

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Tuesday, October 26, 1993**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 93/10/26

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, we thank You for Your abundant blessings to our province and ourselves.

We ask You to ensure to us Your guidance and the will to follow it.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

MS HANSON: I have a petition to present that was put together by a group of residents in Edmonton-Beverly-Belmont.

Thank you.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I will rise after question period under Standing Order 40 to deal with the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly recognize the achievement of the October 25 federal general election by sending congratulations to every successful Alberta candidate as well as sending congratulations to each of the two parties which elected members in Alberta, Preston Manning and Jean Chrétien, and, further, that these messages of congratulations should convey the expectations of this Legislature that the newly elected MPs will keep in mind the best interests of Albertans and all Canadians when fulfilling their duties in the House of Commons.

Thank you, sir.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'm giving notice that tomorrow I'll be moving that motions for returns appearing on the Order Paper stand and retain their places with the exception of the following: motions for returns 209, 211, 212, and 214.

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

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

DR. WEST: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to file the 1992-93 annual report for Alberta Municipal Affairs. Included in this report is the report of the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation for 1992-93.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul.

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table two documents today: four copies of request for proposals, High Prairie timber supply, dated August 17, 1993, and a letter written to the forestry department dated January 31, 1991, signed by the president of the Alberta Forest Products Association.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in both the public and members' galleries are 96 visitors from Barrhead elementary school, including 88 grade 8 students. They're accompanied by three teachers Mrs. Janis Wittcheu-Kleuke, Mrs. Marita Dauk, and Mr. R. Klumph; as well as three parent helpers Mrs. Setterington, Mrs. Varty, and Mrs. Armstrong; and two bus drivers Mrs. McNaughton

and Mr. Lindquist. This is now two days in a row and nearly 200 people from Barrhead have come to visit. Mr. Premier, you should know that the number one question they asked of me was if I knew Premier Klein, and I said: yes, I did. So could I ask all the students in both the members' and the public galleries to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

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

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly a very active community activist and advocate from the city of Edmonton Mr. Jake de Hoog. Mr. de Hoog has been busy with his wife, Gerry, in the Calder Action Committee, the Calder Seniors, the Calder day care, West 10, the Social Planning Council, teen aid, and the Urban Reform Group Edmonton. Mr. de Hoog is accompanied today by another energetic community volunteer Mr. Ralph Haeckel. I'd ask them both to stand and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you a young university student who's spending the day with our caucus to gain insight into the political process. I should say that after just a morning with our caucus he already realizes exactly how that process should be run. I'd ask that Chris Brauer stand in the gallery and receive the welcome of the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's indeed a pleasure to stand before you on behalf of my colleague the Member for Sherwood Park to introduce to you and through you 41 students from Pine Street school in Strathcona county and four adults who are with them today: teachers Alex Newhart and Ken Werenka and parents Myrna Parker and Merrilee Nelson. I'd ask this Assembly to please extend a warm welcome and invite them to stand in the public gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a constituent of mine, a leading businessman in the town of St. Albert and very active in the community: all things good, you might say. Without further ado, I'd ask Jim Greene from St. Albert to stand and be recognized. He's in the public gallery.

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

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last but not least I'd like to introduce to you and through you two individuals who are in the public gallery this afternoon. They help to make my constituency office work. First is Maureen Workman, who is my office manager and advocate extraordinaire, and John Kuiper, who is a first-year student at Grant MacEwan College in social work and who's learning advocacy through my constituency office. If they would please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

Thank you.

