?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The first person to respond is Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I raised this in my speech that we have to do better and we can do better. I have had some able staff that have been hired, 30 this year that have been doing a lot of work. So I look forward to coming to this House and presenting options, along with my Cabinet, on how we can improve our services in this area because it is not something we're very proud of. It's something that we have to change. But it's not just government. It has to be a broad section of our territory.

So it's something that we are working on and I hope that the work we do in the future will have an impact because everybody that I know has been impacted by it. It's something that tears our society apart and it's something that tears me apart. Being Premier, it is something that I've tackled personally. Thank goodness for my family; they pulled me through. It's something that, unfortunately, it has been suffered by a lot of our constituents and it's something that we have to work on and improve in the territory and as families.

So I commit to you that we'll do something. I can't identify exactly what right now, but it's something that we will be tackling in this term. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley will now respond.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member's question. I know that this one is a very complex one. I think one that has affected us all because when a member of our community chooses to go that route, it's very complex and affects everybody.

I have been very cautious of how I phrase in response to questions of this nature because I believe it's more than I could handle. The reason I say that is because I'm not 100 percent ever convinced that the government can do all of what should be done. What the government could do is to enable the community groups, the families, with more ways to communicate with their children and that goes to the heart of one of the principles that have as a candidate, strengthen the family values.

If we strengthen the home, if we establish programs that are family oriented ... I know that there have been good programs established through the Community Wellness Program I welcomed the government for that. I think more could be done.

The reason I say that is this: because on November 22, part of which I missed, and I need to get a copy of, that every member who is involved in community work, social welfare officers, should get a copy of Pierre Karlik's radio interview and his comments on families, impacted and affected by suicide. Be very cautious on how we phrase and talk about that because he believes there are many youngsters that have a negative impact when you speak about it too openly, other than in a closed setting with them. So he proposed a number of ideas. I am going to get a copy of it and have it transcribed. We should all listen to it.

I believe we need to provide more resources, and not just have national/territorial bodies to deal with all these complex issues because we're dealing with life and life issues are very complex sometimes. We need to work with the communities and even the faith-based groups in our communities. They can help us out. By continuing to have separate groups doing that, we're not going to get anywhere. We won't get control of that.

So I propose that the minister responsible will have to continue to improve that service and consult with members of the Assembly, as well, because I think it's what we should deal with in closed settings as well as open ones. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. It is indeed, a complex situation. We have been immersed in it. I think each and every one of us who is here has been touched by it in one

way or another. There is no one answer unfortunately. That's the problem. There is no one answer.

We are lacking in some of the services that are essential in helping people who are in crisis situations. We are lacking mental health capabilities too in terms of crisis intervention. We are lacking in social workers that would deal with situations like that.

Although a lot has been done in terms of studies and numerous workshops but is it making a difference? It is the very question we have to ask ourselves. Are all these workshops and studies and research and all that, are they making a difference? If not, why? Are we missing the boat here?

Over the last several years all these initiatives have been done and nothing is changing. The suicide rate is still very high. It hasn't come down. There must be something wrong. There must be something that we're missing, and what is that? I think it is for each and every one of us to think what that is. What is the missing link? And again, I'm not saying that there is one answer that one would find.

Empowering youth goes a long way. When a person knows where they come from, who they are, and where they are going, there is more sense of empowerment within themselves. They feel more youthful. They are more creative. They have more energy. They want to do more things and so on.

Of course, we are in a high unemployment situation but then again there are people who are affected by it and so on who are actually in the employment sector. So again, there is no one answer to that. I think it takes a whole lot of different initiatives, different resources, and perhaps even a different mindset as to how we see suicide in order to move us a little bit forward involving everybody, the youth and all the way up to the elders.

I don't have the answers. As it is so complex, it's not just our problem here in Nunavut, it's a global problem. So every aspect of the community situations, I think, still need to have a long look at the whole issue. But, I feel that there are certain things that can make a difference.

In some communities elders are utilized to be with young people to help them find out who they are. The land, hunting, and camping skills program is of help too. There are many things that different communities and different organizations and individuals are trying and some are making a difference. We also need to look at other areas too.

(interpretation) There are different reasons why that kind of stuff such as suicide happens but we have to get something to help the young people and the elders to work together. This is an ongoing thing that we have to deal with because we need mental health workers and we need social workers but also there are people in the communities and elders that can help out with this kind of issue.

This business of suicide is going to need a lot of work from the government because there is nothing on paper and there is nothing out there that we can use to prevent this suicide. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Like I said just before the question period, I warned you that we were going to give you a limit. Keep the answers to the point and the questions to the point. Mr. Elliot.

Mr. Elliot (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to thank the candidates for the answers. It is definitely a hard issue and, again, I think it's the way we look at it. The Embrace Life Council is an example, instead of calling it suicide prevention, they are looking at it the other way. So here I am going on.

The next question, question number two: Poverty, it was brought up in Mr. Okalik's platform speech and he was alluding to the fact that Mr. Peterson has been bugging him about it for the last couple of years. I just had the question for all three candidates; how would you tackle the issue of poverty? How would that look?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will get Mr. Curley to answer first.

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nunavut has a very difficult economy; it has a mixed economy as well as a traditional economy. Depending on which sector of the economy the person is engaged in ... I grew up in a traditional economy and I never for one moment, when I was a kid, ever thought of poverty so I think it depends on exactly who you are asking the question to.

I know there are many that are engaged in traditional economy who never really think of poverty. So what do you mean by poverty is probably one definition that we have to ...

Are there many members who are my colleagues who have grown up on traditional economy that have a wealthy kind of a prosperous life, including solid family values and no social breakdowns? So when we talk about poverty it really is a question I need to research better but when it gets down to the urban life where it is more evident, we really have to collectively engage our policies that have an impact with our business communities as well.

They certainly are going to have to find ways to provide commitment to local labour markets and our educational program as well, but when it gets down to those that are constantly on the social safety net, we could only do so much with our social safety net program.

So I think it is going to take time, in my view, to deal with that thing but I think we cannot afford to work separately with our communities and municipalities. We need to have an engaged solid relationship established with the municipalities so that we collectively work together and that's going to take a bit of time. To me it is a challenging one because poverty is not only territorial. I think it is also a national problem that needs

more resources from the federal government particularly geared towards dealing with the younger generation that was mentioned earlier

We need long term training programs and input negotiated with the federal government so that there would be solid affirmative action related initiatives brought in from the feds. They do very well in supplying provinces a labour market initiative but not enough for this part of the territory. I believe that those things would help release some of the pressure that we have. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. To keep the response short because it's a very big question, it's got to do with; it's connected to, education.

We have to be able to give the small business people some incentives in the communities because there are a lot of things that anybody can do to start a business such as guiding and tourism. And, they can take training and work at the same time, on the job training. Because we know that in this world, looking at the whole world, education is part of our lives today. So, if you have an education then you can get employment. We have to make sure that the people out there are told. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank my colleague from Cambridge Bay once again for giving me this wonderful idea and I use the term campaign for my riding. It's one area that we can tackle and we can do something about this.

