

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Friday, September 10, 1993**

10:00 a.m.

Date: 93/09/10

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our divine Father, as we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our thanks and ask that we may continue our work under Your guidance.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-West.

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to present a petition this morning from a number of sweet and gentle women from Lethbridge who are all above the age of 18, they assure me, and are respectfully requesting that the Alberta government not allow the sale of beer and wine in grocery stores.

Thank you.

head: **Reading and Receiving Petitions**

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, may I request that the petition I presented yesterday be now read.

CLERK:

We petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the government to adapt the policy where a single registration be required from either applicant. Then the registry would locate and contact the adoptee(s) adult(s) adult sibling(s) and advise them of the registration of the interested party. The adoptee(s) adult(s) adult sibling(s) would have the freedom of choice in establishing contact or not. The protection policy would apply when warranted.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

Bill 7

Alberta Energy Company Act Repeal Act

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 7, the Alberta Energy Company Act Repeal Act. Consistent with our government's commitment to let the private sector get on with business and its sale of Alberta Energy Company shares, this Bill repeals the special legislation governing Alberta Energy and which provided for government involvement in its direction and ownership.

[Leave granted; Bill 7 read a first time]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table financial statements that relate to Gainers as at 1989 and copies of the latest public accounts that relate to Gainers that have just been filed.

Thank you, sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the 1992-93 annual report of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I table the 20th annual report of the Alberta Law Foundation, fiscal year ended March 31, '93.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you. Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, I am pleased to introduce today His Excellency James Blanchard, the United States ambassador to Canada. Ambassador Blanchard is accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Janet Blanchard, and Mr. Bill Witting, the U.S. consul general in Calgary. As you know, the U.S. is Alberta's leading trading partner, Alberta's largest source of international tourist revenues, and Alberta's most important source of foreign investment. In light of the importance of these ties we are particularly pleased to have the ambassador and his delegation visit our province. I would ask that His Excellency Ambassador Blanchard, Mrs. Blanchard, and Mr. Witting rise in the gallery and receive the recognition and warm welcome of this Assembly.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very honoured today to introduce four very important people from my constituency. Those of you who travel Highway 16 west, your eye would have been caught by a little winery on the north side of the road. It's the Andrew Wolf winery. The owners and proprietors are here today, Andrew and Alvina and their two sons. I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

MS CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you a wonderful grade 6 class that's here from Satoo elementary school in my riding of Edmonton-Ellerslie. This school has recently had a teacher nominated for a teacher of the year award. This class is accompanied by their teacher Mrs. MacDormand and three parents: Mrs. Treder, Mrs. Allan, and Mrs. Davidson. I ask that they be awarded the warm welcome of this Legislative Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for West Yellowhead.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the House recognize the former Member for West Yellowhead, whom I have just spotted in the gallery there. I would ask that the House give him a warm welcome.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister of advanced education.

MR. ADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to acknowledge the presence of Mr. Wade Alston from Magrath, Alberta. Mr. Alston is the lead architect and designer of the proposed farm safety centre to be built in Raymond, Alberta, and he is here in Edmonton today to do some work on that project. I'd like to have him stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **Oral Question Period**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Gainers Inc.

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The latest public accounts that have been filed in this Assembly reveal that Gainers lost \$21 million last year. Total losses on Gainers so far are \$107 million. The taxpayers of Alberta have to pick up the costs of these losses. Four years ago Gainers had a debt of \$114 million; today its debt is \$158 million. Mr. Premier, how does your government expect to find a buyer to take over a company that is so heavily debt ridden?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not so sure where the hon. Leader of the Opposition gets his figure \$158 million. It's certainly not in any publication I have before me, and the Provincial Treasurer is not so sure about that figure. Nonetheless we're trying to find a buyer for Gainers. We think that notwithstanding the debt it still is a good asset. There is a tremendous supply of good stock in hogs. The name Swift is a good name throughout Canada, and it sells a tremendous quantity of processed pork. The land itself is good industrial land. There is equipment within the building and so on that can still be used and put to good use. So we think this is a good asset, and we're pleased to note that there are numerous individuals and companies interested in buying this facility.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier talks about considerable assets at Gainers. This is the same line that this Assembly has been getting every year since 1989. I'd like the Premier to explain – and the financial statements make this clear – how it is that the assets of Gainers since the government has taken Gainers over have fallen by \$17 million.

10:10

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that our position on Gainers is quite clear. We would like to keep the plant open obviously, and we would like to divest ourselves of it and put it into the hands of the private sector. I would like to know – I'm just wondering – what their position is. Is their position putting 1,200 people out of work?

MR. DECORE: The routine is that we ask the questions and you answer.

I want to know, Mr. Premier – I'm going to repeat the question because you didn't answer – how could it be that since the government's involvement in Gainers the assets have plummeted? They've gone down by \$17 million. Why? [interjections]

MR. MITCHELL: He knows about Fridays.

MR. KLEIN: It's the last Friday.

Mr. Speaker, there are some good things about that plant, definitely. The hon. Leader of the Opposition should understand this. It's a well-established Edmonton company, and it was around when he was the mayor. I'm sure he was very, very proud of that name Swift. It's a tremendous name across the country and indeed in North America. The plant has accommodated, and I would say very successfully, the hog producers in northern Alberta and has provided for significant economic stimulation in the city of Edmonton and northern Alberta. As I said, the facility is located

on prime industrial land. It has within it equipment that can be deemed an asset of considerable value. There are numerous corporations and individuals interested in buying this plant.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Who are they?

MR. KLEIN: You will find out soon enough. The proposal call is out. If you were listening to the plant manager yesterday, he said that indeed there are a number of corporations interested in buying this facility.

Mr. Speaker, I simply ask again. I've stated our position on this plant. I've stated it loud and clear. We want to keep those people working. We want to keep the plant viable. We want to keep the Swift name a proud name in Canada, a proud Edmonton company. We know where we stand on this issue. Where do they stand?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. deputy leader.

Child Welfare

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Children's Advocate report is the most recent of many on child welfare. It's a frightening indictment of this government's negligence regarding children in their care. These are children at risk. The minister's response is vague and defensive: short-term, long-term plans, but mainly that parents should be more responsible and accountable for their children. Well, my question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. We're talking here, Mr. Minister, about the most vulnerable children in our province. This minister is legally the parent of 4,000 Alberta children in protective services. When is this minister going to show more responsibility and accountability for his children and clean up this mess?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, as I advised this Assembly yesterday in relation to the copies and also what my short- and long-term action plans are in relation to the report, I will not repeat that. I would like to advise the hon. member that the total child welfare budget in Alberta per year is \$160 million. That shows that we do care in Alberta. In addition to that, under handicapped children's services my budget is \$90 million. In addition to that, we spent \$70.7 million in day care, for a total of close to \$250 million in programs for children in need. I know we don't have a perfect system, but in the very near future this minister will come with a plan of how child welfare will look in Alberta in the future.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Minister, we don't need to know how much you spent; we need to know what you're going to do to save the children.

Mr. Speaker, we have yet to hear from this minister whether or not he even supports the advocate's recommendations. Tell us now, please, Mr. Minister. Do you support the recommendations? Do you intend to make them fact, to put them into action?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, the report is over 300 pages, and I read all of it. In addition to that, in the past eight months I've visited over 68 different centres in Alberta. I bet you anything that the hon. member opposite putting the questions across did not do that in the past eight months: talk to foster parents, talk to district offices, talk to child welfare frontline workers, talk to native workers. I am not proud to say that close to 50 percent of the children in foster care right now are native. That's why I'm pushing so hard on the welfare reforms: to get people to end the poverty. That report says that a lot of the problems in child

welfare are tied in with poverty. That's why we are moving forward with reforms to end that poverty. That is the plan.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, this House and the people of Alberta don't need to hear about the minister's schedule. They need to hear about what he's going to do for the children in his care.

The advocate made it clear that we must have a decision this year. We should have a decision before the end of the fall sitting. Will the minister undertake to provide a decision on his plans to put this report into action before the end of this sitting?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to advise the hon. member that we do have over 8,000 children in care in Alberta we're providing services to. It's not an easy job to make changes. We will make changes. There are over 200 recommendations. The recommendations are now being prioritized by my department along with the Children's Advocate, and we will take the appropriate action in the very, very near future.

Gainers Inc.
(continued)

MR. STELMACH: Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister of agriculture. Yesterday's announcement that Gainers is shutting down its beef kill floor has caught many beef producers in northern Alberta by surprise. This is fall season when many farmers cull cows from the breeding herd and cull any lame animals from their herd. Why at this particular time has Gainers shut down its beef operation?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and certainly a very, very important question to the agricultural community. Obviously, this was a business decision that was made by Gainers. It was a decision that was made to try and make their operation viable. Gainers has been cutting back in their cattle kill for some time now. By and large, they have been slaughtering less than a hundred thousand animals per year. The number of animals that they have been slaughtering has been fewer and fewer. With that in mind, that's why the decision was obviously part of the process that the Gainers' management has indulged in. The smaller plants located within the northern part of the province have indicated that they'd be willing to expand their facilities and utilize some of the opportunities that this may create. Overall the balance of the animals will have to go to the south where the majority of the animals from northern Alberta are now going.

MR. STELMACH: The shutdown of the beef kill floor, Mr. Speaker, has left a number of producers in northern Alberta in quite a predicament, but it's especially the smaller operators, those that have smaller lots to ship. Given this government's commitment to rural Alberta, especially to the rural small family farm, what options are available for those individuals, all farmers in northern Alberta to ship their beef?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: The options that are available, of course, are amongst the smaller processing plants, amongst the smaller abattoirs that are located in Alberta. We have engaged in discussions with several of these smaller plants, who, by the way, would qualify for the CAPA program, which allows for nutritive processing in western Canada, the same program that the Liberals

were so adamantly condemning last week. So there are opportunities that this process will allow to expand throughout northern Alberta. It'll allow for additional processing to happen right at home.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

10:20 North Saskatchewan River Boat Ltd.

MS CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The saga of the *Edmonton Queen* is just one example of how this government seems determined to continue its legacy of squandering taxpayer moneys through bad loan guarantees. The Provincial Treasurer has confirmed that more than \$700,000 from the loan guarantee has already been accessed by the North Saskatchewan River Boat company, a company that may or may not own a boat that in all likelihood will never see the water. My question to the Provincial Treasurer: will the minister now admit that this was a mistake to risk Alberta's taxpayer dollars on this company?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in April of 1992 a loan guarantee was provided to the North Saskatchewan River Boat Ltd. for the construction of a paddle wheel riverboat. There was a consortium of activity with respect to that, including dollars provided to this particular company by the western economic diversification fund, the city of Edmonton, and the community tourism action program. There has been a legacy of difficulty with respect to this matter. The matter has been dealt with in one level of Provincial Court in this province, and then the matter has gone now to a level of the Federal Court. I am advised that at this point in time our guarantee is not at risk. Interest that has been provided has been provided according to the plan, and the province is anxiously awaiting to see what the resolution of this matter by the courts will be.