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

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see sitting in the members' gallery today a social activist and an old friend and

someone who has actually performed duties for the people of Alberta as a former colleague of mine on the Occupational Health and Safety Council. I would ask Gus Bottas to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

head:

### Oral Question Period

#### Senate Reform

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, something rather interesting happened last night, and I fear that the government may not have noticed. I must say that the Premier I'm sure smelled the impending doom of his party because he has now suggested that he will press the new Prime Minister for a triple E Senate. Albertans will remember that the Premier did nothing except send a very timid little letter to Mr. Mulroney, who was preparing to appoint the Premier's good friend Mr. Ghitter to fill a vacant Senate seat, and just for show the Premier spoke to Prime Minister Campbell about Senate elections for something like two or three minutes behind closed doors. My first question to the Premier, then, is this: Mr. Premier, can you explain to Albertans why you have suddenly seen the light and decided to press the issue with the new federal government on triple E Senate?

1:40

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I would be most delighted. As a matter of fact, I indicated to the hon. leader's colleague the Member for Edmonton-McClung that I would be very happy to participate with the Liberals in the spirit of a legislative consensus to press the Prime Minister elect and eventually the Prime Minister for a triple E Senate. The point I was trying to make earlier on is that while this caucus certainly has always been tremendously supportive of a triple E concept, we could not see the benefit in putting any candidate through the process of a Senate election with absolutely no guarantee that that person was going to be appointed to the Senate. Even the hon. Member for Redwater indicated in the Legislature last week that it would be absolute folly to go ahead with a Senate election with no guarantee of being appointed.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, if the truth be known, the Premier wimped out because it was his good friend that got appointed and he didn't want to upset the applecart.

Mr. Premier, will you tell Albertans, will you commit to Albertans today that from this time on we will always have an election for a Senator in Alberta?

MR. KLEIN: No, I will not make that commitment. If his federal leader, well, our federal leader now, the leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Chrétien, makes a solid commitment – and I hope that he does – that whomever we elect in this province will be appointed, then absolutely there will be an election.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, don't pass the buck. [interjections] I've hit a nerve, Mr. Speaker. I've hit a nerve.

I want Albertans to hear, Mr. Premier, that you recognize that there is an Act in place, the Senatorial Selection Act, and that whatever the federal government might be, we will take the initiative in this House quickly to ensure that there is an election for the vacant Senate seat in Alberta.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I hope that we take the initiative very, very quickly. I'm glad to invite the Liberals to participate with me – or I'll participate with them – to make the approach to the new federal Liberal government to seek assurances that whomever we elect as the next Senator will in fact be appointed and, further,

that the new Prime Minister will pursue the true concept of a triple E Senate and bring about responsible and reasonable Senate reform the way Canadians want it.

MR. DECORE: Just don't wimp out on us, Mr. Premier. Just don't wimp out on us.

#### Premier's Trade Mission

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, our party is supportive of the Premier traveling to sell Alberta to the world. It is something that we have lacked for many years. But there are too many important things happening at this moment, too many important things that must be attended to by the Premier. Education is being undermined. The health care system is falling apart. Children and poor people are being hurt. Mr. Premier, you must reschedule that trip. I ask as my first question: Mr. Premier, will you delay your trip until you sort out the business plans that are falling apart on your ministers, until you sort out the difficulty of unions now ignoring your time frame? Will you wait until all of those matters are sorted out before you leave?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. leader of the Liberal opposition and the public of Alberta that everything is well in hand. When this gentleman was the mayor of the city of Edmonton with massive problems facing that city, he had no problems picking up his little bags and flying to the Far East whenever he wanted to.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, Edmonton's debt was going down. Yours was going up, and it's still going up.

Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised the Premier says that everything is in order. Roundtables are falling apart. New roundtables are being set up. Five thousand people walked on this Assembly. Mr. Premier, tell Albertans that their problems are totally in control, that nothing is wrong, and that you can leave without many problems existing at all. Tell us that.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, quite simply, a very significant part of our recovery in this province has to do with selling the Alberta advantage and seizing opportunity, and the time is now. The trip has been scheduled for literally months. The planning has all been done. There are in excess of 23 companies who are already in the Far East waiting to participate with us. They are bidding on contracts. They're looking to this government to assist them in obtaining those contracts in Korea, in Japan, in China, in Hong Kong, and in Taiwan. This is a massive undertaking that involves very little effort on our part but tremendous effort and tremendous commitment by the private sector. I don't think the hon. leader of the Liberal Party understands that.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, I remind you that 5,000 Albertans marched on this Assembly, marched on education and social services and health care. Mr. Premier, I would like you to tell Albertans what your priorities are. What are they? People are going off to China.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, quite simply, my priorities are clear. As a matter of fact, that's why we won on June 15 and that's why they lost, because our priorities were quite clear. Our priorities are, one, to eliminate the deficit by the year 1994 and put in a schedule for the paydown of our debt and, secondly, to promote aggressively and vigorously and as strongly as we can economic growth and prosperity in this province.

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

### Social Policy

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the election the Premier told us that he not only listens but he cares. His refusal to attend Saturday's rally quickly turned that into nothing more than a statement of election rhetoric. [interjection] I certainly was. The Minister of Family and Social Services has refused to hold true and open public discussions on social policy. Apparently there are two classes of people: those who get hearings and the poor and the disadvantaged that are not heard in this province. My questions are to the Minister of Family and Social Services. Mr. Minister, why do you refuse to hold public discussions on social policy as Albertans United for Social Justice asked you to yesterday?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I met with the group of people, and I believe they have the same interest as I have and our government has in relation to dealing with people in need. I explained to the group very well that the three-year welfare strategy we have in place is looking at ways of getting young, healthy Albertans back into the work force but on the other hand making sure that the high-needs area of our department gets the services they deserve and require in Alberta. I also indicated to the group that the three-year welfare strategy that our government is working on was filed last April 15, before the election. It is a three-year plan. What this minister agreed to do yesterday is direct my deputy minister to continue meeting with that group to make sure we monitor the three-year plan that's in place to ensure that if we do have areas that are high needs and not looked after, this minister is willing to make the necessary adjustments to deal with those issues.

1:50

MS HANSON: Mr. Minister, I understood that you had instructed your deputy to review the impact of the cuts. Why wasn't an impact assessment study done before the cuts were made instead of waiting till afterwards?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, that is part of the plan. The welfare reforms that are in place – I as an individual have worked over 20 years, been involved in the process. The devastation of the welfare program on the native people in Alberta is nothing to be proud of, and that is why I got into politics, specifically to look at ways of dealing with the issue. I believe that the three-year plan that was filed will work towards assisting those people that do not want to be on social assistance and want to be back in the work force. The plan will achieve that. On the other hand, when we have young healthy Albertans working and paying taxes, we will have more dollars for the people that are needy.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MS HANSON: Thank you. Well, in order to give a hearing to the people who are on social assistance in this province, my question is to the Premier. Before you fly off to the Orient, Mr. Klein . . .

### Speaker's Ruling Referring to a Member by Name

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Hon. member, surnames are not to be used in this Chamber.

MS HANSON: I know, and I apologize, sir.

### Social Policy (continued)

MS HANSON: Will you tell your Minister of Family and Social Services to immediately hold public discussions with those affected by the cuts to social assistance to give consumers a chance to be heard?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, from what I can see, the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services is doing exactly what Albertans told him to do, and that is to reform the welfare system, to get people off the welfare roles, to get people back in the work force, to offer them the opportunity for job retraining, to identify areas of abuse of the system, and to take strong action to cut down on that abuse. That program has been in place for some time and is working very, very well.