I'm a product of going back to school and getting myself two degrees. It was hard but it can be done. There are only thirty thousand of us in Nunavut and it's a young population so it's a real opportunity to get our young population educated and put them back to school. Find out their skills tests; we have wonderful programs already that can assess each individual's potential. We assess them but we have to follow through on creating training programs more effectively for the jobs that are coming our way to the territory.

So it's one area that I would love to focus on and have a real impact for the young population that is coming forward and joining the workforce. I look forward to this challenge, overcoming it, and having much healthier productive society in this territory regardless of where they may be. So I applaud my colleagues for their questions on this and I look forward to working with every one of you so we can overcome this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The last person to ask questions will be Mr. Elliot.

Mr. Elliot: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe my last question should be if everyone is ready to vote?

>>*Laughter*

The last question that I have or the final question is; with the Nunavut territory receiving eight-five percent of our funding from the federal government and a lot of talks about devolution; is our territory ready for that?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. The first candidate to respond is Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): This is an excellent question. Are we ready today? Do we have the human resources? Do we have adequate human resources? But we know that the federal government and the territorial government are still negotiating and I'm sure that there are still in the negotiating process and there is progression.

I think I would better respond by looking at where we are at right now and see what kind of human resources we have and if they are adequate. Can we generate our own revenue? We have to look at the different aspects of the whole issue and then I would give you a better response to your question. You asked if we are ready. That's an excellent question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This is one area that I have grown accustomed to answering over the years and it is something that has never been asked of other jurisdictions.

Nobody asked the provinces if they were ready to take on those areas of responsibility and I find it puzzling why we have to answer this question because we can do a much better job than what is taking place out of Ottawa. It is our area, this is our home, we plan to be here for a while and we would like to take care of it. Whether we would have the workforce or not is something we could talk about. It's on the table in the discussions with Ottawa. We would like to talk about training for the jobs that will be coming with this opportunity.

So I hope that we can make real progress during this term. It is something that we would love to take over and assume so that we can manage our own resources and benefit from our own resources throughout our territory. We have such good potential in minerals, oil, and gas that if we can assume that responsibility, we would be one of the have territories in this country and I look forward to that day very much. It will be a proud day to be a Nunavummiut when we are on our own and we don't need outside help. We have been here before and we used to run our own country.

So we can do a much better job than what's taking place now and I look forward to taking over the role. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer is yes. I would rather have 85 percent revenue coming out of our own resources and 15 percent from Ottawa anytime. Yes, we are ready. Over 30 years ago James Arvaluk asked me the question, "Are we ready to have our own government? I said yes and the answer is still yes. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Pauloosie.

Mr. Pauloosie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would first of all like to congratulate the three individuals who are running for the premiership. My question is in regard to the people of Nunavut and especially in the High Arctic area.

In the High Arctic area, the price of food and gas is higher than the more southern communities. There is a subsidy program or food mail subsidy program that was set up by the federal government to help offset the high cost of food that has to be transported by airplane to the northernmost communities, or to the northern communities, but the problem is that these subsidies are not reaching the consumers and that was the whole intent of the program. It was intended to help the consumers by offsetting the high cost of food or fuel. The subsidy is spent by the time it arrives into the community and the residents do not see any difference in the costs.

Usually, what happens is it stops at the retail outlets and merchandise is not subsidized, even gasoline. If any of you are successful in your bid to become Premier, will you commit to undertaking a review of this program to see how it could be operated to benefit our people? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik will respond first.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is the responsibility of the federal government but we have kept informing them that we want to look at the Food Mail Program further to see how we can improve the system. There have been improvements in the past but more must be done and this is not completed.

I will keep lobbying the federal government. We now have a representative from Nunavut who is one of the Cabinet members and our concerns will now be heard by the federal government. We have to make sure that the benefits of the Food Mail Program are reaching the consumers. Most of the intended benefits have never surfaced to date.

Again, I brought up the issue of the high price of fuel. We will be looking at providing subsidies to homeowners especially and we will have to revisit this issue. This government will have to look at other benefits that could be provided to the people of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley will now respond.

Mr. Curley: Thank you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Eruk Pauloosie, for bringing up this issue. This is an issue that has been brought up on more than one occasion and this is one issue that continues to resurface in my constituency. The Food Mail Program is operated by the federal government and there's more usage of it nation-wide, but there's room for improvement, as the current Premier stated, such as improving the delivery system.

The retail outlets are the ones who are benefiting the most from the Food Mail Program which subsidizes the transportation costs. There are the retail outlets and the Northern stores that use the Food Mail Program and again, the program pays for the freight, but the subsidy isn't passed on to the consumer. So that's where the problem is. As Premier, I will ensure that the benefits go right down to the consumer. We have to massage the federal government policy to better fit Nunavummiut.

In regard to the price of fuel, there's a decrease in the price at the global level but we're lagging behind, here in Nunavut. We bought the bulk fuel when the price was very high. We will have to revisit this further as a government. We have to look at the market prices very carefully.

I would pose this question to you: there are quite a number of federal departments in Nunavut, and they can pay for their utility costs and they can buy their own fuel, however, the costs of fuel purchased by the federal government are passed along to the tenants. Due to these reasons, the setting of the fuel prices can be reviewed by our government.

So there is room for improvement and I will make sure I deal with this issue once I become Premier and see if we can set up other benefit programs. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the question about the Food Mail Program, I agree wholeheartedly with the other two candidates that there has to be a review done by both levels of government. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Pauloosie, do you have any other questions? Mr. Pauloosie.

Mr. Pauloosie: No.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At this time, I have no more names on my list for questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will take advantage of being able to call you Mr. Chairman today because after this it will be Mr. Speaker all the time.

My next question that I would like to ask the candidates and I know it is something that I've said as a member and publicly over the years, on numerous occasions. It's the fact that each and every one of us that's here has a job to do. At some stage, even though it's a consensus style of government, you're not always going to have a full consensus or agreement on issues, or policies or anything.

There will be times when there are disagreements. Every member here has a right to be able to raise their concerns if they don't agree with a position of the government, or a decision of the government. I've seen, in the past, it doesn't really matter what it's in. We all have that right. We don't have to, as an individual; we don't have to agree with what another member is saying. I don't have to like what they're saying but they have a right to say it. They're fulfilling by doing that, by saying what they want on behalf of their constituents and the people that selected them to represent them. They have that right.

It doesn't always go along with the position that the government takes whether it is an organization like the union during collective bargaining or a newspaper that publishes an article that doesn't reflect nicely on the government, or any other organization in the territory that has a conflict with the government.

How would you handle that, when you're going to be faced with that criticism? As individuals that are seeking the position, I want to know how you are going to handle that conflict whether it be a member, an organization, or a body, or even a newspaper in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley, first of all.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the member's question. I think it's an important one also. We represent diverse groups in Nunavut. I think we ended the debate in the Second Assembly with a very complex issue as well. I had to do with the transportation policy. I disagreed with a group of companies that I, as a member, belonged to. There was a beneficiary related group of companies that had entered into a partnership with a non-Inuit beneficiary company to provide medical travel and benefit from all of us.

