

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Tuesday, April 7, 1992**

2:30 p.m.

Date: 92/04/07

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, keep us mindful of the special and unique opportunity we have to work for our constituents, our province, and our country, and in that work give us both strength and wisdom.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

MR. CHERRY: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Member for Bonnyville, the Minister of Agriculture, I wish to table petitions from 119 teachers representing seven schools in the Bonnyville constituency regarding the Teachers' Retirement Fund.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am presenting a petition from 17 teachers at the Muriel Clayton elementary school in Airdrie related to the Teachers' Retirement Fund.

MR. JONSON: On behalf of the hon. Minister of Health I wish to present petitions from 102 teachers employed at six schools in the Edmonton-Glenora constituency. Mr. Speaker, these petitions advocate certain improvements to and a prompt resolution of matters with respect to the Teachers' Retirement Fund.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition from 122 teachers from seven schools in Edmonton-Gold Bar requesting an early resolution to the situation around the Teachers' Retirement Fund.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition from approximately 130 citizens of Red Deer expressing the need for a native courtworker to be assigned to the city to work on behalf of the growing native population in Red Deer, and I'll be following it up with the minister.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

Bill 16 Public Trustee Amendment Act, 1992

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 16, the Public Trustee Amendment Act, 1992.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Bill is to amend the Public Trustee Act to make it easier and less costly to administer small estates as well as making the setting of interests rates paid on trusts more responsive to market conditions.

[Leave granted; Bill 16 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Mountain View.

Bill 264 Financial Accountability Act

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 264, being the Financial Accountability Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Act would amend a number of statutes to make the government more accountable and efficient and to eliminate the potential for political interference in the investment

and disbursement of public funds. One of the highlights would be to strengthen the powers of the Auditor General to do value-for-money audits. It would also require disclosure of tax expenditures or revenue forgone due to special tax loopholes. It would require the tabling of public accounts within seven months of their completion. It would put the Treasury Branches at arm's length from the Treasurer's department. One of the other highlights would be to ensure that the Lottery Fund was not used as a political slush fund.

[Leave granted; Bill 264 read a first time]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 16, the Public Trustee Amendment Act, 1992, as introduced by the hon. Member for Drumheller, be put on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, in the interest of focusing our attention on the results of evaluating how well students do in school, especially to improve their education, I'm pleased to file with the Assembly today three reports, the first being the Achievement Testing Program Provincial Report from the June 1991 administration, as well as samples of students' writing from the June 1991 grade 9 social studies achievement test and samples of students' writing from the June 1991 social studies 30 diploma examination.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Public Contributions Act's annual report for the year 1991.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to table letters from 23 teachers from Park Meadows school in Lethbridge expressing their concern and requesting resolution of the TRF.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**

MS BARRETT: It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and members of the Assembly 54 students visiting us from Concordia College high school. I think this is the largest group I've ever introduced here. Each year, Mr. Speaker, their social studies teacher, Mr. Lloyd Grosfield, makes sure that his students get to come and watch the proceedings of the Assembly, and I'm pleased that he does that. He's accompanied today by Miss Patricia Pituskin and Miss Michelle Haberstock. I'd ask the students and teachers to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and members of the Assembly 37 grades 10 and 11 students from Mundare school in the heart of the beautiful Vegreville constituency. They're accompanied today by teachers Mr. Allen Dubyk, Mr. Ernie Shupenia, and Mrs. Sylvia Zacharkiw, who is, by the way, the daughter of the member who served for Vegreville in this Assembly for 15 years, Mr. John Batiuk. They're in the public gallery. I'd like them to rise and receive the warm welcome of members of the Assembly.

head: **Ministerial Statements**

World Health Day

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the World Health Organization has declared today World Health Day. Created to commemorate the ratification of the World Health Organization's constitution on April 7, 1948, World Health Day draws the world's attention to a special health issue each year. This year the theme chosen for World Health Day is "Heartbeat: The Rhythm of Health," and it reminds us all of the significance of heart disease worldwide and the actions individuals and communities can take to prevent or reduce the impact of heart disease.

The Canadian heart health initiatives currently under way are a national effort to address this major health issue. As a provincial government we are joining efforts with health units, voluntary agencies, and professional associations in the implementation of a comprehensive strategy for the prevention and control of cardiovascular disease. Earlier this afternoon I had the opportunity to participate in the Leduc Heartworks project. It is an excellent example of how Albertans individually and collectively are committing their energy and intellect to a healthier future by promoting heart health.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian health system is a model which affirms the fundamental value and equality of the individual. On this World Health Day as Canadians and Albertans we proudly recommit ourselves to the principles on which the Canadian health system is based and acknowledge its unique contribution to our distinct national identity.

2:40

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, certainly World Health Day is an important day for us in Canada and around the world, and we're quite glad to participate and welcome the statement by the minister.

I agree that the Canadian health system is a model, but I have to say at the same time that there are a great many pressures on our health care model in Canada. We now have politicians, Mr. Manning for one, going around saying that we can no longer afford it, that we have to bring in user fees, that we really have to dismantle it: I think some very dangerous trends in that position. In fairness to the minister I'm glad that she's always taken the stand that it should be a universal program, but I think we have to recognize that there are pressures.

Also, I do believe that if we're going to maintain our system with an aging population, we are clearly going to have to look at some different delivery systems, obviously moving more towards a prevention model rather than an illness model. If we look at such things as community clinics, midwifery, we'll save money over the long haul, Mr. Speaker. We have to look at the whole fee for service. So there are many things we can do to improve our system.

I'd like to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by noting that the theme chosen for World Health Day is "Heartbeat: The Rhythm of Health." If I may give an advertisement for the minister of transportation, this weekend there's a roast for Boomer Adair. I understand it's going to the heart fund, so we can go and pick on Boomer and also donate to a worthy cause.

head: **Oral Question Period**

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

Provincial Budget

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has been traveling the province trying to blame the deficit on falling

revenues instead of the real reason, the government's mismanagement. Last year they brought in a PR budget, threw in everything but the kitchen sink to say that they had a balanced budget: one-time lottery funds, the sale of AGT, overestimated the revenues such as oil and gas and sales of Crown lands. I have here a little newspaper ad from a year ago bragging about the balanced budget, paid for by the taxpayers of Alberta; they also spent taxpayers' dollars on expensive television ads: a total waste of taxpayers' money. My question to the Premier is simply this: how can Albertans believe anything this Premier says when he completely destroyed his credibility on a fantasy of a balanced budget last year?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Treasurer may want to augment my comments, but I think there's absolutely nothing wrong with a government striving to reach a balanced budget. [interjections] Sure people can laugh. Go ahead and laugh, but it is something that we strive to do. It is a tough target these days, and we tried to hit it. In this province of ours, where so much of our revenues are based on oil and gas, it's extremely difficult to forecast our revenues. What we can do is control the spending, and that's what we have done. Over the past six years we have controlled spending better in this government than any government in Canada.

Now, the hon. member talks about mismanagement. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the management of spending in this province has been the best of any government in Canada. If your revenues are down – and ours are down seriously, almost as bad as 1986 – what is the solution? I gather from the NDP's policies that theirs is to load taxes on either the corporate sector or individuals. We do not want to do that, particularly now. We have a fragile economy when the rest of North America is in a recession.

MR. MARTIN: That's very interesting. A year ago they told us we had a booming economy; now we're in a recession. We're not talking about striving to balance the budget. We're talking about truth and honesty to the people of Alberta, Mr. Speaker. Almost everybody except this government was saying that you overestimated the revenues.

My question is simply this. I'd like the Premier to answer. The truth of the matter is that it was for political reasons, going into your PC convention, that you had to talk about a balanced budget. It had little to do with the budget. That's the truth of the matter.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, what a foolish notion by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. By the way, I noticed that he went to the same school that some of the other NDP opposition leaders went to. When they ask their question, we all watch them throw the paper down in indignation. It's kind of interesting to see. He's learned his lessons well on how to be indignant.

Coming back to the budget, Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta got the most realistic assessment of revenues that it was possible to get, but there has been a tremendous erosion of prices and revenues from oil and gas. Now, that's a fact of life in this province. We live with that, and when it happens, we do face large deficits. What we will do is work to control spending, to control deficits, to pay off the debt, to stimulate the economy, because those are the messages that the people of Alberta are giving us.

MR. MARTIN: That was predicted by most everybody but the government, Mr. Speaker, including the opposition. The erosion is in this government's credibility. That's what it's all about. The Premier can go around and yammer all he wants, but we'll end up

with at least another billion dollar deficit, probably more, no matter what he says.

I'd like to follow up. This is the type of wasteful spending that you can get away from, Mr. Speaker. We don't need to spend money misleading the people of Alberta. I want to ask the Premier: how much did these ads about the balanced budget eventually cost us? Tell us about that.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I fail to understand the hon. Leader of the Opposition. Surely when the government presents its budget, the budget should be communicated to the public. I don't know what his big problem is. It is true that last year the Canadian economy was coming out of a recession. For five months there was growth, but for the first time since World War II a recovery collapsed in Canada. This one collapsed, and therefore it impacted on Alberta late in the last calendar year. There's nothing strange about the fact that a year ago it looked like we had a recovery coming on and then it collapsed. The recession in North America impacted on Alberta. It hurt people in this province, and people are worried. So now the government, at a time of lower and lower revenues, also has the problem of trying to support people who have lost their jobs and help people hold their jobs and get new ones and better ones. Those are the choices we're making now.

MR. MARTIN: You know, Mr. Speaker, what's hurt people is the mismanagement and exaggeration from this government.

I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, Mr. Speaker.

Grande Alberta Paper Ltd.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, today the Grande Alberta Paper Ltd. proposed construction of a CTMP mill which will manufacture fine-quality magazine paper without chlorine bleach and also a sawmill to produce finger-jointed, laminated, and moulded products, products which according to their information have value added equal to double that of a paper mill and three times that of kraft mill. They're proposing to do all of this without any taxpayer subsidy. I would like to ask the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife if he will now explain why he allowed himself and this government to be stampeded into signing a whole range of deals for projects that provide a fraction of the value added, a fraction of the jobs at enormous taxpayer expense and create chlorine pollution to boot.

2:50

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: I sat in anticipation today wondering what the opposition was going to come up with negative about this. Here we have a company that has a proposal to develop a project in the province of Alberta. As you know, the economy of Canada is not in great shape. Alberta is recognized as having one of the best economies in this country, if not the best, and to have a proposal like this come forward that creates jobs all across this province is one that should be received in a positive light.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, the projects that have been announced today have a tremendous economic benefit and spin-off, and the proof is in the city of Edmonton today. The jobs and the employment picture here in this city, let alone in Alberta, are much better for them being here.

MR. McINNIS: The negative comment, Mr. Speaker, was about the government, not about the project. Although there is a point. The project seeks to tap a market which has been opened up

primarily through the efforts of the environmental movement. *Time* magazine, for example, is boycotting chlorine-bleached paper. That's why there's a huge market. In fact, *Time* is mentioned in their material today.

To the Minister of the Environment: will he undertake to work with the company over the next year towards presenting a zero effluent proposal so that we can make this something that's truly environmentally friendly for world markets?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the company has proposed to incorporate state-of-the-art environmental technology. Indeed the company has indicated that if they can iron out some of the problems that have become evident relative to the closed-loop system, then that indeed will become state-of-the-art technology, and they will pursue that technology relative to the pulping component of this particular project.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I'm hearing if this and if that. Is the minister not aware that in Saskatchewan at Meadow Lake and in British Columbia at Chetwynd they have ironed out these problems and they are building mills? I would like to ask him why Alberta doesn't insist on a zero effluent mill to make this a state-of-the-art, world-class facility.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, you know, is often wrong but never in doubt. With respect to the closed-loop systems that have been incorporated into the mills that have been mentioned, some problems have been identified, and those problems involve contaminants coming through the system and back into the pulp. That has been identified as a problem by the proponents for the Grande Alberta Paper project. It has been indicated to me that if they can iron out these problems through research and development, then that's the technology that will be applied.

Forestry Projects in the North

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, Albertans have learned about the application by Grande Alberta Paper to build a pulp/paper mill with value-added components in the Grande Prairie-Manning area. It is our understanding that other enterprises are also tendering for the same tree area resource. We understand that the company, Grande Alberta Paper, does not wish government subsidy, direct government assistance. This is almost too good to be true from a government that has pushed money out to businesses like nobody could believe. I'd like the Premier to give an assurance to Albertans that no direct financial assistance will be given to Grande Alberta Paper nor any other company tendering for these Alberta resources.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we will do what we've continued to do. We will try and make sure that we have the strongest possible economy in this province, we will diversify that economy, we will broaden the opportunities for Albertans, and we will also try and provide those opportunities throughout the province, not just in the major cities.