MS CARLSON: It's shaping up to be another mini-NovAtel.

My supplementary is again to the Treasurer. Is the Treasurer now prepared to add this \$700,000 to the already massive expenditure that his department has wasted on losses on loan guarantees?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of histrionics and theatrics that come into the normal thumping that comes in the Legislative Assembly. The fact of the matter is that there is no loss to date. This matter is, at least in the eyes of some, a matter of some significance. The city of Edmonton had committed itself here to this particular project in two ways. There has been no call for any canceling of any guarantee by the province of Alberta at this point in time. I repeat: this matter is currently before a Federal Court, and the government is anxiously awaiting to see what the resolution of this matter will be. We will then be in a position to basically go with the next step. It is really quite a high level of histrionics to start talking about mini this and mini that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-West.

Gaming

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister responsible for lotteries. Gaming is viewed as a problem by many Albertans. Now, why is the government owning and running the gaming activities here in Alberta?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the involvement of the province of Alberta in terms of gaming in this jurisdiction is one of control, and control to ensure that there is an integrity maintained. Now, there are at least four different areas of gaming in this province. There is the horse racing industry, and we have the Alberta Racing Commission that supervises and controls it. We have an Alberta Gaming Commission that deals on an annual basis with some 8,500 licences dealing with such things as pool tickets, raffle tickets, casinos, and bingos. We have a lottery corporation. Alberta Lotteries is a partner with two other jurisdictions, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, in assessing the lottery system, the selling of tickets such as 6/49. Then we have the fourth area, which is the video lottery terminal system. Looking at other jurisdictions around the world, it is absolutely imperative that a government agency control, regulate, and thoroughly assess on a day-to-day basis the operation of this.

I might point out as well that in several weeks from now, at the end of this month, Alberta will play host to a convention of the North American state and provincial legislators in the lottery business. That convention will be held in Calgary and in Kananaskis, and we'll be having upwards of a thousand regulators from North America come to Alberta, because they all know that the most secure system in North America is the Alberta system.

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, again to the minister: is the minister prepared to consider the Montana model, in talking about video lotteries, whereby they sell the machines to private operators and then are able to gain revenue through the purchase, then, of gambling licences, the purchase of the machines, and some sort of return on the revenue through those machines?

MR. KOWALSKI: Absolutely not. This minister will never, ever consider that particular venue. I had an opportunity several years ago to spend a day with the then governor of the state of Montana and the previous governor of the state of Montana, and we had a discussion about this. I said to both governors, the current governor and the previous governor: exactly how much revenue is the state of Montana getting from the rental system that has been allocated now with private ownership? He said: regretfully to date we have received none. I said: well, that's strange, because I was told that you were going to get all of this. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, there has to be one control mechanism, and the control mechanism in Alberta will be the government of Alberta.

Now, having said that, Mr. Speaker, we've then taken at least 15 different steps to allow private involvement in this system. In Alberta the province does not own the venues where these machines are located. In Manitoba the government owns them, but in Alberta we do not. We allow class D liquor licences to have access to these machines, and we have a long waiting list of other organizations in the province that want to do it. The maintenance of the VLT system in this province is done by contract with the private sector. We've purchased all of the machines from the private sector. All of the communications, the transportation, the courier system, the banking services, the insurance premiums are all done with the private sector, but the ownership must be maintained by a regulatory body to make sure that there's integrity, that there's honesty, and there's never, ever a possibility of having unsavoury characters have access to the chips that go into these machines.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper.

Government Appointments

MR. CHADI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would hope that some day I could be able to ramble on like the hon. Deputy Premier. I'm really looking forward to it. I can assure you of that.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, a point of order under section 23, please.

MR. CHADI: That's a cheap shot.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier talks about listening to Albertans and keeping his promises. When the Auditor General made eight major recommendations for improving government in this province, the Premier promised that his new management team would act swiftly to implement the recommendations. My question is to the Premier. The Premier pointed out in a February 24 speech to the Edmonton Petroleum Club that his government had implemented the recommendation of the Auditor General to use the Public Service Commissioner to shortlist candidates for major government appointments. If this is the case, can the Premier explain to Albertans why he did not use the expertise of the Public Service Commissioner when his government appointed John Oldring to a \$50,000 job for six months now and Jim Horsman to a \$600 per day job and Catherine Arthur and Marv Moore and Sherrold Moore and Lord knows how many 'moore.' Can you answer that question?

MR. KLEIN: Well, first of all, Mr. Horsman and Mr. Oldring were not appointed to a board or an authority or an agency; they were given a contract to do specific jobs. Now, lots of people get contracts. I remember a prominent Liberal being given a huge contract, probably the largest contract ever awarded by the Alberta government to anyone. His name was Mr. Bill Code. Remember him? He's a good friend of all of yours. He got the largest contract that anyone has ever received. You know, we don't play favourites. We appoint the odd Liberal to the various boards, authorities, commissions, and agencies, Mr. Speaker. Sherrold Moore has been on the Alberta sport foundation for a number of years and has done a remarkable job as a volunteer.

10:30

MR. CHADI: Mr. Speaker, thank you. We all know or at least we have an idea of what happened in the past and who was elected and who was nominated and who was appointed. The question is: what will this government do? What will the Premier do? That's our question. You keep talking about the Alberta Advantage, that this government is interested in promoting this province, but are you really wanting only to promote the future careers of former Tory cabinet ministers and friends? Mr. Premier, my question is this. [interjections] Please bear with me. Allow me the opportunity to ask the question. Goodness gracious. Given all these appointments without the use of the Public Service Commissioner, is the Premier prepared to admit now to Albertans that patronage appointments will continue unabated under his new management?

MR. KLEIN: You know, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is obviously referring to recommendation 7 in the Auditor General's report. I was quite concerned about the wording of that particular recommendation. I'm going to read it.

It is recommended that the Province consider using the expertise of the Public Service Commissioner to short-list suitably qualified candidates for appointments to the boards of all Provincial agencies and Crown-controlled organizations.

There are numerous, literally hundreds of boards, authorities, commissions, agencies, hospital boards, and so on. So I asked – and I'm going to table this letter – the Auditor General to give me clarification relative to this issue, and he writes:

My use of the word "all" in the context of "... Public Service Commissioner to short-list suitably qualified candidates for appointments to the boards of all Provincial agencies and Crown-controlled organizations" should be taken to mean all significant agencies and organizations. An Auditor should never be concerned with the insignificant or immaterial and my use of the word "all" should be considered in this light.

I'd be glad to table that letter. If you take the appointment, for instance, to the Natural Resources Conservation Board, a significant agency, that was indeed through the Public Service Commissioner, and so have other appointments.

The point I'm trying to make here is that there is a difference between volunteerism and the kind of patronage that really the Auditor General wanted to have addressed. I'll give you an example. Volunteerism is the kind of thing that a Marv Moore would take on or a Sherrold Moore and indeed some Liberals. Patronage is when a well-known Liberal, a former member of Edmonton city council, gets appointed to a job that pays hundreds of thousands of dollars as chairman of the CNR by a Liberal government. Mr. Speaker, there is a difference. Both Mr. Moores, Sherrold Moore and Marvin Moore, are volunteers. What I cited is blatant, outright patronage.

Job Creation

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, our Provincial Treasurer just finished bringing down a budget outlining our financial picture for the coming year. While I applaud the fiscally responsible direction we are taking, I think we'd all agree that the true solution to economic recovery lies in getting every employable Albertan back to work. We've been told that government's role is to create the environment for that to happen. Can the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development tell this Assembly just how he intends to accomplish this?

MR. ADY: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's really not the mandate of this minister to create jobs. Rather, this minister has some responsibility, in fact has the responsibility for the system that will train our adult learners in this province. We have an infrastructure in place that's doing an adequate job with that. Certainly we're going to have to do some work with them in view of the access problem that we have, but let me just take a moment and tell some of the things that are evident in our job statistics of the province.

As of this morning, when the employment statistics were released, we find that Alberta in fact has 3,400 more full-time jobs this month than last. Most of the jobs that were created in this province – being a total of 6,400 new full-time jobs during the month of August, albeit we did have fewer part-time jobs. Let's remember that full-time jobs are always an advantage as opposed to part-time jobs. We see that as a healthy direction for employment to be headed in our province. In view of that, I think we can be optimistic. When we look back over the last three months, full-time employment rose in this province by 122,900, while total employment increased by 79,700 jobs in this province. Mr. Speaker, I think that's a healthy direction for our employment to be headed, and we can at least be optimistic to some extent in what's happening with our economy in the province.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question?

MR. BRASSARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With many of our students returning to school and hoping to offset some of their expenses with part-time employment, can the minister indicate what opportunities he sees for them?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, historically the youth of our province have had the most difficult time to find employment in our province. I think we can relate that to the fact that they're still in the training mode; they don't have a lot of experience. However, we are finding that our youth are being more successful than they have been in the past. During the month of August we found that we had an all-time high of student employment in this province: 134,000 students found jobs in this province in August. I might also say that my department with its summer temporary employment program was responsible for creating over 5,000 of those jobs. Some of that was done by changing the emphasis of the summer temporary employment program, by moving it out of the government agencies and into the private sector and into the nonprofit and municipal agencies. There was an increased uptake in those sectors creating a record number of jobs through that program. So I think we can again gain some encouragement by what's happening. Certainly the Treasurer is taking a direct approach, a positive approach by reducing the deficit of this province, which will have a dramatic effect on what happens with employment and our economy in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

Native Hunting Rights

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Over the last while I think most people have heard about the moose hunting moratorium that was requested by the High Level Tribal Council of Treaty 8, but what's not known is that these people were forced into making that request by a government that has refused to co-operate with native peoples. For the past two years the government has ignored a proposal by the natives for integrated resource management. Now, my question is: when will he call in – this is at government to government level – the principals in this whole affair so that we can ensure a proposal for joint management so that all hunters can have access to a healthy, sustainable animal population?

MR. KLEIN: I appreciate the question, although it should appropriately be answered by the Minister of Environmental Protection. He has indeed briefed me on this particular situation. He has indicated that meetings have been held with the chiefs of Treaty 8. He is meeting, as I understand, this weekend with representatives of the Fish and Game Association. Indeed, he's committed to the principle the hon. member has just espoused, and that is the principle of a sustainable moose yield to accommodate both the native population and the recreational hunter.

10:40

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, there's a complete failure of the Premier to understand the problem. This is downgrading and actually an insult to the native people, the aboriginal people, who had these rights before the province was created. It should be part of an intergovernmental concern, and to foist it off onto some junior minister – when is the Premier going to take part face to face with the leaders of our aboriginal people and work out a joint hunting commission?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, you know, I do resent that insinuation that I wouldn't be prepared to meet with the representatives of Treaty 8. I would like to point out something to the hon. member. Not so long ago – and it was in this Legislature – we signed a framework agreement with the grand chief of Treaty 8 representing all the tribes of Treaty 8. It was an agreement that said that there would be full and complete access to government and we would negotiate government to government. Indeed, if Grand Chief Halcrow wants to have a meeting with me and feels that he is not getting the progress that he desires through the appropriate ministry, then he has my assurance I will meet with him on a moment's notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Highwood.

