

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Monday, September 20, 1993**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 93/09/20

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

At the beginning of this week we ask You, Father, to renew and strengthen in us the awareness of our duty and privilege as members of this Legislature.

We ask You also in Your divine providence to bless and protect the Assembly and the province we are elected to serve.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees**

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

MR. RENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to Standing Order 93 I wish to report that the petitions for private Bills which have been received by the Assembly have been under consideration by me as chairman of the Private Bills Committee, and all the petitions received with two exceptions complied with Standing Order 86.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 91(2) the Private Bills Committee has had under consideration a petition which was advertised prior to November 1, 1992, presented by me, being the petition of Elda Hoevers and Hendrik Jan Antony Hoevers for the Karen Mavis Poor Eagle Adoption Act. This petition was advertised in anticipation of a fall sitting in 1992, which fall sitting did not occur. Standing Order 86(1) requires that advertising be commenced not earlier than November 1 next preceding the session. The petition has otherwise complied with the advertising requirements under Standing Order 86.

The committee also has under consideration the petition of Albert Ludwig and others for the Alberta Seniors' Legislature Act, for which the advertisement first appeared in the *Alberta Gazette* on September 15, 1993, which is one day after documents are to be filed pursuant to Standing Order 89(2). The petition has otherwise complied with the advertising requirements under Standing Order 86.

I therefore request that these petitions be referred to the committee pursuant to Standing Order 91(2). I request the concurrence of the Assembly in this recommendation and report.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly grant the concurrence requested?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

Bill Pr. 1 Karen Mavis Poor Eagle Adoption Act

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 1, being the Karen Mavis Poor Eagle Adoption Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 1 read a first time]

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

Bill Pr. 2

The Youth Emergency Services Foundation Amendment Act, 1993

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 2, being The Youth Emergency Services Foundation Amendment Act, 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 2 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Bill Pr. 3 Mosaic College of Canada Act

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 3, being the Mosaic College of Canada Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 3 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

Bill Pr. 4 Gimbel Foundation Act

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 4, that being the Gimbel Foundation Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 4 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

Bill Pr. 5 Canadian Union College Amendment Act, 1993

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 5, being the Canadian Union College Amendment Act, 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 5 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 6 Mennonite Mutual Insurance Co. (Alberta) Ltd. Amendment Act, 1993

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 6, that being the Mennonite Mutual Insurance Co. (Alberta) Ltd. Amendment Act, 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 6 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 7 Gerald Edwin Crabbe Adoption Act

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 7, being the Gerald Edwin Crabbe Adoption Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 7 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 8 Michael Caleborn Rothery Adoption Act

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 8, being the Michael Caleborn Rothery Adoption Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 8 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 9**Adrienne Heather Cupido Adoption Act**

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 9, being the Adrienne Heather Cupido Adoption Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 9 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 10**The King's College Amendment Act, 1993**

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 10, being The King's College Amendment Act, 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 10 read a first time]

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

Bill Pr. 11**Newman Theological College Continuance Act**

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 11, being the Newman Theological College Continuance Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 11 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 12**First Canadian Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, 1993**

MR. HLADY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 12, being the First Canadian Insurance Corporation Amendment Act, 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 12 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury.

Bill Pr. 13**Gardner Bible College Amendment Act, 1993**

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 13, being the Gardner Bible College Amendment Act, 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 13 read a first time]

1:40

Bill Pr. 14**Benaning Osi Adoption Act**

MS LEIBOVICI: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 14, being the Benaning Osi Adoption Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 14 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 15**Alberta Seniors' Legislature Act**

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 15, being the Alberta Seniors' Legislature Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 15 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie.

Bill Pr. 16**TD Trust Company and Central Guaranty Trust Company Act**

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 16, being the TD Trust Company and Central Guaranty Trust Company Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 16 read a first time]

Bill Pr. 17**Canadian Health Assurance Corporation Act**

MR. JACQUES: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 17, being the Canadian Health Assurance Corporation Act.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 17 read a first time]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table with the Assembly today the triennial report of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research pursuant to section 22 of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research Act, an Act that I have ministerial responsibility for.

I'm also privileged to table a very special report on the activities of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. This second report has been prepared by an independent International Board of Review, consisting of seven medical research experts from around the world. This report is in keeping with the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research Act, which requires that an independent review of the foundation be done every six years. Mr. Speaker, this report can be reviewed by the Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

DR. WEST: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to file with the Assembly four copies of the 1992 statistical annual report reporting on marriages, deaths, births, and otherwise in the province.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will exercise its prerogative in this regard to introduce a guest sitting in the Speaker's gallery. Seated in my gallery today is Ms Tatyana Shtukina. Ms Shtukina is division head of the administration of the president of the Russian federation. Tatyana is visiting Alberta for three weeks as part of the Yeltsin democracy fellowship program. This program is dedicated to developing and maintaining partnerships between Russia and Canada in order to foster understanding and continued exchange programs. As you notice, Ms Shtukina is standing in my gallery, and I'd ask all members of the Assembly to give her a warm Alberta reception.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of this Assembly a distinguished group of men and women who are involved with the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. They're in the members' gallery. Earlier today Premier Klein released the report of the International Board of Review, which assessed the activities of the foundation. The foundation was given excellent marks. In fact, the board has declared Alberta to be one of the leading medical research centres in North America. This is an outstanding achievement.

I'd like to introduce some of the people responsible for making it happen. We have with us members of the board of trustees for the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. I'd ask them to stand as I introduce them: Mr. Alvin Libin, chairman; Mr. Thomas Biggs; Professor Murray Fraser, president of the University of Calgary; Dr. Paul Greenwood; Mrs. Beverley MacLeod; Ms Margaret Mrazek; Mr. Donald Seaman. We also have with us Dr. Matthew Spence, who is the president and CEO of the foundation. As well, we have heritage medical scientists Dr. John Remmers from the University of Calgary and Dr. Lorne Tyrrell from the University of Alberta, who are both known internationally for their work. We are fortunate to have the chairman of the International Board of Review, Dr. Samuel Freedman of McGill University in Montreal. I'd ask them all to receive the warm welcome.

head:

Oral Question Period

Provincial Tax Regime

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has repeatedly said to Albertans that we don't have a revenue problem; we have a spending problem. He has also said: you don't need brain power to raise the revenue side. Remember that one, Mr. Premier? Okay. Without a plan and before any consultation the government began making cuts to our health care system. Now the minister in charge of health planning is talking about raising revenues. The Premier says one thing; the minister, as is often the case, says something quite different. To the minister of health planning: Madam Minister, what do you know that the rest of Albertans don't know on this issue?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister responsible for the Health Planning Secretariat.

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome that question. We've had two roundtable meetings. The Premier has indicated to Albertans that we are in a consultative process and that there will be 10 roundtable meetings. We now have had one in Grande Prairie, where over 450 people attended, and a second one this Friday in Calgary, where over 600 public members attended. We break up into smaller groups on Saturday morning. All of these issues are discussed at these roundtable meetings. These are issues that have been raised by each of the members in the roundtable and the public, and they are the ones who are discussing this.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has failed to answer the key question, and the key question is: Mr. Premier, isn't it a fact that your plan isn't going to work, particularly on the health care side, and the only way that you're going to solve your problem is by dipping your hand into the taxpayers' pockets and making it work that way? Mr. Premier, tell the people of Alberta the truth now.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I'll simply reiterate what I have said in the past: indeed we don't have a revenue problem; we have a spending problem. Our first line of attack will be to get expenditures under control. Mr. Speaker, if you look at the four-year plan, increases in taxes and a new tax such as a sales tax as proposed by the Liberals does not figure.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, let's put the issue of the sales tax aside.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Why?

MR. DECORE: Well, if you want to talk about it, Mr. Premier, you put your signature to paper on that issue, not the Liberals. You did.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier talks about the first line of attack. I want to know what the second line of attack is. Tell Albertans that there will be no revenues coming out of their pockets to look after health care. Tell us the truth.

1:50

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the plan is easily understood. It was understood by Albertans. Obviously they understood it. You know why? They elected us on June 15. They understood it. We won; they lost. We won on our plan.

Now, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition wants some authority for the Liberals' attitude towards a sales tax, I can only quote – I assume the *Calgary Herald* was absolutely right, and I agree with them in this regard – a speech at the spring Liberal convention in Edmonton

when economist and Liberal aspirant Michael Percy began talking about the possible need for a sales tax to deal with the province's grim financial situation. Decore then said the party would consider such a move.

The *Edmonton Journal*, again a very reputable newspaper when it has to be, April 27, 1992:

Laurence Decore vowed that if elected his party would . . . consider the province's first sales tax . . . The sales tax issue is an option.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I didn't put my signature to a piece of paper talking about a sales tax; he did. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

Liquor Control Board

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the minister in charge of the Alberta Liquor Control Board has neglected to tell us of yet another waste of taxpayers' money. For the last few months the ALCB has been installing a new computer system to handle inventory control, accounting, and payroll. The cost of the system is a staggering \$6 million. It hasn't even been completed, and already it's a white elephant. Mr. Minister, tell Albertans if the \$6 million is part of the \$65 million the Premier says that we're going to lose or if this is more money and it puts the loss up to \$71 million.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, it does not put the loss up to \$71 million, if that was the question.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder why the minister wouldn't have come clean on this and have told the people of Alberta about this horror story of the \$6 million. Would you explain that to the people of Alberta, Mr. Minister?

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, in 1990 the Alberta Liquor Control Board was looking at purchasing a mainframe for 2 and a half million dollars. It did not. What it did do is it upgraded to a midline-range computer system to look after the inventory and payroll and otherwise that was within the works of the ALCB. They were handling at that time about a billion dollars in sales and running a warehouse out of one location in the province of Alberta. The efficiency of that, if anybody knows anything about running a warehouse, is unbelievable. In order to do that, they continually have to upgrade their computer directions and the

efficiencies of that computer. Some of that computer network will be there in place to continue at the warehouse and for the people that are left working for the ALCB. Certainly there will be fractions of that computer that may not be needed. We were in a billion dollar business in 1990, '91, '92, and we will continue to be in that business in '93 as far as the warehouse goes, and therefore I don't know what context that question comes in.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, a fraction here and a fraction there and a million here and a billion there: that's the way you operate, Mr. Minister. Tell Albertans how many other horror stories Albertans are going to be facing in this botched up plan of ALCB privatization.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I think we should clarify one thing. The hon. Leader of the Opposition made an innuendo a minute ago that there was a \$65 million loss. Nobody knows what the market value of the property is. Second of all, I think there's a clarification on the \$115 million worth of property inventory: \$38 million of that is the warehouse in St. Albert. That isn't up for sale at the present time, and therefore that decreases the potential in losses on property considerably.

I want to ask the individual here that's asking the question: are you in favour of the privatization?

MR. DECORE: Oh no. You answer; I ask.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjections] Order please.
The hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

Alberta Opportunity Company

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government claims that the days of being involved in taxpayer-backed business ventures are over, but unfortunately the truth of the matter is that concrete action is rather lacking. In particular I'm looking at some of the activities of the Alberta Opportunity Company. I'd like to file four sets of documents regarding Southern Telecommunications and Microtech Well Logging that have Alberta taxpayers on the hook to the tune of \$587,000. My question to the Premier: will the Premier tell Albertans why the Alberta Advantage includes taking advantage of Alberta taxpayers to the tune of \$587,000?

MR. KLEIN: I will defer, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Opportunity Company comes under the ministerial responsibility of this minister. The Alberta Opportunity Company is a lender, and it's a lender in the marketplace. Individuals and firms from around the province of Alberta can make application to the Alberta Opportunity Company. There's a board of directors that reviews all of the applications and makes the decisions, and those decisions are made hands-off from the government of Alberta for all levels under \$1 million.

My estimates were here before the House a few days ago. The hon. gentleman certainly had an opportunity as the chief Liberal critic with respect to this particular department. He chose not to raise those questions then. If these applications and these levels are underneath a million dollars, Mr. Speaker, it will be up to me now to ask the Alberta Opportunity Company for an explanation in terms of dealing with that, but I do not on a day-to-day basis nor does any member of this government on a day-to-day basis interfere with the operation of the Alberta Opportunity Company.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, let's talk about direct hands-on then. How much of the \$3.4 million increase in the AOC budget for this fiscal year is being used to cover impending losses in the seed and venture capital department?

MR. KOWALSKI: To my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, zero dollars.

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Speaker, the government talks about what a wonderful job AOC is doing. My final supplemental question to the minister is: how can the minister claim that they're doing such a good job when the Provincial Treasurer has allocated \$20 million for doubtful loans against loans advanced by the Alberta Opportunity Company?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of having a review of estimates in fact is to review the operation of all agencies associated with the government of Alberta, and I'd be absolutely delighted to review the full operation of the Alberta Opportunity Company once again.

Please remember that the Alberta Opportunity Company has been in business in the province of Alberta since the early 1970s. There are some 18 to 20 years of activity with respect to this, and over the years there probably has been a small margin of loss, as there is with every risk-taker. In the marketplace if you sustain as a lender a loss ratio of 1 to 2 percent, that seems to be the acceptable range of losses for a lending institution. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, please let us never, ever forget that the Alberta Opportunity Company is a lender of last resort, and by the very nature of the loans that they will do, those loans would fall under the category of being above normal risk or higher risk loans.

Just so the hon. member knows, I'd be very, very pleased to review each and every application that is causing concerns and difficulties for the hon. member in terms of understanding the situation. I'd be happy to deal with it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

Students Finance

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On last Thursday evening we went through a detailed process of going through the government estimates for the Advanced Education and Career Development department, a process attended by members from both sides of the House and a very effective process I might add. There's a question that came up which begs an answer in this Assembly, and that is under program 3, Financial Assistance to Students. It talks about Implementation of Guarantees, which went from a budget of \$9.3 million last year to an estimate this year of \$19.3 million. To the minister of advanced education: can you give us an explanation of that?

2:00

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, the answer is not that difficult to give. It has to do with the increase in the student loans in this province. Loans over the past three years have increased from \$47 million in 1990-91 to \$101 million in 1993-94. So the increase that he recites, taken from the estimates, is due to the ratio of increased loans in the province.

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. I believe that the number refers to basically loan losses or a write-off of debts that cannot be collected. Can you tell this Assembly what percentage of students actually default on their loans?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, I can give the hon. member the average default rate in the province. As we speak, it's 23 and a half percent. That varies according to the type of institution. Universities are different than colleges, and it goes across the spectrum.

MR. DOERKSEN: Mr. Minister, I find 23 percent to be a rather high figure, and I communicated that to you on Thursday. Can you tell the House what direction, if any, you're giving in terms of improving on that particular figure?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, we have initiated some processes to address that. One is the audit program that was put in place by the Students Finance Board a couple of years ago, and it has been quite effective. In fact, as near as we can tell, they have been able to reduce their loss by about \$18 million and reduce their client roll by about 7,000 students.

Also, because of the high default rate, we're of the opinion that some of that is caused by the fact that students are not able to repay within the repayment scheme and schedule that's available to them. That's caused our department to initiate a process to review the repayment system for students in this province. I anticipate having a report back within about 30 days, which will give us, hopefully, some alternatives for students to look at that will allow them more flexibility in repayment of their student loans in this province.

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

Social Assistance

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has made cuts to a variety of social programs that hurt people and their children in very real ways. On the weekend 2,000 people marched to the Legislature. They pointed their finger at you, Mr. Premier, and said: have a heart, Ralph, and all the Premier has done is let them down. My questions are to the Premier. Has the Premier personally reviewed the impact his cutbacks are having on single moms who can't feed their children or send them to school in dignity or on those who are disabled and cannot work?