I publicly disagreed with them so I don't have any problem whatsoever in proposing my public duties whether they conflict or not. I'm not bound by an alliance with any group because this is a public government and we are here to provide the best service for the Nunavut territory rather than to a certain group.

I would advise members, whether those who you represent be Inuit, or not that we are there to consult with all these groups and not just select ones. So personally, I don't have problems whatsoever with that because they will be part of my consultation group whether they belong to a beneficiary group or other public groups for that matter. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would expect fairness and a balance of information, the right information, on both sides and would work with you, as Premier and as elected members whenever there is a conflict and try to come up with the most logical, efficient solution with you. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) This is one area we have worked on and I must say that I've grown accustomed to it but at the same time I will continue to improve myself and I appreciate contributions made by all members in this House whether they be supportive or not of any decisions we come together on.

On any given day I'm put down all the time so I've grown to accept that and it doesn't matter. My focus is on the interest of my fellow Nunavummiut and how much more we can improve as a territory and that will be above and beyond any criticism that I receive. I will continue to act in a way that is in the best interest of the territory and not get distracted with minor disagreements that we may have. Like the campaigns, they are over. It's now time to turn a new page and face the challenges ahead us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will give Mr. Tootoo the last opportunity to ask questions.

Mr. Tootoo: I asked my last question when I get it anyway. I thank the candidates for that response.

I guess one of the other concerns that I have and everyone should when you're looking at selecting an individual for a position like this. We've heard the word teamwork used a lot here today in responses by all the candidates.

I know we just talked about disagreements here in the House with members that aren't in government and other organizations outside of government, and whether it be unions, newspapers, businesses, or whoever.

Within your Cabinet, I've heard that we'll let the ministers do their jobs so leave them alone or work with them. We also hear that you're going to direct them well as let them do what they want. So, when you run into a conflict, and if you truly allow the ministers to deal with and perform their responsibilities under the portfolios that they have, and they come forward with something and it may not get full agreement around the table or with you as an individual member of Cabinet, as the Premier, how would you handle that? How would you handle that within that smaller confined group of Cabinet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): If I understood you correctly, the Cabinet has the authority and as long as there is a majority then I would follow it. If I was the only one opposed to it and the rest of the Cabinet agreed with the decision at hand, as I said, the majority rules and I would follow with the rest of the majority.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik.

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I've had the luxury of working with all kinds of wonderful individuals as ministers and I can say that at one point or another, I had disagreements with each and every one of them but we found ways to overcome them and face challenges that are far greater than our minor disagreements, whatever they may be. So that's one of the benefits that I have learned from being raised by very wise people. You live life. You leave those behind and focus on the future and the present.

One of the proudest moments that I have seen was in this House when we passed our Languages Acts. I felt at home, and that was in collaboration with one of my ministers. That's how strong and wonderful it can be when it works. Let's focus on those issues where we agree and accomplish wonderful new things as an Assembly. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Curley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yet another important question. For myself, when I talk about partnerships, partnerships is bringing people with different ideas together, otherwise there won't be any need to bring a team together to face the challenges that we have in Nunavut. So with a new group of MLAs here, I think there's a lot more talent than the Second Assembly or for that matter, the First Assembly, which I think was weaker than the second one.

So having said that, the parliamentary style that we have allows for major debates in the House. There should be more debates in the House on public policy issues. That hasn't really always happened here. I would propose, as the Premier, that there will be major issues that are presented for debates, whether they be broad, open policy matters, and allow some input to come in.

In the end, it's the Cabinet that will eventually make the decisions and there will be discussions and debates, and that's a welcome sign. That's the way it should be. I hope every Member of the Cabinet will come in with their solid ideas and proposals. I would propose always a debate in the Cabinet, rather than just instructions.

The only time the instructions from me would come in is where I have made a public commitment, where there is a general consensus, where a number of debates have already occurred, and it is a time for decision. But in the end, it's still, again, after the debate from the Cabinet. The Premier has the discretion to either go ahead with the proposal

from a member that was in question or if the majority rejects the proposal, then it's not moved ahead.

So I think the idea of having a real discussion is healthy because we have diverse regions and each region is unique in its own. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At this time, I have no more names on my list for questions. Are members ready to vote?

Some Members: Agreed.

Election of Premier

Chairman (interpretation): The Table Officers will distribute the ballots. (interpretation ends) I ask all members to proceed to the Voting Table in an orderly fashion, please.

Chairman (interpretation): Has every member voted? At this time the ballots will be taken to a secure area in the precinct and we'll take a brief recess.

>>*Meeting recessed at 17:06 and resumed at 17:20*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I anticipate that the appropriate motion will be moved in the House at its first sitting to confirm the selection. I will now invite the Premier-elect to make a few remarks. Ms. Aariak.

Ms. Aariak (interpretation): Do I still have 20 minutes?

>>*Laughter*

I did not finish my speech so I could try to finish it off.

Thank you, very much my colleagues, for of all. First of all I would like to thank my family, my children with all my heart. Also I would like to thank my colleagues that voted for me to become the Premier, the people of Iqaluit East, and the people of Nunavut. I thank you, very much.

There were a lot of people that asked me to try and become the Premier. Thank you, very much and I am hopeful that we will be working closely together, although we will have some debates once in a while because that's part of the parliamentary procedures.

I will do my best to be a Premier and I will be open to work with all the people and to work with the employees of Nunavut because they have great expectations and I will provide that for them. I also hope that each and every one of us will be able to work together. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

Nominations for Cabinet Positions

Chairman: Thank you. We will now proceed to the selection process for the Members of the Executive Council of Nunavut. I will first review the procedure for the selection of candidates for the Executive Council of Nunavut.

Members have agreed that the forum will select six ministers at this time to serve on the Cabinet. The remaining Cabinet position will be selected at a later date. Following the close of nominations, each candidate has up to ten minutes to make remarks. As agreed to by Full Caucus, they'll be no question period.

I remind members that if you're nominated you must immediately accept, or decline the nomination. The floor is now open for nominations. Mr. Schell.

Mr. Schell: Yes, I nominate Mr. Shewchuk.

Chairman: Mr. Shewchuk, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Shewchuk: Yes, I accept. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Shewchuk;

Mr. Shewchuk: I would like to nominate Fred Schell. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Shewchuk. Mr. Schell, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Schell: Yes, I do.

Chairman: Mr. Tapardjuk.

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): I would like to nominate James Arvaluk.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Taptuna.

Mr. Taptuna: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate the Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Keith Peterson.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Peterson: Yes, I accept.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate Mr. Peter Taptuna.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Taptuna, do you accept the nomination?

Mr. Taptuna: Thank you. I accept.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Ningeonan.

Mr. Ningeonan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate the Member for Rankin Inlet South and Whale Cove, Mr. Kusugak.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Kusugak, do you accept?