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

### Freedom of Information Legislation

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are all to the Member for Rocky Mountain House. As you know, we introduced Bill 1, the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1993, earlier in this session to much negative criticism from the members opposite who insisted that Albertans were keenly desiring to be part of this process. To accomplish this, a committee was structured of four Conservative MLAs and three Liberal MLAs to tour the province to get input from all Albertans. As a matter of fact, last Friday in Medicine Hat I attended the afternoon session at which there was one individual in attendance. Could the member tell us: is this typical of the attendance around the province?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In answer to the question, the hon. member is absolutely correct; there was only one person there in the afternoon. In the evening three other people attended along with the same individual again. The attendance throughout the province has been somewhat varied. The committee has attended sessions in the city of Calgary at which there were 30-plus presentations, the city of Red Deer too. As I reported earlier, in our tour of northern Alberta the attendance was much similar to what we had in Medicine Hat.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you. It appears like you could describe attendance as low to abysmal, and it looks like the Liberals were wrong again. Is this poor attendance due to the lack of some kind of appropriate advertising, or is it just due to the fact that people are relatively happy with Bill 1?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, to make the House aware of the advertising, there were two press releases that went out, one at the time of the committee being struck and then one later as we developed our process. The weekly papers in the province have all been advised of the communities that we are coming to, and they have run at least six ads. All the dailies have carried at least six ads. We have spent in excess of \$26,000 on advertising alone. Just to make the member aware of what happened in southern Alberta, I can read off the weekly papers that had ads in them: the *Lethbridge Herald*, the *Pass Herald*, the *Crowsnest Pass*

*Promoter, the Brooks Bulletin, the Cardston Chronicle, the Cold Lake news . . .*

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member has made his point.

Final supplemental.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you. Do you consider this to be a good utilization of the valuable time of four members and a good utilization of taxpayer resources?

MR. LUND: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, certainly our Premier and this government believes in public consultation, and on this important issue we have said that that's what we are going to do. We are also receiving written submissions and are still encouraging people to write in. The upcoming weekend we will be in Edmonton. So far there are about 22 people registered for formal presentations. Next Saturday we will be going to Vermilion. I understand that there are only two people preregistered out there.

MRS. HEWES: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Alberta Intermodal Services Limited**

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks ago we found out that taxpayers were paying \$75,000 per month plus a \$125,000 completion fee to sell Gainers. Last week we found out that taxpayers paid over a million dollars in fees to sell Syncrude. Yesterday we found out that taxpayers could be forking out a quarter million to sell North West Trust. Now we have Alberta Intermodal Services on the block. To the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism: is the sale of Alberta Intermodal Services being handled in-house, or has the government once again hired an outside firm?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, we are in the final days in the final process of dealing with the final resolution of Alberta Intermodal Services. I will have it rather definitively here in a matter of seconds if I can find my note on it. In essence, we will realize more dollars out of the sale than the province ever put into it. We will have successfully concluded a privatization to the benefit of the province of Alberta. The privatization occurred utilizing interest within the province of Alberta and the best expertise we could get outside of the province of Alberta. The bottom line is that the taxpayers of Alberta will have received more through the privatization of Alberta Intermodal Services Limited than was ever invested by the taxpayers of the province of Alberta.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I can give the minister the phone number of the director in his department who is responsible for the sale.

My question is to the minister. Why is it that you can handle this sale in-house, yet the Provincial Treasurer has to go outside to sell North West Trust, Gainers, and other entities?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it sounds to me like the hon. member is angry at me because we've had a successful sale. There are 88 young people from Barrhead, and I don't want them to feel that I'm being chastised because we've done something successfully. As a matter of fact, it sounds to me as if it was a pretty good deal. I indicated that it was a combination of the best

experts that we have in the public service and consultation with the private sector as well. I would repeat again: the bottom line is that the province of Alberta has received more than was ever invested. It was one of the most successful privatizations that I'm aware of ever.

2:00

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I am angry because that minister is deliberately misleading this House.

#### **Speaker's Ruling Parliamentary Language**

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member knows that that is clearly unparliamentary language, and the Chair would ask him to please withdraw.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I regret that I cannot withdraw that statement, because it's true.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, the Chair urges you to reconsider this position.