MR. KLEIN: The answer, Mr. Speaker, is no. No, I haven't done that personal review, and it would be silly to expect that I would personally review each and every case of a person receiving social assistance. That would be utter, absolute nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, the welfare reform package put forward by the hon. minister is a package that says that we want to look after those who need help and that we want to facilitate those who are employable and are able to work to get off the welfare rolls and into the work force. It's as simple as that. We want to cut down on abuse of the system. We don't think it's fair, for instance, for someone to receive three or four or five or six damage deposits in one year. We don't think it's fair that someone should take a cheque and hand it over to someone else to have it cashed at 4:30 on Friday and then report that cheque lost and be issued a new cheque. We want to cut down on those kinds of abuses. We want to make the system fair and equitable.

MS HANSON: Doesn't the Premier admit that he's making a sad mistake by targeting the disadvantaged when an unemployable, brain-damaged, single mother weeps in public because he has cut her off?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to get into specific cases. I think it would be wrong to do that kind of thing.

[interjections] No. The hon. member has cited a specific case. I am not about to get into this kind of thing, but I can perhaps reiterate what one of the Liberal cousins in the federal Parliament said yesterday on television. Sheila Copps, that great defender of all rights for all people, said that the Liberal Party would be implementing the New Brunswick model of getting people off the welfare rolls and putting them into programs of retraining and jobs.

MS HANSON: Will the Premier, then, agree to meet with the leaders of the 18 social work agencies, members of Albertans United for Social Justice, who marched on Saturday to get their input since he made these cuts without first asking what the effect would be?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I answered that question last week, and I indicated that I would be very happy to meet with these groups after they have met with the minister so the minister can then brief me on what their concerns are and how we can work collectively to resolve some of the problems that they have brought up.

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

Special Waste Treatment Centre

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the minister of the environment. We're building extra capacity at the Swan Hills waste management facility. I'm wondering if he can inform this House as to what the total cost of that is and what percentage of provincial funds are going into that project.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The expansion at Swan Hills, just as all of the other upgrading at Swan Hills and the facility itself, is jointly paid for by the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. That's 40 percent owned by the province of Alberta and 60 percent by the private-sector partner, Bovar industries. This relationship has existed since the original facility was opened back in 1987 on September 11.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that we're bringing in waste to be disposed of from the Northwest Territories. I'm wondering if the minister can inform this House as to any public consultations that he may have had along the transportation route.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To clarify, we have talked about the new kiln, which is a 40,000 tonne capacity incinerator that will require PCBs and PCPs, about 4,200 tonnes each, to be fully tested to ensure that it is operating within the licence to operate and in conformity with our restrictions and our rules and regulations with respect to air emissions. It will require quite a substantial amount of PCB and PCP backlog to accomplish the tests. In order to do that, we are going to use all of the available PCBs and PCPs that we have in the province of Alberta. Because the tests will probably go on for a two- to three-month period of time, it looks like we won't have enough capacity, enough of a backlog of these chemicals in the province

of Alberta to complete all of the tests. It really does require quite a substantial amount of test material. What we are therefore doing is looking at adjacent jurisdictions to supply that kind of quantity, anything that we do not have currently as a backlog here in the province of Alberta, again the reason being that we have been disposing of these wastes over a substantial period of time, and we don't have that kind of a backlog of some 4,200 tonnes for each.

Now, that is one part of the equation. The other part is that the Northwest Territories have asked us whether we would dispose of their hazardous waste at Swan Hills. I think there's been a fair amount of comment indicating . . .

Speaker's Ruling Repetition

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair recalls the hon. minister really giving that information to the House last week, and the Chair endeavoured to give the minister the chance to answer the question, but maybe the final supplemental will bring it out.

2:10 Special Waste Treatment Centre (continued)

DR. L. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, since we don't have enough waste to burn in Alberta and since we have this facility, will the minister consider expanding the waste collection procedure to take in waste from other provinces and from other jurisdictions so that the provincial government can get out of this business and put this back in private business where it legitimately belongs?

MR. EVANS: Well, I know that many hon. members are looking for this answer. The reason we don't have the PCBs and PCPs in the quantities that we need for the test burn is because since the plant began operating in 1987, hon. member, we have disposed of these hazardous wastes. This is a state-of-the-art plant, Mr. Speaker, that has disposed of these wastes, although in fairness we are accumulating in the province of Alberta some 25,000 tonnes each and every year, and we have to dispose of these. Now, the way we are going to be doing that is through the new kiln. We're going through a process of making sure that it's operating efficiently, effectively, and properly.

We will dispose of Alberta waste, and that is our mandate. We have talked about expanding that mandate for the Northwest Territories because of need, because of the fact that these wastes would be going beyond Alberta to be disposed of in any event. But if we were going to change that policy, Mr. Speaker, an Alberta-only policy, it would be through input from Albertans, and it would be as a result of their acceptance of that kind of a process.

International Offices

MS CARLSON: Mr. Speaker, last week the Department of Economic Development and Tourism announced that it would be recalling agents general Mary LeMessurier from the London foreign office and Sig Schmidt from Tokyo and that these positions would be left unfilled. My question to the Minister of Energy: can the minister confirm that David Manning, the acting agent general for the New York foreign office, is indeed moonlighting for her department as a consultant?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Manning as the acting agent in New York has been helping my department with some of the contacts on the States' side which are very important to the energy industry and in fact have been very helpful as we've been identifying market areas and as we get further along in our

resolution of our California dispute that we've had. Yes, he's helping us.

MS CARLSON: To the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism: without either the acting agent general or the agent general, what is the relevance of keeping this New York office open?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, first of all, to clarify something, the hon. member said that Mrs. LeMessurier is being recalled. I indicated the other day that Mrs. LeMessurier is retiring December 31, 1993. Mrs. LeMessurier has played a very valuable role for the people of the province of Alberta in London, and quite frankly we'll all be very sad that she has decided to arrive at this retirement option for herself.

I also indicated the other day during my estimates that Mr. Manning was assisting the Minister of Energy in this regard. Of course there's a point of order to be made under section 23(h), (i), and (j) with respect to providing these allegations about credibility. Mr. Manning unfortunately cannot be in the House to defend himself, so we will. Mr. Manning is a very valuable employee of the province of Alberta, is functioning very well as our senior administrator in New York, and he's assisting the Minister of Energy in some very difficult negotiations that she's now having in various parts of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the way we do it in the Conservative government family is that when one person assists another person, we also fill in to assist that other person, and you can be assured that the minister and others will be taking very good care of the office in New York.

MS CARLSON: By keeping the offices open without agents general, will the minister now admit to Albertans that these agents general were simply unnecessary patronage appointments used to reward their old Tory friends for loyal service?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, this is not CN rail we're talking about. We're talking about some very competent Albertans who are assisting us in overseas offices. Mary LeMessurier has made a remarkable contribution to the people of Alberta, and I'm sorry that she's decided to retire on December 31.

I indicated that our government is refocusing its attention, and the gentleman we have in Tokyo is coming back to work with Alberta entrepreneurs in the province of Alberta and will spend nearly 12 months visiting Alberta businesses and making himself available for chambers of commerce and other individuals who want to get involved in economic development. He will be here in Alberta advising them and assisting them to penetrate the Japanese market so in fact these individual Albertans do not have to go to Japan and go through the Canadian embassy or Alberta House in Japan to do that. It's a convenient service for the people of Alberta.

It really is mischievous, hon. member. I know that you're coming under the influence of some of those people over there. I don't want to get in any more trouble. The last time I said, "Don't look to your model," certain people - and I'm trying not to look across because I'm probably going to get into trouble again by somebody seeing it. Look to your model, please, in the Liberal caucus, not at any of the individuals who happen to sit in that front row. They are bad, bad examples.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Treasury Branches

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The services provided by the Alberta Treasury Branches are important to all Albertans, and more importantly they are vital to economic development in rural Alberta. Weekend media reporting on comments attributed to the Premier suggest that the government is looking at the possible sale of Alberta Treasury Branches. My question to the Premier: will you please clarify whether the door is open or whether the door is shut on the possible sale of Alberta Treasury Branches?

MR. KLEIN: The answer to the question, if I recall it, was as it pertained to ADC and ADC being a lending agency and begging the question: do we get out of the business? The hon. Member from Calgary-North West brought it up: AOC, Vencap. Do you take it as far as the Treasury Branch? I simply pondered these things.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary question to the Provincial Treasurer. Are there any plans in your ministry regarding the possible sale or the privatization of Alberta Treasury Branches?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, the short answer is no, an unqualified, absolute no. The Treasury Branches were established in this province about 55 years ago and receive deposits from some 200,000 or more Albertans across this province and have had a successful track record of supporting and being supportive of Alberta business, especially Alberta small business and the Alberta farming community. It has a proud past. It has a strong future. We are confident in the lending activities of Treasury Branches, and I know that Albertans are confident of Treasury Branches and will continue to be so.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?
The hon. Member for Bonnyville.

2:20

Gainers Inc.

MR. VASSEUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The recently leaked health inspector's report on Gainers is one more example that this government should not be in business. During the election campaign the Premier and his government campaigned on the promise of an accessible government and an open government. My question to the minister of agriculture: will he tell the House why he broke both promises by not releasing the July 6 health inspection report on Gainers?

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

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important to note the fact that the report is a federal report issued by Canadian department of agriculture inspectors to the operator of the plant, which is Gainers.

MR. VASSEUR: My supplemental question to the minister of agriculture again: is the minister saying that with over a hundred million taxpayers' dollars at stake he did not feel Albertans had the right to know that Gainers received an F rating in this report, the worst possible report that could have come down, and a rating that requires shutting down this plant?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, this is very, very unfortunate because if indeed Gainers had an F report, Gainers would be shut down. In fact, Gainers had a C report.

As a matter of fact, as a follow-up, last Tuesday the federal department again made an impromptu visit to Gainers and said that all of the aspects they had asked to be corrected were being looked after. So I don't think it's fair and I don't think it's right to mislead the House when you're suggesting that indeed Gainers had an F rating. If that were the case, Gainers would have been shut down.

MR. VASSEUR: Mr. Speaker, will the minister of agriculture now commit to releasing as soon as it's possible the report that's supposed to come down in October, this fall?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: The report of course is a document that Gainers has, and it's up to Gainers, the operator, as to whether they want to allow the release of the publication. This is through the federal freedom of information Act, and that Act is very specific and very clear in what it allows to be done and what it doesn't allow to be done.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie, followed by Edmonton-Norwood.

School Amendment Act

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are directed to the Minister of Education. My constituents and indeed many Calgarians expressed a great deal of interest following the introduction of Bill 8, formerly Bill 41, and specifically the reference to the Francophone governance issue. We are encouraging departments to develop four-year business plans, and as you can appreciate, the school boards around the province need to have a plan of action in order to implement some of these changes. To the minister: could you please advise this House somewhat of an anticipated time frame that it will take to get this Bill passed?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, Bill 8 of course, as all members of the House know, now awaits second reading. It will go through that process, then into committee, when any amendments that are put forward will have to be considered, and on to third reading. Certainly it is the intention to have this piece of legislation completed by the conclusion of this session.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to that scenario, then, sir, could you please advise the House: following an anticipated successful conclusion in the House, what type of time frame for implementation do you anticipate so that our school boards can begin to plan?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I think we have to recognize that there will be some considerable effort required in the development of regulations pertaining to Bill 8 prior to proclamation and implementation. Certainly it is recognized that there is a great deal of interest in the implementation of these provisions, and the plan would be to have them effective for the 1994-95 school year.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To complete, then, my scenario and my concerns about this issue as it affects

our local school boards, sir, could you please identify whether or not your department will be planning a communications program or plan in order to assist the districts and the school boards that are affected in an appropriate, timely manner?

MR. JONSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Workers' Compensation Board

MR. BENIUK: Mr. Speaker, first we had the Millard report in 1988, then we had the Horowitz report in 1992, and now I understand that the minister responsible for the WCB is meeting with industry and injured workers for more consultation at the end of this month. To the minister responsible for the WCB: when is the minister going to act on these recommendations to help the injured workers that he is responsible to?

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has talked about a lot of different reports. Let me give him the Stockwell Day report. He talks about meeting at the end of the month with workers and industry people. I meet with workers, representatives from industry, and labour on a constant and an ongoing basis. If you would allow, I would be more than delighted to talk about how we have a four-year plan addressing the unfunded liability. It's on track. Injury rates are decreasing because of the type of consultation and the plans we have in effect. Administration costs are not in a deficit this year. It's going to be in a surplus position, which will be applied to the unfunded liability. I can go on giving good news. It's not all perfect. There are still things we're working at, but those are some of the elements of the report that I can give today.

MR. BENIUK: Which of the 61 recommendations from the Horowitz report have been or will be implemented?

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, in your good judgment I don't think you will allow me to go through either 61 recommendations or the number that have been implemented in a variety of ways and approaches that we've taken over the last period of time. If there is some specific question that the member's got on a specific recommendation, I'd be happy to try and address it, but I don't think you'll allow me the time to work through all of them.

MR. BENIUK: As the injured workers need the system changed now, will the minister commit himself to a deadline when all the recommendations will be implemented?

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to addressing the needs of injured workers, I have no deadline. It is a constant process in which a variety of methods are addressed on how injured workers' and employers' concerns can be addressed. That process doesn't stop as far as I'm concerned, and any assistance or suggestions the member opposite would like to give in that process I'd be delighted to have.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Three Hills-Airdrie, followed by Sherwood Park.

Economic Development

MS HALEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. I understand that Goodyear is relocating to Edmonton from out of province, and I'm wondering if the minister could inform the House if Goodyear

has received a government loan or any loan guarantee to facilitate their relocation.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Economic Development and Tourism.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we tend to have good news in the province almost on a daily basis about firms from other parts of North America relocating to the province of Alberta, and the other day we certainly had that with respect to Goodyear locating in the metro Edmonton area. There have been absolutely no provincial dollars involved by way of guarantees, financial assistance of any shape, and we don't have to for the most part.

In recent weeks and in recent months there have been a fair number of redevelopment projects that have occurred. The HI-ATHA Sawmill opened in the Hinton area employing some 145 full-time people: no dollars involved there. We have the Sunpine Forest Products Ltd. with their laminated veneer lumber plant located near Sundre: no dollars. Saturday last Spruceland Lumber of Spruce Grove and Timeu Forest Products of Fort Assiniboine signed a new agreement to entertain a new organization and provide some 50 additional jobs to northwestern Alberta. No government dollars, direct or indirect, or guarantees or anything else in it: that's part of the Alberta message.

2:30

MS HALEY: In light of the minister's response my supplemental question is: could the minister of economic development please inform the House as to what incentives in Alberta attracted these companies to relocate here?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I think one of the really positive incentives has been the election of Premier Ralph Klein as not only the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party but the Premier of the province of Alberta. That provided a dramatic change in the way governance in this province will occur. If one goes back to December of 1992 and looks at some of the messages - the downsizing of government, the reduction in cabinet from 27 to 17, the reduction in the numbers of departments we have, the approach that we've taken to the Alberta Advantage and talking about it, the budget of May 6, the budget of just a few days ago, the Speech from the Throne just a few days ago - they're all part of the new attractiveness of the province of Alberta in 1993.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary.

MS HALEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. My final supplemental question is: are there any other companies that the minister is aware of moving to Alberta in the near future?