Mr. Kusugak (interpretation): Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Komoartok.

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): I would like to nominate Eruk Pauloosie.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Pauloosie, do you accept?

Mr. Pauloosie (interpretation): Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate Mr. Louis Tapardjuk.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tapardjuk, do you accept?

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Yes, I accept.

Chairman (interpretation): Are there any more nominations? Mr. Ningeonan.

Mr. Ningeonan (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to nominate Hunter Tootoo.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tootoo, do you accept?

Mr. Tootoo: Yes, I accept. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Komoartok.

Mr. Komoartok (interpretation): I would like to nominate Mr. Paul Okalik.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik, do you accept?

Mr. Okalik (interpretation): No, I decline.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Okalik has declined. The floor is still open for nominations. Mr. Pauloosie.

Mr. Pauloosie: I nominate Tagak Curley.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley, do you accept?

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I decline.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley has declined. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to close nominations. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Arvaluk has made a motion to close the nominations. Do you agree? Thank you. The nominations have been closed. We will continue. The members that have been nominated will have 10 minutes to speak. I will begin by asking the members by their surnames. Mr. Arvaluk.

Mr. Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to thank the people of Pond Inlet and the other communities because the people in Pond Inlet said that if I was to accept the nomination for Executive Council that I would accept. That is why I accepted the nomination.

I just want to begin by saying that I have been known as a Member of the Legislative Assembly that I follow the wishes of the Premier and the majority of the Cabinet. I think Paul Okalik knows that I worked really hard when dealing with a department.

And further, I was proud of the fact that my previous portfolio of the Department of Education has passed the hurdle of completing the Education Act. I was quite happy to find out that the last government approved the legislation. I also have several issues in my mind, especially some unfinished business that we are now experiencing issues with, and these are the types of issues that were voiced by the three candidates for the Premier's position, such as the lack of funding and the fact that we have to look down the road as to how we will try to make Nunavut self-sustaining.

In particular, in looking at the mining sector and other sectors that can help create economic development, as well, this issue is a very difficult one that my colleagues will know, since I have experienced it myself. We will have to lobby the Canadian government as much as possible, especially if Nunavut is to catch up with the rest of Canada. We have mentioned docks, schools, health centres, health centre nurses, land

survival training and other issues that we have to prepare our arguments for presentation to the federal government.

Our new Premier-elect will require the support of all the executive members who are elected to Cabinet, whether it be myself or others. If I am elected to Cabinet, I would want to support our Premier completely, as the Premiership is a very difficult position to manage. I would like you to note that although it seems like a game at certain points, once you are elected to Cabinet, it becomes quite difficult. If your Deputy Minister wants to have a breakfast meeting, you have no choice but to attend, since there are issues you must resolve.

Actually, I wish to support the Executive Council and Government, to develop a plan to ensure that our residents have a better future. There are many duties and responsibilities inherent in these positions. I would like to thank the last government, however, it is impossible to complete anything overnight and we still have legislation that was drafted during the NWT era, which we have to adapt for Nunavut.

There are still quite a number of Acts that we will have to consider in the immediate future, and this point, which was raised briefly, is social services. We have to look at this from a different perspective, and try to resolve them especially when our people are experiencing problems with adoptions.

I have heard that they are not utilizing the custom adoptions anymore and that they are no longer following the Inuit customs. This concern was expressed to me during my campaign and I know that I can be a good team player, and whomever is elected to the Executive, I believe that I can work with anyone. I am proud of my ability to work with anyone and that is why I agreed to this nomination. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arvaluk. I will have Mr. Kusugak.

Mr. Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank Mr. Ningeonan for nominating me and I would like to congratulate the new Premier. I am happy to be able to sit with my colleagues today, and I am proud to associate with people who have been here since Nunavut came into being in 1999 to date. The members who have been involved, including Mr. Okalik have done a tremendous job and I look forward to working with all of you in the upcoming years.

Just like you, when I was campaigning for Rankin Inlet South and Whale Cove, I looked for and asked the public what they would like to accomplish and what their concerns were. I shared those concerns with them. However, in presenting my speech to my colleagues as to the reasons why we should be elected to the Executive Council, I believe that we must follow a different path.

We will have to state our vision for Nunavut, how we envision reaching those goals and how best to resolve the problems we face here in Nunavut over the upcoming years. That is one of the reasons why we're here. (interpretation ends) there is tremendous strength in

the Assembly and you have many choices. We represent a good mix of seasoned, experienced and new energy. Your challenge is going to be in balancing those two forces but with this much talent around the room to work with you can't go too far wrong on any six of the people you choose, of which who are running.

I've been thinking for a little while what to say to you but I've also been thinking of ongoing on who to support. Not an easy decision. And to me it comes down to three things.

If you want to be in the Cabinet, I'd like to know what you want for Nunavut. I want to know how you plan to get us there and just as importantly, I'd like to know a little bit about yourself and if that's anywhere near what you want to know about me before you make your decision, well let me start with my vision for Nunavut.

I truly believe that we're not just here to review and debate material prepared to us by bureaucrats. We're here to lead. The bureaucracy takes their cue from us and tells us how to frame legislations and programs and services but that original vision has to come from us, us in this room and our people in our communities. And that should form the basis of the government's agenda.

Given the time available, I can only outline a few of the priorities I'd like to see addressed over the next four years; implementation of the agreement, especially Article 23 and 24 but more attention paid by both GN and the federal government, to all its provisions.

Thanks to Justice Berger we have a new blueprint for the implementation of the agreement and specifically for *Article 23*, which has been largely ignored for three years by the federal government. More engagement at the community level on initiatives, like the Nunavut Economic Development Strategy, that's where the real goal is going to occur and that's where the real cost and benefits accrue.

(interpretation) As well, family violence is one of the things that I would like to talk about and those, and we have to think about those women and families that are under family violence and I would like to assist them and decentralization of the government was a very good idea but we cannot stop it. We have to continue with it because there is smaller communities that are not being looked after, in ways of decentralization and they have to be looked at. We realize all the hamlets in the communities have employees, maybe we can learn from them but we have to make the beneficiaries work.

(interpretation ends) Those are some strategic goals but just as important as the goal is that way we get there. I think one of the biggest challenges we're facing is the question of consultation. Major decisions have been made in critical issues with inadequate or poorly managed consultation. Just thinking of the small fortune that was spent developing the first draft of the *Wildlife Act*, a draft that failed because not enough attention, I believe was paid to community input. We see weaknesses in that when we talk about medical travel, when we talk about the polar bear quota systems and so on.

(interpretation) Inuit have to be consulted as to how the government can work better. (interpretation ends) The second question I would have about any potential Cabinet minister is their relevant skills and experience, just like any job interview. I know many of you and many of you know me. I'm not going to walk around handing out resumes, although I could, but let's just highlight some of the experience I have that would be relevant here.

I've lived here. I was born and raised here. I know the needs and concerns of our communities. I'm bilingual. I've spent many years working in the public service with CBC Radio, sometimes with the Government of Nunavut, and spent a lot of years working with the Kivalliq Inuit Association in Nunavut Implementation Planning and Committee and, of course, I've served as mayor of Rankin Inlet for the past six years, serving three consecutive terms.