Highway 40

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted to participate in this last Friday morning question period. To the Minister of Transportation and Utilities. Tourism is one of Alberta's most important and growing industries. In my constituency of Highwood many people and businesses are engaged in this growing industry. However, each year a problem arises because Highway 40, which is in the south end of Kananaskis Country and part of our constituency, is closed to tourist traffic until June 15. So visitors are deprived of access through Highwood into the Kananaskis Country during the first four important weeks of the tourist season. Could the minister please explain?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is some history in regard to this proposal by the hon. Member for Highwood, and the history goes back some numbers of years. Highway 40 was developed in a major park, and when we had that development in the park, a number of people came forward, all sectors came forward and requested that the highway be closed during the critical elk calving season. The people that the gentleman talks about now were onside at the time. We did that closure. It was approved by government in 1983. The dates are set by fish and wildlife. They ask me as minister of transportation to close the highway for that period. That's not to say that we can't look at it and realign the closing date, but the critical time is May 15 to June 15. As I've mentioned before, the Kananaskis Country produced a report which was approved by all those people involved back then. As I've said, we could look at the changes if there are some needed.

MR. TANNAS: Well, to the same minister, Mr. Speaker: if elk calving is the reason for closure, would the minister please tell me all the other primary highways in this province that are closed for elk calving season?

MR. TRYNCHY: Well, Mr. Speaker, right now there are no other highways closed, but I can relate to Highway 43, which is Moose Row, from Whitecourt to Valleyview that causes us some considerable concern with regards to moose being killed by traffic. I think we could look at a number of things in regards to a slower speed limit. Certainly, as I've said at the outset, if fish and game and the people involved would get together and make a submission that's acceptable – and I think the hon. member should be talking to the Minister of Environmental Protection, who controls fish and wildlife – I'd be willing to look at it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

Driver Training

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Motor Association has been given approval to issue drivers' licences, yet small driving schools throughout the province have been denied the same treatment. My question to the minister responsible for Municipal Affairs and registry services: why has the minister chosen to single out and discriminate against the backbone of the Alberta economy, the small businessperson?

DR. WEST: We haven't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, will the minister please answer the question rather than make light of it? It's a very serious matter. Is the minister prepared to give the same treatment to the small, private driving schools that is being given to the Alberta Motor Association?

DR. WEST: Now we have a question, Mr. Speaker. The history of driver training schools did include at one time the ability to test the drivers after they had been trained. Because of the conflict of interest that developed by granting that testing policy, I guess, to the schools, it was removed from them under a previous policy of this government. At the present time the AMA will not be involved directly in that conflict. They have been grandfathered in the position that they have served in this province because they are legislated. They are under a mandate that they can only serve their membership. The policy that was taken forward as we advance to putting out the final group of some hundred-plus registry services to go with the 149 that are already out there plus the AMA – at the present time the driving schools, although they have made application, have had it pointed out to them that they would be in conflict in delivering the examination to the individual person after they had indeed educated them themselves.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat.

School Board Amalgamation

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a new member I've heard that Fridays were giddy days, and I can certainly see that's true by the questions coming from the opposition side. However, my question goes to the Minister of Education. I'd like to first of all, sir, congratulate you on the amalgamation of the nonoperating boards. However, there are a number of boards who are operating who have a small geographic area and who have a small number of students who could benefit by amalgamation and certainly save money for the province and for boards and for Education. Now, these boards will not amalgamate voluntarily. They will only amalgamate if there are some incentives provided. I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you have provided any incentives or are considering providing any incentives for the small, inefficient boards to amalgamate.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I think the school boards of this province are interested in quality education and in greater efficiency of operation. Certainly as we look toward having to provide certain controls on educational expenditure, that should be a primary focus of school boards. I certainly recognize that this is a very strong theme that is emerging in the discussion about education for the future, and that is, as the hon. member has identified, the need for looking very seriously at the amalgamation of school boards. It is something that I will be assessing as the roundtables come up in terms of future educational planning.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question?

DR. L. TAYLOR: None, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Norwood.

Workers' Compensation Board

MR. BENIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The WCB has an obligation to properly retrain injured workers to give them a fair opportunity to re-enter the work force. Although we have high-quality technical institutes in this province, the WCB is sending injured workers to nonlicensed private vocational schools like Jack Bredin that are not on the list of licensed vocational schools supplied by the Department of Advanced Education and Career Development. I would first like to table this list dated August 4, 1993. To the minister responsible for the WCB: why are one in five injured workers being sent to the nonlicensed Jack Bredin Community Institute at a cost of \$3,700 per injured worker when we have quality institutes like NAIT?

10:50

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, one of the positive aspects of criticism is that it gives an organization a time to do an analysis on some of the things that they're involved in. In this particular case, where there were concerns with the Jack Bredin institute coming to my office, immediately an external review was done by a group that was not part of the institute nor was it part of WCB. It was found that both the classroom instruction and the follow-up work experience was clearly satisfactory in those interviews. Also people in the private sector who'd take these students on from a work experience point of view indicated very clearly that students from that particular institute would be hired at the same entry level and at the same salary as somebody, for instance, from NAIT. The job market obviously reflects how many can be hired. So the entire review showed that it was being conducted in a satisfactory manner.

It's important to recognize that Jack Bredin institute takes students specifically who are academically and experientially challenged, and it goes through a period of bringing them up to a level where they can come out of this with a certificate. All systems checked out on this particular internal review, and it's for those reasons we have the confidence that the training is done the way it should be.

Workers are not sent to the various institutes. They are given a variety of choices. They are required to look at the choices, even to interview the particular institutes and to interview employers who have hired people from those institutes to see if they're satisfactory. Then if the worker chooses, they may be permitted to go to that particular institute.

MR. BENIUK: Mr. Speaker, the question dealt with sending people to nonlicensed private vocational schools.

To the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development: did the Jack Bredin Community Institute apply to be licensed, and if so, why is it not licensed?

Thank you.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question on notice.

Point of Order Interrupting a Member

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader asked that a point of order be raised at this time.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I rise under Standing Order 23(j), and I raised the point of order as a result of a comment that was made by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper, comments which were not in context with questions that were raised of me just a minute or two earlier but an off-the-cuff statement made by the hon. member. Section 23(j) very clearly points out that certain statements may cause other members to react, and this member is reacting to the words "ramble on."

I believe very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that in this House there must be decorum and there must be a dignity assessed to and attached to the question provided by any hon. member. In this case an hon. member asked this particular member a question. This member felt very strongly that he had an obligation to provide the information requested by the hon. member. When an hon. member raises a question, surely a minister, then, who is in a position to provide an answer should provide that answer if he can. The fulfillment of the obligation to provide the required information was there, and I was proceeding to point out some 15 or 16 different examples of involvement by the private sector in the video lottery administration of this particular province. I was proceeding to do that and then was in essence halted by interjections from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that's a violation of my freedom of free speech, and secondly, I believe it is a violation of the public's right to know. If an hon. member raises a question in this House, then I think it is a responsibility of a minister to provide the answer. I would sincerely hope that the Member for Edmonton-Roper – he had his opportunity to raise a question – would not then throw out words such as "ramble on," which have nothing to do with the question at stake. I know that some of the hon. members on the other side are really trying to make a name for themselves, and histrionics and theatrics come into play, but please would the hon. member not try and do it at my expense? I believe very strongly in the integrity and the decorum of this particular Assembly, and I also believe very strongly in the right for an hon. member not only to raise his question but to receive an answer for that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The point of order allows the Chair to make some comments that it was going to make anyway. This is probably the best context in which to make them. The Chair is really not prepared to say at this time that "rambling" is an unparliamentary word.

Speaker's Ruling Oral Question Period Rules

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair wants to remind members on both sides – and members on both sides, I'd say, are equally guilty of not allowing the proper progress to be made in question period. We've now slipped back another question from yesterday. The *Beauchesne* citation here is that under 410(7), "Brevity both in questions and answers is of great importance." I just think that has to be considered by both sides, because there are going to be new arrangements in this Chamber starting on Monday as a result of the great work done by the Government House Leader and the Opposition House Leader and all other members of this Assembly as a matter of fact, as I pointed out yesterday.

The rules for questions are that there will be a succinct preamble to the question, and that is going to be enforced as a succinct preamble, not little shots about the preceding question or the answer to the preceding question. There is going to be a succinct preamble relating to that question, and then there will be a succinct reply that responds to the question. For the supplemental questions there will be no preamble. Government members as

well as opposition members have been putting preambles to their supplementals lately, and this practice has got to cease if we're going to have the proper type of question period that has been agreed to by all members. Now, all members, you've agreed to this rule, and I unfortunately have the job of enforcing it, so I hope you won't be blaming the Chair when the Chair is going to be interrupting you in your question to stop you from making lengthy preambles that then eat into the time of other hon. members. We've got at least six or seven hon. members who didn't get their questions in today, and the same happened last time. So I just want to give fair warning now that the Chair is going to be very strict on this until we get into the good habit of stating succinct preambles so that the person being asked the question knows what it's about, with a short question and a short, responsive reply, if possible.

Thank you very much.

head: **Orders of the Day**
11:00

[On motion, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of the Whole]

head: **Government Bills and Orders**
head: **Committee of the Whole**

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd like to call the committee to order.

Hon. members, if you would engage in lively conversations in your respective lounges, we'd like to bring the Committee of the Whole to order.

The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

Bill 2
Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1993

MR. DINNING: Mr. Chairman, I would simply ask hon. members, having debated this matter a number of days in the last week or so, to give approval here at Committee of the Whole House regarding Bill 2.

DR. PERCY: We have discussed in some detail the issue of principle related to the interim supply, and we have made our objections abundantly clear as to why, with regards to process, we felt with regret that we would oppose the interim supply Bill. As we are now embarking upon a process of parliamentary reform, as there will be the opportunity for detailed discussion of the budget and the provisions of the budget, since the interim supply Bill effectively accounts for three-quarters of the fiscal year, the real forum, then, to debate the interim supply in terms of the detail and to deal with it as an issue of confidence in the budgeting process will be in the budget debate itself, both from the nature of the details in particular and as to the general philosophy.

So having registered our concerns over the issue of process, we would like to ensure that the details of the interim supply Bill, which are contained in the budget, are going to be dealt with in the new process that lies ahead, the 25 days that we have to debate the main estimates, the subsequent days that we have for the other divisions of the budget, and in the opportunity that we have to discuss in detail the five particular departments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any other comments, questions? If not, in summation.

MR. DINNING: I appreciate the hon. members looking forward, looking to the future, and having some good debate in future committees of the whole House, Mr. Chairman.