MR. KOWALSKI: There was one thing that I forgot in my last answer which I think is pretty important. The hon. member asked: what are these new things? Well, I think one of the conclusive things was the defeat of the Liberal Party in the provincial election on June 15, because with it it made sure that Alberta was going to have a private-enterprise, a free-enterprise alternative.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, companies like Hitachi, that recently provided press releases with a redirection in the Calgary area, Northern Telecom, who indicated that it's moving massive numbers of people from other parts of this country to Alberta, even the hopeful attempts we're making with the Canadian Red Cross and Miles Canada Inc. to have that blood fractionation plant located in the province of Alberta: all of these will come without

government financial involvement because industry wants to come to Alberta. We have many advantages here.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Special Waste Treatment Centre

(continued)

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Minister of Environmental Protection opened the door to the importing of hazardous wastes into Alberta and in fact brought into question the Alberta-only policy on hazardous waste disposal. While the Premier indicated that this change in policy from Alberta-only would only occur after full public hearings, it is in fact the economic benefit of importation that is really at the centre of the issue. To the Minister of Environmental Protection: will the minister be up front with Albertans and confirm that as a matter of economic policy this government wants to import hazardous waste into the province regardless of the environmental impact?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thought we'd answered all the questions that could possibly come about Swan Hills but apparently not.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, we have an Alberta-only policy in this province with respect to the importation of hazardous waste. The hon. member opposite is arguing that if there's an economic advantage to importation of hazardous waste, that's somehow wrong, that's somehow harmful to Alberta. I think the hon. member is confusing economics on the one hand and environmental sensitivity and responsibility on the other. We have a policy in Alberta which we certainly brought forward at the time that the Swan Hills operation came into existence in 1987. That's Alberta-only. As I have indicated already to the hon. member from this side of the House in this question period, we're considering expanding that with respect to Northwest Territories waste because it doesn't make any sense for that waste to go by Swan Hills to be dealt with in other parts of Canada or other parts of North America. It just doesn't make sense. The safety of transportation of that waste to Swan Hills is well known, well documented, and certainly beyond reproach.

If we are to expand outside of Alberta-only, with limited-exception importations, we will we do that with public input from Albertans. We did it with public input on the Northwest Territories situation through newspaper ads, through dealing with stakeholders, and we would use the exact same kind of a process were we to entertain any kind of an expansion on that policy.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, since the so-called test burn is really just a test run of importation of hazardous wastes into the province, isn't this just another example of the government setting policy first and then asking for public consultation after?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister.

MR. EVANS: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to give the hon. member opposite a little bit of a history lesson here. We have had an environmental impact assessment on the proposal to build a new kiln. We have had beyond that a very extensive

public input process through the NRCB hearings. The NRCB, the Natural Resources Conservation Board, determined that it was in the public interest, as is their mandate to determine, for this process to proceed and a new kiln to be built, and that's after examining environmental, social, and economic consequences of that proposal. This is a very clear, open, transparent purpose. Albertans have said, "Yes, we want this expansion to occur." We have a backlog of hazardous waste. We are creating 25,000 tonnes of hazardous waste every year, and we have a capacity of some 13,000 tonnes. We are moving ahead to dispose of hazardous wastes in this province, and certainly well in advance and well ahead of other jurisdictions in Canada who, quite frankly, look on Alberta with great envy.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplementary to the Minister of Environmental Protection: if the expanded Swan Hills facility can accommodate imported hazardous wastes, why were we told at the previous public hearings that the facility would run at full capacity on Alberta-only hazardous waste?

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member or members of this Assembly or Albertans in general would like to review the review that was done at the Natural Resources Conservation Board, he, all of us here, and Albertans would be very clear – very clear – that the proposal before the NRCB was only to deal with Alberta waste. That was a very significant part of the application. It was reviewed very, very carefully and thoroughly – publicly, transparently – and the conclusion was that this new kiln would be dealing with Alberta waste only, as was the proposal, and that there was justification and that it was in the public interest that this proposal be approved on social, economic, and environmental criteria.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period has expired, but the Chair has received information that the hon. Minister of Health is prepared to respond to the question that the hon. Premier took on notice last week.

UniCare Integrated Software Inc.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, on September 15 the Opposition House Leader asked a question in relation to the University of Alberta hospitals, and I would like to respond to that. The question was dealing with why the hospitals' restricted revenue fund dropped between 1992 and 1993 by \$3.1 million. The audited financial statements of the University of Alberta hospitals was tabled on September 1, 1993, and in that tabling the Auditor General indicated at that time the balance of the fund went from \$13.2 million to \$10.1 million, a drop of \$3.1 million. The largest reason for this change was capital expenditures of \$6.1 million, and I think that is clearly indicated in the Auditor General's report.

How was the money spent? I would give some examples: the hospital portion of the MRI unit, funding towards the helipad at the hospital, ultrasound equipment, nuclear medicine equipment, operating room monitoring equipment. The list does go on. If the member would like any more detail, he could put it on the Order Paper or write me, and I will give him that information.

2:40

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you. The Premier also said in reading a press release from the hospital that really somehow the hospital got \$3.7 million worth of value in discounts on hardware that they bought because they had this software firm. I'd just like to ask the minister if she could table in this House invoices that would confirm that in fact there were \$3.7 million worth of discounts. Secondly, if it's such a great idea, why doesn't she insist that every hospital across this province and every department in this government set up software firms so they, too, can get some kind of computer hardware discount? It just seems to be ridiculous.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly the proper place to request that information is from the University of Alberta Hospitals Board. When I was asked the question on this in the House, I think I made it clear that I am responsible to ensure that the operating funds that are granted to those hospitals are used in the best means for patient care, et cetera. The funds that were used for UniCare were not out of operating funds. I explained at that time that I was satisfied that the University of Alberta hospitals had handled their operating funds appropriately. Certainly they have given indications in the comments that they made that there were substantial savings made in accessing computer software. Computerization is a very, very important part of a hospital's operation today in patient care as well as in other areas. So again, if the member has any other questions, I'd be happy to respond.

MR. MITCHELL: I would like to know why it is that the minister continues to say and the chairman of the board of the hospital continues to say that somehow this money didn't come out of operating funds when the Auditor General very clearly specified in the audited financial statements of the hospitals the hospitals' financial rule which said that that reserve fund was to cover operating deficits.

Point of Order Supplementary Responses

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It's only for the general administration of the House under Standing Order 1. Under the rules that we have, the individual is only permitted to have one supplemental question. I suspect that perhaps the House leader just overlooked or forgot about that, because I know that he's very conversant with the rules.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Could I answer the last supplemental, if you are going to allow it? Very briefly.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, we won't allow any more of these.

UniCare Integrated Software Inc. (continued)

MRS. McCLELLAN: This is, I think, an important point, and I would like to clarify it. It is clear under the regulation that the hospitals' first use of discretionary funding must be to clear any operating deficits if there are those. That is the first use of discretionary funds. The University of Alberta hospitals has acted under those regulations and under those guidelines, is very well managed, and I have every confidence in their operation.

MR. SPEAKER: Before calling Orders of the Day, the Chair on behalf of all members will take the opportunity of wishing the hon. Member for Calgary-East a happy birthday. [applause]

head: **Orders of the Day**

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.

[Adjourned debate September 13: Mr. Evans]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. EVANS: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As much as I would dearly love to enter into this debate, I know that there are a number of members on the government side, new members in the House, who are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to talk about their constituencies and talk about the economic future of their constituencies and the province as detailed in that Speech from the Throne. So with that, I will very happily take my seat and listen to the very astute comments from hon. members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Beverly.

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to respond to the Speech from the Throne today as the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Beverly, representing one of the most interesting and diverse urban constituencies in this province. Our community begins at the heart of the city on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. It goes east some 80 blocks to the Beverly Bridge where the river curves north. The northern boundary wanders along the Yellowhead, the tracks, and back to the inner city. Edmonton-Highlands-Beverly is a diverse community. Our residents represent a broad variety and range of cultures, beliefs, and interests. Aboriginal people, people of Chinese, Southeast Asian, European, African, South American descent are commonplace on our streets, and the central community of Highlands is home to many second- or third-generation people.

Within only a few short blocks we see a shocking disparity in income and opportunity. As a community we are concerned with the inability to find practical solutions to the constitutional, economic, and social problems that face us. Our problems are complex. They involve all sectors of society. We recognize that we cannot simply spend all of our time talking to ourselves or complaining to ourselves. We are obliged to live together as a community, and we are obligated to find better answers.

In Edmonton-Highlands-Beverly we know that a government that cannot deal with the bread-and-butter issues of everyday life is not a government for the people of Alberta. We are obligated to make sure that public services which are vital to our well-being are provided in an effective and cost-efficient way. We must be committed to a balanced approach to both social and economic policy.

Major reforms are required in the health service system. It's costly, and more importantly it's not meeting our needs. Canada

spends more on health care than any other western country with a national insurance plan, yet our overall health status as a nation ranks far below countries like Germany and Japan which spend much less on health care but live longer and healthier lives. I believe it's time to reinvest in the things that make us healthy rather than keeping the focus of all of our attention on the resolution of sickness. Preventive programs which allow people to learn to take responsibility for their own physical and economic well-being continue to be brushed aside in favour of the quick-fix approach.

People in my constituency recognize that we cannot have a strong economy and a competitive work force unless we're committed to education and training to meet the needs of the changing labour market. We also know that economic diversification cannot supersede the interests of protecting our physical environment. We know that programs that support people in times of social insecurity are not enough, and we must be committed to real job creation. We have an obligation to ensure that all of the people in this province are treated with justice and with fairness.

The opportunities that exist in Alberta should not be limited to a select few. Most importantly, we understand that the entrepreneurial spirit that is at the very heart of this province must be brought to bear on all of the facets of our endeavours. We must challenge the public sector to promote excellence and effectiveness, and we must ask the same of the private sector too.

I believe it's time to look at the problems in our province with new eyes. In all the years I have worked in support of community interests in this constituency, I have been committed to the principles of community control. I know through experience that when people are given the tools, the time, and the information, they can work together to solve the common issues that they face.

My goal as opposition critic for Family and Social Services is to work with my colleagues in the opposition and with government members to help shape a social development policy that will help people become as self-reliant as their skills and their circumstances will allow, to protect those who cannot protect themselves, and to provide support for those who cannot support themselves.

In the past many people believed that government could solve social problems without involving the community and individuals in need of help. That belief is now largely discarded. It is impossible in an office building in Edmonton to devise policies and programs which will make sense for every corner of this diverse province, let alone to allow for innovation. Opportunities for communitywide input into social programs would result in better decisions and better programs in the same way that input from business improves our understanding of economic development.

2:50

We must all be involved in the battle to eliminate child abuse, poverty, and welfare from our communities. Only co-operative programs developed and implemented at a local and regional level can hope for success. We must not accept that a generation of young people not only are likely to be sentenced to a lifetime of unemployment but that we in Alberta no longer consider dollars spent on education, health care, prevention, and social assistance to be a worthy investment. To quote political analyst Allan Tupper: cost-cutting in these human services is not only ineffective but destined to change the nature of our society; you can get some short-term savings by killing the funding, but in the end it is economically unsound and will dramatically change how we live; we are looking at a very different type of society emerging from this. I believe there will be more crime, more prostitution, violence, more battered kids and disillusioned, hopeless young

adults. This is not the way to bring back the vibrant, self-reliant Alberta of about 10 short years ago when people were confident that when times were tough, they could still get by on their own and that things would be better next year.

Each of us on both sides of the Assembly in this Legislature faces many challenges in carrying out our responsibilities, but by far the greatest of all is to bring an end to the cynicism and mistrust of the political process that has poisoned political life in this province. We are obligated to give back to the youth of this province their birthright, optimism and a hope for a better tomorrow, because that is the key to economic and social recovery.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. Member for Redwater is rising on a point of order.

Point of Order Imputing Motives

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday night an unfortunate incident occurred. I wasn't here Thursday. I think this is my first opportunity really, and I wanted to make an apology.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair certainly appreciates the hon. member's feelings and intent, but that situation occurred in the Committee of Supply, as the Chair understands it. That matter can be dealt with there. Only if it can't be resolved in the Committee of Supply would it be brought back here.

MR. N. TAYLOR: You mean I have to delay the love-in until the next committee?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Chair does express its appreciation to the hon. member for this early attempt to do what he's going to do.

The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

Debate Continued

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great pleasure for me to rise today and deliver my maiden speech as the MLA for the constituency of Lacombe-Stettler.

Before I begin, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate you on your election to this highly esteemed position. This is the first time that Alberta has elected its Speaker, and I am delighted to see that both sides of this House have shown confidence in your ability to guide the affairs of the Legislature. As I am still quite unfamiliar with the rules and practices of this House, I look forward to your guidance and counsel as we debate the issues of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be the first MLA for the new Lacombe-Stettler constituency. The constituency is a large one. It takes about two hours to travel the length of it by car. My constituency extends north and east of the Red Deer River. In the east the communities of Big Valley, Endiang, Byemoor, Gadsby, and Botha all serve the number one industry, agriculture. The town of Stettler anchors the eastern side of the constituency along with the community of Donalda, made famous as the home of the world's newest supermodel, Tricia Helfer. Visitors to the area can take a nostalgic ride through east-central Alberta on the popular steam-powered locomotive operated by prairie steam tours. The

tour shows a landscape of rolling parkland and picturesque farms. As well it offers passengers a glimpse of the past in the unique museums and communities which are rich in history and small-town friendliness.

The Stettler area is diverse in its agricultural activities and includes many specialized operations. The area boasts many pedigreed seed growers which provide high-quality cereal, oilseed, and grass seed to eastern Alberta. There are many purebred livestock and horse breeding operations including some of the best heavy horse breeders and racing stock breeders in the province. As you move past Buffalo Lake and through the rolling hills and farmland, you arrive at Alix. Mr. Speaker, Alix is the home of the Westcan Malting plant, which provides much needed jobs for the area and a local market for malt barley. The Joffre gas plant is also located in my constituency. Communities such as Blackfalds and the city of Red Deer have prospered around the activities of Joffre and the oil and gas industry, still a strong industrial base in central Alberta.

The western end of the constituency is my home. I live in Lacombe, a heritage centre in the heart of Alberta with its tree-lined avenues and majestic turn-of-the-century houses. Lacombe's historic downtown provides tourists and residents alike with a firsthand view of Alberta's past. Many of the old buildings have been restored to their original beauty, giving Lacombe a rustic, peaceful feel. Five years ago Lacombe was one of the first communities to take part in the Alberta main street program, which is administered by the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation in conjunction with Alberta Community Development and the Heritage Canada foundation. This revitalization program proved to be most successful, creating a definite boon not only to our downtown core but the entire community.

Lacombe is also nationally known, Mr. Speaker. We made the news in November of 1990 when my town council determined by resolution that Lacombe would not participate in the national recession. This positive public declaration made the news across the country. We received accolades and congratulatory letters praising our resolution from financial institutions, businesses, government, and individuals. We did however receive one negative letter. It was from none other than the hon. Michael Wilson, then the federal Minister of Finance. He went on for some three pages explaining why we could not opt out of the recession and to tell us we were actually in one. It is a relief to see a more optimistic person has taken over the Finance portfolio in Ottawa.

Just north of Lacombe is College Heights, home of the Canadian Union College. Mr. Speaker, Canadian Union College is a small educational institution that is privately operated and privately funded, well known for its focus on quality education and academic excellence. This institution provides students with an alternative education with more personalized instruction than can be offered by a large university or college. In September 1991 the province recognized the college with degree-granting status, a major step for the school.

Being the MLA for an expanded constituency means I am following in the footsteps of two MLAs instead of one. It is not often that an MLA can say they are following in the footsteps of a former Premier, but this is my task. The hon. Don Getty served as the MLA for Stettler since 1989. The people of Stettler and the surrounding communities expect quality leadership from their new MLA, and I look forward to the challenge of working with them and gaining their friendship and trust. The other part of my constituency, Mr. Speaker, consists of the former Lacombe constituency, served since 1982 by Mr. Ron Moore. Mr. Moore's dedication is legendary around Lacombe. We know him as a man

who shoots straight from the hip, a man who would never shy away from a debate. Mr. Moore always listened and put the needs of his constituents first, a model that I hope to follow. As the former mayor of Lacombe it is a privilege for me to continue the work that Mr. Moore started.