MR. DECORE: I guess that means, Mr. Speaker, that we're likely to see more direct financial assistance.

My second question is this. Al-Pac was a great embarrassment to the Alberta people. It was a charade in the sense that the Premier stripped authority from the Minister of the Environment. Will the Premier give us his assurance that a full, complete public hearing process will be allowed to take place before any FMAs are signed or any licences given?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. member is alert to what goes on here in the House. He must know that environmental impact assessments are required. The Natural Resources Conservation Board was approved by the members of this Assembly, and this project would have to go before that board. All of the process is in place.

MR. FOX: He's only here for question period.

MR. GETTY: As far as the hon. member saying that there's a certainty of government assistance to this corporation, there's no certainty of that at all. As a matter of fact, this is a proposal. There are many proposals. What I'm pleased about is that there are people with confidence in this province who are prepared to come here and help us build a stronger province.

Speaker's Ruling Reflections on a Member

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member, just for half a moment. The Chair gets as much amusement as anyone else from the repartee, but I think one exchange took place there which is a bit unfair given the fact of the recuperating health of the particular member.

MR. DECORE: I don't want any sympathy from the hon. Member for Vegreville, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FOX: That was last year.

MR. DECORE: It was a dirty call and a dirty statement, but I can look after myself.

MR. FOX: You know that Act was passed last year in this House.

Forestry Projects in the North (continued)

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, my last question is to the Premier. The Grande Alberta Paper company has talked about value added. I'd like the Premier to assure this Assembly by telling us what the strategy is to ensure that value added is in fact given to the people of Alberta before FMAs or licences are put into place.

MR. FJORBOTTEN: Again, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry doesn't understand the process. The Bill was debated in this Legislature that each mill will have to go through. The value added in each one of these projects takes place not only through the construction phase, but if he were to take the time to read the forest management agreements, he would see that there's phase 1, phase 2, phase 3, phase 4 in some cases that adds value in each step of the way to keep more jobs here in this province. The Grande Alberta project, if it were to proceed and get approval, will be subject to the same.

Energy Revenue

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Minister of Energy and the Premier met yesterday in Calgary with representatives of the petroleum industry associations. As you may be aware, industry revenue shortfalls have been seriously eroded thereby eroding the industry's capacity, frankly, to operate. I'm wondering: can the minister indicate any assurances or commitments that he was able to give the industry at this time of critical need?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the Independent Petroleum Association and the Canadian Petroleum Association were very appreciative of the Premier taking time from his schedule to meet with them. If there was one message that was left with us, it was that it's a tough environment to do business today in the oil and gas sector.

The industry shared with us a number of externalities that are having a major impact on their businesses and other industries in North America that are in the energy sector: going back to the Gulf war, OPEC overproduction, the uncertainty of exchange rates, a higher production of lower valued heavy oil in this province, and lowering production of sweet crude oil. On natural gas, Mr. Speaker, we've seen unprecedented winters where the weather has been warmer than at any other time in recorded history on a consecutive basis.

With regard to the specific question posed by the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, I should say that our ability to respond beyond our drilling incentive program, that we put in place in the fall to try and create more activity, is really constrained by a reduction in Crown revenues to the province. Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that their pain is our pain; when they hurt, we hurt. We are all trying to adjust to the new reality of energy revenues in this province.

MR. TAYLOR: Bring back the NEP.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Premier's and the minister's reference to the serious impacts on the province's budgetary position, can he quantify for the Assembly precisely how great those impacts will be?

3:00

MR. TAYLOR: And if you do, tell Johnston.

MR. ORMAN: The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon finds this humorous, and I did hear him say across the way: bring back the national energy program. I find that shocking, Mr. Speaker.

This is one of the most devastating years in recent memory with regard to revenues. Hon. members will recall that we lost over \$2 billion, almost \$3 billion, in one year. That was a 64 percent drop in revenues between the '85-86 fiscal year and the '86-87 fiscal year. It dropped from \$4.4 billion to \$1.6 billion. The impact this year is of the same order of magnitude. We expect to see a drop of 36 percent in provincial revenues from the energy sector.

As you know, the budget figure for '91-92 was \$3.3 billion in resource revenue. That figure now I can confirm with the Assembly is a shortfall of \$1.2 billion over our budget estimates for '91-92. That has a lot to do with the externalities that I spoke about: the conditions of the OECD soft economies having an impact on west Texas intermediate and the North American recession, which has reduced consumption of natural gas in our province.

Mr. Speaker, there is optimism, and I should say that the industry was optimistic. They do see that natural gas is the fuel of the future. We will do everything we can to maintain a stable, competitive industry in a North American context.

Health Services in the Inner City

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, the Single Men's Hostel in the inner city of Edmonton operates a nursing service, which is going to be cut in half by the axe that this government is going to wield in the upcoming budget I understand. As of July 1, 1992, their nursing staff is going to be cut in half. Now, this service saves

the nearby hospitals an awful lot of money. They're able to help out people, the transients in the inner city, provide prescription drugs for them. They even provide nursing service to the women's emergency accommodation shelter. It's a very cost-efficient service. I'd like to ask the health minister why it is that she's not prepared to jump in and prevent these cuts that are planned for July 1992.

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I share the concern of the hon. member with respect to the health services that have traditionally operated within the Single Men's Hostel. We are working with the hostel in view of the decision to fund it in a different way than it has been in the past, and I'm hopeful that we can find a resolution to the issue of providing some nursing services in it.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, what the minister has just said is essentially that she's going along with reducing the nursing staff by half.

Let me just indicate right now that there are 38 beds in three dormitories, and the nursing services alone provided to the inner city in 1991 were over 9,000. Those people will be going to hospital if they can't go to this facility. My question to the minister is: will she absolutely commit to retaining the nursing service in this inner-city agency so that it can provide a cost-efficient alternative to hospitalization?

MS BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, there's more than just adding new dollars to find cost efficiency for community services. What we're trying to do is ensure that we use the resources in health in the best possible way. I committed to the hon. member here – and I will restate the commitment – that I am working through the Department of Health and with the hostel to try and deal with the needs of health in a very specific and specialized setting. I'm not prepared to guarantee anything beyond that except that we are working towards a solution. That is what I believe health is all about. It's about thoughtfully working through the management of health issues within the resources we have, and I'm committing to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West, followed by Grande Prairie.

Interprovincial Trade

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government makes a good story about reducing interprovincial trade barriers and in particular makes reference to the western accord agreement of 1989, but two months ago this government raised trade barriers, not lowered them. My question is to the minister responsible for Public Affairs: why did the government, supposedly committed to reducing interprovincial trade barriers, on February 14 send several Alberta printers a letter stating that they could no longer bid on provincial printing contracts because their shops are in Manitoba and British Columbia?

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, we're committed to the reduction of provincial trade barriers all across Canada. The Premier signed several years ago an accord with the western Premiers to begin that process. It's since expanded virtually from coast to coast, and we support it.

MR. BRUSEKER: Very effective.

Maybe I'll put it in another way then. The government's policy is not only affecting these printers but is affecting Alberta printers and preventing them from competing in other provinces. Will the

minister commit to solving this problem, not creating more barriers, and meet with these printers prior to the Queen's Printer Conference in Winnipeg this June?

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if a meeting's required, but I'll certainly undertake to solve the problem if one exists.

MR. SPEAKER: Grande Prairie, followed by Edmonton-Avonmore.

Grande Alberta Paper Ltd.

(continued)

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to return the discussion to the Grande Alberta Paper announcement in Edmonton today, because even with all of the excellent opportunities being provided to our constituency of Grande Prairie with respect to jobs and economic spin-offs through supply and services, my constituents are deeply concerned about what the negative impact could be on the environment. I'd like to ask the Minister of the Environment if he has determined exactly what the impact from such a development will be on both the water and the air.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, no, we haven't determined what the impact will be, and that will really be the subject of an environmental impact assessment. To explain the process, basically the company has agreed to follow the rules that will be set out in the proposed Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act, Bill 53, which calls for a very intensive environmental impact assessment followed by a hearing before the Natural Resources Conservation Board.

DR. ELLIOTT: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The proposal put forth by this company is now with the government, and the questions we have back in the constituency are: what is the process now, and how soon can something positive be identified to the people back home?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, at this point we do not have a proposal from the company. They have announced their intention to proceed and have defined clearly for the public what areas they intend to proceed in. There are basically two separate issues that need to be dealt with here. The first one is the Manning project. Manning is a stand-alone sawmill that we requested proposals on. Those proposals were to be in by March 31. We received four proposals on that project, and we'll deal with them as one part. The other part is the Grande Alberta Paper project itself. They will have to, of course, do more work and define their proposal more clearly with the government and then step through the processes that were defined by the Minister of the Environment.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Avonmore, followed by Vegreville.

Midwifery

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Chair of the Council on Professions and Occupations. Today on an open-line radio show in Calgary, the Chair of the Council on Professions and Occupations said that the government was not proceeding with designating midwives because it needed more public input on the issue. Albertans have been talking to this government about midwifery for years, through the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues since 1988 and more recently through the Health Disciplines Board investigation in

1991. In fact, 600 individuals and organizations have responded to this issue, and almost all recommend recognizing midwifery and regulating it through professional legislation. My question to the member: will the Chair of the Council on Professions and Occupations abandon the stalling tactics she exhibited today and recommend that formal designation under the Health Disciplines Act be introduced immediately so that implementation, education, and regulations committees can get on with the job and carry out the recommendations of the report? [interjections]

MRS. MIROSH: Actually I like the question. You should have listened to the radio talk show. That isn't what I said at all. As a matter of fact, I was promoting the Report of the Midwifery Services Review Committee. While I was promoting it, I indicated to the public that this report was out there for public discussion, and it would be important to have feedback from the taxpayers of Alberta to see if, in fact, we can afford the designation of midwifery.

3:10

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, this member dumps on a proposal that has had intense public scrutiny, saying that it may be too expensive.

The committee's report was clear in its recommendations for integration of midwives to avoid duplication of services, and there have been numerous studies on cost benefits. I will pass two on to the member for her information. In fact, it costs \$300,000 to train a doctor . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. Order. Thank you for the succinct introduction to this supplementary question. Now the question, please. Please.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, will the member now get on with the job of bringing forward the legislation so that women in Alberta can have the kind of health care they want when they have babies?

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I don't know why the member is getting so emotional about this report. As a matter of fact, the Midwifery Services Review Committee has a very excellent report, which I support publicly. It needs examination for cost. I don't think the member is aware of the cost, and the public should be aware of the cost before the midwifery group is designated for self-governing.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Vegreville, followed by Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Free Trade

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ever since they signed the free trade deal, the Americans have used their export enhancement program to steal markets from Canadian grain farmers and drive their incomes to near-record lows. Now it seems that American actions are undermining the markets and incomes of vegetable producers in southern Alberta, where prices have fallen as much as 17 percent for carrots and beets that are grown for canning. I'd like to ask the Minister of Agriculture what, if anything, he's doing to help these producers in this important industry in southern Alberta cope with falling incomes and market erosion.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the free trade agreement has certainly brought both pluses and negatives to Canada. I think it's fair to

say that from an agricultural perspective in Alberta and in western Canada, the pluses have far outweighed the negatives and have led to new jobs and new processing plants in our province. As far as the specifics involved here, if those producers are having difficulty adjusting to the marketplace, we're always prepared to work with them on stabilization programs and other forms of assistance that fit the needs.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, perhaps Better Buy Alberta should be more than just a slogan; it should mean something to processors and retailers as well. I think people have had enough of Conservative governments who always kowtow to the Americans. It's about time a government stood up to them. I'd like to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he's prepared to lobby the federal government to do an investigation into the alleged practice of dumping of American produce into the Canadian market.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, Better Buy Alberta is a program that was developed with support from this government, continues to enjoy support from this government, and is certainly a direction that we are working in, putting forward money and effort to make people aware of which are Alberta products and encouraging those people to consume those Alberta products. However, we cannot have the privilege of selling into our neighbours' marketplace, where we export a significant amount of our beef, a fair amount of our pork, and many other products, and tell them on the other hand that they cannot come into our marketplace. We can encourage our consumers to give favourable attention to our products, but we cannot bar the competitors' products and expect our products to go south. Far more of ours go south than theirs come north.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Little Bow.

Provincial Budget (continued)

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're hearing a new line now. These deficits aren't really deficits; they're simply revenue losses. How can the Treasurer continue to rationalize an ongoing, seven-year billion-dollar structural deficit under the guise of declining resource revenues when what he's really got to do is come to grips with a new revenue reality?