[The sections of Bill 2 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

Chairman's Ruling
Members in Other Members' Seats

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the benefit of newer members, in fact in Committee of the Whole, because of the relaxed state of affairs, members are not required to stay in their places. Indeed, we often find opposition members sitting in the Premier's chair or some other chairs and hon. ministers sitting over in some of the front benches of the opposition. So don't be alarmed, as long as it doesn't cause outbursts or prolonged discussions.

Bill 3
Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund)
Interim Supply Act, 1993

MR. DINNING: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the speed, and I would encourage all members to approve Bill 3 here in Committee of the Whole.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Edmonton-Whitemud.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We, too, look forward to discussing the elements of the budget in detail in the new forums that are available to us and in the process of budget debate. Again we would like to reiterate the process of interim supply. The manner that it was conducted leads us, with regret, to vote against it. We think that since three-quarters of the budget is in fact contained in the interim supply Bill, with regards to the issue of confidence, it's better dealt with in the context of the budget debate itself and forums that we have there.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further questions?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

[The sections of Bill 3 agreed to]

Bill 2
Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1993
(continued)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have erred on Bill 2 and would beg your indulgence so that we can move back to that. I am required to request that the hon. Provincial Treasurer, who has moved Bill 2, move that it be reported.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 2 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 3
Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund)
Interim Supply Act, 1993
(continued)

MR. DINNING: I move that Bill 3 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Chairman's Ruling
Members in Other Members' Seats

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have one further caveat on our voting procedure. When you're voting in committee, you must be in your seat. If you are engaged in lively but quiet debate elsewhere, you're not entitled to show your aye or no from any place other than your proper seat. So if we can remember that.

Bill 4
Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings
Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division)
Interim Supply Act, 1993

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any comments, questions, amendments offered on this one?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

[The sections of Bill 4 agreed to]

MR. DINNING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker entered the Chamber]

MR. DAY: There already appears to be someone behind you: Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise and report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll try it again, then, hon. Deputy House Leader.

MR. DAY: We're all on a learning curve, Mr. Chairman. We appreciate your returning to the Chair so that we can legitimately vote and not rob our colleagues of the opportunity.

I will move again that the committee do rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Highwood.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration certain Bills, and the committee reports the following Bills have been agreed to: Bill 2, a money Bill; Bill 3, a money Bill; and Bill 4, a money Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur on the report and request for leave to sit again?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that we move to consideration at the third reading stage of Bill 2.

head: **Government Bills and Orders**
head: **Third Reading**

11:10 **Bill 2**
Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1993

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. DINNING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to you, sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: It's morning yet.

MR. DINNING: It's still morning. Well, I'm so anxious to get this last Friday over with, Mr. Speaker, that my enthusiasm got the better of me.

I am pleased to move third reading of Bill 2, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1993.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with regret that I speak against this Bill. Let me outline the reasons why. It is, first of all, an issue of process. To have an interim supply Bill presented two or three days prior to a budget when there was not then full detail for the members to assess the interim supply Bill, particularly when it's of such magnitude, \$8.9 billion, and we're effectively accounting for three-quarters of the forthcoming budget, really leads all members to be at a disadvantage to assess the document. One cannot refer to the May 6 document or the estimates associated with it because those are not documents that have force. We are now in the position that since we have a budget, since many of the elements of the budget and the estimates are very similar, to the extent that we are much concerned with the budget itself, the details, and our confidence in the government in terms of its spending allocations, the way that it is implementing cuts, on whom those cuts fall, we feel that the best forum to debate those issues is in fact in the new process that lies ahead with the parliamentary reform that has been passed and our ability then in the subcommittees to have detailed review of five core departments, one of which will be Treasury. We also look forward to the debates on the main estimates and the subsequent debates on the other divisions of the budget.

Again, it is with regret that I will vote against the interim supply Bill, because such Bills are important. They do provide the cash for the government to run. But in this case we think this process was inappropriate, and we look forward to the detailed debate of the budget, since three-quarters of the budget in fact is subsumed in this interim supply Bill.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the hon. . . . No, I take that back. I've heard what the hon. member has to say, and I would simply conclude and again move third reading of Bill 2.

[Motion carried; Bill 2 read a third time]

Bill 3
Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund)
Interim Supply Act, 1993

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to move third reading of Bill 3, the Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund) Interim Supply Act, 1993.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with regret that I do oppose this interim supply Bill for the reasons I have formerly stated with respect to the previous Bill; that is, the issue of timing and our ability to have the detail that we require. With regards to this Bill again, when one looks at such a Bill, one doesn't know under what circumstances some projects were in, some were not, which specific projects are being discussed, because there is not sufficient documentation with the Bill itself to allow us to debate the merits of those specific projects, why they're in now as opposed to other projects being passed in the budget itself.

Since we will have under the new parliamentary process the ability in the subcommittees to have detailed review of the process, since this interim supply Bill constitutes three-quarters of the budget, and since to the extent that our concerns are issues of confidence, we feel that the best forum for such debate is in the budget debate itself, and that is where we will pursue these issues both in detail and in general terms with regards to principle.

Thank you.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, having acknowledged the comments from Edmonton-Whitemud, I would simply move third reading of Bill 3.

[Motion carried; Bill 3 read a third time]

Bill 4
Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings
Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division)
Interim Supply Act, 1993

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill 4 standing in my name on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Whitemud.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You may anticipate what I'm going to say. It is with regret – and I'm serious on this – that I will vote against this Bill. Again, the process I do not think was appropriate. Since our concerns are concerns that are best dealt with as issues of confidence, since the interim supply Bill in fact constitutes such a significant portion of the budget, we feel that the best forum for this debate is in the subcommittee and in the debate on the main estimates and the subsequent divisions.

Thank you.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, permit me just to make a few brief comments, now having the opportunity to speak for the last time on these three Bills, specifically on Bill 4. Thanks to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the two House leaders, this will be the last time that we will have to rise and speak in this Assembly on a Friday.

Mr. Speaker, I hear the hon. member's comments about process. I can't tell you how excited I am about the prospect of appearing before the subcommittee for four straight hours along with my colleagues in Executive Council: the Minister of Health, the Minister of Family and Social Services – who am I missing?

– and the minister of advanced education. I know that we are all waiting with bated breath for that opportunity, and we will prepare for that. We look forward to responding to some insightful, intelligent questions that all hon. members will want to ask.

Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker. The member, I presume speaking on behalf of his caucus today, has voted against two Bills and will on this third Bill. Let's be clear on what the hon. member has agreed to vote against. Already he has voted against seniors' lodge accommodation in this province. He spoke of process. The hon. member stood and said he was going to oppose this Bill. It doesn't matter what the reasons are. In fact, he's opposed to seniors' lodge accommodation. He's opposed to the construction of health unit projects, including the one in Sherwood Park. He and his caucus are opposed to finishing the Reynolds-Alberta Museum in Wetaskiwin and the Remington-Alberta Carriage Centre in Cardston. He has opposed the finalization of the construction of the Grant MacEwan College. Let's make it perfectly clear: that is what the hon. member and his colleagues have done in opposing the interim supply Bills this afternoon. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, I know he's feeling frisky. He had his opportunity; now I have mine.

11:20

Also, as the hon. member is going to vote against this Bill – and we'll see whether they do. They've already voted against providing interim supply funding through to the end of November perhaps to child welfare services in this province. The Bill provides for an allotment of funding partially to meet the total cost of providing some \$158 million this year in child welfare services. They have been talking for the last week about this government's position and its efforts to get Alberta citizens who are on social welfare back into a state of self-reliance and independence. What they are doing today, having opposed Bill 2, is opposing the programs that we have in place to support those people until they get there. That is the ultimate contradiction. Hypocrisy is a word that you will not let me use, I think, Mr. Speaker, so I will simply not use the word hypocrisy on the record.

When I look at the rest of the elements that he says he doesn't know – he said he didn't know; the fact is that he does know. Standing before the Assembly today, he does know that he is voting against Family and Social Services. He's voting against providing funding to the Edmonton public board of education, to the Edmonton Catholic board of education, to the University of Alberta, to Grant MacEwan College, to the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. We know where the opposition stands, Mr. Speaker: they are opposed to providing funding to those important programs that this government so strongly believes in.

Finally, we know we will watch – I don't know whether we're going to stand and watch – them vote against providing irrigation and rehabilitation expansion to various irrigation projects and construction of reservoirs across the province. I know my colleague the hon. Member for Bow Valley . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Where is it?

MR. DINNING: Down in the Vulcan area. . . . is deeply interested in this subject, Mr. Speaker, as I know you are on behalf of your constituents. Let it be clear that they will vote against it. They will vote against providing funding to create urban parks in Lethbridge – shame on the Member for Lethbridge-East – in Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Lloydminster, and Grande Prairie. When they stand, they will stand against providing funding for the development and application of renewable energy, particularly solar and wind energy in the southwestern region of the province

of Alberta. They will stand and be opposed to providing funding to reforestation nursery enhancement in this province. We speak of developing our forest industry, but they will vote against it. Finally, the ultimate is that they will stand and be opposed to providing sufficient dollars to fund applied cancer research. We on this side of the Assembly stand in favour of these projects and this funding. We know exactly where the opposition stands, because they will vote no on this third Bill.

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, we know where this government stands; we now know where the opposition stands. So I would simply move third reading of Bill 4.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. After the mover of a motion speaks a second time, that closes debate, unfortunately.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not unfortunately.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, unfortunately for the hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

The hon. Provincial Treasurer has moved third reading of Bill 4, Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Interim Supply Act, 1993. All those in favour of this motion, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

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

11:30

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Ady	Friedel	Oberg
Amery	Fritz	Paszkowski
Black	Gordon	Pham
Brassard	Haley	Renner
Burgener	Havelock	Rostad
Calahasen	Herard	Severtson
Cardinal	Hierath	Smith
Clegg	Hlady	Sohal
Coutts	Jonson	Stelmach
Day	Laing	Tannas
Dinning	Lund	Taylor, L.
Doerksen	Magnus	Thurber
Dunford	McClellan	Trynchy
Fischer	McFarland	Woloshyn
Forsyth	Mirosh	

Against the motion:

Abdurahman	Decore	Percy
Beniuk	Hanson	Sekulic
Bracko	Hewes	Soetaert
Bruseker	Kirkland	White
Chadi	Langevin	Wickman
Collingwood	Leibovici	Yankowsky
Dalla-Longa	Nicol	Zwozdesky

Totals: For – 44 Against – 21

[Motion carried; Bill 4 read a third time]

head: **Consideration of His Honour
the Lieutenant Governor's Speech**

Moved by Mr. Severtson:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Gordon Towers, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

Moved by Mr. Decore that the motion be amended by the addition of the following words: but that the Assembly condemns the government for failing to develop a comprehensive fiscal plan which presents proper budgetary and human service priorities, since the most severe budget cuts made by this government have been extracted from Albertans who form the most unfortunate and vulnerable sectors of society, such as children, the poor, and the disabled.