3:00

The people of Lacombe-Stettler are true Conservatives. Their number one concern is to reduce the size of government and get rid of the debt. We all want to leave our children and grandchildren a legacy, Mr. Speaker, but we do not want to leave them a legacy of debt and intrusive government. All of society, including governments and citizens, must learn to live within their means and get out of debt. I was elected because I believe the role of an MLA is to listen and work hard and then represent the views of his or her constituents. Our government has received a strong mandate based on Premier Klein's proven record of listening and then taking action. The people of Lacombe-Stettler saw an honest, realistic plan, a plan to eliminate the deficit, and believed I was the person to best represent them as the plan was carried out. I am proud that I was strongly supported across the region. I will do my best and devote my expertise, experience, enthusiasm, and time to ensure that I live up to my constituents' expectations.

This is a critical time in Alberta's history. We are a people hungry for restraint. We recognize that the debt facing our province and our country has put each of us and our children at severe risk and it must be eliminated. Albertans have said that they want to see government spending reduced. They do not want to balance the budget by creating more taxes or raising taxes. They want to see spending put in line with our revenues. On June 15 they agreed that there is not a problem with revenue in this province; our problem is on the spending side of the income statement. I am proud to be part of the important decisions to come, decisions necessary to reduce expenditures fairly. By implementing quarterly budgets, we are able to better plan our expenditures. Our plan for eliminating the deficit is ambitious, but it requires that we take corrective action when the state of the economy warrants. We cannot wait an entire year to examine our fiscal position if we expect to balance the budget in four years. Mr. Speaker, I have an accounting background and am pleased that the recommendations of the Auditor General and the Financial Review Commission are being implemented. I believe that effective planning is more important to the budget process than partisan political accusations and games.

Albertans already enjoy benefits unavailable to other regions in Canada. Our taxes are lower than any other province. An average family of four pays \$1,800 per year less in taxes and pays no sales tax. We must ensure that our tax advantage continues both for personal and corporate tax payers. I am encouraged by the tax reform commission announced in the throne speech. We must examine all taxation policies and methods. The review should include the machinery and equipment tax, corporate pooling for education, the hotel tax, corporate tax rate, and other taxation issues which have been identified as compromising a competitive tax regime.

Health care is a priority for the residents of Lacombe-Stettler, but they also recognize, Mr. Speaker, that costs are growing at a rate we cannot afford. The roundtable on health in Red Deer last month has given the government solid recommendations on how to focus health expenditures where they are needed most. We must fundamentally restructure the entire health care system. We can no longer afford to continue with old approaches. I believe it's time to look seriously at new options. Instead of a per visit

user fee, I support a tax credit for those who are limited users of the health care system. This would encourage and reward us for leading healthy life-styles and yet when needed give us access to quality basic health care irrespective of cost.

Quality education is the key to the future of Alberta. We must develop an educated work force, one that has the ability to quickly adapt in our rapidly changing economy. I believe the people we've elected to local boards and municipal councils can reduce expenditures. More regionalization, more sharing, more co-operation, and more communication are the keys to preserving local autonomy and reducing wasteful duplication and overlap. I believe the best decisions are still those made closest to the people.

The throne speech is a promising document, Mr. Speaker. It shows Albertans that we were not kidding when we explained our plan during the election. We are going to the people for consultation on access to information legislation as we promised to do. We know our legislation is not perfect. The Liberals may believe they have all the answers, but we want to consult with the people before we try to put this important piece of legislation into law.

I am also encouraged by the recent changes made to the procedures followed in this Assembly. Finally, the rules of the Legislative Assembly have been reformed to make it more open and more responsive. We have shown a willingness to change, and these initial changes are an important first step in restoring the faith people have in their government and their Premier. We now have two required sessions each year. This will put some regularity and some consistency into our legislative process. We know when we will be in session, and we know when we will be able to be in our constituencies. When we are in session, the compression of our workweek to four days enables me to spend my Fridays doing what I was elected to do: meeting with the people of Lacombe-Stettler and finding out what issues are important to them. Sitting in this magnificent building is a great honour, Mr. Speaker, but I am more effective to my voters when I am in my constituency.

By reducing the time allowed for speeches from 30 minutes to 20 minutes, more MLAs will get the opportunity to speak to the issues before this Assembly. Each person in this House is very capable of expressing themselves in 20 minutes, and I'm thankful for the change. Free votes remove the collar of party discipline and will force MLAs to make an individual decision. This individual decision must be justified to their constituents. This will allow the concept of representative democracy to be more effective and will encourage more people to keep informed of what is being discussed at this Legislature. I am also encouraged by the fact that private members' Bills and motions will actually come to a vote, adding credibility to the legislative process. This will allow each MLA to be more effective in bringing forth their initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to represent my constituents in Lacombe-Stettler. They have placed a great deal of trust in me, and my promise to them is that I will listen and will always do my best to represent their interests. Over the next four years we have a tremendous amount of work to do. We have received a strong mandate to balance the budget and put Alberta back on track. The pioneer spirit that built this province still exists, and it is with this spirit that we once again will rebuild Alberta. I look forward to playing my part.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read for the benefit of the members of this Assembly a few words that I hope they'll consider as we proceed: I cannot change yesterday; I can only make the most of today and look with hope and work with determination towards tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-West. [applause]

3:10

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Well, thank you for the applause. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election. It was a close one. Who'd have guessed when you and I first met some five or six years ago that we'd end up in here. Well, you might have thought you would've. I certainly didn't.

Let me begin by saying that being here before you on the floor of the Assembly is one of the prouder moments of my life. As some of you hon. members may know, my parents immigrated to this great province and this great country in the aftermath of World War II. They and their ancestral generations before them hailed from the northern region of Italy known as Veneto. In Italy at that time conditions were extremely difficult. The whole of Europe was war ravaged, food was scarce, what was left of the economy was devastated. There was neither hope nor opportunity, so my parents decided to come to Canada, and they have not been disappointed.

They arrived in the great city of Medicine Hat in 1952. They worked hard, lived by the rules, raised and educated three children, and did well. They taught me to love our province and our country and to appreciate the opportunities that are afforded to the citizens of this country. They've always had the greatest of respect for their government, and they even trusted their government. They also taught me that these opportunities are indeed gifts not bestowed to the citizens of most countries. Instead, most countries in the world still face widespread want, disease, illiteracy, and hopelessness. So Albertans, Mr. Speaker, are very fortunate. We have a first-class quality of life supported by the twin pillars of economic advantage and a stable political environment.

I now sit in this Legislature, and it is indeed a privilege to do so. I can assure this House, the people of Alberta, and particularly the people of my riding in Calgary-West that I shall take my responsibilities seriously. Calgary-West is a riding that was previously well known to the Conservatives.

AN HON. MEMBER: We'll be back.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Not in your wildest dreams.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to take this early opportunity of speaking in this House to outline some of my personal beliefs that I have about government and the governed as well as some of my views about the greatest issues facing this House. The people of Alberta are not only concerned about the current issues; they are taking an increasing interest in learning about these issues and finding solutions to them. In short, Albertans will not be fooled by the sleight of hand or by the smoke and mirrors. The apparent goodwill that the people of Alberta show towards this government and particularly the Premier is not limitless. Albertans demand the facts, and they demand sensible action. Any government that obscures the facts and delivers indefensible actions will be punished severely by the electorate: first, by being driven into the bunkers, as was the Getty government, and then out of office, as they most certainly would have been had Getty stayed around to experience it. Thus any government that hopes to survive must be honest with the people. They must give the people the facts, and they must give to the people improved and sound public policy.

So how is this government doing by these standards? Is it on its way to the dustbin of history, or is it on its way to greatness?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Greatness.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Greatness.

Mr. Speaker, with respect the signs are starting to appear obvious. This government is not pointed towards the direction of greatness. It is pointed towards the dustbin.

As to the facts, Mr. Speaker, Albertans are not getting the straight goods, whether it be with respect to government promises of cabinet reduction, streamlining the process, cutting cabinet minister's salaries by 5 percent, implementing the recommendations of the Auditor General in his 1992 annual report, eliminating financial assistance to business, or delivering freedom of information. This government has given Albertans untruths, half-truths, mistruths, and plain blarney, for you Scotsmen.

Moving now to what the government gives us in the way of policy. The throne speech states that the "government has a plan." This plan is to meet the promise of balancing the budget within four years, "create an environment that will allow the private sector to create 110,000 . . . jobs . . . over the next four years . . . streamline government," and to consult with Albertans in a fair, open, and compassionate manner. I'm quoting from the throne speech. Mr. Speaker, there is no plan. One senses that fingers are being crossed, perhaps appeal to the divinity or the seeking out of mediums, but there is no plan.

The first promise, balancing the budget within four years, includes the promise of reducing program expenditures by 2 and a half billion dollars, now revised to \$3.4 billion or \$3.7 billion, whichever figure you decide to choose, all this within the next four years. But a plan must answer the questions: what, why, where, when, and who? What program will be cut, for example? Why these programs? Where will these cuts be most effected? When will these programs be cut? Who will be the most affected? The government has provided no answers to these questions. There is no plan. There are not any solutions. This is not public policy. Mr. Speaker, when there is no plan, the people are not able to accept straight across-the-board cuts. What we have here is pin the tail on the donkey.

The government's second promise is to create an environment that will bring 110,000 privately created jobs within the next four years. Pay attention, Steve, you might learn something. But where is the plan? Apply the W5 test. What? Why? Where? When? Who? The government has no answers to these questions. They have no plan. There is no substance.

The government's third promise is to streamline government. Again, there is no plan. There is no solution.

The fourth promise, my favourite, is to consult with Albertans in a fair, open, and compassionate way. Has the government consulted with the people about the \$190 million in medical care cuts? Did the government consult with the people that would be most affected by those cuts: the senior citizens of our province who access the health care system far more than other groups? Did they consult openly, fairly, and compassionately with the poor and disadvantaged Albertans about indiscriminate welfare cuts? Did the government consult with its ALCB employees openly, fairly, and compassionately about their imminent terminations, or did they just read about it in the newspaper? Is that how they found out? We all know what happened. One can only question the form of consultation, consultation between the government and its pals: former ministers who build extra shelves in their beer stores to accommodate liquor in anticipation that ALCB stores will pass into history; Tory-dominated hospital boards who discuss cuts in hospital services in private while yakking it up about their patronage appointments. That is the kind of consultation that is going on. Meaningful, fair, open, and compassionate consultation: give me a break.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Treasurer often make reference to the deficit spending record of the federal Liberals and by some bizarre process infer that the Alberta Liberal Party is really the same as the federal Liberals. With that logic in mind let's look at the Progressive Conservative record. First, we have our neighbours to the east in Saskatchewan. The Conservative Devine government has all but brought that province to its fiscal knees. Tax supported debt in that province now stands at \$11.2 billion. We'll go on a travel tour here. Next we go to the province of Nova Scotia. The newly elected Savage government has proclaimed that its finances have been left in an abysmal state and that it might even lose its right to govern. The granddaddy of free enterprise of them all, the federal Progressive Conservatives, in nine years took the deficit, tripled it, and brought in near record tax increases. Of course, let us not forget right here at home, where in the last 10 years, 75 tax increases later, we have a basic example of how to blow your brains out financially. Yep, that's the free enterprise party, the party of fiscal conservatism. I submit to you that all of that has occurred because there was no plan, just a philosophy, and that because they stood for so-called fiscal conservatism, they thought they knew what they were doing when it came to managing finances.

3:20

Well, let me take a little bit different tone now. That was then and now is now. All of this is irrelevant in my mind. We are the Alberta Liberal Party, and the government across is the Alberta Progressive Conservative Party. If this government is looking forward as it claims to be, it'll stick to what is relevant. After all, it wasn't the Alberta Liberal Party, the federal Liberals, or even the federal Progressive Conservative Party that created the \$25 billion deficit or whatever the real figure ends up being. The problem that I see with this current government is that they have failed to come clean. They are failing to make the transition from the Getty years to the supposed new wave Ralph's team.

As a newcomer to this House I see a government that is not levelling with the people of Alberta. I see a government that instead indulges in demagoguery. I see a government floundering without a plan and indeed without leadership. The Premier is not Premier Kowalski. It is a government that is showing no fiscal responsibility. We are getting a budget two-thirds of the way through the fiscal year. What kind of fiscal responsibility is that? It is a government that does not keep its promises. How can a government that prepared a budget two-thirds of the way through the year expect its departments to behave or properly do their own financial planning? Mr. Speaker, given the cars, perks, and appointments for its pals such as former minister John Oldring, the government once again appears to be patronage driven. It is not policy driven.

Mr. Speaker, let there be no doubt in this House about our party's position on taxation. Let there be no doubt. We are absolutely, positively opposed to tax increases or any new taxes. The problems of this province are expenditure based. There is no doubt about that. If we don't show the people of Alberta a plan, a sense of direction, some compassion for the underprivileged, if we don't give them the straight bill of goods, they cannot and will not accept any cuts of any sizable magnitude, and they will accept tax increases even less.

Mr. Speaker, when I came into this House, I came here with the resolve that I wasn't going to participate in the shenanigans that regularly occur, that I was going to provide meaningful input into the process in solving this province's financial mess, the one we currently find ourselves in. But when I witness the Provincial Treasurer chastise the opposition for not asking specific questions

on a two-thirds prepared budget only partially accurately compiled, halfway into the fiscal year, with debate on the full budget coming subsequently a week later, I have to start to wonder. I wouldn't get involved in that interim supply debate and give credence to that interim supply debate fiasco if my life depended on it. I throw out the challenge to the Provincial Treasurer: go out to any CFO/treasurer of any major corporation of his choice and explain this latest budget timing, the process, and the standards and ask him if he still deserves to keep his job after he's explained what's gone on in here. Ask this CFO/treasurer if it's possible to have a good plan when the numbers for last year just got refinalized a couple of weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, the current Prime Minister of Canada has said quite correctly of a politician: charisma without substance is a dangerous thing. Let me add to this: demagoguery without substance is an evil thing. This government is indulging in demagoguery. It is not giving the true facts to Albertans and is not on its way to making sound public policy. The choice still remains with the government. Is it towards the bunkers and dustbins or towards greatness? I fear it is towards dustbins, and Albertans will be worse off because of it: those very Albertans that look to us most now in their time of need.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Montrose.

MR. PHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise today in the Alberta Legislature to deliver my maiden speech as the representative for the constituency of Calgary-Montrose. The people of my constituency have placed their trust in me, and I plan to honour that trust.

First, Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate the Lieutenant Governor for outlining the direction in which this government is heading. The goals set out in the throne speech are important pieces of the plan this government has to create a bright future for all Albertans. I know every member of the government appreciates the guidance the vice-regent has given us.

I would also like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your recent election. As a noble and proud parliamentarian you will serve Alberta well. Your experience and knowledge of the tradition of this House will enable you to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Calgary-Montrose elected me for one reason and one reason only. They wanted their voice to be heard in our province's capital. They wanted to know that if they had concerns, the provincial government would hear about them. It is important for each one of us to remember that the only reason we are in this House today is to represent our constituency. We are employees; our bosses are the people of Alberta. If we wish to keep our jobs, our employers have the right to demand effective and efficient representation.

Time after time the people of Calgary-Montrose and in fact people across the province tell us that one issue is of great concern. That issue is law and order. There is great concern that our society is doing too little to curb the growing violence in our cities. Much of this violence is at the hands of youths in our cities. The Young Offenders Act is widely perceived to be not just useless but harmful in that it encourages children to get away with it while they are young.