(interpretation): I don't want to make a long speech about what I have done in my life but if you can look at what I done you will realize that I would like, if I was to be elected to the Executive Council it would help out the people in my constituency and lastly I would like to say what kind of a person I am and how you can work with me.

I have talked to a lot of elders and a lot of youth and anyone out there and I listen to their concerns and my door is always open. (interpretation ends) I am also a consensus builder, I don't like factions but I do like to work with a team gathering ideas, forming agreement, and moving ahead.

My services as mayor confirmed for me the absolute importance of a strategic planning approach. I've seen what that can achieve and I hope to bring that perspective to my services here.

I began by recognizing the achievement of the First Legislative Assembly. They managed the incredible task of creating a new government, but in some ways I think the work for the Second Assembly was much harder. Expectations were higher and excitement of the novelty was gone. Nunavut wasn't new anymore and people wanted results. Even facing that challenge the second government made very important progress. I'm thinking of the *Wildlife Act* and of the *Language Act* for which we should recognize the important work of our colleague and new Premier Eva Aariak.

This Third Assembly is going to be the most challenging yet. Expectations are higher than ever and there is a growing sense of impatience among Nunavummiut. This is happening at the time of economic turndown which will hit both the resource and tourism industries particularly hard.

On the positive side, we have a federal government that says it is committed to economic development, to training, and to arctic sovereignty, and for the first time we have a friend and former colleague in the Federal Cabinet. The opportunity to make this a truly historic session of the legislature is there, and I want to contribute as much as I can to it.

I have never been interested in politics for the sake of politics. I even decided to serve three terms as mayor of Rankin Inlet because I needed a job. I wanted to do something for my community, and I believe I did, and I want to do something now for the members of, I think, the most beautiful territory anywhere in the world.

Now I look forward to working with you to build Nunavut, and I will count it an honour to work with, as a colleague on the Cabinet, or as a Member of the Assembly.
(interpretation) Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kusugak. Next on my list is Mr. Pauloosie.

Mr. Pauloosie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all I would like to thank the Nattilik people for getting me to the Legislative Assembly; I'm losing my voice here. Sorry about that. Thank you, colleagues, for giving me the opportunity on this Third Legislative Assembly to run for a Cabinet post.

With many different work experiences in many different fields and communities I have learned a lot over the years. Just to name a few of the jobs I have held, the latest one was with the Government of Nunavut in ED&T. I worked with them for seven and a half years in Gjoa Haven as an Environmental Land Affairs Officer for transportation planning, and with Community and Government Services as a Senior Land Officer and planner for South Baffin and North Baffin in Cape Dorset.

Before that I worked with the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven as a planning and land administrator for four years, and before that I worked with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, again, as a land officer. I worked in Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay for three years at the DIAND language inspections and exploration camps and mines in Nunavut. Before I joined the Kitikmeot Inuit Association I was a police officer with the RCMP for five years, two years where I lived in Baker Lake, and three years in Cambridge Bay.

The reason why I ran for Cabinet is because (interpretation) I wanted to help the people of Nunavut and I wanted to make a better future for the people of Nunavut too as well.

Now that we have Nunavut there are a lot of communities that are have-not and they have to be assisted, such as the Department of Health. There are elders that have to be looked after by our government, because they don't have vehicles in the communities to take the elders to and from where they have to go, and it's also very expensive in every community and it's very, very hard to keep up with buying food because it's very expensive, and there are no wages in the communities, especially for people who do not have jobs. The pension that the elders get is inadequate and they use the money to spend it on food for the whole family. I feel that the pension that they get will have to be increased.

As well as education has to be given some assistance after the kids finish high school they just quit going to school down south, even though that they can. They have no way

of funding from the government although there is, and because it's not adequate. If we want to have biologists, nurses, and doctors we would like to see the people of Nunavut take that training.

The only way that we're going to see those things is as a government if we help those students. We have to make sure that they stay in school and also teach them at the same time to live in a harsh environment. Our young people have to know how to go out on the land, as well as have their wage economy because this is our way of life as Inuit.

There are a lot of elders that don't know how to speak English that can teach the young people to go out on the land and we could pay those elders that don't even know how to speak English to make a little bit of money for themselves teaching young people.

For that reason I wanted to put my name as one of the members of the Executive Council because our community is very small and they have to be assisted in my community. There are less and less advantages for young people in our communities and there is no youth centre in my community, and other communities. For that reason, I wanted to be able to help the smaller communities in ways of education and other infrastructure in the communities, especially in the smaller communities where there's nothing.

One of the reasons that I wanted to become a Cabinet Member is I wanted to work with the Members of the Legislative Assembly. My father is from Cape Dorset, so I could speak in the Cape Dorset dialect, and my mother is from Nattilik. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Pauloosie. Next on my list is Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker-elect. I congratulate you and Premier-elect Aariak on your success today. I welcome all Nunavummiut at home and our visitors who have sat through our proceedings today. It's been a very long and historic day for Nunavut.

I would like to begin by thanking my dear family and my wife, Sandra, who is sitting behind me. She doesn't like getting recognized in the Legislative Assembly, so I kind of tricked her today.

I would like to thank my constituents in the Kitikmeot communities of Cambridge Bay, Bathurst Inlet, and Umingmaktok for supporting me over the last five years. I wouldn't be here today if I didn't have their tremendous support and they showed that support to me by acclaiming me in the recent election.

I would like to thank my friend up here, Taptuna, from Kugluktuk for nominating me for Cabinet. Thank you, Peter.

Like all my colleagues in the House today, I am looking forward to getting to work for the next four years to make Nunavut a better place to live for Nunavummiut.

Mr. Chairman and Mr. Speaker-elect, during the Second Assembly, you often heard me speak about my riding and the friendly people who live there. Even though they are my constituents, they are also my friends and neighbours. Our community has a wonderful reputation throughout Nunavut for welcoming visitors and making them feel like they're at home. Through the good times and the bad times, we have always helped each other, supported each other, and tried to make our community a better place to live. I truly believe and hope that the Third Legislative Assembly will function in a similar way.

Mr. Chairman, over the last 30 years, I've had the good fortune to be witness to a lot of positive change in Cambridge Bay and across the Kitikmeot and Nunavut. I have also been involved in a lot of great organizations that have shaped my approach to work and finding solutions to issues.

After I graduated from university, I returned to Cambridge Bay and I worked for the Government of the Northwest Territories for several years in Economic Development on behalf of all Kitikmeot communities. And I recognize Mr. Curley, he was my minister at one time and he was very supportive of our region. After I finished with the Government of the Northwest Territories, I went to work for the Kitikmeot Inuit Association and two of their affiliate organizations, the Kitikmeot Economic Development Commission and the Kitikmeot Corporation. This was all in the pre-land claims days, so they were pretty exciting days because we didn't have very many resources and we didn't have very many staff. We were able to put a lot of excellent building blocks in place that would help for the next 30 years after the agreement was signed. After the final agreement was signed, we moved forward to establish these organizations into a very formidable group that continues to represent Kitikmeot beneficiaries in many key areas, including health, political and business development. I was very proud when I left in 2004 that they gave me some plaques to recognize my years of service to the Kitikmeot.