MR. JOHNSTON: The Liberal Party of course has confirmed time and time again that it would do one thing for Albertans: it would spend, spend, spend. It would introduce additional taxes including more sales taxes. This government does not stand for that proposition, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, what revenue lottery is the Premier expecting to win maybe next year or the year after that or the year after that or 1999 or 2005 in order to save his budget and pay down this spiraling, uncontrolled debt?

MR. JOHNSTON: I thought that the Doom and Gloom Brothers left sometime ago. We've heard nothing but doom and gloom from the opposition parties now over the past two years. We know fully that both socialist parties have lost any new ideas about how to cope with the changing environment, and certainly neither of these socialist parties have any plan of action which will take us through the '90s. This party does, Mr. Speaker. The Conservative Party has done several things over the past couple of years. First of all, when the plan of action was presented in '86-87, when

the price of oil fell to those perilous levels, we presented a plan which allowed us to work our way out of a very difficult deficit. We controlled the size of our expenditures, we used the economic strengths of this government including the heritage fund, and we did not unload the taxes on the backs of Albertans, as the socialist party and various other models have done.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, when the time comes for us to accept the challenge of the new changes in natural gas revenues, we'll do it with the same kind of evenhandedness, the same clear thinking that Albertans expect of this government. We will not use the same kind of calamitous action, the doom and gloom position taken by the opposition parties. We're optimistic about the future of this province.

Library Funding

MR. McFARLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism. There's been a good deal of controversy about the funding of the regional library systems. In fact, concern has been expressed that there may no longer be any resource sharing grants available to these library systems. Would the minister indicate if he is planning to cut the legs out from under the library systems, which rely on this funding?

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, the matter is a budgetary matter, but I can say a couple of things about the resource sharing grants. There has been a considerable amount said, granted, most of it incorrect, including the Liberal critic, who says that rural Albertans will no longer have access to library services. That is absolutely false.

Mr. Speaker, our plan to expand the rural regional library systems is continuing. Our plan to continue to support libraries in a very generous way is continuing. Any changes that are coming in the resource sharing end of things are coming to provide service in a more cost-effective and more efficient manner. I daresay that users of libraries all across this province, whether they're in small towns or in large centres, will continue to have the availability of interlibrary loans. That great service that has been provided through regional systems and through individual libraries will continue, and the books and resources will be available to be shared on an ongoing basis.

MR. McFARLAND: My supplementary, Mr. Speaker, is again to the minister. To be specific, the Chinook Arch library network has been working extremely hard for a good number of years to create a regional library system. Will the minister give his assurance that their efforts and the commitments of other municipal districts for this current fiscal year will not have been in vain?

MR. MAIN: The Chinook Arch library system has been trying to operate for a considerable period of time. The government has made a considerable amount of money available to them to continue that effort. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, on April 2 I wrote to the mayor of Picture Butte and let him know that the ministerial order approving the formation of the systems board had in fact been signed.

The question now of money attaching to that library is of course a budgetary matter, but I will do everything I can to make sure that the Chinook Arch library system will be established, that it will be allowed to operate, and that it will have staff and library resources applied to it. I hope that we can in the course of time provide all the dollars that they're expecting and hoping for and that they desperately need.

3:20

Social Assistance Policy

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family and Social Services admitted yesterday with respect to the client benefit cards that he is prepared to cut people off social assistance simply because they cannot read or write or because they are ill or disabled and will not be able to fill out the cards. The minister stated that he's satisfied that there is adequate support for clients in difficulty, but what he really means is that he is prepared to unload yet more responsibility onto community agencies. Given that other provinces have tried and abandoned the idea of client reporting cards because of serious problems, I would ask the minister: instead of implementing this plan, which will no doubt terminate people's benefits, will the minister agree to ensure adequate access to the department's social workers, which currently people don't have?

MR. OLDRING: It's not a matter of unloading responsibility onto community agencies; it's a matter of unloading responsibilities back onto the individuals who are using the services, Mr. Speaker. I don't think it is at all unreasonable for us to be able to have current information from each of the individuals who are accessing our programs. In piloting it in other regions and other offices, it doesn't appear to be a problem for individuals who are experiencing problems of illiteracy or language barriers. They're getting the necessary help and support to be able to fill out those cards. The bottom line is that it's information that we need to have. It's information that we're entitled to have, and, yes, there is responsibility for individuals in our programs.

MS MJOLSNESS: Well, I don't know where the minister is getting his information, because certainly the community is concerned that people will not be able to fill out these cards.

Given that these cards now request information about income which is currently exempt from deduction, such as family allowance, the GST credit, and the child tax credit, will the minister make a commitment that he will not deduct these tax refunds, which rightfully belong to the people who receive them?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, I responded to that last year and indicated that, no, we wouldn't be clawing back family allowance or GST rebates.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by West Yellowhead.

Mental Health Services

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We now have the recommendations on mental health services. We really would have preferred to see action. My questions are to the Minister of Health. When will the minister table an action plan with time frames for these recommendations?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me remind the House that the policy paper that I released last week provides a very sound basis for planning mental health services in this province. If the hon. member doesn't believe in the policy direction or doesn't believe we need a policy direction at all, then I would welcome her putting that on the record. I think it's a disservice to the paper to specifically commit to time lines. If she would like to suggest some time lines to the Assembly, I'd be more than happy to review them. What this is is a statement of policy, of where we want to be, and it interacts with our strategic planning on mental health as it fits into the entire health system, which does

have time lines attached to it. Perhaps she has some suggestions in that regard.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, on the contrary, the recommendations in the policy paper are exactly the kinds of things we've been asking for and demanding for years now.

Mr. Speaker, this is not good enough. The credibility of the government's at stake, as well as people's lives. Will the minister respond immediately to the need and develop functioning crisis centres?

MS BETKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the underlying assumption in the hon. member's question is that we're going to move from intensive psychiatric care in an acute care facility right out into a community care option. What this paper tries to do is look at all of the areas in between, including inpatient rehab, outpatient rehab, long-term care, community support, mental health promotion. All of those are part of the continuum of mental health that we are attempting to develop. How we deal with crisis in the psychiatric field is not simply solved by creating yet another institution. It's in getting the continuum to commit to dealing with whatever comes its way, which is what the whole focus of this paper is about.

MR. SPEAKER: West Yellowhead.

Rural Electrification Associations

MR. DOYLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of rural electrification associations are hopping mad with the Minister of Transportation and Utilities for threatening to deny them government benefits unless they toe the line and join the Federation of REAs. I'd like to file a copy of a letter the minister sent to an REA member indicating that unless his REA joined the federation, the minister would cut off government funding for things like brushing and upgrading transformers. Now, I'd like to ask the minister: given that the membership in the Federation of REAs is supposed to be voluntary, not compulsory, how can the minister justify penalizing these REAs that do not wish to join?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, the comments by the hon. Member for West Yellowhead deserve some response. Number one, there is absolutely no - n-o - cutbacks in any of the programs that are available to any member of any REA. What I did say, so that you hear it from the horse's mouth, is that if they are members of the federation, there will be a couple of other benefits that will be available, but REA members make the choice.

MR. DOYLE: The fact remains, Mr. Speaker, that the minister is using the heavy hand of government to force REAs to join what is supposed to be a voluntary federation.

Will the minister order a vote of all REAs to determine whether they wish federation membership to be compulsory, and if not, will he stop using heavy-handed tactics to force them to join the REA?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, heavy hand? I guess the best response that I can give so that it's clearly understood, and that's why I'm slowing it down, is that each of the REAs are independent bodies elected by the members of that REA. If they choose to belong to the federation, it is their choice. When the federation, whoever they are, get in place some benefits, those who are not members share in those benefits as well. So what I was attempt-

ing to do was to get the total team co-operating by saying: we take nothing away from you, absolutely nothing, but we are going to add a couple of benefits to the members of the federation, and if you would like those benefits, you choose.

MR. SPEAKER: There's an item of business related to yesterday's question period and also to Friday. The Member for Stony Plain.

Health Services for Natives

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Health responded to some comments I had made on Friday and asked me to substantiate the fact that there were in fact offers made to cost share immunization programs. I would like to file one copy of a letter from an official of the medical services branch and another copy from an official of the county of Parkland. Also, I'll send copies over to the minister so she has them on hand.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: It's simply a filing, hon. member.

Point of Order Clarification

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Transportation and Utilities has an item of clarification from earlier in the day.

MR. ADAIR: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, just to clarify. I appreciate, first of all, the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition mentioning the roast on Friday, but I do have to correct one thing. The proceeds are for the Edmonton Cardiac Fitness Institute, not the heart fund directly. If you haven't got your tickets, you can phone my office.

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

First, minister responsible for Seniors, followed by Edmonton-Centre.

Introduction of Special Guests (reversion)

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly 43 students from the Olds high school. They're accompanied by two teachers, Mr. Garry Woodruff and Mr. D. McFarland, as well as eight parents. I wonder if they would stand and enjoy the warm welcome of this Assembly.

3:30

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the public gallery are 17 students at the Alberta Vocational Centre. They're in the social studies program there with their instructor Ms Lorna Wilson. I'd ask that they now please rise and receive the welcome from the members here today.

head: **Orders of the Day**

harvesting and pulp mill and sawmill training, and silviculture training for reforestation?

head: **Written Questions**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that the written questions on today's Order Paper stand and retain their places with the exception of the following: 149, 153, 156, 161, 162, 171, 211, 281, 282, 283, 316, 332, 333, and 339.

MR. GOGO: Accept.

[Motion carried]

Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation

149. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:
- (1) What salary was paid to Brian Downey, enhancement co-ordinator of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, in the 1990 calendar year, and
 - (2) what was the last annual salary of the previous enhancement co-ordinator for the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, and for what year was that paid?

Forest Industry Training Program

171. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question:
- (1) How much money has the government spent on forest industry training from November 1989, when the forest industry training program was announced, until December 31, 1990, and
 - (2) how much of this money was spent on
 - (a) training for timber harvesting and pulp mill and sawmill training, and
 - (b) silviculture training for reforestation?

MR. GOGO: Accept, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GOGO: The government rejects that question, Mr. Speaker.

Erosion of Agricultural Lands

153. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:
- (1) What is the best estimate of the amount of topsoil lost from agriculture lands in Alberta due to wind erosion and water erosion in the periods 1980-85 and 1985-90, and
 - (2) what percentage of the topsoil in the province has been lost this way in the last 100 years, and how much of this has been lost since 1980?

Supports for Independence Program

211. Mrs. Hewes asked the government the following question: How many recipients under the supports for independence program have received training, and for those who have received training, how many have been placed in permanent jobs and what type of employment was provided for each placement?

MR. GOGO: The government will accept that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GOGO: Reject, Mr. Speaker.

Lottery Funds

156. Mr. Wickman asked the government the following question: What is the amount of the lottery funds proceeds held by the Western Canada Lottery, Alberta Division, as of December 31, 1990?

Advanced Education Demand

281. Mrs. Gagnon asked the government the following question: What are the government's projections for the increase in demand for postsecondary education from 1991 to 2010?

MR. GOGO: Reject, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GOGO: The government must reject that question, Mr. Speaker.

Students Finance Board

MR. WICKMAN: Is that 156?

282. Mrs. Gagnon asked the government the following question: What proportion of student representatives on the Students Finance Board over the last 10 years have been recipients of student aid through the Students Finance Board prior to their appointment?

MR. GOGO: Reject, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: One-five-six.

Special Waste Management Corporation

161. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question: What did it cost to produce the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation annual report 1991, and how many copies were printed and distributed?

Advanced Education Enrollment

283. Mrs. Gagnon asked the government the following question: What percentage of Alberta high school graduates are expected to be admitted into Alberta universities, colleges, and technical institutes in the years 1995 and 2000?

MR. GOGO: Reject, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GOGO: The government will accept that, Mr. Speaker.

Forest Industry Training Program

162. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question: How much money has the government spent on forest industry training from November 1989, when the forest industry training program was announced, until December 31, 1991, and how much was spent on training for timber

Meeting the Challenge Conference

316. Mr. Bruseker asked the government the following question:
- (1) What was the cost to the government of the Jasper conference Meeting the Challenge: An Alberta Roundtable on Competitiveness and Training, held on September 11, 12, and 13, 1991;
 - (2) what was the cost of producing the video *The Winning Edge*, made of the above conference;

- (3) what was the cost of distributing the video *The Winning Edge*; and
- (4) how many copies of *The Winning Edge* were distributed?

MR. GOGO: The government will accept that question, Mr. Speaker.

Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan

332. Mrs. Hewes asked the government the following question: How much was paid by the Alberta health care insurance plan for medical services rendered to Albertans outside of Canada, and of that total what was the amount paid for each main classification of service or treatment for the 1985-86, 1986-87, 1987-88, 1988-89, 1989-90, and 1990-91 fiscal years?

MR. GOGO: The government will accept that as well, Mr. Speaker.