I would like to relate to you an incident that was brought to my attention by one of my constituents. I received a letter from a mother with a shocking story. Her family has been victims in the past and expect to be victims again in the future. Their home has been broken into, their car has been robbed and vandalized, their

business has been robbed and destroyed. Her husband has been threatened. In each case the police were involved. In each case nothing was done. The police said that they had little power to deal with the culprits who were likely juveniles. However, Mr. Speaker, now the attacks have actually touched her family. One of her sons got attacked with a knife that was held at his throat. The criminal was known to the child and positively identified. However, no charge could be laid. The police, after repeated pleas from the boy to take the weapon away, said that they didn't have the power to do so. In fact, they said they would try to get the weapons. Hopefully, the boy would not come back after her son. However, they concluded that if he does, that is the price a person pays for ratting.

3:30

What kind of a message is this? How can we expect the people of our province to accept this? This mother wants to know what the government is going to do. In her words: you cannot take the law in your own hands, but whose hands is the law in now? It is hard to tell a woman that her child's attacker will hardly be punished, if at all, because he's too young. Too young for what? Too young to be able to rob, to steal? Too young to know what is right and wrong? Too young to beat and abuse other children? Too young to learn that until they are 18 years old, crime does pay? Too young to learn to be criminals? There are many good people in this province that are fed up with the system, a system that is not working, a system that they demand be changed.

The police of our city are doing a good job. They have the same problems with the system that parents do. Do you think they want to see the same kids committing crimes over and over? Of course not. It is not the policing that must be changed. It is the system, the Young Offenders Act, that must be changed.

Mr. Speaker, I commend this House for passing Motion 202. It is the responsibility of this Legislature to ensure that the federal government act on an issue that is so important to the people of our province. The Young Offenders Act must be changed. Through pressure applied by the province, we can help to ensure that it is changed.

Calgary-Montrose, Mr. Speaker, is a blue-collar constituency. The people are rather sceptical about a change to the welfare system. However, they do not want welfare; they want jobs, a system that creates an atmosphere in which job creation is possible, a system that does more to help them than a weekly cheque. We realize that the emphasis of our welfare system should be helping people to re-enter the work force. In general, people do not want to be on welfare. They agree with this government's social services program. They appreciate programs and policies that allow them to attain the skills with which they can achieve employment. It's up to this government to ensure that those who are in need get the assistance that they deserve while supplying programs that will reduce the number of individuals in need of assistance.

The hon. Minister of Family and Social Services knows firsthand what it's like to live in poverty. I, too, have that firsthand experience. I know what it's like to be impoverished, to have little hope of a future. It is our moral duty and obligation to ensure that our system gives those in need a second chance, a shot at a future. The system is not and should not be a way of life. Sympathy is useless and in fact harmful if all that is done is a cash giveaway. The system must look at the root of the problem and try to make changes. Each of us must look into the eyes of a child in poverty and tell him that a future without poverty is possible.

From my own experience I know that the Minister of Family and Social Services is right. No matter what the opposition says, the goal of this government is to help those on social assistance by giving them the ability to attain real, long-lasting employment. It is up to every member of this Legislature to give the Minister of Family and Social Services the support he and the people of Alberta deserve.

Another issue that is important in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, is that of education. My constituency is a young, growing community, a community that realizes that the greatest gift we can give to our children is an education. The people of my constituency urge this government to ensure effective and efficient delivery of quality education. They want a back-to-the-basics education that would better equip our youth for the future, an education that concentrates on the three Rs – reading, writing, and arithmetic – as well as a solid background in the sciences. Education does not occur in a vacuum within the school walls. The parents of our province must be encouraged to take an active participation in their children's education. This must be a joint venture between the government, the school, and the family. Education begins at birth at home and cannot be left completely to the school system. The education system of Alberta must also look outside of itself to other systems of education. We should try to create a two-way street of learning between Canada and countries like Germany and Japan. We can learn and contribute much in such a mutually beneficial relationship.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are worried about continued quality service in our health care system. However, they realize that we cannot afford a system as it stands today. The public wants to be involved in the decision-making process. This government's roundtables have and continue to allow for a fantastic forum for better communication and consultation. There is understanding of a need to prioritize, a need to create a system that ensures efficient delivery of quality service.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Calgary-Montrose are like the people across this province. They are already taxed enough. This government has repeatedly committed itself to a no-new-tax policy. Our Premier has repeatedly said that there is no plan for a sales tax. I have promised the people of Calgary-Montrose that I will be their voice to ensure that this commitment is honoured. This government must and will balance the budget in four years without a sales tax. The working people of Alberta have repeatedly told this government that this must be a priority, a priority that this government won the election on.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about this institution. There are 83 brilliant, well-qualified people in this House. I believe that we are capable of so much more. I feel a frustration in this House, a feeling that we are not doing enough. In many instances, we are bogged down by procedure; we are bogged down by *Beauchesne* when we could be actively helping the people of Alberta. Tradition, as we are all well aware, is a powerful and beneficial tool; however, change is necessary. I must commend the leaders from both sides of the floor on the initiation of a process of change. I see the beginning of a system that could be much more effective in representing and dealing with the problems faced by our province. We must follow our leaders' example and work in the spirit of co-operation, not confrontation.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta is experiencing tough times economically and socially. The people of this province rightly demand more of their representatives at all levels of government. The problems that we are facing with regards to law and order, health, social services, and education are not simple, easy problems. The easy route that many could take are usually not the best. To resolve

this issue will take courage and sacrifice. I am confident that this government can achieve these goals.

This government has presented a clear direction, a clear plan of action. This government is focused on the future. As the Premier has continually said, between the past and the future we choose the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

3:40

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise for my first shot at the throne speech and my first attempt at representing the new constituency of Redwater. I think that probably some of the newer members may not know their history well enough. It's been an ongoing war for some years: the members on that side of the House keep changing my constituency around, and quite often when an election is called, I'm not sure where to go back to find my constituency. But I somehow or another, like a bad penny, keep turning up.

I also would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that when I see the quality of the people that have been speaking from the government side and also from our side, I think it is the best crop of freshmen that I've seen for a generation or two.

Also, I think it's probably worthwhile for us on both sides of the House to remember that neither of us as parties got even half the vote. We're always fond of saying how much we did and how we beat this and beat that, that we're the biggest opposition we've ever had in Alberta, and that the government's won once again, but when you look at the figures, only about 65 percent of the people voted, and we didn't even get half of that. So that means that if we even managed to get much over a third, that would be about a third of the eligible vote out there. There's a large mass of people out there that just are not that impressed with us, and I don't suppose maybe we should get that impressed with ourselves when you realize that by just a small number of votes one way or the other, you could be history. I spent a lot of time trying to get into the House, and I've spent a lot of time in the House.

I'd like to say a word or two about my new constituency. I wanted to pay tribute to the fact that the old part of the constituency that I still represent – Morinville, Legal, Bon Accord, Gibbons, all that area – supported me quite strongly, although I've had my fights with them. I'm going to pass on any experience to the newcomers in the House. It isn't always detrimental to get into a fight with local government. Local government and I have occasionally twisted off. There's a thought out there amongst MLAs that you have to leave to Peter what's Peter's and to Paul what is Paul's, but when you see injustice – and I think the hon. Member for Calgary-Montrose gave a good speech there – you should jump in and try to do what you can about it, even though it may not be a provincial function. It may be a federal function or it may be a municipal one, but people will respect you for it.

I am particularly pleased to see that my old riding supported me strongly. I was also, in spite of the gerrymandering, able to leave a legacy over on the Sturgeon side that seemed to come up with the Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert. I wasn't quite as successful planting the seeds of dissent, Mr. Speaker, in the Barrhead-Westlock area as I have in the others, but I'm sure that he felt a warmth sort of nipping at his rear as he went through the election. Consequently, I have been named since then the Liberal caucus buddy for his constituency, just as my friend – I'm not so sure he's my friend – my hon. colleague from Whitecourt has been named the buddy for my constituency. Indeed, I think I'm very lucky to have him as a buddy, because he's in charge of

pavement and pipelines and power. So I've got it going both ways: if it doesn't show up, I can blame the buddy; if it does show up, I can take credit for it. I'm not adverse to doing that.

I also wanted to talk a little bit about the new part of my constituency. The French-speaking people were pioneers in my area, accompanied by some WASPs, before the turn of the century to where – I may be wrong – I believe I have more families on farms for over 100 years than any other constituency in the province. At least I was told that by the historical resources department. In other words, I represent a very early-settled area, and I've quite a number of families that have been on the farm for over a hundred years. You know, for a southerner that's hard to think. They think the world started when the CPR hit Calgary, but we were going up here in the farming area and farming for quite a long time. The French-speaking people have, of course, put together a good community, a very interesting community, and probably results in a rather interesting phenomenon. Most of you are used to separate schools being Roman Catholic. In part of my area they are most likely to be Protestant, because separate school means the religion of the minority. It doesn't mean Catholic, although many people think that.

Now, over in the new part of the area I've acquired – Redwater and Smoky Lake, through there, other areas, Radway, Thorhild – is very heavily settled with Ukrainian people. The names don't sound Ukrainian in origin because quite often the WASPS and the French Canadians gave up. The land was so inhospitable there. The Ukrainian people, people from middle Moldavia, Bessarabia, and other areas near the Ukraine that came in there mostly in the '10s and '20s were able to turn the land, make the land flower, and were able to wrest a living out of it when very few others could. Consequently, we see to this day many names that don't really reflect the Ukrainian origin, because the original wave of settlers weren't able to make it last, to come through.

My wife and I were just overjoyed with the reception we got in the new area too. We won the polls there, too, mostly. We find it very interesting. We're learning the odd word of Ukrainian. It's different. When I was younger, I was brought up in a Hungarian community, and I could swear better in Hungarian than in English, Mr. Speaker, until I was about 12 or 14. Now, at this ripe age I'm not learning the swear words. I'm learning the nicer end of the language, so it'll maybe go a little faster. It may not be as colourful, but it will be very interesting. They are a very enterprising, rugged people and very proud of their ancestry, and they have a right to be very proud of their culture. Certainly they add a great deal of salt and pepper, you might say, to the Alberta pudding to make it tasteful, make it interesting, and make Alberta such a wonderful place to live.

I was lucky enough to be born here. I go way back to when some of my early ancestors, the Fraser Highlanders, came to the maritimes in the 1700s. My grandfather was fond of remarking that half our ancestry came over just after the Mayflower; the other half were here to meet them. I often like to tell Lesser Slave Lake and Athabasca that I probably have as many corpuscles of aboriginal blood as they have, but they always win the argument because they don't seem to think that Micmacs have a reason to be called natives in Alberta.

Nevertheless, if I may repeat, I am very pleased by the crop of freshmen on both sides of the House and look forward to watching debate occasionally or, I should say, listen to it often. I would ask the newcomers not to listen to my behaviour because sometimes I don't behave as well as I should. On the other hand, I have a lot of fun doing it.

I want to make some comments on the throne speech. It had the usual pile of right-wing rhetoric on privatization. What

bothered me a bit about the throne speech is that you could go back – and I've been involved in politics many, many years. It's always been something that's interested me. I might even mention that one of my ancestors was a member of the old Northumberland legislature from 1801 to 1811. He seems to have been about as bad as his descendant, because he got thrown out of the legislature a few times, too, Mr. Speaker. It must run in the family. The only thing I'm sort of ashamed of and I keep a little quiet is that he was a Conservative, but it happens in all families. There are some black sheep that we have to talk about occasionally.

The throne speech didn't go that far, but I think that it tried to pull the argument of privatization that our friend Mr. Reagan rode to power on: that society would be better off with privatization. But it's like a lot of things we politicians do. We seem to swing too far one way or swing too far the other once we start to swing. Now, there's no question that governments of all stripes in the boom years since 1948 – and I've been in business through those years too.

I'd like to, by the way, take a moment here to recognize another member with the same name from Medicine Hat. I wanted to make it very clear that although I was born down there, he is no relation. There are no Conservatives down there at all. As a matter of fact, I've been looking around, and I think he must have been adopted, Mr. Speaker.

3:50

Mr. Speaker, there's no question that since the late '40s and all the way through into the '70s there was a mystique that as long as you were in business, you were going to make money. It didn't matter what. No matter how stupid you were, you would likely get skated aside by inflation or boom times. Of course, after a while politicians started getting into business. It didn't matter if you were Liberal, Conservative, or NDP, you were always able to say: well, I went to school with that fellow or that person, and they were the most stupid one in the class, and they're rich now. I mean, there's nothing to this business of being in business, so governments started being in business. It didn't matter whether it was computers, transportation, or whatever.

There's no doubt that now when the times get rough, we find out that politicians should be sticking to politics and that businessmen should be sticking to business, although a certain amount of cross-pollination is always good. I've noticed through the years that often politicians make good businesspeople when they come out of politics, but rarely does a good businessman do that well in politics. The adaption isn't that easy. I often tell my business friends – and I've had the fortune to have done business in over 20 countries around the world; some money has stuck to me, and some hasn't – that actually the politicians are more honest than businessmen. Of course, this incites any businessman worth his salt in the petroleum clubs of Calgary and Edmonton to paroxysms of fury, because they think that they're the most honest. I find that's not so, not because I think politicians are basically more honest. I think there are just more people watching us than there are businessmen. Businessmen have a penchant of only having a few people watching, and sometimes it's your own mother-in-law if your own family owns all the shares. As a general rule, politicians have to adapt to either way.

Nevertheless, in this holus-bolus throne speech idea of trying to privatize, Mr. Speaker, or going for privatization, I think we forget that sometimes government is in areas because collectively we can make a better bargain than we can individually. So there are two types of cuts a government can look at. Certainly a cut in expenditure that is new money, like buying a Gainers or going into the aluminium smelting business, something like that, is wrong.

It should be cut out. But when we talk about cutting welfare or cutting medicare, all we're doing is shifting the expense from the public pocket to the private pocket. Now, that is all right if there is proof to show that the private pocket can make a better purchase than the collective public pocket, but rarely is that so. The whole idea of medicare is that we are trying to protect ourselves from a cost that goes far out of sight. It's quite easy to come up with the idea of saving money. Cancel medicare; let the individual . . . But have you saved money? You haven't as a society, and the U.S. shows that. The U.S. cost of medicine and looking after the families runs nearly one-third to 50 percent more than ours. So if the argument was that privatization automatically costs the citizens less, then that would show that it's going the wrong way.

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that we have to start looking, when we're talking about money, if we're just off-loading onto the individual when the individual collectively can't make the bargain against many of the power groups in society that we can as a government. We must remember that much of society, whether it's in the transportation and utility area, whether it's in medicine, has large financially powerful groups, and the individual hasn't got a hope of stacking up.

Now we have a feeling, going abroad, in our agricultural people, because the younger generation hasn't grown up nor remembers the idea of how they were exploited by the international markets, of let the free market reign. "It's every man for himself," the elephant said as he stomped in amongst the chickens. The point is, Mr. Speaker, that that's exactly what will happen. There's nothing wrong with collectively dealing, and this is what I argue.

I often hear in this Legislature about marketing boards being socialistic. They're not. They're no more socialistic than a manufacturers' association. What they are is a collection of producers that have banded together to try to negotiate with the market. What's wrong with that? There's nothing wrong with that. We'll turn it around the other way: why should the large marketing buyers in this world have the right to pick them off one at a time? I will be the very first to admit that banding together should be done after a vote of the membership, but if most of the corn producers or the hog producers want to bargain as a unit to sell their product, to keep it up, so be it. Labour can withhold its use. Everybody accepted long ago the right to strike. Everybody's accepted that. For some reason or another, when farmers get together and want to restrict the amount of product they're turning onto the market, "That's communist, that's socialist," or whatever. The fact is that it is the freest of free enterprise. Even our friend over there who's used to looking in the back end of animals will recognize that, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that they have every right . . .