Mr. Chairman, like several of my colleagues in this House today, I am a former mayor as well. I served two consecutive terms as Mayor of Cambridge Bay and as any mayor or hamlet councilor can tell you, being on the frontlines everyday on behalf of the people who elected you is a very special feeling. They can reach out and touch you. You're not in some town far away; they can come to your house and see you at the store, so you're always on the frontlines to help them. And they expect you to find solutions to their problems, maybe not immediately but they expect you to find solutions, and we usually did, and try to make their community a better and safer place to live. I believe the Government of Nunavut can and should find solutions, similar to the way hamlets operate.

Mr. Chairman, when I was Mayor I also had an opportunity to be an executive member of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. I was very pleased and happy when my friend and colleague Johnny Ningeonan won as MLA in his riding so he could bring his skills here to help Nunavut. Johnny and I worked together on the NAM executive to lobby the Government of Canada for increases in base allocation funding for Nunavut, housing, and a regional development agency. We've been rehashing stories over the last week on some

of those exciting days. I am very happy, I'm sure Johnny is as well, that NAM has continued to grow and today is a very strong and effective lobby and advocacy organization on behalf of Nunavut municipalities.

Mr. Chairman, when I first arrived in Iqaluit at the beginning of the Second Legislative Assembly I was a bit naive in thinking that MLAs could solve all of Nunavut's many problems overnight. I kind of thought that once you get into the Legislative Assembly as an MLA you could, but I have come to realize that that is not the case.

Many of the issues that we're facing today, we heard about many of them today; housing crisis, health and social issues, poverty, infrastructure deficit, financial reporting, suicide, weak economy, and poor workforce morale are still with us today. I believe we have made progress but it is a continuing exercise that we have to work on to stay on top of as MLAs. I have to say though, during the Second Assembly the MLAs who I worked with on standing committees and the ministers I worked with took all those issues very seriously and tried to address them as best they could.

Mr. Chairman, as a Regular Member of two standing committees with oversight for several departments and crown agencies I quickly realized that changes and improvements required time and hard work to resolve, and they will occur if all the MLAs and ministers are committed to finding solutions to the issues, and making recommendations, and implementing changes that will improve our government. My years on the standing committees has given me a tremendous insight into how government departments operate and a very sincere appreciation for the many public servants who go to work everyday to deliver the governments capital projects, and programs and services that we approve here in the House. We often hear about government employees who don't help people, but there are an awful lot out there who do help people, and I'm proud that I call many of them my friends.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that Nunavummiut have sent MLAs a strong message that they're seeking change in our approach to how we do business in the future. They know that there are no easy answers or solutions to the many difficulties that we will face. However, they are hopeful and optimistic that this group of MLAs gathered here today, and our 19th colleague who will be elected next month, will work together on their behalf for the next four years to improve the quality and standard of life in our communities for everyone.

They did not elect MLAs who want to be somebody; they elected MLAs who will help people. If you're in this business for a title then you're in the wrong business.

Mr. Chairman, I also believe that our often maligned public service is seeking change and is looking for strong leadership from MLAs who will restore their confidence that we value them and that there really is no better job in Nunavut than serving our public.

Mr. Chairman, I am standing today for a Cabinet portfolio because I am committed to Nunavut's future. I have lived here since my dad first came here in 1952 and came back

in 1968 and brought our family, and I returned from university. Cambridge Bay is my hometown and Nunavut is my home territory, so I'm very committed to it.

I believe that I have demonstrated leadership skills, executive experience, political knowledge, a strong work ethic, I'm a team player, and I can use these skills and other skills I have to draw upon to lead a government department to meet the challenges we are going to face as we move forward over the next four years.

Mr. Chairman, during the Second Assembly I worked many long hours with my colleagues to understand how the government works in a consensus model. With this experience I believe it will help me as a Cabinet Member to listen to and understand the concerns that will be raised from MLAs on behalf of their constituents and being an MLA is a very special job. People confide in you and trust you, they tell you an awful lot and so when an MLA goes to a Cabinet Minister it's on behalf of the people, it's important that ministers listen to the Regular Members because you are actually talking to their constituents.

Mr. Chairman, it is very important that Regular Members and the ministers go forward work together in the spirit of cooperation to represent our great territory to the best of our abilities. We should never have to ask questions of ourselves at the end of the day, "Did we do enough, or could we have done more to help Nunavummiut, or Nunavut."

Mr. Chairman, in closing, I thank my colleagues for giving me this opportunity to say a few words about myself, and I congratulate all my colleagues for seeking a Cabinet post today. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. I will now ask Mr. Schell to make his statement.

Mr. Schell: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to first of all congratulate you on your appointment as Speaker, and I would also like to congratulate Eva Aariak as the new Premier here. I would also like to thank my constituency; the residents of Kimmirut and Cape Dorset for supporting me. I am very happy that they supported and I am very proud to represent South Baffin.

I will provide a brief personal background so that you'll have a better understanding of what I have to offer. I was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba and lived two hours north of Winnipeg on a farm. The closest community had a population of 100 residents; therefore, as you can see, I'm used to small communities.

At the age of 18 I moved to Alberta. I spent two years working in Churchill, Manitoba at a construction site. At the age of 20 I started a construction company in Alberta, which I ran for 17 years until I moved to Cape Dorset. There I run and own a hotel and a construction company from 1993 to present.

I would also like to thank my common-law wife and my four year old daughter for the support I received on the campaign trail. I have been the Mayor of Cape Dorset for the past three years, and as Mayor, I've learnt a lot in politics. There has been a lot of volunteer work that I've done in Cape Dorset. We had an outdoor rink that we put in that we poured a concrete slab, 80 by 100, that was all volunteer stuff, which I was there most of the time. Also as Mayor, I've learnt a lot about the different issues in government from going to different meetings at NAM, and other things, and all the other concerns from other communities.

As you can see I have a balance between politics and the private sector, which I believe is important as a member of the Cabinet. There are going to be some tough times for the Government of Nunavut and I've experienced some of these in the private sector.

As a member of the Executive Council I will work hard and listen to the concerns of all the residents of Nunavut. Housing, health, and social issues and the general well-being of all the residents of Nunavut is very important to me. We, as a government, have to work together to accomplish all the issues that we'll be dealing with in the next four years.

I would also like to thank Dan Shewchuk for nominating me, and the other two candidates that ran for Premier; Tagak Curley and Paul Okalik. We have a lot of issues here in Nunavut that are education issues, health issues, and of course, social issues. Hopefully, we'll be able to do something in the next Session here to solve a lot of those issues.

Also I would like to wish all the other candidates who are running here for Cabinet positions good luck, and thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. I will ask Mr. Shewchuk to say his opening comments.