MR. KOWALSKI: There's a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: There will be no point of privilege at all. If the hon. member refuses to withdraw those words, the Chair will have no alternative but to ask him to leave the Chamber.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, the question that I had phrased was very simple: was the deal going to be done in-house or outside? It is clear that it's being done in-house, and the minister would not answer the question although he has the facts in hand. If I have impugned his character by stating these facts, I withdraw the statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, hon. member, this is not a question of impugning character. This is a clear question that "deliberately misleading this House" is not parliamentary language. That's clear everywhere. The hon. member should realize what the ground rules are. The Chair again urges him to withdraw those words.

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the words I uttered that he deliberately misled the House.

MR. N. TAYLOR: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Peace River, followed by Lethbridge-East.

#### **Interprovincial Trucking**

MR. FRIEDEL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities. There's been a strong move by this government to remove interprovincial trade barriers, but it seems to me that the present agreement we have with the province of B.C. has a significant flaw. Mr. Minister, can we do anything about the fact that a B.C. trucker can work in Alberta without paying any additional costs, whereas an Alberta trucker wishing to enter British Columbia to do work must pay the full sales tax on the value of his equipment before he can cross the border?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, it is an important issue. The member is right that an Alberta trucker on entering B.C. has to

do one of two things. You either have to apply for a permit to operate in that province, which is sometimes hard to get, and if they want to work there on a full-time basis, they have to pay the sales tax on their unit. Also they have to have authority from the trucking industry in B.C. to be able to work there. I have had negotiations, some discussion with the transportation department in British Columbia, and hopefully we can resolve this matter somewhat to the benefit of Alberta truckers.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. FRIEDEL: Yes, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: can you tell us what kind of agreements we have with the other provinces relative to interprovincial trucking regulations?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, we have a trans-Canada agreement, that is working very well. We have a bilateral agreement with Saskatchewan, that's working well. The thing that is difficult in regards to British Columbia is that they have a sales tax, and they regulate the trucking industry in British Columbia. We don't have a sales tax, fortunately, in Alberta, and we don't regulate our truckers in Alberta. As I mentioned at the outset, I will be discussing this further with the British Columbia trucking industry, and hopefully we can come to some resolution of the issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?  
The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

### **Poultry Marketing**

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the late 1980s the broiler marketing board refused to expand quota to include roaster chickens needed for the chickenburger market. Fifteen producers in Alberta took the risk and initiative to make a success of this adventure only to have the broiler board later take over this production and allocate quota to their original producers. Only after a court challenge were these producers recognized and given a temporary quota. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Is it not the mandate of the Alberta agricultural products marketing board to ensure such inequities do not occur in the orderly marketing of products in this province?

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

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Certainly one of the objectives of supply management is to provide a service both to the consumer and to the producer. That's the upside. The downside of course is that there are problems in trying to access the opportunity to produce and to market. This is perhaps one of the problems that is involved in supply management. It's fairly clearly identified that the freedom to produce and the freedom to market is not there for the producer. We try to work with the supply management groups through our department and will continue to do so. We try to assist in every way we possibly can.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, should it not have been the mandate of the agricultural products marketing board to ensure that the people who took the initiative and developed this market get first priority on this new quota?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: The product marketing council works very closely with the marketing boards and with producers as well. The supply management group basically administer the marketing board; they administer the privileges. That's the way it's designed to operate. It's not just in Alberta, but it's designed to operate that way throughout all of Canada. The problem is that when you want to try and expand and access particularly foreign markets, it becomes very difficult, because supply management serves the domestic market very well. It serves that purpose very adequately, but the problem with supply management of course is when you start expanding and trying to access foreign opportunities. That obviously is the situation that's developed here.

DR. NICOL: Mr. Speaker, these 15 producers produced into the market, slaughtered here in Edmonton, yet they didn't receive any recognition. Why is it that the marketing boards can't build into their mandate an ability to recognize people who take on an initiative and expand the industry to create value added for Alberta agriculture?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Well, I certainly can't argue with the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East. We have to realize that the whole process of supply management was introduced to Canada by the Liberal government. It was the Liberal government that introduced and laid down the guidelines to start with. If we're going to be critical of the issue, perhaps we have to look at home. This is where the supply management process came from.