Health Care Premiums

333. Mrs. Hewes asked the government the following question: With respect to the private agency hired by the government to collect unpaid Alberta health care premiums from October 1989 to December 1991,

- (1) what is the amount of dollars collected,
- (2) how much was paid to the collection agency, and
- (3) what is the income for the individuals who have been turned over to the collection agency for payment?

MR. GOGO: Reject, Mr. Speaker.

Casual and Part-time Nurses

339. Ms Barrett asked the government the following question: How many registered nurses and how many licensed practical nurses employed in hospitals in Alberta are employed on a part-time basis, and of those how many are employed on a casual basis, as of March 27, 1992?

MR. GOGO: Reject, Mr. Speaker. [interjection]

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me; what was the phrase we heard? [interjection] I'm just hoping the ambient mikes heard. I'm sure it was something to do with the springtime.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, can I ask on 155?

MR. SPEAKER: No.

MR. WICKMAN: Was that going to be 156? We've got the wrong list, sent by your member.

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon member. It's not discussion time. It's the Chair's understanding that a listing was sent to House leaders in the course of the afternoon. It is also my understanding, yes, that certain things that were on the original sheet were then changed, and that's why we have to listen very carefully when it comes to the deputy House leader then reading out the list. I'm quite certain that in future the deputy House leader will read just a bit more slowly so that all hon. members

can keep up to speed here. One fifty-five was not dealt with today.

head: **Motions for Returns**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that the motions for returns on today's Order Paper stand and retain their places except for the following: 295, 296, 297, 298, and 300.

[Motion carried]

MS BARRETT: That's all?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.

[Motion carried]

Advanced Education Funding

295. Mrs. Gagnon moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all documents and correspondence between the government and postsecondary institutions providing direction to the institutions regarding budgetary matters, including the increase in tuition and elimination of programs, for the 1990-91 and 1991-92 fiscal years.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, with regard to Motion for a Return 295, the government proposes an amendment, sir, and would care to send it to you and other members of the House.

Mr. Speaker, the government is not prepared to accept the motion for a return as is, but indeed is proposing an amendment to the Assembly. It would be to strike out in Motion for a Return 295, if hon. members would mark their Order Paper, the words "between the government and postsecondary institutions" and replace with "from the government to postsecondary institutions." The motion for a return as amended would read the following: that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all documents and correspondence from the government to postsecondary institutions providing direction to the institutions regarding budgetary matters, including the increase in tuition and elimination of programs, for the 1990-91 and 1991-92 fiscal years.

We think that would be ample disclosure in that we do not purport to speak for institutions in the area of confidentiality. If they share with government various information, we don't presuppose for one minute that we could proceed without the consent of those institutions to be disclosing information to other people. Hon. members are quite at liberty to deal with these self-governing boards and seek whatever information they want. My concern and the concern of government is in terms of access to information and being open. We would be quite prepared to share the directions from the government to its Minister of Advanced Education to those institutions. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, hon. members would support the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Others wishing to come in on this debate? Thank you.

Calgary-McKnight.

You do have a copy of the amendment? Thank you.

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Speaker, I would accept the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a call for the question with respect to the motion for a return as amended?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion as amended carried]

Advanced Education Programs

296. Mrs. Gagnon moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all requests from postsecondary institutions for the establishment of study programs which are currently awaiting ministerial approval.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the motion by the hon. Member for Calgary-McKnight, the government would intend and propose an amendment to the motion. It would be that the words "copies of all" would be struck out and replaced with the words "an inventory of." So the amended motion which I propose would read the following:

that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing an inventory of requests from postsecondary institutions for the establishment of study programs which are currently awaiting ministerial approval.

That way, Mr. Speaker, we think we could provide an inventory of whichever proposals have come forward from those institutions which under Bill 27 would require the ministerial approval to delete or transfer various programs. I would ask that if hon. members would support Motion 296 as amended, it would be in keeping with the intent of, I believe, the hon. member but more importantly to show the co-operation of the government in giving this information.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there copies of the amendment?

MR. GOGO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Page, would you take one directly to the Member for Calgary-McKnight, please.

3:40

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll accept the amendment, but I do look forward to the day when we do have complete information on these and other matters.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a call for the question on the motion as amended?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion as amended carried]

Advanced Education Programs

297. Mrs. Gagnon moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all proposals submitted from postsecondary institutions requesting ministerial approval to reduce, delete, or transfer study programs.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, with regard to Motion for a Return 297, the government is proposing an amendment identical as with Motion 296: that the following should be deleted, "copies of all," and replaced with "an inventory of." So the motion would now read the following:

that an order of the Assembly . . . an inventory of proposals submitted from postsecondary institutions requesting ministerial approval to reduce, delete, or transfer study programs.

We believe that if this amendment is accepted, that information would certainly be available to all members of the House as a result of an order of the Assembly. I would urge hon. members to support the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-McKnight.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I accept the amendment with the same comment as the one that I made previously.

[Motion as amended carried]

Advanced Education Enrollment

298. Mrs. Gagnon moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of all documents from postsecondary institutions to the government concerning full-time equivalent enrollment statistics for the 1989-90, 1990-91, and 1991-92 academic years.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, in responding to the hon. member's request for Motion for a Return 298, the government would propose an amendment, and the amendment would be the following. I've distributed copies of the proposed amendment. Strike out the words "copies of all," and replace with "a summary of." The motion would now read:

that an order of the Assembly . . . showing a summary of documents from postsecondary institutions to the government concerning full-time equivalent enrollment statistics for the 1989-90, 1990-91 . . . academic years.

We do believe that the government is quite prepared to share that information. We think that in many instances the self-governing boards of our institutions are probably more than keen to share this information, but we would feel as a department that we could provide a summary to hon. members and thereby, if this amendment is accepted, comply with the order of the Assembly. So I would urge hon. members to support the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-McKnight.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The amendment is reasonable. Thank you.

[Motion as amended carried]

Goods and Services Tax

300. Mrs. Gagnon moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing all studies or papers completed by or submitted to the government examining the impact of the federal goods and services tax on the operating and capital costs incurred by Alberta's postsecondary institutions.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, the government rejects this motion for a return for the following reasons. The department has not prepared any reports or studies on the effects of the GST on our postsecondary system. Each institution is self-governing, and each institution, to the best of my knowledge, participated directly in the negotiations with the federal government. Hon. members may be aware of the results of those negotiations; i.e., what percentage of their operating budget was exempt.

In essence, Mr. Speaker, Motion for a Return 300 is a duplicate of Motion 201 which was brought forward in the spring session of 1991 and was rejected. I feel that if any member or any party in this Assembly wishes to obtain this information, because each institution dealt directly with Ottawa with regard to GST, then that hon. member or hon. party should deal directly with that postsecondary institution. So it's on that basis that the government would reject Motion for a Return 300.

MR. SPEAKER: Discussion?
Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I want to take a bit of exception with the minister on this. I'm sure my colleague would have much more to say, but this has far-reaching consequences. It says here that this request is only: what does the GST do to Alberta's postsecondary institutions? The fact that any institution that's financed by the taxpayers of Alberta will have – the amount of money that taxpayers of Alberta will have to put up could be quite drastically changed. It makes it of very, very close interest to the taxpayers of Alberta. In effect what we have is double taxation. I think that citizens of Alberta would like to know exactly how much federal tax is being taken out of the province indirectly through different provincial government funded institutions whose costs have now risen. These institutions when they pay GST do not manufacture the money out of thin air; they have to get it from either the students or from the Alberta government.

The minister has quite often said that students only pay, I believe, about 15 percent of the cost of their education. In other words, the other 85 percent or so is charged against the Alberta taxpayers. Well, if that 85 percent or so has been raised by 2, 3, 4 percent, it could run into many millions a year. So I think that the government, either when they refuse to answer – I've got maybe three answers. One is they don't want to embarrass their federal cousins, which is a very poor reason indeed, to show how much we've been robbed or has been taken away at gunpoint. Secondly, they just don't know what they're paying, and that bothers me nearly as much because incompetence today is about as costly as associating with their friends in the federal government. So either excuse doesn't sound sufficient to me: one, that they don't know what the dickens is going on, have no idea what kind of a hemorrhage we have going on here to the federal coffers, or the other one where they're trying to protect the federal government. Either reason I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I would just add a few comments to this. It seems to me rather odd that a government that decided they didn't like the GST should be reluctant to give information that would help to make the case as to why the GST should not have been implemented. I suppose it has some rather odd roots in the government's paradoxical attitude toward this whole business. It's clear that the government went into the free trade agreement without any studies to indicate that it would be good for Alberta, and when the GST came along with the free trade deal, which they knew it would right from the start, it was very hypocritical of them to switch sides and decide they didn't want the GST. In fact, they went so far as to take the federal government to court to tell them that they couldn't impose the GST, that it was imposing on Alberta's jurisdiction. What a charade.

3:50

Here we are with a motion that would allow the government to release some information for once that would give some substance to the claim that the GST was not a good idea for this province, yet the government turns down the opportunity. It makes me wonder if they're worried about the Reform Party. Of course, the government is trying to attract Reform Party votes right now. I guess since the Reform Party was born out of an anti-GST movement and has now flip-flopped and switched sides and decided they're in favour of the GST and in fact want to extend

it to other items besides the ones it presently applies to, maybe the government doesn't want to alienate the Reform Party vote or something. It is a most extraordinary series of convoluted thinking that would allow the government to stand up and say they don't intend to release this information. I guess they really don't want to help the cause of getting rid of the GST.

MR. SPEAKER: Summation.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will sum up very quickly. I just feel that when the government supported the GST, they surely must have examined its impact, especially its impact on students and on institutions of learning. I find it very strange that the minister is unable to provide the type of information that we all need here in order to determine what the budget is lacking in order to support our secondary education institutions. So I do protest. I am very sorry that the government does not have this kind of information, and quite frankly I think it is shocking that they have not examined the impact of the GST on our postsecondary education system.

[Motion lost]

head: **Motions Other than Government Motions**
Green Jobs Strategy

205. Moved by Mr. McInnis:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to develop a green jobs strategy which would encourage the use of ethanol-blended gasoline in motor vehicles through a 4-cent-per-litre reduction in the fuel tax on these blends; encourage industry to capture waste heat for the purpose of cogenerating electricity and space heating; establish a provincewide network for collecting recyclables, including paper, plastics, glass, and metals, for composting of organic wastes; encourage economic development of a recycling industry by requiring the use of their products by government agencies and, where practical, by requiring that key end products sold in Alberta contain a minimum percentage of recycled materials; and encourage more value-added processing of our agricultural, energy, and forest products.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, 1992 is a very important year. I suppose they all are in some respect, but in this year the world's nations are gathering in Rio de Janeiro at the United Nations summit to discuss the future of our environment and economic development.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, this is an Official Opposition initiative aimed at changing the fundamental direction of our economic policy in the province, a direction which has been pursued for most of the past 50 years. We've discussed this matter before in this Assembly. So much of the tremendous growth and prosperity in the past 50 years, the postwar period, has been as a result of rapid exploration and development of petroleum reserves but also, to some degree, coal and more recently in the forest industry. These are very important industries for our province, industries which I hope will be around for a very long time, and industries that we can build on.

I want to contrast the view of this process as developed by the United Nations world commission on the environment in 1987, which said very clearly that we have a choice; we're not doomed

to continue on the downhill slope towards ecological disaster. I'd like you to contrast that, if you would, with a statement in this Assembly not two years ago by the Minister of Energy – who in his spare time chairs the economic policy committee of this cabinet – who said in debating Bill 52, the Natural Resources Conservation Board, that he views people who are environmentalists as: “that agenda possibly is to have zero economic development in the province of Alberta in our natural resource area.” Clearly, he seems to believe and the government often says in its many statements that they see a trade-off, you know, between economic growth on the one hand and our environment on the other hand. They are victims of outdated thinking, thinking which has to change if we're ever going to succeed in making the transition to a more sustainable type of economy.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, who is the former Prime Minister of Norway and chaired the world commission on environment, wrote in an article in October 1990 that

the market, left to itself, has often led to an overexploitation of natural resources and the treatment of our land, waters and atmosphere as a free wastebasket.

We must reform economic, financial and fiscal procedures to make the market serve the environment instead of exploiting it. We must establish pricing mechanisms that make pollution and resource depletion unprofitable. Taxation should be deflected from its present emphasis on labor and capital toward the use of natural resources.

In all of that, Ms Brundtland and many, many others have seen and continue to see the potential for jobs and economic growth.

You know, there are really two ways you can look at technological change and economic change in the marketplace. You can look on it as an opportunity, or you can look on it as a threat. I would guess that most people who look on it as a threat don't benefit from it, and those people who look on it as an opportunity do.