Point of Order Imputing Motives

DR. WEST: Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order, the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

DR. WEST: Under Standing Orders 23(h), (i), (j), (k), he's imputing motives with that last statement.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, the last thing I would impugn is the motives of anybody that makes his living looking at the back end of animals. I don't know why anyone would consider that . . .

Debate Continued

MR. N. TAYLOR: Well, anyhow, we'll move on from that. I just wanted to put in my argument that the strongest free enterprise

urge in the world is to band together to try to bargain for services that you have to give or to get. To start screaming "socialist" at a farmer because they have a dairy board or a pig board or a vegetable board is the height of ridiculousness, especially when you're a veterinarian or a doctor or a lawyer, who do everything, Mr. Speaker, to control their markets. For some reason or another it's a dirty, socialist trick if a primary producer does it. It's something very hard to understand.

Mr. Speaker, I've already mentioned the fact about off-loading government expenditures onto individuals, and that is no cut in government expense. How can you argue in society that if you are putting in medicare premiums, you're helping the people? The point is that if through your taxes you can drive a better deal with the whole medical establishment – and we've shown that in North America – than you can by leaving the money in the pockets, you're better off to do it as a collective deal. That's one thing we should remember.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

That takes me to the last point I wanted to touch on, and that is the creation of jobs. Mr. Speaker, it's a very hollow victory for anybody sitting out there to talk about reducing the debt or cutting the deficit if it means that your family or you will go without a job. Jobs still make the world go around. Jobs still make people feel confident so that that confidence bleeds over to the capitalists, who will then invest money. I think one of the worst things we can do is decide that cutting debt and cutting deficits rank above keeping people employed. I notice that the new Speaker here, like myself, has worked in a number of foreign climes, and we know that in those foreign countries – there were many of them, remember, that had hardly any taxes, but we had millions of poor people.

The point is this: low taxes by themselves do not make prosperity. This is something that seems to have hit this group. They seem to think that if they have the lowest taxes in the country, they're going to have prosperity. That's not so. I could take you to parts of Africa and Asia where I have worked, and so has the Speaker, where the taxes are even less than what you pay here, but you do not have prosperity, not a bit of it. So to try to equate the two together – lower taxes, automatic prosperity – it just doesn't go. Of course, like everything else, a little bit of common sense comes in there. If your taxes are higher than those of your neighbours, certainly you're going to start losing business. To start taxing less than your neighbours and friends with the idea that you're creating jobs doesn't seem to hold. It hasn't held out, especially when that cut in taxation . . . [Mr. N. Taylor's speaking time expired] Thank you very much.

4:00

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Calgary-Currie.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, hon. Member for Redwater. Thank you, sir.

It's a pleasure to rise today to deliver my maiden speech on behalf of the residents of Calgary-Currie. First, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate you on your election as Speaker. Your role in presiding over the debates of this Assembly no doubt will be a challenging one, one that with so many new and energetic MLAs will test the limits of a great deal of patience. However, I'm confident that your experience as a parliamentarian will be of great benefit to me and others as we chart our course for Alberta and take ourselves into the 21st century.

Mr. Speaker, as I went door to door during the last election, I came across a great deal of frustration among voters. I share with the hon. Member for Calgary-West – as we shared a boundary – some of that frustration, frustration that the economy had not yet stabilized and that we were still experiencing high unemployment and low consumer confidence. But more than that, they were expressing a frustration with the old style of government that existed in Alberta. People were tired of seeing politicians fighting over partisan politics more often than important issues. I believe that if you look at the number of new members in this Assembly, 49 in all, you can see and will see change in the making. The voters of Alberta wanted a fresh face representing them at the Legislature. They wanted a new style of government, one that consulted with the people, that would be affected by change in any direction. Most of all, they wanted a leader they could trust. They wanted a leader that would show the people a realistic plan for the future and had the resolve to carry out that plan. That leadership, political will, as I translate it to this Assembly, is the most significant change these fresh faces will provide to the citizens of Alberta.

The people did find that leader on June 15 in Premier Klein. I must say to the Premier that I was fortunate in my decision to run in Calgary-Currie, because I found that the Premier personally had 6,646 friends that lived in my constituency. His popularity and performance record made it much easier for me to be a candidate. The people of Alberta saw Premier Klein as a man who would be honest with them. His plan for the future, the very same plan outlined in the Speech from the Throne, let Albertans put their faith back in their Premier and, most importantly and personally to me, in their government. The Premier has told the people he will not let them down. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have had him as a mayor know that his promise will not be broken, and I look forward to all Albertans having that same treatment now that he is our Premier.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Calgary-Currie want a government that is open, honest, and accountable to the people it serves, the taxpayers. They have given this government a strong mandate to balance the budget and put our financial house back on a stable footing, and they are not in any way unprepared to share in the hardship and some of the difficulties that facing that task may bring them. People want smaller government, one that is better focused on its role in society. Government does have a responsibility to protect society, and it must provide support for those who are not able to or no longer able to support themselves. However, my constituents also recognize that government is not obligated to help those who don't want to help themselves.

I am particularly concerned about the care of seniors, Mr. Speaker. Thirteen percent of the residents in Calgary-Currie are over the age of 65, and I have the privilege of serving as chairperson of the Seniors Advisory Council. I believe last week in Committee of Supply I spoke to a number of my goals and opportunities with that role. I look forward to working with seniors from all across Alberta to establish priorities that will enable our government to provide care for seniors more effectively and, most importantly, in a more efficient manner. Following on suggestions from my colleague the hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity, one of my first objectives will be to hold a mini-roundtable of discussions in Currie on the issues facing seniors. Once those discussions have concluded, we'll be providing a written submission to the Minister of Community Development so the views of my constituents are used in long-range planning for seniors' programs.

The people of Calgary-Currie are also concerned about our education system. Mount Royal College is within my constituency, and this institution plays an important role in our community. My constituents know that proper education at all levels is the key to our future but recognize that a more expensive system doesn't necessarily mean a better system.

Also situated in Calgary-Currie is the future site for the new Catholic Francophone school, the K to 12 facility to replace the overcrowded école Ste. Anne. I'm interested in seeing how this development unfolds in light of the recent tabling of Bill 8 in the House.

Personally, as a graduate of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute and as a former Calgary Catholic school board trustee serving wards 6, 7, and 8 in Calgary, it is evident that I have a genuine concern for education. We must work to develop an education system that reflects an understanding and support for lifelong learning and once again must focus on the basics of education yet reinforce a system which is accountable to students, parents, and society at large. I am most interested in encouraging our local boards to work in that context as we move into the next decade. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I will be planning to hold a roundtable on education in Currie to bring together members of my constituency to develop their own ideas and issues and, in addition, support that document in writing to the ministers of Education and Advanced Education and Career Development to inform them on the results of our deliberations. I'm very committed to representing the residents of Calgary-Currie in a consultative fashion and bringing their issues to caucus.

I am fortunate also in Calgary-Currie to have a major institution, the Alberta Children's hospital, located there. Health care is a concern in my riding not only because of the hospital issues that face my constituency but also because it is a community-based organization and any changes to health care will reflect the community and the children served by that hospital.

Because of the diversity in the population of Calgary-Currie, 62 percent of the homes in my constituency are rental properties. I would just like to mention Sarcee Meadows, which is the largest co-op housing residence of its kind in Canada. Calgary Housing also has a number of projects in my constituency. I think it's interesting, and something I don't take lightly, that this residential nature of my constituency allows me to have a continuous, ever-present reality check as we continue to address the issues raised in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I sought to be an MLA in Calgary-Currie because I felt many of the frustrations I was hearing from my neighbours. When I went door to door, my answer to them simply was that I am as frustrated as they are and this is what I am doing about it. I wanted to see the government take a new direction. I wanted to be among the people who would change the way government operates in our society, and I and my family were prepared to make that commitment and sacrifice. I believe my role as an MLA is to listen to the people who have put their confidence in me for the next four years. I state to them and state before the House that I am not here to follow my own agenda; I am here to follow their agenda. I am committed to taking the issues of Calgary-Currie to the Legislature in a fresh, direct approach regardless of the political ideals or partisan beliefs that may be reflected. I am an MLA for all my constituents, not just a select few.

My first duty as an MLA was to make sure I was accessible in my constituency, and I made the decision to move my constituency office to a new and more central location. It's located in Marda Loop, a commercial area thriving with new business opportunities. While this move may be seen as symbolic to some

people, it is just a first example of how I intend to be an MLA: open to the public and ready to serve my constituency.

I would also like to focus briefly – and I know a number of women who are now serving in this House have the opportunity to do so as well. The role of women in politics is a unique one. I believe this Assembly is somewhat ground-breaking. There is a cohesiveness and collegiality amongst all my colleagues in recognizing some of the sacrifices we have to make on behalf of our families or our business liaisons and colleagues in order to be a representative in this Assembly. I think it's important to make a couple of comments in that regard, because we will be watched by our colleagues in the business community and in our residential communities and society to see that we maintain our focus on families and to see that we also maintain our professional careers and strive to have a unique balance as we commit to society in a positive way.

4:10

In closing, Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour for me to represent the people of Calgary-Currie. On June 15 they voted for a better future, one which will put Alberta's financial house back on solid ground, and they have put their faith, hopes, and trust in me. I will make the same promises to the Premier that the Premier has made to all Albertans and will not let them down. Thank you all for the opportunity to serve.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Roper, then Medicine Hat.

MR. CHADI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to rise today and speak to this House on behalf of the people of Edmonton-Roper. To start, I'd like to thank my constituents, the people of Edmonton-Roper, for their confidence and guidance.

I don't know if any of you know much about the riding I represent in this Assembly, so I'm about to tell you. Edmonton-Roper is in north-central Edmonton and contains the neighbourhoods of Castle Downs, Castlebrook, and Castlewood. These are relatively young neighbourhoods, especially those in Castlebrook and Castlewood, which are still largely under development. Edmonton-Roper is still developing much of its infrastructure. It has a young population which is largely underserved by local schools and community facilities, but slowly many of these things are being built to serve the needs of the constituency. Perhaps because it is a young neighbourhood that has grown largely in years of restraint and has so much need for new schools, playgrounds, and local community and health services, my constituents are very familiar with restricted budgets and delayed projects. Much of the growth that has occurred in their neighbourhood has been done only after long fights and community initiative. Edmonton-Roper has therefore become an area that shows little complacency, takes responsibility for itself, but still expects elected officials to respond. My constituents are very conscientious with respect to local needs. They are also very concerned with what we have to do here, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to be their representative, and I can assure this House that over the next few years my primary concern will be ensuring the needs and concerns of my constituents as they are known to me.

Mr. Speaker, like all Albertans, my constituents have great expectations of us here. They are looking for their government to be guided by professionalism more than partisanship, to be true to its promise of open and responsible government and frugal when dealing with the purse strings of Albertans. This is what we've promised Albertans we will do, and we will all be judged by our constituents again in four years or so based on our ability to hold true to these promises.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to my duties as MLA for Edmonton-Roper, I'm pleased to have also been named chairman of the Edmonton caucus. After this last election that left all of Edmonton with Liberal MLAs, I found it interesting to hear that somehow this would leave the city without a proper voice in government, because every MLA has a role to play in government. Both the Liberals and, belatedly, the Conservatives have spoken of opening the political system and listening to all reasonable and proactive ideas no matter where they originate. If anything, I think the seat distribution we now have invites us to prove our commitment to this belief. I've never understood my role as an opposition member to be that I must blindly oppose any government initiative strictly based on its origin. Rather, I must question and oppose government initiatives when warranted and support the government when support is assured. I must work with members on the government side to ensure that my city and my province are served in the most effective manner possible. It is with this focus that I and my caucus colleagues have already had the pleasure of meeting with the mayor and the council for Edmonton and have opened lines of communication. We have formed the basis of a good working relationship, and I am confident we have gained some valuable insight on the perspective the city of Edmonton has with respect to many of the issues that have come before us here. I'm certain the city of Edmonton, along with every other part of this province, can and will be served effectively by this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we've heard much in the first days of this session about the government's mandate and how the government is holding true to the promises it made to Albertans. I'd like to turn to a few of the areas on which the government has focused thus far, because these are important to me and my constituents.

I would like to say first of all that I was pleased to hear the Lieutenant Governor reflect in his throne speech about how the winds of change swept a significant number of new MLAs into this building and gave our government a fresh look. I would generally agree with this weather forecast, except it underemphasizes the number of opposition MLAs elected and the mandate we, too, have been given.

Our Official Opposition is one of the largest opposition groups ever elected in this province, and we have both the strength of numbers and the confidence of 40 percent of the people of this province behind us. While I cannot argue that the government was given a mandate to proceed with the promises it made during the campaign, our government must not argue with the mandate we've been given to watch what they do and work with them to ensure promises are kept.

As I listened to the throne speech and the Budget Address, I was struck by how on a superficial level I can agree with much of what the government has proposed to achieve. I find the government's words to be actually kind of soothing, if only because they are so heavily borrowed from Liberal Party policy. But unlike the people from this side of the House who spoke here first of the need to balance our budget and redefine our role in business, I have trouble believing that the government understands the policy implications its throne speech should have. I myself am from a business background, and I understand how constricting an operation can become when it's too top heavy. Also, because of my own background, I have always been frustrated by the overall negative effect direct government participation in business causes, and I can't help but agree with a government that pledges to get out of the business of doing business. But, Mr. Speaker, my agreement with this government, like its very own throne speech and Budget Address, is only superficial. This is because although I've sat in this House and listened to words from the members of this government, I've had trouble accepting that they are com-

mitted to their statements when in so many ways they are contradicted by their actions.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the government's commitment to cutting back the size of government, but there is no plan in place which has determined how these cuts can be best achieved. Instead, the government has set targets for across-the-board cuts and announced that departments will be expected to fall in line. In the departments of Health and Family and Social Services, we will see \$122 million and \$150 million in this year's budget alone. There has been no consideration of whether these cuts can be absorbed equally by all the affected Albertans; they are just told that they will. I'm struck by the irony of our Premier, who says he cannot cancel a six-month, \$50,000 contract given to a former Conservative minister because of a commitment previously made. I would normally applaud the Premier for his loyalty and willingness to stand by a promise, except that his promises seem to count only when they are made to a member of his party.

Our government finds other commitments easy to set aside. It has a commitment to ensure that all the people of this province are able to live with dignity and even the barest essentials, but our Premier does not hesitate to break his promises to these people. Our Premier just keeps shouting at his targets and does not stop to consider that his government's decisions are hurting the very people who most need the government's help. Cutting back on the few essentials children need to function within our school system just because they happen to have parents living on social assistance is depriving these children of a chance for their own futures.

4:20

Our Lieutenant Governor spoke in the throne speech of a way to build a healthy economy. He said that we must build a strong economy with healthy, well-educated, and well-trained people. He did not say that this should apply only to people who can afford to reach this level on their own. He did not say, as this government seems to, that you build a strong economy at the expense of the most vulnerable in our society. I'm afraid this government is wearing blinders and is neither willing nor able to see how their first cuts have hurt many Alberta families. Our government is in such a hurry to hit its targets that it's not taking the time to study how these cuts can be better absorbed or if some families are better able to absorb the cuts than others.