We are working at trying to access the opportunities. Alberta has stood alone in opposing article 11. In the process of the GATT discussions, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important to recognize that Alberta has been the only province in Canada that has opposed article 11 in the GATT negotiations. We feel that tariffication is the proper way, and if we had tariffication, we would be able to access these markets that are available, the foreign markets that indeed would allow the industry to expand and to grow.

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

### **Education Roundtables**

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I attended the education roundtable in Edmonton this past weekend as an observer. There were two key recommendations that came forth, from my perspective. They were, first of all, equity of access and funding for all students across this province and, secondly, that the best decisions on spending priorities, curriculum, et cetera, are made at the place closest to the student. My question to the Minister of Education is: what steps are being taken to ensure that the bulk of funding is being directed to the priorities of the consumer, the consumer being defined as the parent and their children and perhaps even the teacher, as they are the ones closest to the students?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, the roundtables, as members of the Assembly know, have just been concluded. Therefore I think we have to in the proper manner wait for the final report to be compiled. I would like to indicate that if one were to make an estimate of the major themes or conclusions arising out of the roundtables, the direction that resources should be directed to the school level was certainly there. The idea that parents at their local school level should have additional input into the education of their students was also supported. No specific decisions have been made. However, I am taking seriously the recommendation

that came from the roundtable, and that is that the school councils, which are already provided for in legislation for the public and separate schools of this province, should be strengthened in some way. Perhaps they should be allowed to take on additional responsibilities.

**2:10**

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Do you have a plan that effectively downsizes Alberta Education, it being the furthest from the student, by a disproportionate share of the spending reductions?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated previously in the Assembly, we do not have any approved plan or any decisions that have been made ahead of time at all, but certainly I understand the interest that the hon. member has in this particular topic, and that is certainly something to be considered as we move toward developing our plan following these roundtables.

MR. DOERKSEN: In view of the strong endorsement to proceed with fiscal equity, when will a decision on equity funding be made?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has correctly identified another dominant theme arising out of the roundtables and our other consultative activities, and this particular matter has been under examination for some time. We are working actively on a solution to that particular problem, and I'm hopeful that there will be one in place for the 1994-95 budget year.

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

#### Student Health Services

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The biggest recommendation from the roundtables was: don't cut education. Get the message.

The government has proposed to remove a section of the School Act that allows school boards to provide those health services that the school board deems necessary. Those are things like physiotherapy, audiototherapy, aides for students who are disabled. Several parents have approached me, and parents around this province are really concerned that removing this section from the Act, section 39 for the minister, would in essence remove those services from disabled children. I would like to ask the minister the question: how can he assure these parents that the services for disabled students are going to be provided when in fact he's removing the section from the Act that allows school boards to provide that service?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, this particular topic was raised and debated when Bill 8 was in Committee of the Whole. As I explained at that time, the removal of section 39 from the School Act does not in any way prevent school boards from providing services to students along the lines that the hon. member has just referred to.

MR. HENRY: In that case, Mr. Speaker, could the minister please enlighten the whole House and tell us what section of the Act, once section 39 is gone, is going to allow school boards to provide these badly needed health-related services?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member fully knows, I do not likely have the legislation here in front of me, but I'm quite

prepared to copy the *Hansard* that was developed from our debate on Bill 8 and provide him with a copy.

MR. HENRY: He knows one part of the Act but not the other.

I'd like the minister to explain the connection between removing section 39 from the Act and the section in the roundtable workbook that defines services to special needs children as – and I'm quoting – going beyond a basic education.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the hon. member, the links between the different sections of the School Act were well discussed in debate on Bill 8. Section 39 deals with a situation which dealt with health services prior to the development and introduction and passage of a new Public Health Act in this province, which covers that particular area of services. That matter, as I said, has been, I think, well dealt with in the Legislature.