I recently saw an item buried on the back page of the *Edmonton Journal*. This was on March 3. “Environment protection creates jobs, report says.” It's about a report prepared by the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre noting that environmental protection is already a \$10 billion industry in our country, Canada. It has grown by leaps and bounds, grown more quickly than almost any economic sector in recent years. The newspaper item stated that

job creation by the environmental industry may more than compensate for job losses in industries hurt by tougher environmental regulations.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I went out and got a copy of the report, because it really is a fascinating study. One of the things they point out is how few economists have really studied this relationship over the years; in particular, how it is possible for us to gain employment opportunities and business opportunities through wise use of our resources and through care and attention to preserving our environment. For example, the report begins by stating that “environmental protection measures can have both positive and negative impacts on employment.” Well, I would think that's a fairly obvious point, but when you contrast it to the way the Minister of Energy thinks, you realize that in Alberta what we need is a much more balanced view.

It says that aggregate employment levels up to this date have not been affected a great deal one way or the other by environmental policies but that that's going to change. In the future there will be a great deal of impact on employment and economic policy by environment policy, but it's an open question whether it's a positive impact or a negative impact. We just know that it won't be the same as it has been prior to the 1990s. So it's absolutely vitally important that we be working as hard as we can now to move that direction in a positive way.

The report points out that in the past it's rare that environmental policy has actually cost a lot of jobs, that usually when there are job losses, they occur because of a combination of economic circumstances, technological change, resource depletion, and so forth but that environment often takes the blame. You know, it's fairly easy for companies to blame environmental policies for changes in the workplace, changes in their economic production.

4:00

In particular, though, the report looks very closely at the resource industries, resource-based economies, of which Alberta is one. I'd like to read a brief quote for the information of members.

For instance, in sectors such as forestry, agriculture and fishing, attention to maintaining natural resource bases for the future and lowering pollution can bring about sustainable employment levels. Public environmental investment creates jobs in government, in parks and recreational sites, and in public works and transportation. This investment also produces considerable private sector activity, such as tourism.

You know, tourism is one of the great beneficiary industries of environmental protection and environmental enhancement, because most people in the world enjoy nothing more than enjoying our environment when they're in tourism.

The report states that

environmental industries demand a high proportion of skilled and semi-skilled labour for both goods manufacturing and services.

In our country when we sometimes lose high-end jobs in the manufacturing end, it's good to know that there are other environmentally friendly industries that can pick up the slack. Technological change is very closely tied up in the future of our economy but especially the environmental field.

Technological change is a key prerequisite to enhanced environmental quality and [its] sustainable development. Environmental technology and innovation can also yield important efficiency and productivity benefits to enterprises.

They cite two major studies, one by the OECD and the other by Stelco, to back up that particular conclusion: that research and development in the environmental field has a tremendous potential to spin off and benefit productivity in all kinds of enterprises, not simply in the environmental industries per se; that environmental investment is often investment in people, in development of new employment skills, which we need more and more of.

The study talks about the environment and trade, and as a trading nation and a trading province I think that's an area we have to pay pretty close attention to. It never ceases to amaze me how government decision-makers and people in industry are surprised when markets for products which are made out of pollution, which are made out of resource depletion, start to dry up. You know, it's just a fact in the marketplace. The pulp and paper industry all of a sudden in the last year or so has started to worry about the effect of recycling laws in the United States, pointing out that because American recycling standards have had a serious impact on our pulp and paper industries, our share, the Canadian share of the U.S. market for paper, has already declined to between 50 and 60 percent from the 70 and 80 percent that we've traditionally enjoyed in the past.

One of the beauties of the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre is that it's a joint venture of management and labour. It points out the strong, positive role that trade unions have played in creating environmental awareness in our society, especially through the health and safety issue. What workers do when they battle for a clean workplace is help to battle for a clean environment for all of us. One of the ways that we clean up our environment is to clean up the workplace, and I know that in our province, the province of Alberta, the trade union movement is at

the leading edge of promoting a clean environment, of promoting environmental policies which not only will have the effect of making our environment clean but making certain that they will have safe and sustainable jobs in the future.

The report talks about many things that we ought to be doing to include business and labour in the crucial decisions that we have to make on the environment, which I would say is the major failure to date in terms of any effort or any lip service that this government may have paid to moving toward a more sustainable economy. We still have decision-making in cabinet by government without involving broad-sector representation among working people and trade unions and the broad spectrum of industries in the province as well.

The round table process, which again grew out of the Brundtland commission, was supposed to involve environmentalists, business, labour in an extended decision-making loop, and we don't have that because this government was very slow in setting up a round table. It has not involved the round table membership in economic decision-making in a meaningful way nor has it addressed how those decision-making processes could be changed and ought to be changed in order to help us along in the right direction.

That brings me to the detailed provisions of the motion that's before us today, and this is really a part, but a critically important part, of a comprehensive approach towards the question of job creation and economic recovery in the province which my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway and I announced at a news conference on March 5. It isn't funny, you know, that here we are, well into the third week of this session, and there's essentially no government business on the table to deal with. We've got some housekeeping Bills in Energy, and we've had a throne speech debate and things like that, but there's no budget, no substantive economic policy. Why is it that the only thing of any substance in terms of the future of our economy we've got to debate is opposition business? Here we are presenting one part of a job creation program for the province of Alberta.

Now, I'd like to deal first with the question of ethanol. My colleague the Member for Vegreville has certainly educated many members of this Assembly about the important economic benefit to agriculture of having an additional market for grains. I'm assured that it's not grain that would otherwise be destined for the table of human beings but is rather lower grade grains which are something of a drag on the market at the present time. The creation of ethanol fuel not only provides that economic benefit but provides a much cleaner burning fuel; you get a lot more benefit in terms of the cleanliness of combustion than you'd expect for a volume of ethanol that you put in.

All that's being said here is that the government relinquish some of the taxation that it collects on that particular fuel in order to get an ethanol industry off the ground. There's an ethanol industry in the province of Manitoba. They see the benefit of it. In Saskatchewan, I understand, there's a plant under construction. What's wrong with Alberta? We're sometimes thought of as a prairie province. We certainly have a prairie ecosystem, and we've got a lot of grain. We've got a lot of farmers who would like to sell more grain. We've got a lot of cars that burn gasoline. We have this one company that sells ethanol quite successfully in the marketplace: Mohawk. What's wrong with us that we can't generate that opportunity?

We believe that a 4-cent-a-litre reduction in the fuel tax on those blends would do that. The New Democrat proposal refers to a high-energy efficiency program, and there are many, many elements of that. One is an Energy Efficiency Act, which my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Centre has introduced in this

current session of the Legislature. We would like to work with industry, with private individuals, to outline areas of waste in energy, to promote energy efficiency on all fronts but in particular to encourage industry to capture waste heat for various purposes.

Sometimes if there's enough of it, if it's high enough intensity, you can cogenerate electricity. That's done right now in the pulp industry in large measure, and there may be other industries that are capable of cogenerating. But also space heating. One of the more innovative notions that's being explored downtown in the city of Edmonton is core area space heating using a hot water system that would serve a number of buildings at the same time and may in fact generate heat from the waste of other industrial processes. I think that may be something that's particularly suited for the downtown core of our major cities, but it may have other applications as well.

It has been mentioned on many occasions that we could grow more of our own vegetables and not be hostage to the California and Florida markets, especially in the wintertime, if we had greenhouses powered by waste heat. Again that's potentially an enormous creator of jobs.

We would like to "establish a provincewide network for collecting recyclables." There is really no single thing that would be more important toward developing a recycling industry – by that I mean the industrial value added in recycling – than having a consistent provincewide network. Now, I know, and I'm sure you know, Mr. Speaker, that the blue box recycling program is under intensive political attack at the moment from the garbage business, in the first place because they've got a deal for us – they'd like to take over our garbage for commercial profit – and also from some of the industries that are associated with that and from others who I think are not so much in conflict as I guess shortsighted from an economic point of view. I think they add it up and say: "Well, gee; we can dump everything in the ground for 60 bucks a tonne. It costs us 200 bucks a tonne to recycle, so to heck with the 200 bucks a tonne; we'll pay the 60 bucks a tonne and be done with it."

4:10

Well, I know the previous Minister of the Environment, who is now the minister of public works, commenced an advertising campaign which was quite an effective one in support of the Special Waste Management Corporation. They made the point that burying stuff in the ground doesn't mean it goes away. I think a lot of people have come to the view, for example, that it's a terrible thing to kill a tree to use it once to print an Ann Landers column and then bury it in the ground. Not that there's anything wrong with Ann Landers columns; it's just the idea of using it once and throwing it away. We've come, I think, in this part of the 20th century to the realization that it's just plain wrong for us to use things once and throw them away. If we allow the opponents of blue box recycling to prevent further development, or worse yet kill the program as it now exists, we'll be back to the same old cycle of looking for landfills and filling them up, and the costs, the 60 bucks a tonne, will look cheap in the future when we do it.

We have to recognize that these are the key building blocks towards jobs – long-term, sustainable, manufacturing jobs – in our economy. A company in Edmonton called Superwood makes plastic lumber out of thrown away, discarded plastic. They even throw some of those juice boxes, the tetra paks, in the mix – I was there at the official opening – and they make lumber which is ideal for a dock. Plastic wood does not rot. You can sit the wood in water as long as you want. It's perfect for decks, for all kinds of outdoor packages that you buy in lumber yards: sheds

and this kind of thing. You can get it in almost any colour you want with the exception of white. It never has to be painted; it never rots. It's quite a useful and handy material. It's a private company based in Ireland. They came to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, because we have a blue box recycling program. Now, these people who go around saying, "We can't afford blue box recycling; there are no markets," had better think about this: you're not going to get a market until you have a supply. No businessperson around is going to invest in an industry where they can't be assured of a reliable source of raw material. No manufacturer will invest that way.

I see that the Alberta Newsprint Company is going ahead without a provincewide blue box system and without any particular help from the government to do a pilot project in its Whitecourt mill to start recycling newspaper. Well, good for them. That shows courage, initiative, and enterprise. They haven't given up on blue box recycling, and they haven't given up on Albertans, either, although I'll tell you what's happening to this date. Because we don't have a recycling program in the province, because we've got this Mickey Mouse program in Alberta where the Minister of the Environment gets to hand out cheques to Boy Scouts around the province to buy bins which people put their stuff in until somebody's dad gets tired of driving it to market and it gets disused – that's the Mickey Mouse program – instead of a real blue box recycling program, a lot of our paper is going to British Columbia. Bill Vander Zalm's government had the sense to realize this was the wave of the future and built a recycling plant. They've got a deal going with Southam in Calgary to ship their newspapers out of here to Port Coquitlam. In Edmonton we send our material to Korea and to Hong Kong. So it's good for jobs in British Columbia, it's good for jobs in Korea, good for jobs in Hong Kong, but what about jobs here in Alberta?

That's what we should be worried about in this Legislative Assembly. It's why we need to have a blue box collection program around the province, and the buck stops here with the provincial government. It's not going to be the kind of system that will power a world-class, state of the art recycling mill up at Whitecourt unless we do it as a province. As good as the Boy Scouts and the environmental clubs are in their sphere, they're not able to generate the kind of economic growth that we will need if those little Boy Scouts are going to have jobs in the future when they grow up, Mr. Speaker.

So collecting recyclables is a critically important part of a green jobs industrial strategy, as is composting of organic waste. Encouraging the recycling industry by purchasing their products for government is a further way that we can enhance the development of those industries, because markets are very important, especially in the beginning phases of any business enterprise. I think the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services has gone a fair way to see where he can source materials that are recycled rather than virgin product, but what he hasn't been able to do is source those products here in the province of Alberta, and that's really the link that has to be made in order to make this a successful industrial strategy for the province. We want to encourage the manufacture and use of Alberta-made environmentally friendly products.

I think this announcement today by the Grande Alberta Paper company is a case in point. It is quite possible to make good quality consumer products for which there is a market without having a great deal of environmental cost, but it's only possible if you don't have cheap and easy access to pollution, cheap and easy access to capital, cheap and easy access to the inside track with government. That's clearly what's happened with some of these other projects which have been financed by the government – the

Al-Pacs, the Daishowas, the Procter & Gambles and the Weldwoods – whereas we should be looking much, much more to these further value-added products. It looks like Weyerhaeuser is one of the primary backers of this project, and I congratulate them for coming in with the project that has triple the value added of the conventional bleached kraft pulp mills, has likely a much more secure long-term market, because they're going to be buying this stuff long after nobody is buying the chlorine-based stuff at all. This is the kind of thing that should be done. My question today is quite simply: why were we putting \$1.4 billion into these other lemon projects when there are and were people around willing to look at the longer term and to look to a more sensible production?