The same approach is being taken with respect to cuts in health care. Our government has lined up its target at \$122 million and plans to hit it no matter what the effect is on these services. Instead of looking to see whether some hospital boards can better absorb the cuts than others, our government arbitrarily decides that it will cut. Then, when under the facade of a listening, caring government, a recent panel urges the government to place a moratorium on new hospital construction as one way to hold costs down, we will again see the government dodge its own bullets by planning to go ahead with a new hospital slated for the Deputy Premier's riding. How can this government justify finding \$10 million for this hospital, which is of dubious need, while at the same time not being able to relent on cutbacks facing every other hospital in this province?

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, these are issues of great concern to me, as I believe they are to all Albertans. Albertans understand that these are times of restraint. Everyone in this province expects to see restraints and cuts, but what we do not see from this government is consistency. No person here is without some recognition of the enormous task facing our government over the next few years.

Our sympathy for them may be somewhat dimmed sometimes by the realization that they are the manufacturers of their own position, but every member here is willing to co-operate and help this government find its way toward a balanced budget.

As a co-critic for the Official Opposition on the Treasury, our own province's budget is of significant concern to me. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the whole of the government's plan is inconsistent. It promises to get out of the business of doing business but then turns around and finds a million dollars for Beatrice, a guarantee for an American multinational that has a much more appealing balance sheet than the government. It plans to privatize our registry services, enabling it to save \$150 million a year, but transfers the costs directly to consumers and adds 300 people to our unemployed work force in this process. Our government promised to create 110,000 new jobs over four years, and with three and a half years left, it has only managed to add to the unemployment. As yet we have seen no plans from this government about how these jobs will be created, nor have we heard an explanation of whether these jobs will be \$6 an hour, private-sector jobs or permanent, full-time positions that will allow Albertans to support themselves.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to challenge the proposed commitment to freedom of information leading to open, honest, and accountable government. I challenge that commitment, because it is one this government has no desire to uphold. The need for proper freedom of information legislation in this province was never so obvious as when the Liberal opposition had to use American freedom of information legislation to gain information about how this government mismanaged hundreds of millions of dollars; that was with NovAtel. Without the American laws, Albertans may not have found out about a government mistake which cost them more than \$700 million. Our government now claims it has learned, but I guess the only thing our government has truly learned is that it wants more effective legislation to protect privacy so any further NovAtels can go on hidden.

This government commitment to secrecy will be protected and upheld by Bill 1, the government's Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The proposed Bill will make it possible for the head of a public body to

refuse to disclose to an applicant

- (a) information that would reveal trade secrets of a third party,
- (b) financial, commercial, scientific, technical or labour relations information
 - (i) obtained in confidence, explicitly or implicitly, from a third party.

I would suggest that the above is only one of 10 sections in the government's Bill that would have enabled the government to keep from the public information about the recent loan to Beatrice or the details behind the current patronage appointment of a past minister to the trade office in Mexico. Therefore, I ask: what exactly is this government committed to? It certainly didn't feel like a more open, honest government when this House was asked in the last couple of weeks to approve the government's interim supply based on two-line spending summaries for each department.

Mr. Speaker, we do have grave concerns, each one of us, not only on this side of the House but Albertans in general. I would hope that we can all work together to ensure that in a nonpartisan fashion we can at least take a step forward in building this province.

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

MR. RENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed a pleasure to rise in this House to speak on behalf of my constituents in

Medicine Hat. First, I would like to extend my congratulations to you on your election as Speaker of this Assembly. Certainly your wealth of parliamentary experience will be of great assistance to all members in this House, especially first-time members.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin my remarks by thanking the people of Medicine Hat constituency. They have placed their trust in me, and I will endeavour to meet their expectations. The people of Medicine Hat have asked for open, honest, and efficient government, and I will work hard to see that their wish is carried out. I would not have sought election in this Assembly if Premier Klein were not leading this party. His vision of Alberta is similar to my own and my constituents', one of a better and more prosperous Alberta. Certainly this vision was brought out very clearly in the throne speech, and I have no difficulty in speaking in support of the motion before us. I strongly believe in government living within its means. We can no longer afford to live in a world of champagne wishes and caviar dreams. We have created a system that can no longer sustain itself. I do not believe throwing more money at the system is the answer. We must reconsider how we do business as a government, and we must reconsider what the role of government will be in our lives.

Mr. Speaker, Medicine Hat is a small "c" conservative community. They believe in a government that is accountable to the people. They believe in a government that lives within its means. They believe in a government that will help people to help themselves. Big government is not the answer to the ills affecting the constituency of Medicine Hat and the province of Alberta. Leading up to the June 15 election, one of the themes of my campaign was: In Business a Deficit is Called a Loss. Why should the government call it a deficit? Governments cannot and should not operate at a loss. This government has received a mandate from the people of Alberta. Very simply, they told the members of this Assembly to balance the budget. They told us to be fair and equitable in whatever cuts are required but, in the end, to balance the budget.

All members of this Assembly are responsible to see that we pass on a legacy of growth and prosperity for future generations. In four or five years we will be judged on our performance inside this Chamber and out. Let us not fail the awesome responsibility our position holds.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency is for the most part the city of Medicine Hat. Due to redistribution, my constituency is strictly an urban riding. My colleague from Cypress-Medicine Hat represents the rest of the city and a major portion of southeastern Alberta, and my colleague from Bow Valley represents the area immediately north and east of the city, including the town of Redcliff. I mention these other two constituencies because they form a very close community, and the interests that exist between us are very important in all three areas. Even though they represent primarily rural ridings, the traditional trading centre of these areas is for the most part Medicine Hat. I'm sure we will work closely together in bringing forward the interests of our respective constituents.

4:30

The city of Medicine Hat is the product of expansion. The city was founded in 1887 on the shores of the South Saskatchewan River where the Canadian Pacific railway crossed the river. How fitting that a city with such strong entrepreneurial spirit should itself be the product of Canadian economic expansion.

Mr. Speaker, as most people would expect, agriculture plays a very important role in the economy of Medicine Hat, but oil and gas also have a very significant impact. Much of the local industry is focused on the oil and gas service sector. As well, value-added industries relying heavily on our vast natural gas

resource include Goodyear tire plant; Canadian Fertilizer Institute; Novacor, whose latest expansion plans will make it the world's largest producer of ethanol; and Cancarb, producing carbon black for export markets throughout the world. We're also home to I-XL Industries, manufacturing brick products, also with worldwide distribution.

I would also like to point out to members a significant economic initiative currently undertaken by local interests, that being the relocation of Piper aircraft from Florida. No government funding, no loan guarantees are involved. Local investors raised a million dollars U.S. to pursue the relocation for the city of Medicine Hat. Again, Mr. Speaker, the city of Medicine Hat has a strong entrepreneurial spirit, and it shows in their efforts to help their city help themselves.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency also has a large population of seniors. In fact, it has a higher per capita population of seniors than any other city in Alberta. Seniors' programming and the shortage of long-term care facilities are important issues to my constituents, and I will endeavour to represent those interests in this Assembly.

The city of Medicine Hat owns its own utility system, Mr. Speaker, from the generation of power to its distribution. The city is a major energy supplier to the people of Medicine Hat and outlying areas. Energy issues such as EEMA are of prime importance to the city, and again I will endeavour to represent their interests in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Medicine Hat is also the home of the Medicine Hat College. This facility was established in 1971 and was designed to accommodate 800 students. The facility now services some 2,500 students and clearly suffers from overcapacity. I will be pushing very hard to have this facility placed high on the list of priorities for capital expenditures over the next couple of years.

Mr. Speaker, I will endeavour to work closely with the municipal council. The city of Medicine Hat benefits from very strong leadership. The city is financially sound yet still maintains the lowest property taxes in the province, a recipe for growth and prosperity that all areas of this province could benefit from.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to pay tribute to the previous Member of this Legislative Assembly who represented Medicine Hat. Jim Horsman did an exceptional job while in office. While serving the people of Alberta in his roles as Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and Deputy Premier, he still represented well the concerns of his constituents and all Albertans in this Assembly.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working in this House in coming years. I hope that this House will see co-operation and not conflict as we address the most pressing issue of putting the pieces of a very complex puzzle back together.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to extend my formal congratulations to you on your election.

As I was coming into this building the other night, the carillon was ringing, and I was awed by the beauty and grandeur of this Assembly. I consider myself to be truly fortunate to be able to represent the citizens of Edmonton-Meadowlark, and I would like to thank them for this privilege. I was nominated two years ago as a candidate for Edmonton-Meadowlark and spent that time trying to meet most of the constituents in the area. As an elected member, I intend to continue to meet with those I represent.

For those of you who are unaware, Edmonton-Meadowlark is a relatively stable community with a population of 34,000. It's a

diverse community with many different ethnic cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds. It's a community that has developed over the years, with some areas that are older and some that are relatively new, like Terra Losa and Lewis Estates. There are also many new commercial sites that are constantly being developed. We have in our constituency a first-class medical facility, the Misericordia hospital, as well as one of the province's – no, one of the country's – major attractions, and that's the West Edmonton Mall.

Though there's a wide mix of people who live in Edmonton-Meadowlark, there was a commonality of issues that came up over and over and over again before the election and are still being raised by my constituents right now. I'd like to speak to three of those issues as they relate to the throne speech and the amendment, which I support.

They are, one, the issue of trust. Why should anyone trust any one of us in here because we are, now that we are elected, considered politicians? Two: effective management of our economy. Over and over, as I'm sure we all found, people said to us, "Well, if I managed my house this way, I'd be bankrupt." Three: jobs. People were afraid; they were afraid they would lose their jobs. I think of those ALCB employees who asked me at the doors, "Are you closing the liquor stores?" They were afraid of not being able to find jobs. They had been laid off. They were people who were 45, 50 years old and could not find work, and this was a key consideration.

The people of Alberta have put a great deal of faith in each and every one of us. I intend to try and show that politics can indeed be done differently, that there are different ways, better ways of making what we do here relevant to the people who placed their trust in us.

Members on both sides of the Assembly were elected on a platform of change, and what has amazed me in this last month is how many times I've heard in this Assembly: we won; you lost. I say, so what? The people in Edmonton-Meadowlark, and in fact about 40 percent of Albertans across the province, voted for the Liberal platform of change, which is only 4 percent less than those who voted for the Tory platform of change. That, in my mind, is not a clear mandate to willy-nilly make decisions without open, fair, honest consultations with all of us here.

I see therefore with dismay the freedom of information legislation that has been put forward by the government, which has been dubbed by some as secrecy legislation. The people of Edmonton-Meadowlark want to know, and they deserve to know, what's going on in the government that they elect and that they support through their tax dollars. This legislation does not allow for Albertans to have access to information. That is of grave concern to all of us.

An example of what secrecy can do is in this recent report that we just got from the International Board of Review of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, in which it states:

Toward the end of the 1980s, the buoyant economy of Alberta began to falter. The provincial debt, less than a billion dollars in the early 1980s, rose to over 14 billion by 1992.

Well, just last month it rose to \$31 billion. That's what secrecy is all about.

The second issue which was of major concern for people in my constituency was the debt. My constituents said, "Please, don't pass this debt on to our children." They were also very concerned, however, with what would happen to their children's education, health services, and social services. While knocking prior to the election, I could say with confidence that if the Liberals formed the government, we would look at new and innovative ways to provide these services within our means, that we would truly

consult and listen to the nurses, teachers, and social workers who know where the inefficiencies are within the system. For if we truly want to know how to be efficient, we need to find out from those who provide the services.

It's unfortunate that to date all we've seen is a system of consultations, called the roundtables, that are flawed, that the government still sticks to its line that it's only their ideas that count, that it's only the Tory family that has any influence, and that this government continues to look at the easiest route to manage the economy, and that is across-the-board cuts. The Tories say that they have a plan to cut the debt and control the deficit with no tax increases. I wish I could believe this is true, but unfortunately every day we seem to hear of potential tax grabs, with the latest being the call for user fees for health care. In fact, this government has increased taxes 75 times in the last 10 years. The residents of Edmonton-Meadowlark have sent a clear message to this government through my election, and that is to get a plan that will not continue to bankrupt this province.

4:40

The third issue I'd like to specifically deal with is employment, or rather the lack thereof. In Edmonton the employment rate is approximately 11.2 percent, and across the province, 10.2 percent. This government campaigned on a promise of 110,000 jobs. In the last four weeks, however, we've seen a government that's intent on laying off as many people as possible: 1,500 ALCB workers, potentially 300 registry employees, health care workers, and the list continues. This is with little notice to the employees and little or no job retraining. In fact, this government has made much of the fact that it has a back-to-work policy for those who are disadvantaged or disabled and that it has plans for retraining. Well, then, my question is: why would this government cut \$7 million from the program which promotes the development of skills to assist Albertans to access or adjust to the labour market? It just doesn't make sense.

We know that government does not create jobs, even though this government promised 110,000 jobs, but we also know that government must be in the forefront to ensure that there are healthy and well-educated people in Alberta. Everyone knows that our strength in the world economy is our work force, and unless we ensure that our education and health care systems are first rate, we will not be able to participate in the economic restructuring that is occurring around the world.

Unfortunately, it still seems this government has not learnt its lesson, and we have been led to the brink of bankruptcy. The people in Edmonton-Meadowlark and Alberta cannot afford to have this government continue to play games trying to pick winners.

I indicated earlier that I was very proud to be here today. My parents came to Canada after the Second World War, and I was born five months after their arrival. They instilled in me values of hard work, fairness, honesty, and humility, and I am proud to be their daughter. I would never want them to be ashamed of anything that I do in my performance of my work as MLA for Edmonton-Meadowlark. It is these values that I bring to the Legislative Assembly today.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta is a wonderful province and indeed a place of opportunity. The citizens of Alberta and my constituents of Edmonton-Meadowlark deserve to be treated with respect and dignity in all decisions this government undertakes. They deserve a government that cares, a government that listens. They deserve a government that will ensure the best education and health care systems in the world, and they deserve to have hope for the future for themselves and their children and grandchildren. I will try to

represent the constituents of Edmonton-Meadowlark to the best of my ability so that they do indeed have the government and the representation they deserve.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the Assembly ready for the question?

The hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not my maiden speech in this Assembly, but it is my maiden speech for '93-94. I recall that my first maiden speech was in 1972. I was the first speaker of the new government in response to the throne speech many, many years ago. I can recall being somewhat nervous, as some of the members that are new in this Assembly have been today, yesterday, a week ago, and two weeks ago, but I want to congratulate all the speakers for their fine performances and how they've handled themselves in this Assembly.

I want to thank you, sir, and congratulate you on your promotion to the Chair. I believe that having a free vote and a free election as we had in electing the Speaker was a step forward. I look forward to a number of things that we can do in regards to free votes and freethinking in this House.

I want to thank my supporters in Whitecourt-St. Anne for giving me their trust in my seventh election. I want to thank the hon. Member for Barrhead-Westlock for working so well in the end of the constituency I took over from him. He's done a tremendous job in that end, and I hope to do as well as he has and to keep that trust of those voters in the east end of my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I have said, back in 1970 when I was nominated and in 1971 when I was elected, that I would be open, that I would be honest, and that I would be accessible. I've lived that role for some 22 years. I've been open with my constituents and with all Albertans. I've been honest, and when we've done something wrong and I've misused or whatever, I say to the people: give me what I've got coming; I'll take the blame. I've been accessible, and I think that's so important. I just want to say to all the members that if they want to continue coming to this Assembly as a representative, get back to people as quick as you can. I have never – and I'll touch wood – in 22 years let a phone call or a message go beyond 24 hours before I got back to the concerned constituent or Albertan. I've found that it works so effectively. If you get into your living quarters at 11:30 after sitting in the House and you phone the person that called you earlier that day and get that person out of bed and you can say to them, "I just came off work, and I'm phoning you now because I know it's important to you," they're pretty impressed. Or you call them at 6:30 in the morning when you go to work and they're still in bed, and you say, "I'm going to work now, but I want to get back to you." That's the kind of thing that keeps you getting elected term after term.