[Debate adjourned September 8: Mr. Yankowsky speaking]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Belmont.

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank you for allowing me to complete my speech, which I began on Wednesday. On Wednesday I spoke about some of the history of the older part of my constituency. I spoke about the improvement of the level of services in my constituency. I spoke about the diversity of the business sector. I spoke about problems related to crime and unemployment. I spoke about some of the agencies that are struggling to deal with these problems.

Mr. Speaker, I continue with my speech. Targets for economic development: regarding the last of these, I must say that for many years I have heard similar noises, especially about diversity, from the hon. Premier and his colleagues and from his predecessors. Granted, some of the progress has been made, but my unemployed constituents are not counting on that. They can't wait for long-range planning, however thoughtful, or for hypothetical long-range targets to kick in. No, their need is immediate.

In his April 22 address the hon. Premier, among other things, spoke of a more competitive tax environment and greater emphasis on local and community economic development, especially regarding small and intermediate businesses. All this sounds fine in principle, but surely the government can see the need to move this along more rapidly in order to help ease the immediate problems. In addition to creating a positive atmosphere in which businesses may thrive, we must also strive for a wholesome environment in which our families can grow, in which educational and health facilities meet the local needs. In particular, health care poses special problems. My talks with residents tell me there is a popular sensitivity to the health care financing crisis. People are willing to forgo a local hospital until closed wards in the Royal Alexandra and other area hospitals are opened and more obvious shortages are evident in northeast Edmonton. However, for the interim an emergency transfer facility could be established, and land should be set aside for a local hospital that at some time in the future will be needed.

11:40

Mr. Speaker, I have described the constituency of Edmonton-Beverly-Belmont and have outlined some of the problems its citizens face, problems which to a greater or lesser degree confront other urban constituencies. I would like to conclude by briefly addressing a more general problem, that of aging in our society. Because of reasons and trends which are becoming clear to all, the rapidly growing senior portion of our population is creating unprecedented strains on our housing and health care programs. Demographic indications are that these strains will increase. Fortunately, we have come to see that not all senior citizens have identical needs. We, I hope, appreciate that an appropriate balance of family care, home care, leisure centres, group homes, and various levels of institutional care can create the most humane and financially efficient system. Yet for too long we have basically let the system roll along on its merry way, utilizing new strategies and techniques when they are available or affordable and slotting people, often inappropriately, into the wrong facilities if there is a crunch.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Unfortunately, the twin crises of health care funding and government financing are not likely to help matters much in the near future. Furthermore, cutbacks of services to seniors, even when relatively minor, are not viewed favourably by Albertans. Surely, Mr. Speaker, it is time we pulled our heads out of the sand and came face to face with this problem.

Alas, I have no instant solutions, but if we were to inventory our resources and projected needs, any number of answers might emerge. A conversion of some of the facilities to other levels of care might be prudent. Increased levels of home care might be desirable. Maybe all facilities should be made more flexible. Maybe a more sophisticated blend of strategies is required. Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent on the government and this Assembly to embark on a detailed and wide-ranging study of this problem so that we may resolve the serious difficulties facing seniors today and be prepared for the increased pressures they will place on society in the future. I call for a more vigorous approach than the government has indicated in the Speech from the Throne, and I look forward to addressing this issue in this session.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HLADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my esteemed colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give notice to the province of Alberta that the people of Calgary-Mountain View expect and demand a rejuvenation of their province and a promise for a bright future for them, their children, and their children's children, rejuvenation that they have started in their own community and demand that I continue to strive for on behalf of this government.

First, I must congratulate our vice-regent on a tremendous throne speech. The direction that the Lieutenant Governor has boldly laid out for this government signals the change in style, purpose, and expectations that our leader, the Hon. Ralph Klein, has promised the people of Alberta.

I must also congratulate the Speaker on his recent election to the Chair, and our Deputy Speaker. The most honoured seat in the House is a just reward to such fine parliamentarians. The shoes of the hon. Dr. Carter may be hard to fill, but your election to the office proves that this whole House has complete confidence in your ability to do just that.

Calgary-Mountain View, Mr. Speaker, has long been an important part of the city of Calgary. My constituency is situated in the heart of this fine city, a stone's throw from Alberta's mountain ranges, from which the constituency takes its name. While in our province's capital, I dearly miss waking in the mornings to the majesty of the Rocky Mountains. However, this is a small sacrifice I will endure so long as the people of Calgary-Mountain View continue to place their trust in me.

When traveling through my constituency, one can feel an attitude that pervades the people of Calgary-Mountain View. The people here have a commitment to the future, a future grounded in the rejuvenation of their community. Rejuvenation is a key theme in Calgary-Mountain View. The inner city has historically been given low priority by most levels of government. In Calgary-Mountain View the people have taken control of their own destinies. They have dedicated themselves to rebuilding their communities. The people here are committed to growth economically and socially so that their children may benefit from their efforts. I am convinced, and so are my constituents, that by rebuilding our community we shall look forward to a bright future for our children. There are 11 neighbourhoods within the boundaries of my constituency, Mr. Speaker, each with its own distinctive flavour. However, there is a consistency in their desire to rebuild, a desire to equip their communities with the tools to forge the bright future that I mentioned at the outset.

The four industrial and business parks in Calgary-Mountain View are key aspects in the rejuvenation of the economy of our community. My constituents congratulate our government on its pledge to create an environment where business and industry can thrive, a policy that is sure to prove extremely beneficial to our community. Anyone who has traveled through Calgary-Mountain View would realize that 17th Avenue in Forest Lawn is an area of great potential. The business community along 17th Avenue is undergoing serious revitalization. Included are plans to create a better atmosphere that will inevitably help bolster the commercial sector of the community. A positive business environment is only the first step towards a strong and prosperous future.

Another area of development in Calgary-Mountain View is that of our cultural diversity. Alberta's history has been positively influenced by many ethnic groups. In our community we are using our diversity to our advantage. A Little Bavaria is being established in the neighbourhood of Bridgeland. Not only will this be a positive project from a cultural standpoint; it will also attract more business into the area. It was my honour, Mr. Speaker, to participate for my first time in the sixth annual Old Bridgeland Days parade this past July 24. The whole weekend was a wonderful event to promote the unity in the community. There were about 20 or 30 floats in the parade from many cultural and social groups. There were also games and activities for young and old alike. This event is quickly becoming a prominent display for the many diverse groups in our community. It is evident from the projects and ambitions of the people of Calgary-Mountain View that they are extremely interested in the rejuvenation and re-establishment of their community as a jewel in the crown of Calgary.

My constituency is concerned about the future of this province. In much of society personal responsibility and accountability for one's future has been lost. There is an overriding attitude that expects – no, demands – handouts. Those days are over. The people of Calgary-Mountain View have taken responsibility for their future and demand that I represent their views. Our constituency is up to the challenge of acting in a positive direction. Instead of automatically gainsaying any government action, they want better communication, accountability, and responsibility

by the government to the people. They demand that the entire Legislative Assembly act in a constructive and effective manner to ensure that the people of this province are informed and given input into the policy-making process. With this mandate the government won the election.

The people of Calgary-Mountain View understand that our society must move away from being tax users, move away from receiving social services, and move towards being constructive and positive contributors to society. They demand that the social welfare system must have its mission: the desire to enable people to become self-reliant and self-sufficient. To this end we applaud the steps taken by the hon. Mr. Cardinal, Minister of Family and Social Services, in working to create a system to help the people of our society gain a means to rejoin the work force. If the people of my constituency can rise to the occasion, so can the rest of this province.

On June 15 the people of this province were quite decisive in their review of the socialist experiment. It failed. The people of Calgary-Mountain View elected me, knowing that I represent a government that would be fiscally responsible. In my view, a strong economy must be the first priority. A strong economy is essential in order to preserve social services and programs for those that are truly in need. The people of Calgary-Mountain View elected me for what I stand for, and I shall strive to serve their interests.

11:50

Mr. Speaker, as elected members of the Legislature it is our duty to recognize and promote policies that will rejuvenate our province. It is not our job to pick sides and then decry any effort made by our opponents. It is our job to ensure a better future for our children and our children's children.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge this institution. This government campaigned for a change in the way government is run. They called for responsible, effective, and responsive representation. The people of Alberta demanded this change on the doorsteps and at the polling booths. We must be up to the challenge. There are many members on both sides of this House. We must not fall into the trap of routine and tradition. It is the simple role to continue the negativity that I see in this House. Positive and constructive criticism takes more effort and more courage. This change must be encouraged – the people of Alberta demand it – for the entire government.

The recent changes in the procedure of the House give me room for hope in this regard. The use of the free vote that has been expanded is a step in the right direction. I hope that this move will allow the members to truly and honestly represent their constituents. In order to achieve this challenge, the leadership of both parties was required. I hope and trust that both leaders will continue to move in this bold direction, away from the practice of slinging arrows and towards the constructive governing of our province. I will be greatly disappointed if we cannot achieve this goal. There are many great thinkers and distinguished members in this House. They all have something to offer this institution. Many have offered great things in the past, and I hope they will continue to do it. We have made some very positive reforms already. Let us continue to forge ahead.

I have a great deal of respect for the experienced members of this Assembly. I understand that this Legislature will not change overnight. However, positive, constructive criticism on specific issues from the opposition members is needed inside and outside of this House. This government plans and wants the process of governing to be open and responsive. The standing policy committees and roundtables all attest to the fact that this govern-

ment wants to change. We want the people of this province and every member of this Chamber to have an active role in the governing of this province. The people of Calgary-Mountain View elected me to represent them to the best of my ability. I sincerely hope that I can, and I will continue to try to live up to that task.

Thank you very much.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Rutherford.

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to make a few comments in response to the throne speech delivered on behalf of the government, the throne speech that the Premier likes to refer to as sort of a mandate for change. He likes to refer to it as his dream, his vision for what's going to occur during the next four to five years. I want to talk about some of that dream, about some of that vision and the impact it's going to have on people.

The first one I have to look at, and I've raised this point before, is the health care cuts and the method that they're being done in. Right off the bat, and I pointed this out before, we see the rates go up in the long-term care facilities, hurting those people that are not in a financial situation to bear that burden. We see bed closures occurring. We see people waiting in hallways of hospitals hour after hour after hour, while at the same time we see a government that's proposing to build new hospitals, including one in the riding of the Deputy Premier. That, Mr. Speaker, does not in my opinion dictate a mandate for change from a point of view that Albertans would like to see.

I can look at the social services. I've done it before; I'll do it again. It saddens my heart, Mr. Speaker, when I get these phone calls, and I feel so helpless when people have been cut off their benefits. They're no longer there. When I went out and took a phone call, it was from a gentleman that said to me: "Look, I want to go to work. I've been trying to go to work. I go down to the social services offices and they'll only give me two bus tickets. They won't even give me money for food." He says, "I can't even get bus tickets to go and look for a job." They keep postponing him because he showed up five minutes late for a session, five minutes late for a two and a half hour session. The compassion is what I'm referring to. The compassion isn't there. I would expect somewhere along the line – possibly not this year, maybe not this month, maybe not next month but somewhere – education is going to be targeted next. We've seen the targeting of health care. We've seen the targeting of social services. Why a government would target such vital components to begin with to set the example in terms of their budget cutting to Albertans, I don't understand. Why do you take the most important, the most essential and say, "We're going to do hatchet jobs on those particular programs"?