I remember the minister of forestry said to me once that we had to sign all these deals because we thought the window was going to close, like somebody came along and said, "Well, if you don't sign a deal in the next couple of months, your trees are going to be junk and nobody's ever going to buy them." It's just like the real estate agent who says, "If you don't put an offer on this house before lunch, you won't be able to afford it." Most people know how to deal with people like that; they say, "Get lost." It's a pity that our government doesn't know how to deal with some of the international industry that plays hardball in this way and wrings from us concessions that we should never even have dreamed of on some of these projects.

So hats off to Grande Alberta Paper. If what's in this announcement today comes true, it certainly shows the bankruptcy of a government allowing itself to be stampeded into doing things that we never, ever should have agreed to in the first place. Finally, as I said, I think Grande Alberta and the ethanol industry are well on the road towards getting more value added out of our resource products.

Now, it's interesting. Within a matter of a few days of this particular announcement, we heard from the Alberta motion picture industry. You know, this is an industry in the province of Alberta which creates green jobs. There are potentially thousands of jobs, and well-paid jobs, in the motion picture industry on the technical side, on the creative side – acting, writing – and also just the physical supply. The amount of money that goes through in the production of a film industry is phenomenal. They pointed out to us that in 1983 British Columbia and Alberta were more or less on the same footing in terms of the development of this industry because we each have a lot of natural advantages for a motion picture shoot. In fact, some of the older members in the Assembly may have grown up watching some of the famous Hollywood movies that were shot in Banff and Jasper over the years about the North-West Mounted Police and the great romantic adventure of Canada. You know, we haven't progressed very far since then, and B.C. has. Why? Well, they built a major production facility, postproduction facility that they've been able, through sheer force of will and energy on the part of their governments to get all of the different agencies together – the municipalities, the province, the funding agencies, the unions – to do a kind of a one-stop shopping approach, and they've had some financing, while what we had was sort of a typical Alberta government venture. They threw 10 million bucks into this Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation and promptly forgot about it and thought the problem would take care of itself.

4:20

It's interesting that British Columbia put a 3 percent tax on motion picture tickets in theatres which goes into a fund which produces about 1 and a half million dollars a year which goes to finance the creation of facilities for motion picture production. Now, it's interesting in that Albertans pay the same amount to go

to a movie as they pay in British Columbia. It's the industry that absorbs the 3 percent tax; that is, the retail motion picture theatre industry. So we're paying the same amount anyway, but we don't get the industrial benefit, the offset. I think this is an area where with a little bit of creative work, with some discussion with the right people and with an aggressive plan, we could start to recapture some of that industry. I'm told that we have one and only one world-class production crew in the province of Alberta, so if somebody's making a top-dollar film in Alberta, there isn't room for anybody else. Why couldn't we have two or three or four or five world-class production teams in this province so that we could compete on an equitable basis with the province of British Columbia and others for this very important industry which creates a lot of jobs and doesn't destroy our environment? Not even the Sylvester Stallone films destroy the environment. It's all fake, Mr. Speaker; you don't have to worry too much about that.

Mr. Speaker, I've outlined today an approach which I think is an important one towards the problem of what our long-term future will be. We've stated very clearly that we must work towards a truly sustainable economy, that we have to control not just our financial deficit, which gets talked about a lot here in this Assembly, but our environmental deficit as well.

I return again to the points that were made by Gro Harlem Brundtland, that here in the province of Alberta

we must reform economic, financial and fiscal procedures to make the market serve the environment instead of exploiting it.

It's really not a question of trade-off. It's a question of making our economic system more compatible with our ecological system.

We [have to] establish pricing mechanisms that make pollution and resource depletion unprofitable,

and finally,

taxation should be deflected from its present emphasis on labor and capital towards the use of natural resources,

in particular towards resource conservation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Drayton Valley.

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the opportunity to respond to Motion 205 sponsored by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. I also welcome the chance to speak to a couple of issues that my constituents hold very high as being very important to their livelihood and to the environment; namely, the economy and the environment.

Over the past several years we have seen the emphasis on the environment growing tremendously. People are more aware and concerned about what kind of a future our children and our grandchildren have. At the same time, especially in our current fiscal state, Mr. Speaker, people are very concerned about their jobs and ensuring that they can maintain this high quality of life for their families today. Though we once would have considered these very separate concerns, today we know that they are by no means separate. In fact, more and more they seem linked together, at an impossible angle in some cases.

Motion 205, Mr. Speaker, is evidence of this development as it endeavours to draw together these two pursuits. While I believe the member has brought forward some valid concepts, I sometimes question the motives for this motion. I can't help but wonder if the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place has simply thrown into this motion every available trendy notion and catchphrase of the day to attract media and public attention. It is so typical of the opposition parties to monopolize the Order Paper for the sake of the press at the expense of substance and thoughtful suggestion and, I might add, at the expense of Albertans. But regardless of the nature of his motives and whether or not Motion 205 should

be dismissed on that basis, I know the motion will be defeated due to its startling intimations and flawed logic.

Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence I would like to now draw the attention of the House to some dangerous philosophies and illogical ideas camouflaged within Motion 205. Among the suggestions contained in Motion 205 is a recommendation for the government to establish a provincewide network for the blue box system and collecting recyclables. To suggest today that the taxpayers' government should establish a more onerous version of the city of Edmonton's bankrupt blue box program is poor timing, poor research, and just plain ridiculous.

The difficulty is in finding a market for recyclable materials. The Edmonton recycling industry has been making it clear since 1990 that it doesn't make sense to stockpile large quantities of recyclable materials unless they can be sold. Therein lies the problem: you need a market for them. At this point, without proper markets in place, a provincewide endeavour to collect recyclables would be a financial disaster, as we have seen in some places already.

The member seems to understand this problem because Motion 205 goes on to advocate encouraging the recycling industry by requiring that "key end products sold in Alberta contain a minimum percentage of recycled materials." In essence, then, to justify the need for a provincewide collection system for recyclables, Motion 205 advocates that the province create a market – not find one but create a market – for recycled goods.

This sounds typical of the interventionist strategies of the NDP so often put forward. The logic is inexcusable. Getting the government to require products in order to establish markets, also that we can then turn around and finance a reclamation network, is ridiculous. That's a perfect example, Mr. Speaker, of putting the cart before the horse. Albertans don't want government to intervene in the marketplace. They don't want us to interfere with demand; they don't want us to manipulate supply. When will the opposition understand these basic principles? When there's a viable market, industry will respond. Even if the public supported this interventionist philosophy, the economic realities are prohibitive. By the time the government has required a market to justify an industry, to support a collection network, the cost to taxpayers would be phenomenal, and they would soon recognize this.

The member has watched the blue box program in Edmonton inhale public dollar after public dollar year after year with no end in sight. Still the member insists on sponsoring such a fiscally irresponsible proposal. As I mentioned earlier, the member knows that such a market doesn't exist – it's been proven – but in typical ND socialist fashion his answer is to require it. His answer is not to let it develop but to necessitate it by arbitrary means. On this basis alone, Mr. Speaker, members of this Assembly should defeat Motion 205. But there is another significant reason to defeat it, and that's the fact that it's unnecessary.

Mr. Speaker, the government has developed a solid list of initiatives which are working to foster sustainable economic development in a fiscally reasonable fashion. I'd like to remind the member of our government's position statement on green jobs, or as we say, sustainable development, and I quote . . .

Point of Order

Reading from Documents

MR. GIBEAULT: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods is rising on a point of order.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, I refer to Standing Order 23(d), prohibition against reading speeches in this Chamber.

**Point of Order
Imputing Motives**

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I recognize that the member has considerable difficulty finding an argument against this motion, but 23(i) does make it an offence to impute "false or unavowed motives to another member." Normally they try to couch it in some other language, but he came right out and said . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair heard the hon. member say that we could perhaps question the motives. I don't think he was imputing any motives to anybody. He was questioning what the motives of the hon. member were.

The hon. member was going to reply to that point.

**Point of Order
Reading from Documents**

MR. THURBER: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. At least one thing has become quite evident to me. The NDs have an awful lot of trouble reading their documents even, and at least on this side of the House we are able to decipher some notes we put down on a piece of paper.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member will, I'm sure, carry on in accordance with the traditions of our Assembly.

Debate Continued

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We talk about sustainable development, and I quote the Towards 2000 Together document.

The objective . . . is to promote environmentally-sound economic activity and growth, not to promote economic growth or environmental protection in isolation.

This government philosophy has come about as a result of consultation with Albertans, and Albertans themselves are guiding the province's approach to both developing jobs and protecting the environment.

4:30

In 1990 the Alberta government created the Alberta Round Table on Environment and Economy to provide recommendations on how the concept of sustainable development should be implemented in Alberta. In that same year the clean air strategy for Alberta consultation program was launched to develop a comprehensive plan of action for responding to environmental impacts of energy-related emissions. In 1991 the Alberta government established the Natural Resources Conservation Board to provide a forum and a process for public hearings on major developments. The NRCB will consider environmental, social, and economic impacts of non energy-sector projects, with direct input from all Albertans.

Not only is this government working with Albertans, but we're also co-operating extensively with other governments. The Alberta government is a signatory to the national packaging protocol, the establishment of policies for the management of packaging, more specifically the overall reduction in the amount of packaging that enters landfills by the year 2000. The Alberta government agreed to this protocol in 1990 through its membership in the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. We also support Canada's green plan for a healthy environment. Green jobs are being established, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta government is a

partner with other western Canadian governments and the federal government in tracking growth in related green jobs and their economic spin-offs.

Consider these examples of businesses which have sprung up to respond to the environmental needs of the public sector and private industry. Albertans are employed in the areas of land and water management, industrial waste, water treatment, sewage and chemical waste treatment, river basin planning, flood and erosion control system design, forestry conservation, recycling and waste management, pollution control and analysis, and many others. It goes on and on, Mr. Speaker. The work of many researchers and technicians at the Alberta Research Council and the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville is leading the way in the pursuit of environmental excellence. Certainly the ND members should be well aware of what happens in Vegreville through their own member there. The partners are establishing a list of existing capabilities, strengths, and expertise in these areas. As we announced in January of 1992, this listing will facilitate the development of information that would put workers and employers in touch with one another.

Mr. Speaker, I believe these last few facts demonstrate how, if left alone, green industries and markets will develop and flourish for the overall good of Albertans. In fact, the development of these jobs and industries represents a significant percentage of the 107,000 jobs created in Alberta since 1986 and the 12,000 jobs that were created in 1991 alone. Environmentally sound developments in industry, advanced technologies, forest products, business services, tourism, and petrochemicals are providing the impetus for more diversification and growth.

Even net in-migration to our province reflects the opportunities that Canadians and immigrants are finding in Alberta, including, Mr. Speaker, opportunities in the developing green job sector. I'm sure that all members are aware that we've had anywhere from 2,000 to 4,000 people a month immigrate to Alberta over the last year and a half. They come here because there are jobs, because there's diversification, and because we're environmentally sound.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to the increased development of green jobs and employment opportunities arising from sustainable economic development. We are committed to a healthy future for healthy Albertans through environmental responsibility. I'm sure we would be open to suggestions brought forward by the opposition if they were realistic and fiscally responsible. However, this is not the case with Motion 205.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge the members of the Assembly to defeat Motion 205 on those bases.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's incredible, the diatribe we heard from the previous speaker. How he can really take exception to this motion I fail to understand. The motion is an excellent one. There are several parts to it, but I want to focus, initially at least, on the suggestion that the government should

establish a provincewide network for collecting recyclables, including paper, plastics, glass, and metals, for composting of organic wastes; encourage economic development of a recycling industry by requiring the use of their products by government agencies.

If government agencies are going to be using materials, they may as well be recycled materials. Already we've seen a situation in Canada where a lot of our pulp mills and our one paper mill are going to be obsolete because we're not going to be meeting the standards being set by other parts of the world like the United

States, where they're demanding a certain amount of recyclable waste products in the paper they want.

The motion also goes on to suggest that where practical, by requiring that key end products sold in Alberta contain a minimum percentage of recycled materials; and encourage more value-added processing of our agricultural, energy, and forest products.

How anyone can take exception to that I fail to understand. But if you want to be a dinosaur and disappear from the landscape in the next election, I guess that's okay.

Mr. Speaker, one of the basic theses behind what the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place put forward was that the use of environmentally sound products should be seen as an opportunity, not as some kind of a drag that's going to make it more difficult for us to maintain our standards of living. I would like to follow that theme a little bit.

Members might recall a book put out a number of years ago by Toffler. I think it was called *Future Shock* or something. He suggested that some 25 percent of the population could produce all the goods and services necessary to service the whole of the population and that some three-quarters of the population would not have any jobs or would not need to be engaged in what we normally consider productive activities.