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

#### Airline Industry

MR. SOHAL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier. Would the Premier please outline what actions he will be taking with respect to conveying a message to the new Prime Minister and government in Ottawa that the people of Alberta support a healthy, competitive airline industry and that there is room for both Air Canada and Canadian Airlines International to grow and prosper?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is perhaps one of the most critical issues facing Alberta today. This indeed represents thousands and thousands of jobs, many of them based right here. Notwithstanding this Liberal Party's opposition to supporting Canadian Airlines International, we do believe that we should make as strong a representation as we possibly can to the new Liberal government that there should be a competitive airline situation in this province. I would hope that the Liberal opposition would participate with us and convince the new Prime Minister in the strongest possible way that there should be a competitive airline industry in this country and indeed Canadian should provide that competition.

MR. SOHAL: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is also to the Premier. Would the Premier indicate whether he would consider meeting with the leader of the Reform Party to discuss the development of a strategy to press the federal government to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure a viable, competitive airline industry in Canada?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I would be very happy to meet with the leader of the Reform Party and the leader of the Liberal opposition across the way to see how we can participate together. I know the position of the Liberal Party. At least I knew what it was then, but this is now. I would hope that they would see the wisdom of their ways and support wholeheartedly our effort to keep Canadian in this province and Canadian Airlines International as the competitive force in this country.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul.

### Forest Management

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The present government has just recently advertised for proposals for 20-year use of timber in the High Prairie area. Even the request for proposal which I tabled earlier today is based on old data, and professional foresters have expressed serious concerns that there is insufficient timber for existing operations and for new projects. My question is to the Minister of Environmental Protection. Does the minister support allocating more timber at this time, when it is evident that we're short of timber for existing projects in Alberta?

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What this minister does advocate is economic opportunity in all regions of the province of Alberta. We have identified a timber resource on public lands in the High Prairie timber development area of approximately 260,000 cubic metres. There are two other sources of timber supply in that area. One is purchase-wood sources, and our estimate is 295,000 cubic metres, as well as about 125,000 cubic metres from the Metis settlements in the area. The advertisement that we have come out with through my colleague the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, ensures that there be an independent evaluation of the three wood sources, ensures that each evaluation must separately identify those three wood sources, and come to a conclusion that there is adequate timber for an economic initiative in that area.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Minister of Environmental Protection. Will the minister set up an independent inquiry into the timber supply and annual allowable cuts for this province?

MR. EVANS: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of annual allowable cut throughout this province is an issue that I deal with on almost a daily basis in the portfolio of Environmental Protection. We are working closely with the Alberta Forest Products Association, with independent sawmillers to ensure that we have an inventory system and a formula for determining inventory that will ensure that the annual allowable cut will create a sustainable forest in the province. In other words, for each tree we harvest, we will be replanting another tree so that we will have a very important sustainable forestry industry in the province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Minister of Environmental Protection: would the minister agree to table in this House the document that he referred to in the first question, all the data?

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I've been referring to a note that comes to me from my department on the High Prairie TDA. This is an internal memorandum from my staff to me indicating what is going on in that High Prairie TDA area, and I'm certainly happy to give the hon. member a further update on that based on the information that I have from my field staff.

2:20

### Teacher Experience Ratings

MR. TANNAS: I'd like to address my questions today to the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, the free movement of

competent and professionally trained teachers within this province from school district to school district has long been held to be desirable, and it's been a benefit to students as well as to school system enrichment. However, an increasing number of school boards have instituted an unofficial quota system whereby they are entering into the practice of hiring teachers with little or no experience. To the minister: does your department fund in any way teachers on the basis of their experience?

MR. JONSON: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TANNAS: Well, then, would the minister support a teacher in this kind of a situation: a teacher with eight or 10 or more years of successful teaching experience who is willing to accept a lower level of experience rating because the teacher has moved with a spouse because of the spouse being transferred to a new community? Would the minister support this teacher in accepting a lower experience rating?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I would recommend that the teacher contact their association, the Alberta Teachers' Association, and also their local school board. It is at that level that these matters are appropriately dealt with, and that would be the avenue such an individual should pursue.