Mr. Shewchuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again I would like to congratulate you for being elected Speaker and Ms. Aariak as being elected Premier of the Third Legislative Assembly.

I would like to first and foremost thank the constituents of the Arviat riding for electing me to represent the community of Arviat in the Third Legislative Assembly. After all, it is them I'm here to represent and try and make Arviat a better place to live.

I grew up in a farm in Sandy Lake, Manitoba. I grew up with a big family; I have eight brothers and sisters so we had lots of squabbling where I grew up. I attended Lethbridge Community College and obtained my environmental science degree.

I am an avid hunter and fisherman and spend most of my free time in Arviat doing those activities with local people. I'm a long-term government employee with both provinces of Manitoba and Nunavut. I have 22 years in Manitoba with the government and seven years, the last seven years in Nunavut.

All of my government work has been with the wildlife management and environment field. Working directly, involvement with the government has given me the experience of knowing how governments are organized, structured and work. Over the last seven in Nunavut working as a wildlife manager in Kivalliq region, serving all seven communities, I have supervised nine conservation officers that worked and delivered department programs in those communities.

I worked very closely with all of the HTOs and the regional wildlife board, and NTI and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and have been involved in many consultations on issues relating to wildlife management and environment as a whole. I was also the GN appointed member to the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq Caribou Management Board. I was also the chair of our department IQ committee.

I think Nunavut is one of the last wonders of world and is blessed with the amount of resources it has. The beauty and diversity it offers in all three regions of Nunavut. Not only do I want to serve the community of Arviat, but I want to work with all the Legislative Assembly members to serve all of Nunavummiut and make Nunavut, as a whole, a better place to live.

I think there is going to be many challenges that we face. But if this week's orientation to the government is any indication we have very strong capable people in the legislature, assembly of taking on and addressing these challenges. We need to address the issues of health care, housing shortage, employment and training, social services, and provide better communities for our residents to live in.

Being a consensus government, we need to work together and govern with the highest degree of accountability and transparency and also delegate proper authorities to get the job done.

To be a credible leader, you have to be honest. Be a good listener and listen to the people and make decisions on the best information you have available to you. I believe I have these qualities. I am proud to call Nunavut my home and that's where I'm going to live.

If elected to Cabinet, I assure you I will work as hard as I can to make all of Nunavut a better place live for all of us. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tapardjuk.

Mr. Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our Premier-elect. It's too bad that we can't have three Premiers in one government but since we can only select one, we did.

First of all, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the people. When we were elected in 2004, the Premier, Mr. Okalik, gave me the Department of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth and I would like to say thank you very much for having given me that

portfolio and I'm sure that it has benefited a lot of people in Nunavut and we accomplished a lot during tenure.

It was on March 4, 2004 to be exact, that I took my first Oath of Office, as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, where I promised and swore that I will duly and faithfully enter the best of my skill and knowledge execute the powers and trust reposed in me as a member of the legislative assembly and since that was the case, that was in 2004 but I can say today that I would like to thank my constituents and the people who didn't elect me from Hall Beach and Igloolik for allowing me again to take my oath on Monday with the same pride and excitement for the Third Assembly of Nunavut.

I am still going to be taking my oath on Monday. The same oath I took in 2004 and I will work to the best of my ability, it is something new dear to my heart. I'm not just playing lip service; I will follow through with the oath of office.

Leading up to my election and in my platform, I felt that I had moral, ethical, and social obligations to raise concerns of Nunavummiut to my colleagues in this government. In this particular instance, it deals with the government's social programs in the communities and the fact that the existing *Child Welfare Act* was destroying Inuit, rather than building a healthy community.

I will be scrutinizing this as a Member of the Cabinet, or request that Cabinet review it. This has to stop. We already know the areas that cause problems with our people, it is due to this legislation that is causing problems with our constituents. That's what we are there to do, to pass legislation that meets the needs of our people. This is what makes it near and dear to my heart. There is room to make improvements, especially where it affects our people's lives and to make amendments to the existing Acts.

Departments are currently bound by current legislation and regulations. These are implemented and followed by employees who are often not aware of the need for changes and/or not knowledgeable with how to make the changes, but importantly, they may not feel that they have the authority to make adaptations to make them more culturally responsible or appropriate. They are doing their best, but due to their difficulty in making these types of decisions which they have no background in, it makes it difficult to implement and Inuit run into problems. We have to see where we have to make the changes.

The Westminster model of government and political hierarchical structures also dictate expectations and how people may behave. This brings with it, all the way down to the chains of command to the families being serviced, a range of physical, psychological, and social problems with which we are all familiar. I think we have to look at it from the other way around.

We have to listen to the local people and see where we have to make changes within our government. It is the responsibility of this government to listen to the local people in order to make the changes and in order to better the lives of Nunavummiut.

I wanted to make a lot of comments, but the Inuit culture is one of our main goals, to implement within the government system, and the questions that keep coming up are what is *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* and how does it get implemented to the legislations and the regulations, and so on. We have to finalize *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*.

The government has worked hard and has taken their first steps towards decentralization. I see the government as giving the authority to the hamlet councils. The hamlets would then be given the authority to run their own communities. There are 25 different communities and it's not fair to have laws of general application throughout. This is one of the issues that I would focus on if I was elected to be a Cabinet Member.

I strongly believe by working together we will achieve our shared goals of strengthening the Inuit language and culture. We now have two pieces of language legislations that were enacted by the previous government and it is something that I am very proud of. Again, we must not lose sight of the importance of providing our youth, the future of our society, with the tools they need to succeed and to overcome barriers. We have to take ownership of the problems in order to overcome these barriers.

All the problems that we come across on a daily basis, we have to take ownership of the problems and the social ills in order to correct that deficit, and we have to face them head on. Those issues will have to be dealt with by the Third Cabinet. I'm committed in my part in building a territory of strong, self-reliant communities that reflect Inuit societal values.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Mr. Taptuna.

Mr. Taptuna (interpretation): I thank the residents of Kugluktuk for helping me, believing in me, and giving me the honour of representing them as their MLA, my spouse Joanne, and my family.

Today is an exciting day and I am a part of this. I would like to thank Mr. Tootoo for nominating me for the position of Cabinet Member. Briefly I would like to give a history of my personal background for those that may not know me, also how I will serve Nunavummiut.

I was born and raised in the Kitikmeot. I have worked in the Kitikmeot. Like my fellow MLAs, I was sent to the residential school in Inuvik as there was no school in Coppermine, now known as Kugluktuk.

(interpretation ends) For 13 years I worked in the oil and gas industry, 10 of those being offshore, specifically the Beaufort Sea in the western arctic. I am proud to say that during that time our crew was known as the first and only Inuit drilling crew. This was a big accomplishment for us Inuit from Kugluktuk.

Following the shutdown of the oil and gas sector, mining was in its infancy at that time in Kitikmeot, which was my next employment option. Through employment at the Echo Bay's Lupin Gold Mine I completed an apprenticeship program in heavy duty mechanics earning both a journeyman and a red seal certification, which qualified me to work anywhere in Canada.