Well, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we have suddenly learned that the old method of worrying about exploiting our resources is now starting to give way to the idea of using our Earth's resources and sort of nurturing them and trying to keep a healthy environment here so we can continue to live on this planet. If we don't start thinking that way, of course we're not going to survive the next five billion years on this planet.

The suggestion that Toffler makes, be it totally true or not true – and of course he was projecting into the future – certainly points to an incredible opportunity. Certainly we do not want a society where only a few people are working and considered valuable citizens and some three-quarters of the population are considered useless and accomplishing and producing nothing. One of the important things about living and living a decent life is to feel that you are a part of a society and have something to contribute to it. So there's a major, major cost, as we move into this more technological world where we can lay off workers or replace workers with more efficient and more effective machines, of not making sure that we're all productively engaged. We see it every day in the cost of unemployment and social services statistics. Figures were put forward by the Member for Edmonton-Norwood, the leader of our party, not too long ago in which he pointed out that the costs of UIC have gone up tremendously in the last couple of years because of higher unemployment. The social services costs in this province have gone up something like 50 percent in two years. The cost in lost taxes because these people are not being productive is also a major factor. Taking those three together, he estimated that the last couple of years have cost the coffers of this province something like \$2.3 billion. So there's a high economic cost to continuing in the way we have gone in the past.

We should see the development of an environmental conscience, if you like, in this world, and it's coming at a time when technological changes are making it so that fewer people are needed to actually produce the wealth. Take agriculture as a prime example. I think something like 4 percent of the population is on the land in Canada now, and obviously they can produce more than we eat in this country, because we're exporting incredible amounts of wheat and other grains. Clearly, we have this incredible opportunity to do a good job of developing environmentally sound jobs that

will help this planet to survive a lot longer than it will at the present rate we're going.

4:40

As well as the high cost of unemployment being one of the major reasons why we need to look at this, there's also, of course, just the environmental costs of not stopping to look at where we're going and what we're doing with the present system. Any sensible person looking at the future of this nation and this world would know that we're going to have to work together to change the direction and do more about recycling.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in order to take advantage of the ideas of recycling and environmentally sound practices, we have to bring into play all the people's ideas, not just somebody from the top pushing down a program. We're not asking the Alberta government to just set out a lot of money and sort of regiment and say, "You're going to do this, and you're going to do that," and tell the people of Alberta how to do this. The local people of this province are probably ahead of this government – of course, that wouldn't be too hard – in wanting to recycle and reuse products and have environmentally sound practices.

Now, just how important is that, Mr. Speaker? I'm going to diverge for a moment and talk a little bit about economic policy; we're talking economics here in terms of environmental economics. If you look at the way the government has operated up to now, particularly in the ad hoc funding programs where it's handed out a lot of money to individual corporations, the whole of Alberta knows that that's been a failure. People right from the left wing to the right wing have been beating up on the government about that for the last two or three years, particularly since last spring when we revealed the number of companies that have gone bankrupt that this government put money directly into.

Even the economic programs that this government runs, like Vencap and the Alberta Opportunity Company and the export loan guarantee program, need to be re-examined as to how they operate. If we're going to put tax dollars into those kinds of programs, then we need to look at that really carefully as to how we do it, because it costs money. It costs taxpayers' dollars, and you have to make sure they're well spent. In re-examining those, you need to make sure that the industry as a whole is in agreement that some kind of a program is needed and that the taxpayers, the public, are prepared to put up some of those tax dollars for those kinds of programs.

What I'm saying is that it's time for a reassessment of this government's economic policies in the context of which they've been doing economic development in this province. What I am prepared to say about environmental industries in this province is that they are so important that that is one area where I think the government should make sure that they are part of it, and if it costs some taxpayers' dollars, then it's important enough that some taxpayers' dollars should be spent.

What you need to do is consider sound environmental practices right around this whole province in terms of treatment of sewage, in terms of re-collecting as much of our garbage as we can possibly recycle. Those kinds of things have to be considered almost as a municipal infrastructure project that is necessary. Therefore, the government should be prepared to stay involved in that field, help co-ordinate and help make sure that markets do develop and that those industries can be on a sound financial basis over the long term and clean up the environment of this province.

Mr. Speaker, as we move into the globalized competitive world that the Tories in this country at the federal and provincial levels both like to talk about so much, you've got to realize that what we're doing is losing control of our ability to do those things. I

think perhaps one of the reasons that the previous speaker was so against what we're thinking here is that he knows that it would go against the kinds of things that the free trade deal and the North American free trade deal stand for, and that is a world with sort of no borders and no right to control your own destiny or set your own standards. What we see is a government that has gone into a free trade deal with the United States and is now talking about going into one with Mexico, where there are no environmental laws, there are no labour laws of any merit, there are no minimum wages, but even worse, there are no environmental standards to speak of. It seems like that's the way the big multinationals like it, so they play one region off against another and they go to the lowest common denominator. That is, some of them do; obviously, some don't. This new project announced today by the Grande Alberta Paper Ltd. sounds good to me. It sounds like they are prepared to stay and develop an industry for the long term on an environmentally sound basis, and I commend them for that.

One of the aspects of this particular problem showed up, I think, in the Domglas story, a small glass plant down in Redcliff, near Medicine Hat. A couple of years back that plant was shut down because B.C. put more money into the Vernon plant for the particular parent company than the Alberta government felt they could afford to put into the Redcliff plant. What we've seen is a situation where big corporations play off one jurisdiction against another to see how much money they can get to locate where. The truth of the matter in the glass industry, as I said at that time, was that a couple of American firms had already swallowed up all the American industry and with the free trade deal would soon be swallowing up the Canadian glass industry. Here we are in Alberta, then, without a place to send our recycled glass because the distances are too great to get to the recycling plants.

In the paper industry I gather we've been sending some of our recycled paper, newsprint, all the way to Korea, and it certainly doesn't make any sense. Again we see the need for local jurisdictions – provincial governments and federal governments have to be involved in this decision-making in the kinds of rules they set and the kinds of programs they encourage local people to get involved in to make sure that local people have some control over their destiny and some ability to keep a clean environment and have jobs at the local level. Mr. Speaker, the Tories have failed miserably in that regard.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

It seems to me that one of the justifications the Tory government uses for all this global competition, international competitiveness, and all the stuff they talk about in North American free trade deals is, "Well, we export 30 percent of our products." It's true that we're a trading nation. We export 30 percent of our products, and I suggest that it's important that we look at those and how we do it, but remember, of course, that we also import a lot of things. If you're going to export, you're going to import, because somebody else has got some Canadian dollars and they're going to want to buy Canadian products. But when we sell, we get foreign dollars, and then those have a call on the Canadian economy and we end up importing things as a result of part of that two-way trade.

We export 30 percent of our produce, which also means that we consume 70 percent of it locally within our country. So why is it that we ignore that almost totally and don't really stop to think about how important that is? Why don't we encourage it? Why don't we encourage local procurement policies? Why don't we encourage buy Alberta policies? Why don't we encourage local people to make sure they know if they can buy something locally

before they start buying abroad? It may be that just a matter of having enough information and knowing what's going on in your own neighbourhood is all that's needed. Certainly what we need to do is start making the people of Alberta and Canada aware of the importance and the benefits to be gained by local purchases.

When you have an increase in local sales, you have local businesses flourishing and hiring local people, so they've got jobs and they pay local taxes so that they can afford to build better roads and build better schools. That's the kind of thing we need to encourage in this country, not more, quote, international global competitiveness, which is a vicious competitiveness that is really based on the idea that the companies will gravitate to the place where they can get the cheapest labour and have the lowest environmental standards possible.

4:50

That's the kind of competition that we've got at the international level, and for the Alberta government and the federal government to sell us out in that regard and leave us believing that there's nothing we can do to control our own local destiny, buying into a North American free trade deal . . . I've just been looking at that leaked document, and it talks about procurement policies that suggest that a government cannot have any preferential procurement policy for buying locally, and that in fact at the end of the year the various governments involved – and we're now talking about Canada, the United States, and Mexico. If we just take Canada and the United States, for example, for a moment, you'll see the kind of dilemma that creates. At the end of the year they'll take a look and see if they were able to get a proportional amount of the business according to the amount they purchased.

Let's just consider for a moment that if Canada purchases \$100 million – I'm just picking a couple of numbers – of goods and services, then because the United States is 10 times bigger, it will have procurement policies buying as much as \$1 billion – right? – 10 times as much. Now, if we have to buy proportionately from each other, that means that in Canada nine-tenths of the purchases we make on a local basis will be from our own people in our own area, within Canada at least. One-tenth will be local, but nine-tenths will come from the United States. Now, on the other side, in the United States they will still have 90 percent of their \$1 billion that will be bought locally in the United States and \$100 million that will be bought from Canada. So you think: oh, fair enough; just a straight exchange, the same amount on both sides. But the point I make is this: if nine-tenths of our government purchases, and this included provinces and not just the federal government, have to be from the United States, of our local procurement – sorry; I should say our procurement policies. I can't use the word "local" because it's not allowed under the new deal. If we sign this North American free trade deal, we would encourage foreign buyers to be available and to make their goods available in our communities nine-tenths of the time whenever we purchase something. If that won't have an effect on the local businesses, the private enterprise businesses in the area – in other words, it will encourage importation, and pretty soon nine-tenths of everything will be coming from abroad.

We will not have much of a local economy. The foreign ownership that we already have in this country, which is something like 30 percent of nonfinancial industries, will just increase and skyrocket because local Canadian companies will go the way of the dodo bird. There will be hardly any left. That is the direction that that will take us. Mr. Speaker, we will not be able to control our own laws, we will not be able to control our own environment, we will not be able to look after our own people, and we will not be able to afford the kind of social services and health

care and education system that we now have if nine-tenths of the business in this country is done by foreigners.

Mr. Speaker, it's imperative that we take control of our own destiny. It's imperative that we look to the long term and not the short term and see the environmental opportunities for jobs and develop that rather than continuing with the exploitive kind of economic system that we've had up to now.

With those thoughts, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say that the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place has brought forward an excellent motion and has outlined some excellent reasons why this government should pass this motion. In fact, I challenge them with this motion. I challenge them not to and then send it out all around Alberta as to why they shouldn't agree to this motion.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-McKnight.

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Futurists tell us that the new competitiveness means and assumes excellent management of our resources, and this is exactly what this motion supports. So on behalf of our caucus, I am prepared to support in principle the excellent proposals contained in Motion 205, Green Jobs Strategy. Our caucus, our environmental critic, made similar proposals in legislation several years ago, and thus it is quite easy for us to support most of this motion.

I will not speak to the first two principles or proposals in the motion but will go directly to proposals three, four, and five of the strategy. Proposal three says that there should be a provincewide system for the collection of recyclables. It looks to me, Mr. Speaker, as if the New Democratic environment critic has been reading our Waste Reduction and Recycling Act. Our leader, Mr. Decore, announced the Liberal scheme for the provincewide collection of recyclables in 1989, and this Act would have provided a blue box program for all communities of more than 200 persons and would have provided centralized collection sites for others. We thus support and approve the proposed collection of paper, plastics, glass, and metals. We also would support the collection of organic waste for composting, although this support would depend a lot on a location. It may make a lot of sense in large urban areas where there is density of population, but in smaller locations we believe that individual composting should be encouraged.

I note the objections to the cost of the blue box program. They have been many in recent days in this area, but we argue that the objections based on cost are not supportable. In some areas in Seattle, for instance, where I visited around Christmastime, there is a direct tax on the collection of garbage, on the amount collected. We feel that we could support a recycling project, a blue box program, with a small direct tax on garbage, and this would certainly decrease the amount of garbage which is produced by individual households. We believe that it's time to get serious about the environment, that our future and the future of our children depend on it, and that we must make the safety, the protection, and the ongoing health of our environment a major priority in all of our thinking. We really believe that whatever system of collection of recyclables makes sense is the system that should be followed and that the cost should be supported and incurred by the user, by the citizen out there who is producing garbage. We also believe, though, that in smaller areas central depots might be more environmentally responsible. This would certainly create jobs as far as truck drivers and management of a site and so on.

The Liberals also support the proposal for the encouragement of economic development of a recycling industry. Again, it looks

very similar to our waste reduction enhancement Act, which has sections which encourage the development of recycling industries by giving government preference in purchasing goods and services from suppliers who maximize the use of recycled materials or provide for maximum recyclability of their products; secondly, requiring that government paper contain at least 25 percent postconsumer waste, the proportion increasing over time; thirdly, requiring that this procurement policy apply to all municipalities and authorities who obtain funding from government; fourthly, requiring that newspapers require an increasing proportion of recycled pulp; and lastly, establishing a task force to make recommendations on reduction, re-use, recycling, and recovery in waste management. As far as proposal five is concerned, "encourage more value-added processing of our agricultural, energy, and forest products," we feel that it is an admirable policy but wonder how this is to be achieved.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the motion. I compliment the member in bringing it forward. We as Liberals like to support motions no matter what side of the House they come from. Sometimes you will see us support a Tory motion and sometimes you will see us support an NDP motion, because we feel that it is time to work together in order to solve the problems which exist in this province.