Now, I give this free of charge, and hopefully they won't take it to heart because if they do, they'll probably be elected again, and I don't know if we want that to happen or not. Free advice.

Mr. Speaker, my support for the throne speech is real. I look at the four commitments, and they're quite fundamental to our government. It's a balanced budget. It's a climate for meaningful job creation in the private sector, and I say a climate, not a provider of jobs but to provide the climate as a government. To reorganize, deregulate, and streamline government. To have open consultation with Albertans. That's so important, and that's the message that we took, that I took on June 15.

I campaigned with one little document, and we spelled out in pretty precise terms what we wanted to do if we were given the

opportunity to be their representative: balancing the budget by controlling expenditures and not increasing taxes. We hear from across the way that we're moving too fast, we're cutting things, we're cutting where we shouldn't, yet when I looked at the campaign promises of the opposition party across the way, they said they would reduce the capital budget by some \$800 million. That would eliminate all the capital in transportation, all the capital in public works. Yet when we do very small items of reduction, they complain.

4:50

Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to be involved in this campaign, some time ago, and there were two important people, I guess, that made me decide to contest it again. One was our leader and our Premier, Ralph Klein, who suggested that by working together we could bring back to the people of Alberta what they deserved. The second was the leader of the Liberal Party. He came to my constituency, and he made quite a point of how his candidate – well, he didn't use the term "wax" me, but I think that's what he was referring to when he said that I've got to keep looking over my shoulder. I guess, being involved in sports and in business all my life, that was a challenge I could not refuse. So I want to thank him, and I want to thank our leader for convincing me that I should try again.

As we look at the budget and we hear – and we just heard this afternoon one member refer to the dustbin. The other member inferred that we shouldn't be moving that quickly. Jobs are being lost; programs are being cut. Yet all through the campaign, I watched and I listened and I read that the party across the way, the Liberal Party, were against loan guarantees. They made a big issue here the other day about Beatrice, yet we have some 2 and a half billion dollars in loan guarantees to the farmers of Alberta. They would suggest we cut that out. We have over a billion and a half dollars of loan guarantees to small business; that they would remove also. We have loan guarantees to Alberta Newsprint, the paper mill, in my constituency and loan guarantees to Millar Western. They say they would cut those out. Now, I'd like to know from them – and maybe in time they will say where they stand on these programs – where do they stand in regards to farmers? Where do they stand in regards to small business? Where do they stand in regards to industry?

These programs have been well accepted. These programs have provided numerous jobs across the province, not just in my constituency but in every corner of the province where we have these programs under way. I've looked at some of these programs, Mr. Speaker. They've done well in my constituency, and maybe it's because we have quite a variety of industry. Whether it's farmers, whether it's logging or the oil patch, we have a great involvement in all three of those sectors in the Whitecourt-St. Anne constituency.

So when we look at road construction, when we look at hospitals, when we look at senior citizens' lodges – and just the other day we had a vote here on our interim financing, and every one of those across the way voted against it. They voted against funding for the planning and design of the Whitecourt hospital. The Member for West Yellowhead voted against funding for the Hinton facility. They all voted against interim financing for this government. But I guess that can be expected, because the Liberal leader told them to do it. He must have, because when I read his article he said:

What it means, instead of building hospitals in every rinky-dink town, we start saying no.

What it means is instead of building curling rinks in every community, we say no.

Instead of building senior citizens' lodges, we say no.

Of course, if they're part of the party, they have to listen to the leader, so that's what they're doing. I want to go on record so each and every one of them – when I go to their constituencies or talk to their people, we can put their way of thinking in the proper perspective. The leader of the Liberal Party said: listen to me. He's never wrong, and he said he's been honest. Well, I would have to question that. I won't get into that because I think it would be just a waste of time.

The Liberals across the way, when we had the vote on working together, our new rules for the Assembly, said they want to work together. Well, I don't see that happening. I don't see it happening at all, because no matter what we come up with, no matter what we've said, they vote against. They said again today, and I heard, "We've got to work for the betterment of all Albertans." I accept that, and that's the way I intend to work as a minister of this Crown, but I don't see that happening across the way. No matter what happens, they vote against it, they speak against it. I guess that's just the style of that party.

If we took the TV cameras out of this House, Mr. Speaker, so they wouldn't grandstand so much, I'm sure we'd do a lot better. I'm sure we would. I think if we got down to representing Albertans and doing it without saying to ourselves that we have to oppose it because we're on the other side – why can't we agree to programs that are good for Albertans?

Mr. Speaker, I like our new rules. I don't like the private members' Bills closure of 120 minutes, even though we've agreed to it. It means that we have to go to a vote after 120 minutes regardless of whether every member has had an opportunity to speak. I hope we might look at that change in the future. I think the changes are good. They say speaking 20 minutes for each member, and you can speak twice in committee. I think that should be looked at and give everybody a chance to speak, and just reduce it to one 20-minute speech. I recall Dr. Horner, a great philosopher and a great politician, saying that if you can't say it in 10 minutes, it's not worth saying. So I'm going to try to get done here as quickly as I can. I like the fixed sessions, and I want to congratulate the special committee that's going to look at all the things in regards to MLA salaries and programs. I'll look forward to their report.

Mr. Speaker, there's just one more comment that I want to make. It's unfortunate that – yes, I guess the issue was raised, and it was raised by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud in regards to the minister's car. It is a matter of principle with the Liberal Party that they would accept no government cars. Well, I'd like to support that principle too and I'd like to not have a government car, because if I would charge the same fee they charge driving their own personal car, I'd be further ahead, but that's not what we're here for. We're here to get the best value for the people of Alberta. That's the reason I drive a government car, but the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud made quite an issue of it, so I want it put on record. In the '91-92 public accounts the travel expenses for myself, as minister of the Crown and MLA, were some \$18,000, and I drove a government car. The travel expenses for the Liberal Member for Redwater driving his own personal car were some \$38,000. So think about who is giving the service to the people at the right value.

That is the point that member raised, and that's a rural riding so I can accept that, but let's look at the leader of the Liberal Party. He has a small constituency in the city of Edmonton that you can walk across in seven or eight minutes, where it takes us hours and hours to drive ours. He has travel expenses of \$22,000, more than the Member for Whitecourt-Ste Anne as minister and MLA. So

if that's their matter of principle over there, I can accept it. Let the people know what their principles are. That's what they are.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say again that I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words. I want to thank my voters in Whitecourt-Ste. Anne. I won't tell you how great the constituency is, but it is one of the greatest ones in the province of Alberta. When I look at our budget and look at the things that we want to do – we want a reduced budget in transportation, so we'll have to look very closely at where we're going. I want to say this to the members across the way. They campaigned on a reduction of \$800 million in capital. I hope that they're very careful when they come forward to see me about new road construction in their constituencies. I want to say that.

I think it's time that we did work together. I sit here, and I look across the way . . . [interjections] Did you want me to finish, or do you want to start? I've sat in this Assembly a number of years, and I don't as a rule heckle or talk when they're talking. I don't respond. I don't badger back and forth, but no matter when they ask a question in question period – and this is just really upsetting, and maybe that's where the cameras come in – they don't allow the member they asked the question of to respond without heckling back and forth. If they could resolve that and quit doing that, I think we'd have some decorum in here. I'm not blaming you, Mr. Speaker, for not being hard enough on them. Maybe some day we'll have that corrected.

Mr. Speaker and ladies and gentlemen of the Assembly, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to spend a few minutes with you.

5:00

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Manning.

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak to the amendment. It's a difficult act to follow.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The amendment is gone. It's just the address and reply, because the amendment has been dealt with.

MR. SEKULIC: My apologies.

First, Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my thanks to my constituency, Edmonton-Manning, who have placed their confidence in me. It is their views that I am here to represent.

On June 15 I joined 48 other new members in my arrival to the Legislative Assembly, and on June 15 Albertans voted to change the past practice of the government by voting in 49 new members and 34 returning members. If we as new members and as a newly elected Assembly have anything in common, it is the commitment that each of us has made to our respective constituencies in order to earn their trust and to have the honour of representing them. Mr. Speaker, the commitment was one to change, to change from the past, to change that would better the lives of not only our own constituents but of all Albertans.

In my short time here I have heard good ideas coming from both sides of the Chamber. I hope that these ideas are and will be judged based not on their source but rather on their merit as it relates to the betterment of Albertans' lives. This ability to represent good ideas has recently been strengthened given the passing of the free vote, an issue which I personally campaigned on. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the advances made with regards to parliamentary reform, and I anticipate that we have but started the journey towards this long awaited revitalization of an ailing political system. I am very hopeful that the Assembly will continue to promote change towards greater accountability. We need not necessarily agree on all issues, but we must work

together if we as an Assembly are to be successful in delivering better government by putting forward the best ideas from the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I also believe that by putting in place solid freedom of information legislation, Albertans will be given greater access and control of their government, something they demanded and were promised on June 15. I am encouraged by the Premier's creation of the all-party panel of which I am a member and its objective of consulting with Albertans to pursue the goal of developing the best possible freedom of information legislation. Albertans will utilize freedom of information to ensure that their government delivers on its promises. I believe with great conviction in accountability, and because I do, I want to see that this legislation is developed with input from the broadest possible group of Albertans for the interests of all Albertans. Voters on June 15, 1993, did not sign a blank cheque. They now expect performance. I hope we can give them this legislation to ensure that they are no longer spectators but rather that they are enabled to participate meaningfully more often than every four or five years.

By putting in place this legislation and further pursuing parliamentary reform, we are making ourselves accountable to Albertans. When I was at the doors of my constituents we discussed these issues. I used to say and I still maintain that it is not good enough to change or to make different decisions but rather that decisions must be made differently. Mr. Speaker, if I am to go back to my constituents and ask for their support, I want to speak of achievements and of work in progress, not philosophical goals and differences.

Mr. Speaker, I will hold the same criteria against my performance as I do against the government's. Taking into consideration the differences in our resources, these criteria will be straightforward. We're Albertans and constituents consulted openly. Did the consultation process produce clear goals and objectives? Is there a clearly spelled out process by which the goals and objectives can be reached, and, finally, are there measurable outcomes of these goals and objectives?

Mr. Speaker, I think the future of politics will be much different and much more tangible than its past. I am confident that I will represent my constituents well and that change will be positive: one that meets the criteria favourably and that is in the interest of my constituents and all Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity. [some applause]

MR. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, that's just the way the voters sounded on June 15.

It gives me great pleasure to rise before this Assembly and speak on behalf of those voters in a new constituency, Calgary-Varsity. Again I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election. I have it on good source that if you continue to be congratulated, we will continue to have benefits accruing to the member.

In many ways Calgary-Varsity is a symbol of the growth that is taking place today in Calgary. The city remains a city that demonstrates a can-do, achievement-oriented attitude that is critical to the ongoing growth of Alberta. We're challenged as new legislators to changing expectations of governments. Government is a mirror of society, Mr. Speaker. Things have changed in this province, and now it is the time for government to change. Osborne and Gaebler use the term "entrepreneurial environment" in their new book *Reinventing Government*. They give us a new definition of an entrepreneur: an entrepreneur shifts economic

resources out of an area of lower and into an area of higher productivity and greater yield. This is the intent of this government: to maximize productivity and increase the yield of government resources.

Calgary-Varsity is a new riding established in the electoral boundaries redistribution prior to the June election. It's composed of areas taken from the existing ridings, so ably represented, of Calgary-Foothills, Calgary-North Hill, and Calgary-North West. Calgary-Varsity is the home to the University of Calgary. I am proud to call myself a U of C alumnus, as are 10 other members present on both sides of this Assembly.

This school year, Mr. Speaker, the University of Calgary will be home to over 18,500 full-time students and over 3,900 part-time students. President Fraser is currently beginning a sixth year as the U of C president, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his leadership and hard work as president. He brings a forward-looking and challenging viewpoint to the university, and I'm sure we are grateful for his contribution to advanced education in this province. [some applause] I don't know if the hon. Member for Athabasca-Wabasca has ever heard this much thumping.

The university enjoys a wide reputation for academic excellence in a number of fields. Its business and management school is among the best in Canada. It's especially strong in the area of debating. The undergraduate debating team won five gold and two silver medals at a recent Canada-wide intercollegiate business competition. The MBA team also placed third at the latest international business debating competition sponsored by Concordia University. Professor Schulz is to be complimented as a strong, proficient leader and educator.

5:10

As an aside, Mr. Speaker, in 1967 when I played for the University of Calgary Dinosaurs hockey team our record wasn't so illustrious. We went three and nine, but it was an easier team to make than the University of Alberta.

The University of Calgary boasts a new world-class professional building which will soon be home to students learning law, environmental design, nursing, and social work. The university also excels in its programs in arts and sciences. There is a strong research community at work in Calgary-Varsity, Mr. Speaker. There's an excellent research facility named Discovery Place. It is a joint initiative between the Calgary Economic Development Authority and this government. It provides incubation space for high-tech enterprises which range from the computer modeling group, which does reservoir simulation work on a global basis, to cutting-edge projects like Chinook wind, that explores the use of wind as an alternate energy source. Discovery Place stands alongside such facilities as the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research and the Electronics Test Centre. They are strong examples of this government's commitment to research and technology in Alberta.

Calgary-Varsity also hosts a variety of business interests representing everything from energy, manufacturing, and the oil field service industry. It's home to some of the most thriving small businesses in this province. The residential population of Calgary-Varsity is also a cross section of this province. My constituency is home to people from all walks of life and from all economic backgrounds.

The concerns of the people of Calgary-Varsity reflect the needs and concerns of all Albertans to make a living, to educate their children, and to leave behind a healthy legacy for future generations. It is that legacy that this government is striving to ensure. The provincial debt cripples the economic viability of this province

for future generations. Alberta is similar to many governments in the western world today. Saddled with heavy debt, Alberta and other administrations recognize the high growth periods of the last 30 years. Now is the time to make that payment back to the people of Alberta. Alberta will be the province in Canada that takes the country's lead in attacking the deficit. Our economic situation requires innovative thinking and new approaches to developing our economy. This government is up to the challenge.

It seems so very easy now to fall back on the crutch of increasing taxes. However, as Nesbitt says in his book *Megatrends 2000*: in a very competitive world lower income taxes encourage people to work harder and be more forthcoming in their income declarations; in the long run they result in more, not less, tax collected by governments. We have to show Albertans that we have what it takes to lead this province by sticking to cutting government spending and to getting it in line with revenues.

The main commitment this government has made is to balance the budget according to the Deficit Elimination Act. It sets strong goals for cutting spending each year until the provincial budget is balanced in 1996-97. This government is committed to sticking hard to those goals that require strong and committed political will. We will save \$700 million this year, Mr. Speaker, and more than \$130 million of that will result from streamlining government operations for greater efficiency.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, government is a service business. We must concentrate on the mission of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair sincerely regrets having to interrupt the hon. member, but under Standing Order 19(1)(c) I must now put the question on the motion for consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech.

[Motion carried]

head:

Government Motions

Address in Reply to Throne Speech

14. Moved by Mr. Evans on behalf of Mr. Klein:

Be it resolved that the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne be engrossed and presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor by such members of the Assembly as are members of the Executive Council.

[Motion carried]

head:

Government Bills and Orders

head:

Second Reading

Bill 5

Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1993

[Adjourned debate September 14: Mr. Chadi]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague the Provincial Treasurer I move second reading of Bill 5, the Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1993.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the Assembly ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion carried; Bill 5 read a second time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That completes the government's business for this afternoon's sitting.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:19 p.m.]