Mr. Speaker, people have a very difficult time understanding cuts without compassion. They have a difficult time understanding these cuts when they see at the same time a throne speech that promises no more handouts, but what happens the next day? There is an announcement of a \$2 million loan guarantee for a cookie factory, where the president has made it very, very clear time after time in the media: "We didn't need that \$2 million loan guarantee. We would have relocated here." On the one hand, we have a Premier that stands there and says that we're going to create 110,000 new jobs by changing the climate. Is changing the climate handing out millions of dollars to certain businesses? Are we going to continue what we should have learnt from the past, with a riverboat that is still sitting there? Who knows what will ever happen to it. That will end up costing the taxpayers a million dollars. NovAtel – what is that? – \$638 million, for a total of \$2.1 billion, and it goes on and on. People do not understand why

they are deprived of the basic needs they feel they're entitled to in exchange for their tax dollars like health care, like social services for those that require social services, when at the same time we see money being spent in other areas that Albertans say do not have the same priority.

People out there are talking, yes. They're saying: jobs, jobs, jobs. But in the throne speech, when we read about the 110,000 jobs, that's a joke, joke, joke. Mr. Speaker, it's a joke, joke, joke. On the one hand, the Minister of Municipal Affairs gets up; he announces suddenly that the ALCB is privatized. It's gone. Fifteen hundred employees treated very, very callously. If the government can't be concerned about those 1,500 employees that are there, that have been there for years, how do we expect them to take seriously that they're worried about these 110,000 people they're going to attempt to create jobs for? It's a joke. The job, job, job in that throne speech is a joke, joke, joke.

Now, when I go throughout Edmonton-Rutherford, when I go out through my new riding of Edmonton-Rutherford, which has changed dramatically because of redistribution – a system there that was very, very flawed, but a system that came forward from this particular government. Fortunately, from my point of view Edmonton-Rutherford turned out to be a very, very nice riding with some of the best schools in the city, with some of the best community facilities. I'm very, very fortunate, in fact, to have the opportunity to represent a constituency of such a high calibre, named after the first Premier of the province of Alberta, who incidentally was a Liberal Premier, who incidentally did some good, good things.

When I go throughout Edmonton-Rutherford, if I asked them to do up a throne speech, this is what they would say. They would talk about four main points too, just like Premier Klein did, but their four points would be a bit different. Their first point would be human services. They would say that government has a responsibility in exchange for the tax dollars that they lay out, which is thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars, to provide good health care. When I need surgery, I need surgery. When I have to go to the hospital, I don't want to line up in some hallway on a stretcher, waiting for 36 hours. I don't want to be like Dan Kepley, who lay there for so many hours he got frustrated and walked out. Two weeks later he was in emergency in a Calgary hospital and almost died, and that was because the opportunity for him to get the treatment that was required was no longer there.

The health care system is deteriorating. We can understand the need for reductions, but to just chop blanket amounts without any plan as to how it's going to happen, as to where it's going to affect people while we're proposing that new hospitals be built, no, that's not what the people of Edmonton-Rutherford want.

They want to be guaranteed an educational system. They want to be guaranteed an educational system that recognizes that the children from preschool to grade 12 have the finest teaching opportunities possible, proper classroom ratios, and so on. Then when it comes time to graduate and to go on to college, to a technical institute, to a university, whatever, they don't want that door slammed in front of them. They don't want to be told: "I'm sorry. Your marks may be good, but we don't have room for you. You're not going to be able to compete on a global basis because we cannot provide you the opportunity to be educated." That's what taxpayers are asking for. They're saying: "We're prepared to pay reasonable taxes, but give us help here. Give us education. At the same time in a very efficient, effective manner, express compassion: look after those disadvantaged people who by no fault of their own need a handout from government, need some assistance from government."

12:00

I've been in that situation myself, Mr. Speaker, where years ago after my industrial accident I had to go to government. Fortunately, there was a program I could access that allowed me to go back to school, complete my grade 12, get business administration at NAIT, and take prelaw at the University of Alberta. That's because that program was there and it provided that opportunity for me. It's an opportunity I'll never forget; it was like a second chance in life. I don't see why others, like my child, for example, my grandchildren coming on now, may be then denied that same opportunity I had.

The people of Edmonton-Rutherford would say, point two, that they want economic redevelopment. They want a vision of prosperity, but they want a vision of prosperity that entices the backbone of the economy – little business – to flourish. They don't want government interfering and handing out loan guarantees to competitors. They want to be treated on an equal basis like anybody else. They're not asking government to create directly jobs, jobs, jobs. They're saying: "Leave us alone. Provide a climate – the climate that the Premier's not providing – but don't start showing favouritism to certain aspects of big business." Economic redevelopment is extremely important; it spells out jobs, jobs, jobs. Young people are coming out of postsecondary institutions, educational institutions with no hope. The jobs aren't there.

I had a meeting the other night in Edmonton-Rutherford where people talked about the Alberta Liquor Control Board. A lot of those people felt resentment towards the ALCB workers. They felt resentment because they said, "Why should those people have jobs when our children who have invested four, five, or six years in university can't even get a job for \$6 an hour?" That's what the government has to start addressing: creating a climate that will guarantee these jobs, assure these jobs, not just make some fancy promise that meanwhile starts stripping away here and stripping away there.

The third point they would touch on, Mr. Speaker, is fiscal responsibility. Fiscal responsibility is not simply announcing that there's going to be a cut of \$700 million. Fiscal responsibility is taking the resources you have and managing them in the most effective way possible, getting the biggest bang possible for the buck. If it can't be done in four years without totally dismantling the system, so be it. You lay out a vision. You lay out a plan where you have an end-all objective that by a certain time the province will be debt free, the province will be in a healthy fiscal situation: no different than the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, the Leader of the Official Opposition, did as mayor of the city of Edmonton. Recently you saw a report in the paper that by the year 2008 the city will be totally debt free. It will be in a position to buy everything cash: new trucks, cash; new buildings, cash. Everything will be cash. In fact, \$51 million of this year's budget with the city of Edmonton is going towards the paydown of that debt. So it's happening because a plan was put in place that was sensible, because a plan was put in place by a fellow that knew what he was doing and knew how to handle finances and had respect for those finances. That's the third point that the people of Edmonton-Rutherford, my constituents, would ask for.

The fourth would be open, honest, accountable government. If they had had the opportunity to sit here yesterday and watch what happened in this House, I think they would have been pleased. They would have said: "Well, there's a start; maybe there is a ray of hope after all. Maybe we will see a parliamentary system that is going to respect the fact that all elected representatives have equal opportunity to represent their constituents." We're all

elected to serve that same common goal, and that's to serve those people, our masters who gave us the opportunity of sitting in this position of trust, this position of faith. But they would have been very, very disheartened if they had sat here a couple of days before and learned about a former candidate for the Tory leadership being given a \$50,000 consulting contract. For what? To pay off a campaign debt? I don't know, but that's a question that's being asked.

The question that's then being asked is: are there other candidates out there that ran for the leadership that have to be bailed out at the taxpayers' expense? They would question. They would be very disappointed in learning that the ex-Deputy Premier of this particular Legislative Assembly on top of – what? – a 12-month severance package, a pension that kicks in immediately, is given a contract for \$600 a day. All these graduate students that are willing to go to work for six bucks an hour if they could find a job would sit up there and shake their heads in bewilderment: why is this double standard; why does somebody like the ex-Deputy Premier have triple-dipping – I call it triple-dipping – whereas they themselves cannot get a job for \$5 or \$6 an hour?

They want to see a system, Mr. Speaker, that restores trust, restores integrity, restores openness so that they can have pride in their legislative representatives, where legislative representatives themselves can go back to the days when they could walk down the streets and hold their heads up high and be proud because they were doing something worth while for their constituents. They were looking after their constituents rather than looking out for themselves.

That is where the system has started to fall apart, Mr. Speaker. We have a system where you have politicians and elected representatives, and there are a great number of politicians here. Politicians are those that tend to look out for themselves. Elected representatives that you see on this side of the House are those that respect the fact that they're elected to represent their constituents. That's the difference between the Tories and the Liberals: we're elected representatives and they're politicians.

Mr. Speaker, I've addressed the four major points coming out of Edmonton-Rutherford: human services; economic redevelopment; fiscal responsibility; open, honest, accountable government. I'm going to conclude on that note because some of my colleagues want to make remarks because they're hearing similar remarks within their constituencies. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Peace River, then St. Albert.

MR. FRIEDEL: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for recognizing me today. It is a great honour to rise before this House for the first time to speak to this Assembly.

I would first of all like to congratulate you on your election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I look forward to working with you and Mr. Speaker during this the 23rd Legislature of the province of Alberta.

Before I continue, I would like to thank the people of the Peace River constituency for placing their trust in me to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their Member of the Legislative Assembly. I will not break that trust. I will work diligently to see that their concerns receive due consideration by the members of this House. In electing me to this House, the constituents of Peace River gave me the mandate, a mandate shared by all government members, of responsible fiscal management while at the same time ensuring fairness and equity in measures taken to maintain Alberta's fiscal integrity.

I share my constituents' concern about the growing debt of this province at all levels, and these growing debts are building. My reasons for seeking the position of MLA for Peace River are very simple. I will not stand by and allow a legacy of debt to be passed on to my children and to their children. Each of us here has a responsibility to control government spending and to live within our means regardless of the party or regardless of the position we hold. We have a duty to manage this government efficiently and effectively without raising taxes and without jeopardizing the future generations of Alberta who will follow us.

12:10

Mr. Speaker, I also feel strongly about the continued growth in Alberta's north. As a government we need to provide an environment through which the private sector can develop on its own. Alberta's north is rich in natural resources. However, we feel that it lacks value-added production. Agriculture has long been the primary focus of our industry. Forestry, oil and gas, and such industries also play a very key role. Instead of shipping these raw resources off to other areas in the province and to other areas in Canada, we must find ways to add value to those productions in our own backyard, a golden opportunity for growth and jobs in the constituency of Peace River and others like us who are not in the centre of the province.

If I might take a few moments to tell this Assembly about the constituency of Peace River, Mr. Speaker. Our history is very old and very new. Fort Vermilion is the oldest agricultural community in Alberta, having just in 1988 celebrated its bicentennial. We also have the youngest town in the province. High Level celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1990. We have Rainbow Lake, which is only now at new town status.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Peace River is also one of the largest in Alberta in terms of the number of urban and rural municipalities, school boards, and hospital boards. I have already mentioned Fort Vermilion and the towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake. There are also the towns of Peace River and Manning and the village of Nampa. We have the hamlets of St. Isidore, Dixonville, Marie-Reine, and Zama City. Our constituency contains the improvement districts of 17W, 22, and 23. There are three hospital boards, four school divisions, and two school districts operating in the constituency, as well as the francophone school, l'école Héritage, which is administered from and draws one-third of its school population from our constituency.