After that I returned to further my education by enrolling in the Nunavut Arctic College in the program Management Studies earning various diplomas including managerial accounting, corporate and contract law, business and administration, and human resources management.

After graduating from the college program, I felt more confident in myself to actually come and be involved in political affairs of my community, which led me to seek a seat on the hamlet council.

From 1999 to 2004, I served as hamlet councilor and deputy mayor. In 2000, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association appointed me as a director and chair of its birthright development corporation. My colleague, Mr. Peterson I believe, founded that organization. I also held a seat on the Nunavut Development Corporation. Of course, both of these I vacated upon my election as MLA.

Through these experiences, there were a lot of frustrating times throughout that period and yet, on the other hand, a lot of satisfying accomplishments, which brought benefits to my people and residents in my home community and the whole region. The Third Legislative Assembly will face many similar challenges that I faced on many occasions with my work at the local and regional level but at a much broader scale.

Although I am a newly-elected MLA and facing my first term, I am confident and capable of serving on the Executive Council. I view challenges as obstacles to be surpassed and not to hinder growth.

These obstacles are things everybody deal with and surpassed for development progress of Nunavut and doing so, treating all of its residents in a respectable, fair and equitable manner. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Taptuna. Next on my list is Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can keep calling you that today because after that, it will be Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Chairman, Madam Premier, fellow colleagues, MLAs, I would like to take this opportunity first of all to thank my colleague from Coral Harbour for nominating me for the Executive Council. As many of us are seeking your trust and confidence to serve as a Member of the Executive Council, I will bring a lot of experience and ideas to the Cabinet table.

For the past nine years I have been an effective, hard-working Member of this Assembly. As a Member of both the First and Second Assemblies, I have established a reputation for promoting accountability and transparency in government, and I have vigorously defended the interest of my constituents and Nunavummiut. I have been honoured to serve and I feel privileged that my constituents approved of my efforts and entrusted me to be their representative for a third term. I thank them very much for that.

My experience as a regular member of this legislature has given me a deep appreciation for the importance of having open-minded, receptive Cabinet Ministers. I know that regular members can bring forward many valuable ideas that contribute to the direction of government progress in our territory.

In the Third Assembly, I would like the opportunity to be able to contribute from the other side of the House. Our Third Assembly will face more difficult challenges and with my experience, I believe that I can provide positive, proactive, and progressive input as a Cabinet Minister.

We must build an economy that will support the social infrastructure that will benefit our families and our communities. We need to negotiate realistically and honestly with the federal government so that the tools Nunavut needs to become self-sufficient and self-reliant; such as the economic development agreement, resource wealth sharing agreements and a fair quota allocation of shrimp and fish in waters around Nunavut.

Other jurisdictions in Canada take those tools for granted. In Nunavut, they would allow us to increase our own source revenues to build up regional and local economies and infrastructure as well as benefit our trading partners.

The Devolution Agreement with the federal government, which thus far has eluded Nunavut, will be crucial to our success in the future. We need to ensure a collaborative effort on this issue, supported by all members and all levels of government. We need to ensure that everyone is comfortable and how we move forward to gain this level of autonomy within the federal framework.

I was born in Rankin Inlet and I went to school in Churchill and Yellowknife as well as southern Canada and furthered my education in Fort Smith and Saskatoon. I came back to work in Nunavut as a recreation leader in Arviat. I came back to Nunavut to make a better life for my children. I ran as a candidate for this Assembly to make a better life for all Nunavummiut.

I have experience as an executive board member of NWT Cooperative Business Development Fund and served on the Boards of Arctic Cooperatives and the Coop in Arviat, Kisarvik Co-op in Rankin Inlet, I served in the Hamlet Council in Rankin Inlet with Mr. Kusugak in the past. I was also a Board member, an executive board member for the Sport North Federation prior to division.

My financial experience includes the position of the corporate control officer with the GNWT's Financial Management Board Secretariat. I have hands-on experience in managing and maintaining a small business in both Rankin Inlet and here in Iqaluit.

I'm familiar with the challenges faced by both employers and working families. I worked with the NWT Housing Corporation as Assistant Director for the Baffin district before being elected to our first assembly.

This management and executive experience, I believe, will be an asset in cabinet discussions. When cabinet faces difficult decisions, the decisions that will lie ahead, they should at all times put the needs of the people that we represent at the top of our list of priorities. I believe in putting people first. After all, they're why each and every single one of us is here today.

We must always ensure that our government is accountable and transparent so that the people understand what their government is doing for them. It is crucial that people regain their trust in the integrity of their government. I believe that Cabinet needs to work as a team and Cabinet ministers will need to look beyond their individual departments to improve the quality of an appropriateness of our programs and services to find the right balance between our cultures, values and traditions and the conventional western-style of government.

I believe the GN will lose its culture of fear and intimidation. Government should be receptive, open, transparent, accountable, and fair. Members and Nunavummiut deserve to hear the truth.

If selected to Cabinet I will always strive to ensure that this happens. My door will always be open and I would be willing to discuss any issues that members bring forward. I will continue operate in a fair, transparent, and accountable manner.

We have to work cooperatively with each other and with other agencies such as the federal government, municipalities, NTI, and other Inuit organizations to arrange the partnerships that will be required to face the challenges that we will be facing.

I know what it is like to sit as a Regular Member. All members of the Executive Council must always remember that they are in their positions only as long as they enjoy the support of the House and the Regular Members. I assure you that as a Cabinet member I will work with each and every one of you to improve the lives of Nunavummiut and your constituents. I will continue to treat all members and Nunavummiut with respect, always keeping in mind that we all have a role to play in this government and our territory.

I hope that you will support me for a Cabinet position. Thank you very much. *Koana. Qujannamiik. Ma'na.* And Merci.

Election for Cabinet Positions

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. We will now proceed to balloting. The table officers will distribute the ballots. I ask all members to proceed to the voting table in an orderly fashion.

>>Meeting recessed at 18:31 and resumed at 19:01

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Members. I would like to advise the members that there will be no further voting. The following six members have been chosen to serve on the Executive Council: Lorne Kusugak, congratulations; Keith Peterson, congratulations; Dan Shewchuk, congratulations; Louis Tapardjuk, congratulations; Peter Taptuna, congratulations; Mr. Hunter Tootoo, congratulations.

>>Applause

(interpretation ends) Thank you. I anticipate that the appropriate motion will be moved in the House at its first sitting to confer the selection. I will now ask for a motion to destroy the ballots. Mr. Aupaluktuq moves that the ballots be destroyed. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. The ballots will be destroyed. I remind all members that the first sitting of the Third Legislative Assembly of Nunavut will convene at 1:30 on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 in this Chamber. I would also like to remind all members that there will be a meeting tomorrow afternoon at 1:30 in the Nanuq Room of the Regular Members' Caucus.

For those members who are not in the Cabinet, the proceedings are concluded. Thank you very much.

>>Applause

>>Meeting adjourned at 19:04