Thank you very much.

5:00

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Clover Bar.

MR. GESELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad I finally caught your eye. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the debate on Motion 205. There are a number of things that I need to bring to the attention of Albertans.

First of all, let me say that opposition parties typically monopolize the Order Paper by throwing into almost every one of their motions the friendly catchphrases that exist from day to day to perhaps get media attention or public attention instead of putting forward some concrete or constructive suggestions. Maybe I haven't been listening carefully enough, but I've missed any concrete or constructive suggestions that have been made in this diatribe that has been produced in front of the House.

Motion 205, in my mind, calls for fiscally irresponsible interventionist initiatives. I'm concerned about that, Mr. Speaker, because in this smorgasbord of items that are listed here, there are, as far as I can tell, no very concrete examples, and some of them are very much behind the times. I would prefer the way the government approaches this matter. The government, I believe, develops environmentally friendly strategies, and those strategies are developed in co-operation with Albertans, the community out there, and other governments: a logical, reasonable approach, rather than this smorgasbord that I see in front of us here in this particular motion. Time permitting, I'll deal with some individual items that I would identify under the smorgasbord.

Now, many green jobs have been established, Mr. Speaker, because environmental responsibility has always been an important part of our Alberta tradition. Many green initiatives are under way. Some of them have been mentioned by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, and I will mention perhaps a few more. The point I want to make is that the NDP on this particular motion is behind the times again. We've progressed past some of these initiatives, some of the smorgasbord that's been put forward. Let me just deal with a few of them.

There has been very strong interest in our environment by all Albertans and by our Alberta government. There has been a stressing of a balance between the environment and the economy.

We're not dealing with the extreme positions of looking at the environment exclusively and dealing with that, or only looking at the economy and dealing exclusively with that issue. The Alberta Round Table on Environment and Economy is an excellent example of that balancing that our government is undertaking on these very important issues. The clean air strategy that's been mentioned, the Natural Resources Conservation Board that has been set up in order to review these matters – a more recent one, the Toward 2000 Together initiative, is an environmentally sound economic activity. That's what it promotes, a very important concept. Our government is leading by example, Mr. Speaker, by a hands-on approach on these matters.

If you will indulge me for a moment, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out that public concern – Albertans' concern and the concern of all Canadians for these environmental matters – dates back to when first the people came to this province and to Canada. Environmental responsibility has always been an important part of our Alberta tradition. The original aboriginal people and the early settlers had a keen understanding of that. They had a keen understanding of the balance between development and environment. It was necessary not only to maintain their quality of life but for their very survival. They developed some codes to guide their life-styles. They had laws to prohibit wasteful killing of wildlife, and they had cultural practices which encouraged the total use of animals and of other resources of our environment. European settlers followed suit, along the same lines. They cleared lands for crops; gardens were broken at a measured and a slow pace, at a pace which could be fully maintained and sustained. Our ancestors fed their families from the available natural resources in a very environmentally responsible way. They shunned waste and reaped rewards for their efficiency.

The government is seeking on a continuous basis, a hands-on basis, an example basis, to ensure that these laws and standards are in keeping with the high expectations that the members of this province, our citizens, have. We've conducted some very exhaustive studies, some very exhaustive public consultation processes in the development of that hard-hitting legislation, the environmental protection and enhancement Act. It's been a public consultation process that I think has never been seen in Alberta before or perhaps has never been seen in Canada before. It basically questioned all Albertans and gave them the opportunity for input. That legislation that has resulted from all that public input is expected later in this session, Mr. Speaker. It will create clear regulatory provisions that standardize and clarify both environmental impact assessments that are essential and the approval processes for projects that have an environmental impact. When the first draft was released in 1990, I believe it was, Brian Staszewski, director of the Edmonton Environmental Resource Centre, was quoted in the *Edmonton Journal* on June 22 of 1990 as saying: we think this likely the best environmental legislation in Canada.

I think Albertans have been very pleased with their government and the many endeavours that we seek to balance between the economy, the economic development that occurs, and environmental sustainability. Also, they appreciate our efforts to provide additional environmental protection and enhancement wherever possible. Not only is the opposition, Mr. Speaker, forgetting that there is some significant environmental legislation coming forward, but they have also chosen to overlook . . .

MR. GIBEAULT: Give us a date.

MR. GESELL: Well, just hang on there, hon. member. It's in the process; it'll be here.

They have also chosen to overlook the many projects that are already in place and under way in this province with respect to environmental conservation. Mr. Speaker, the NDs, despite their protestations here, are behind the times.

MR. FOX: What about the Liberals?

MR. GESELL: Well, they're not available for comment.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that the NDP Party, as our Treasurer would put it, are behind the times. There are very many green initiatives that are under way, and I just want to list a few of them that are in the process. Our Alberta Action on Waste initiative, introduced in 1991, designed to play an integral part in Alberta's comprehensive waste management strategy, is one of those. It provides some funding for municipalities and nonprofit organizations and encourages the collection of recyclable materials. Economic Development and Trade also participates in that initiative and provides some assistance to the private sector who wish to develop recycled products. We've done those things that the member has listed in item three.

5:10

MR. WOLOSZYN: Four.

MR. GESELL: And four. Thank you.

Three and four: "establish a provincewide network for collecting recyclables," and so on. The sponsoring member infers that we should be helping Albertans collect their waste. I think, Mr. Speaker, that we are doing this but in an economically sensible way.

MR. LUND: Who started it?

MR. GESELL: Yes, exactly: who started it? One needs to look back. The NDs are behind the times again.

Alberta's beverage container recovery system, which was introduced in 1972-73 and again expanded in 1989, is an environmentally sensitive system. It recovers approximately 80 percent of all beverage containers that are covered in the legislation. The pesticide container collection program is another initiative. The Alberta waste materials exchange is another initiative, Mr. Speaker. Asphalt recycling, under the Minister of Alberta Transportation and Utilities, is a new initiative that recycles highway asphalt by milling the existing pavement, mixing it with new materials, and reusing it in that way. We've used almost half a million tonnes of recycled asphalt during the past several construction seasons. In tire recycling, we've had some very favourable responses from the environmental critics from the ND Party and the Liberals, but they retracted that afterwards. It just goes to show that they like it one day; they don't like it another day.

Our green procurement policy, an excellent policy: the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services directed that. He's continually introducing more and more environmentally friendly products to our government boards, agencies, and departments. We've got over 50 types and styles of those products now available. It starts with large items such as grader blades, and it goes down to smaller items such as office paper and recharged printer cartridges.

Last year, when the same member brought forward Bill 216, an Act to promote recycling, we on the government side shared with that member and the members that were in the House some of the details of this strategy that our Alberta government has. Unfortunately, maybe he wasn't listening. Mr. Speaker, we have done a large number of things in order to ensure that we use our resources

in an environmentally friendly way. We've developed, in addition, an Office of Renewable Energy Technology, a very strong thrust in the southwest Alberta area for that energy initiative. I don't want to go into detail on that. Let me deal more specifically with concrete and constructive suggestions. I'd like to bring some forward for consideration because I haven't heard them from the opposition.

In agriculture we've been having some discussions about ethanol, but even now we provide a modest ethanol subsidy. Members are aware of the degree of Conservative commitment; this past week I think the Member for Cypress-Redcliff and the Member for Wainwright talked about this matter. They talked at length about the environmental benefits of ethanol and the work they are doing to encourage a viable ethanol industry in Alberta. I'll tell you the work I am doing to encourage that use, and it's a market force work: I try to use those service stations that provide that type of gasoline. Now, if more members and the public were to do that, the market would see that that product is adequately developed and utilized throughout, without the intervention by this Legislature or this government. It's a natural market force.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

We're talking about agricultural products and utilizing them in different ways. Let me make you some further suggestions, concrete ones that I want to bring forward. One of these was written up in the *Edmonton Journal*.

AN HON. MEMBER: Uh oh.

MR. GESELL: Well, I hate to do research from there, but I'll give you some additional ones as well.

They talked about seaweed, for instance. It's what the Japanese people call nori, and it's used in sushi. I don't know if some of you are admirers of that delicacy, but there is the possibility to utilize that and use dried vegetable substances to replace that seaweed. It has two purposes, Mr. Speaker. It is environmentally friendly because it reduces the demand on seaweed, which is apparently environmentally important, and it also utilizes our agricultural products in a different way and creates a different demand.

They also talked about a munchable beer mug. Well, I've got some difficulties with that. Hon. members might recall that we had some ice cream cones, not the waffle ones but the earlier ones. I don't know exactly what they were produced from, but it was a food substance, obviously produced by our agricultural sector, and you could eat those cones. Now, perhaps we could utilize that same technology to our advantage in an environmentally friendly way but also to support our agricultural sector. For instance, our egg cartons that we have now are either built from styrofoam or from recycled paper. Both of them are considered to be environmentally sensitive to some degree. Well, maybe if we were to produce them out of the same materials that the ice cream cones were produced from, they could be recycled and fed to hogs or cattle in our agricultural sector, and close that loop in recycling. What about the containers that are being used by McDonald's, for instance, to hold the hamburgers and things like that? Well, perhaps the same technology could apply there.

The point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is that we might be utilizing materials that are more environmentally friendly but also find some new avenues, some new markets for some of our agricultural products and recycle in that fashion. That's a beneficial and concrete suggestion that maybe we should research and develop more fully.

MR. LUND: Way ahead of the motion.

MR. GESELL: Way ahead of the motion.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat limited by time here, but I want to stress that the government, our government – and I hope the members wait in anticipation for some of the new ideas. Well, maybe I'll try another one since I've got a little bit of time.

Telephone books is another one, Mr. Speaker. Now, I'm trying to get into an area of technology here that I think is important. You should have an appreciation of how many of these telephone books we actually produce, say, just in the city of Edmonton. We have stacks and stacks of them. There's an initiative to actually recycle those. Well, great, fine and dandy, but maybe we should be developing technology whereby we can access a central directory through our phone to get those numbers. We have, through the initiative of this government, put in place individual line service to all Albertans, so they could perhaps utilize that technology to access a central registry that could be updated on a continual basis rather than have this book in every household. It shifts jobs from one sector of the economy to another, but it creates green jobs.

5:20

In order to make these significant changes in our economic sector and our development sector, we need to go in a measured and purposeful way, not at the whim and the direction that is being proposed by the NDP member to legislate some of these things. We need to have the market. We need to put out the ideas and maybe pursue them, research them, but have the market look after these things, as the market will. As long as there is a dollar to be made in some of these initiatives, the market will pursue that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our government has made some very strong commitments to sustainable economic development, and I stress the sustainable. It comes from the original Brundtland commission, of being concerned and making sure about our environment. Jobs for Albertans are on the top of our agenda, but one should be looking at the creation of new jobs also, not just the shifting of jobs from one sector of the economy to another. The creation of new jobs is more in line with some of the initiatives that have been proposed in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund and have been passed. Those are to maybe establish a separate division of that Heritage Savings Trust Fund, an environmental investment division, that might look at and research certain projects that would enhance our environment through the reduction of pollution and create jobs in that fashion.

Mr. Speaker, let me talk about the realities of the situation. As part of that economic and fiscal reality that we've talked about in our throne speech – the words that were written there are important to keep in mind. We must, number one, maintain our quality in education, health care, social services, environmental protection, and other such responsibilities, so the direction by our government, the leadership, is there for that environmental protection.

Mr. Speaker, on that note I would move to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion to adjourn debate, those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion carries.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

5:30

For the motion:

Ady	Fjordbotten	Mirosh
Betkowski	Gesell	Moore
Black	Getty	Musgrove
Bogle	Gogo	Nelson
Bradley	Hyland	Oldring
Cherry	Jonson	Osterman
Clegg	Kowalski	Rostad
Dinning	Laing, B.	Schumacher
Drobot	Lund	Severtson
Elliott	Main	Shrake
Evans	McClellan	Thurber
Fischer	McFarland	Zarusky

Against the motion:

Barrett	Hawkesworth	McInnis
Ewasiuk	Laing, M.	Pashak

Fox
Gibeault

Martin
McEachern

Taylor
Woloshyn

Totals:

For – 36

Against – 12

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair now will ask an unusual procedure. Is there unanimous consent to allow the Deputy Government House Leader the ability to make a motion to put before this House? All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Thank you, hon. members.

Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, it's not proposed that the House sit tonight.

[At 5:36 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]