The constituency also has within its boundary the Beaver First Nations band, the Dene Tha' reserve, and the Paddle Prairie Metis settlement. As you can see, Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Peace River is a community of ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity, a constituency that I am very proud to represent in this Legislature and a constituency with a great promise for a bright and prosperous future.

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the historic changes that have just been effected in this House. We – all of us – were elected on promises of change, not just change for the sake of change but change toward more effective management of our time and our resources, towards a maximum accountability. It is great to honour tradition as long as tradition is not confused with stagnation. We have to be prepared to experiment with new ideas. In this way we may make a few mistakes, but I think it would be a greater mistake still to not move forward. I truly look forward to working with all members of this Assembly. I look forward to growing with all members, old and new. I look forward to

growing with this province. I am very proud to be here today to be a part of this great challenge.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for St. Albert.

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Today I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the city of St. Albert, a community leader in Alberta. St. Albert was the first settlement in Alberta, established by the Oblate Fathers and the Grey Nuns. The purpose of the community was to serve others by providing spiritual guidance, by providing education, health care, and developing skills in agriculture. This spirit of service to others has continued until today and is manifested in a unique, caring community. Areas that St. Albert has exhibited leadership in include sports, culture, and education. St. Albert not only holds national championships in soccer and baseball, but they also host many provincial and national competitions. The Arden Theatre is a centre of culture throughout the Edmonton area, and our children's theatre is famous throughout Canada.

For 128 years St. Albert's school district No. 3 has provided excellence in education, with students, parents, teachers, and school board working together as a team. Both school districts Nos. 6 and 3 have 88 percent of our students graduating with an advanced diploma and 95 percent of our graduates going on to a postsecondary institution within one year of graduation. Both school districts offer university courses to high school students. St. Albert has the capacity to offer first- and second-year university courses. Approximately 1,300 students presently registered at the U of A reside in St. Albert. St. Albert would be delighted to assist the Minister of Education in meeting the challenges presently facing education.

One program initiated in St. Albert that has been used as a model across Canada is our joint use agreement. This agreement involves the sharing of facilities amongst the city of St. Albert, the two school districts, and the community at large, including our churches. Schools do not sit idle after 3 p.m. or on weekends. Sports groups, charitable organizations, and political parties fully utilize the facilities. Through joint use, St. Albert has recognized the value in working together as parts of the same body.

It is important that we view the Legislative Assembly and government departments as parts of the same body. In order for a body to work effectively, each part must perform its function in unison with all other parts. If the heart is strong but the lungs do not take in oxygen, the body will die. To save our governmental bodies, we are now faced with having to make cuts to that body.

I commend the government for verbalizing the commitment to making necessary cuts. However, it is critical that these cuts not be made across the board. If decisions are made to cut all at the top, it is similar to cutting off one's head: you cannot exist without the brain. Similarly, you cannot say you only make cuts at the bottom, or you cut off your feet and cannot move to where you need to go. I am not saying cuts cannot be made at both the top and the bottom, but to remove the unnecessary tissue without disrupting the function of the body requires a skilled surgical team.

We have the expertise in this Assembly to work together to make the cuts, but listening is a key component. Often we assume we know what others are talking about, and we don't even hear what they are saying. For example, on their golden wedding anniversary a couple were kept busy all day with the celebrations and the crowds of relatives and friends who dropped in to congratulate them, so they were grateful when towards evening they were able to be alone on the porch watching the sunset and

relaxing after a tiring day. The old man gazed fondly at his wife and said, "Agatha, I am proud of you." "What was that you said?" asked the old lady. "You know I am hard of hearing. Say it louder." He said, "I'm proud of you." "That's all right," she replied, "I'm tired of you too."

12:20

If we assume we know what each other is saying without really listening, the cancer that is present in our system will continue to grow. After visiting 15,000 homes in St. Albert, the following cancers in government were identified. The cancer of patronage must be excised. Unfortunately we've been unable to eliminate the cancer of loan guarantees, and this is starting to grow again in the form of loan guarantees. A complete cure for the cancer of withholding information is present; we only need to say yes to complete treatment, Mr. Premier. The growth of provincial debt threatens the body like AIDS. Fortunately, a cure can be found for debt, but it will cost present and future generations dearly. The lack of educational lifeblood: equity funding for our schools must be implemented as promised, hon. Premier and hon. Minister of Education. We have an ugly wart in the form of the present use of our lottery funds. The only treatment for this wart is reconstructive surgery.

By really listening to each other we can successfully treat the ailing body. We have many strengths with a well-educated, well-informed population, a province rich in resources, and a good transportation and communication system to name a few. Let us take the example St. Albert has put forward, with people helping people exemplified in family and community support agencies where volunteers spend thousands of hours meeting human service needs.

I invite you to St. Albert to participate in our cultural and recreational events. St. Albert is hosting the Alberta Winter Games March 3 to 6 in 1994. On behalf of my colleague Colleen Soetaert, the Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert, Mayor Anita Ratchinsky and city council, chairman Bill Hole on the games team, and the residents of St. Albert, we extend an invitation to you to come and join in the spirit of the games. Just to share that spirit with you, Mr. Speaker and members, I'd like to present to each one of you the spirit of the game badge as well as a St. Albert pin on behalf of my colleague Colleen and myself. I would just like to mention that these are not paid for by any government funding at any level or from the lottery fund.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Labour.

MR. DAY: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted to be able to make some comments in reference to the amendment, which I believe is what we're on, and also consideration of the Lieutenant Governor's speech. I'd just like to refer to a couple of areas briefly.

You know, we hear a number of members opposite, for instance, talking about the devastation and the shame and the wrongfulness of so-called health care cuts. I think it's important, as we look at, and as the throne speech clearly points to, the fact that we need to get some spending under control. Health care alone over the last 10 years has gone through an increase of some 160 percent. That's more than double what inflation has been. We're not pointing a finger. We're not saying any one person is to blame. We're not saying let's go after culprits. We're saying let's get our heads together, because these costs, this increase - think about that: over about 10 years, 160 percent in terms of increase in

spending. We have to start saying: where can we rein in these costs?

When you look at it in a broad, global perspective, if right here in Alberta we're not the highest per capita spenders on our own health in the world, we're very close to the top. Yet we look at other industrialized countries: they have lower mortality rates, they have longer projected lifespans, and they've got lower rates of surgical intervention, et cetera, et cetera. We have to be able to say: dollars alone don't seem to be making us necessarily healthier people. What is the crime, therefore, and why do we hear the waves of shock coming from members opposite when we are saying we've got to get this thing under control?

We hear similar cries of anguish and horror when we talk about controlling our social welfare spending, and it's the exact same type of thinking. One of the members opposite said: there's no compassion; where's the compassion? Well we've had some people in the Assembly on both sides as recently as yesterday take a big complicated picture and bring it down to household living, comparing it to one's own household. If I say to one of my sons that he is under no compulsion whatsoever to ever work, to ever do anything, and I'm just going to take care of him, is that showing compassion? That's not showing compassion at all. I would be considered to be negligent as a parent. I don't want to carry this comparison too far because we don't want to project a paternalistic role of big government, but compassion doesn't mean you give everybody everything every time they ask. It doesn't mean that at all.

Mr. Speaker, we are not helping people, not truly helping people if we say to them, "We're just going to give you money and there are no other requirements on your part." There are requirements. Increasingly, because of the initiatives of the Minister of Family and Social Services and Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development, we are making dollars available when people will take the initiative and take some guidance, move into areas of upgrading, of retraining, and of job search.

So when we hear these cries of agony we need to recognize that truly we're dealing with two different philosophies here. The philosophy that we hear enunciated from across the floor, other than the four hon. members closest to your own Chair, Mr. Speaker, is a philosophy that I've heard enunciated clearly in this House for the last six or seven years, the philosophy of the NDP. It's alive and well. Those demons were never exorcised from this building; they've inhabited the bodies of the people across. I've been staggered and amazed at how quickly they transformed from being the ones who were going to look at cuts during the election to the ones who say they are being cut with pain now at the very cuts they said had to be done and that we weren't doing heartily enough. And here they are feigning shock at the process we're involved in.

The other thing too: I think there's some responsibility. We as members who are not here for the first time I think need to be listening to the new members of this House. I think of the Member for Calgary-Mountain View and others who have stood up here and talked about the responsibility that we have to speak the truth. If we've got an argument, if we've got a criticism, let it be based on fact.

When I hear the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford talk about the door being slammed in people's faces so there's no access to postsecondary education, where's the responsibility that comes with speaking from the point of view on a foundation of fact? If that member opposite is interested in fact, I wonder if he tells his constituents that no other jurisdiction on a per capita basis puts as much into advanced education, postsecondary education, as this government does. At no other institution, no other place in the

country, is tuition as low as it is right here in Alberta. We have the lowest tuition rates, unless it's changed in the last week or two, and with that, no other jurisdiction can be compared to what we offer in terms of the generous nature of our student finance packages. At the risk of boring members opposite with fact, no other jurisdiction offers research dollars per faculty member as high as we do here in Alberta, and that covers all our institutions. So there we've got the lowest tuition rates, the most generous finance packages, the most research dollars per capita, and the member has the nerve to say there's no access to postsecondary education in this province.

I know that we're not supposed to use the word "shame." That's one word that's been ruled to be absolutely untenable to be echoed in this Chamber. So just as a previous member quite rightly stayed away from that terrible word "hypocrisy," I'll stay away from the word "shame." But I will say - oh, where's my thesaurus when I need it - that it's approaching shameful when a member uses the tactic, the tired old propaganda tactic of repeating false information, because people know that if you repeat something that's untrue often enough, some people will start to believe it. There's a handy little catch phrase: Liberals can be good managers. You know, if you repeat that often enough, some people are going to start to believe it. It's just a matter of course. That's strictly political, but when people are preying on the fears of citizens by making ridiculous statements like there's no access to postsecondary education in this province, that is simply irresponsible. I would encourage those members to listen to the calls from our new members, the calls for responsibility and for speaking from a point of view of a foundation of truth.

12:30

We're on a course, Mr. Speaker, unlike any other government right now in this province. We're on a course that's going to require some pain and pain for all. For us to try and indicate to people for the sake of cheap political opportunity that we're not going to be experiencing some pain, all of us, is simply being irresponsible again. We're all in this together, and the more we can work from the point of view of co-operation rather than confrontation and looking at the dividends of co-operation rather than the demerits of confrontation - that's what we have to focus on.

Let me give you an idea of how things are moving along in that area, Mr. Speaker. In other groups and as leaders we need to be sensing some leadership here. Two days ago I met with a group of business owners, large business interests in this province. They had met that day with a number of union representatives in a particular area. This wasn't a public meeting, so I'm not going to focus on the exact individuals involved. But do you know what those union members and their leaders were saying to this group of business investors? They were saying: we as union people have to sell ourselves and our services and promote what we have to offer as a preferred choice and not try and take coercive, preventative action refusing to have somebody else come into a workplace situation. There they were, the union representatives, saying: we have to show what we've got to offer as a preferred choice. That's a great step forward.

They were also talking about the fact that on a jobsite they have to be prepared to offer a multiskilled work force, not trades that are so narrowly confined that they will only do one particular job. Now, looking into the mystified, questioning faces of members opposite, the reason I'm using that is that that's called progress. You know, they're taking a lead, and we in this Assembly also need to in this case not necessarily take the lead but at least follow

the lead of other groups that historically have been strictly adversarial.

As we know, the very reason there's this distance between these two front rows here is that it's the measured distance of two sword lengths, because that's how it was settled at one time. I have to confess that at times when I hear some of the comments opposite the urge is to settle things in the old way, but I'm restrained by the civilized aspect of members opposite, so I won't do that. But we need to take that lead and abandon the adversarial approach. There are going to be times that we disagree, and we need to be up front about those disagreements. It has been so obvious in the last couple of days that there are going to be huge disagreements, especially philosophically: the socialistic approach as opposed to a free-minded approach. But we need to really set this tone that's even being set in other areas of our society. When we talk with people in the health care sector, why do some people go out and try and inflame the issue by saying that you're going to get bludgeoned, you're going to lose your job, you're going to do this and that? There could be no guarantees of job security. There are no guarantees for any of us here. I daresay if members opposite continue in their present tone, we'll have very little guarantee of a job in four or five years.

We need to really work together and get that message out that we're here to work together amongst ourselves. We demonstrated that yesterday, a quantum leap forward in terms of Standing Orders changes and free votes. It's going to be exciting for those of us who were here under the old regime and those who are here under the new regime. There are going to be some exciting times. Let's continue to set that message. Let's take the tone, the intent, the spirit, and the words of the Lieutenant Governor's speech and make it a reality in our lives and we'll see the goal achieved of a prosperous and exciting Alberta, a place to raise our children and our grandchildren.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I express my thanks to the Lieutenant Governor for delivering the Speech from the Throne and for his continuing work as the representative of Her Majesty the Queen in our province.

I want to extend my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your election and to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker and my commitment to work with all of you.

Mr. Speaker, I should also thank the good citizens of Edmonton-Gold Bar who once again returned me to this House as their representative. These people have continually given me good advice, good support, have helped in my daily work, and I thank all of them. Many of them volunteer to work in our communities through our community institutions, our schools, our churches, and I'm most grateful to them. As a result of the boundary changes, Edmonton-Gold Bar welcomes the communities of Strathearn, Bonnie Doon, and Cloverdale to our constituency. These communities are adjacent to the earlier ones, and they are very compatible. They're communities that like the original Edmonton-Gold Bar are made up of stable neighbourhoods, mostly middle residential neighbourhoods. Yet I must say that in campaigning in June and before then I found the same kinds of issues arose in Edmonton-Gold Bar, which appears to be a stable, settled neighbourhood, as did in many other parts of the province: those concerns about the debt, about the deficit, and certainly about employment, underemployment, the capacity to access health care,

and our ability to care for the helpless and disabled in our communities. So I heard that a great deal.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments this afternoon on the throne speech itself and on the amendments the Leader of the Opposition has placed before us, because I find in studying it that it says a great deal and then there's a great deal left out. But more than anything, I want to draw attention to the many, many inconsistencies that exist in this speech. Those of you who have your throne speech in front of you perhaps can just follow along.

Mr. Speaker, on page 2 you'll see an interesting comment in the fourth paragraph that says:

Albertans want open government, and they want a bigger say in the business of government than a periodic trip to the polling booth.

I couldn't agree more. I think all of us are finding this immense cynicism in the public about not only access to government programs but access to their own representative.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to draw to the attention of members in the House that Albertans and the Liberal caucus have been clamouring for years for freedom of information legislation. We have met constant resistance from the government, but finally this year they capitulated and brought in a Bill last spring. This Bill is now once again before us as the flagship Bill, and I have to say that it's grossly flawed. This is a badly flawed Bill, to be sure. We are going to a series of open discussions with the people of Alberta, and I am hopeful they will produce the necessary results to correct this Bill, because here we have the contrast of the statement saying this is what Albertans want and it's what the government has been doing and is going to do, yet in front of us we have this ludicrous Bill which everyone knows is inappropriate and is not workable, is not comparable to freedom of information legislation anywhere in the country.

12:40

I draw to your attention another example of inconsistency that we went through this morning, Mr. Speaker, the absurd situation where we're asked to vote immense numbers of dollars, billions of dollars, in interim supply without sufficient information. We comment about that, express our concern on behalf of Albertans whom we talk with daily and tell, "Listen, I'm being expected to make decisions about billions of dollars and yet I don't have the information," but we're treated to gratuitous speeches about our expressing that concern.

Now, don't forget, Mr. Speaker, that Albertans do know what is going on in this House. They do hear from us and they do know what's going on. Further . . . [interjections] Do I have the floor, Mr. Speaker? Further, on page 2 we have: "My government has a plan . . . open, accessible, responsive, and affordable." Where is it? We have not seen it. Further on the page, a second commitment, "110,000 new jobs for Albertans," employment at 11 percent. Look at health care. I mean, tell the nurses and the LPNs and the custodial staff in our health care institutions that we've got a plan to create 110,000 jobs and they'll say, "Listen, I'd just like to keep the job I've got." What are we doing? We have inconsistencies in this document. We're going to create jobs. We are not creating them. There is no plan to do it, and people are getting laid off every day in our communities.

Let me turn then, Mr. Speaker, to page 4. Here we've got the government saying the government will put our financial house in order and "do so with innovation, fairness, and compassion to both the public and employees in the public service." Tell that to the ALCB employees. Ask them what they think about whether or not

this is an accurate and true statement. Down further, "the provincial budget will be frugal and fair." Oh, of course, and here we are with this thin little report on the foreign offices but we're creating new ones. Is that frugality? I would say no. We have no evidence that those foreign offices are in fact producing value for the dollar. I don't think Albertans consider that to be either frugal or fair.

Let me see if I can find the next page. On page 9 we have:

Other highlights of my government's strategy include

- as much as possible, getting out of direct business subsidies.

What about Beatrice? What about the cookies? Here is a huge international company that has immense assets, that does not need loans or loan guarantees, and yet we're providing them with millions of dollars of Alberta taxpayers' money. We had the questions this morning about the riverboat. It doesn't seem to me that the government is in fact doing what this report purports to have them do.

Look at page 10, perhaps, Mr. Speaker. Here we have Maintaining our Commitment to People and Public Consultation. The speech says: "Our current system is too expensive . . . Albertans pay enough for these programs already." What are the indicators? Mr. Speaker, for years we have begged this government to tell us how they know what is enough. They have never been able to do that.

Mr. Speaker, one thing about funds that go into social assistance and programs of the nature of AISH. That money is 100 percent expended. There's no disposable income left for those people. It doesn't get into a savings account as does your salary or mine.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to comment about the questions and answers from this morning's question period on the Children's Advocate. Perhaps the government can in fact find ways to save more money on the backs of helpless children. They certainly are stalling long enough on doing anything the Advocate says. Further, clients on social assistance are being forced to take student loans so they can get off one track and onto another one, but they're not allowed to go into certain programs. The student loan doesn't help an awful lot when there are no openings in the institutions, which are underfunded. So there are no spaces available for people.

I was interested in the comments this morning of the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View. He spoke about – and it's here in the throne speech. It says: "You build a strong economy with healthy, well-educated, and well-trained people." Yes, I agree with that. Mr. Speaker, the Calgary-Mountain View member suggests that the only way we can afford to pay for health care, education, and social services is if we have a healthy economy. I say to you that he has that upside down. I think most Albertans would agree with him. We don't have an economy unless we have educated people in healthy communities. We don't have one, and I think we all understand that.

On page 11 we have some comments about roundtables. I would draw to your attention that last year the government put forward a series of consultations with seniors in the province because the seniors had risen up in righteous anger over intolerable cuts that had been made. These consultations resulted in a report. The original report in fact never did see the light of day, sad to say. I think that's tragic. Now, here we have the government telling us about how wonderful these roundtables are going to be. Is the seniors' roundtable the example of this government's duplicity – is that a possible word, Mr. Speaker? – in taking the report from the meetings and then sanitizing it before it became public, because that's exactly what happened and we all know it.

Mr. Speaker, let me just go to page 14. Here we have an interesting paragraph in the throne speech. It says first of all that

"our province's financial outlook is positive." I'm not sure once again what indicators they're using, because they're certainly not the ones I've seen. Let me look at the second paragraph, however. It says: "Albertans are setting an example for Canadians with humanity, honesty, courage, and fiscal responsibility." All right. Then perhaps those who applaud will consider these questions. Where, members, is the humanity in the welfare cuts that take school supplies away from children? Where, members, is the humanity in the welfare cuts that force single parents on assistance to visit food banks and beg for food and beg for vouchers because there are insufficient funds and they can't get a job? Where is the honesty in the seniors' report that was shredded and not given in its entirety? Where is the honesty in the government? Where is it? Where is the courage, Mr. Treasurer? Where is the courage in taking benefactors of AISH and putting them on a list, on a schedule, and saying, "One in five of you is going to go"? Where is the courage?

AN HON. MEMBER: You know that's not true.

MRS. HEWES: That is true. It is true. You ask the minister. [interjections]

12:50

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. members. Hon. minister and hon. member, could you speak through the Chair?

You can continue, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we've woken up, haven't we? There is no courage, there is no humanity, there is no honesty, and there is no fiscal responsibility in those actions the government is taking. This report is full of inconsistencies, full of them.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about the quarter of a million for renovations for the offices?

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I won't bother to answer that.

This throne speech is full of these inconsistencies. You only have to read casually through it to see them. It's full of distortions; it's full of superficial platitudes. Certainly the quote from the first Premier says time for change. Yes, of course it's time for change. But I do plead with this government to stop the double-speak. Let's have integrity in what we're doing here. Albertans deserve nothing less.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, given the hour and given the fact that for a member to stand at this point, charged up and ready to deliver with enthusiasm and integrity their thoughts and comments – I would like to move possibly for the last time in the history of this Assembly that given the hour, given that it's Friday, we adjourn; for the first time ever in the history of the Assembly move that we call it 1 o'clock and reconvene at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, suggesting that the common phrase . . . [interjections] Monday. We were accused of being asleep, and I was testing. Once again, our members were wide awake.

Mr. Speaker, with all members here, I think I can say from the bottom of my heart that thank God it's Friday.

[At 12:55 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]