MR. TANNAS: Would the minister, because this is a provincial as well as a local matter, be willing to discuss this situation with the Alberta Teachers' Association with a view to bringing some kind of solution that would be acceptable to the whole province as well as to the separate school districts?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, this matter falls into the realm of negotiations, which are the purview, the prerogative of local school boards and the locals representing teachers at that particular jurisdictional level, and this is the point at which this should be dealt with. If those two associations were to ask the minister for assistance in a matter such as this, certainly the minister would be prepared to listen and to assist in any way possible, but it is a matter to be dealt with in those particular associations.

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

### Education Services for the Visually Impaired

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At present the Department of Education provides materials to the visually impaired through the materials resource centre. We now know that this centre will be amalgamated with the learning resources distributing centre during this fiscal year. This bureaucratic shuffling will result in the visually impaired having to pay a fee for educational materials that until now they have received free of charge. To the Minister of Education: why is the ministry imposing user fees on blind and visually impaired students?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think it should be noted that, yes, Alberta Education is bringing together different sections of the department, different agencies to bring about effective delivery of service as well as cost savings. That is certainly, as has been identified earlier today in question period, a direction from the roundtables, and that is that we should be looking for efficiencies in terms of the operation of the department itself. Secondly, in direct response to the question, the materials provided related to the curriculum of Alberta Education for the visually

impaired is a service that we expect to be paid for through school board budgets, and we are providing the service in that manner.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, why is the minister discriminating against the visually impaired students in Alberta?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, this year Alberta Education was one of the few government departments to receive an increase in funding. There was additional equity funding provided to school boards across this province. There is considerable in the way of resources available to school boards to purchase learning resources. The visually impaired are having these special resources prepared through Alberta Education, housed or stored, and distributed to school boards upon their orders for purchase. That service is there.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Mr. Speaker, why does the minister keep ignoring the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure how that question is related to the previous questions, but I do not mind at all answering the question. The hon. member is incorrect in his statement. The minister is not ignoring the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

#### **Young Offenders Legislation**

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice. With the federal Liberal election victory yesterday, what will the . . . [some applause]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order.

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I can try that again. With the federal Liberal election victory yesterday, what will . . . [some applause]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order. [interjections] Order. Hon. members, please. Order on all sides of the House.  
The hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice. What will the minister do to ensure that the momentum for review and reform of the Young Offenders Act will continue?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the review that is ongoing of the Young Offenders Act was advocated by a number of provinces, Alberta being one of them, but is being focused by the federal government because of course that Act is under their jurisdiction. There is a document out called *Toward Safer Communities*, that poses a number of questions and asks people to think and dialogue about the Act and then submit their proposals. I can't think for a moment why under new government the interest in this Act would fall. In fact, there are a number of members that have been elected – the Member for Edmonton Southwest, the Member for Edmonton Northwest – who have intimate interest in the Young Offenders Act, and I would expect that it would still be high profile.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Violent youth crime is of particular concern to my constituents. Will this area be addressed under the new federal government?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the Act is up for review. In the document *Toward Safer Communities* there are actually three areas that the government of the day asked to be addressed. One was the minimum age in the Act, the maximum age in the Act, and some relationship to sentencing and publication of names. I would suggest that anybody that has any interest in the Young Offenders Act write and submit their feelings and ideas even if they aren't related to those three areas, because it will help give an indication to the people putting forward the new Act or amendments what the broad interest is aside from those three interests. I'm sure, as we've had debate earlier in the Assembly, that there is a diverse number of issues relating to that Act that comes from this Assembly alone.

#### **2:30**

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Youth justice committees are an aspect of the Young Offenders Act. Will the outcome of the federal election affect the formation of an urban youth justice committee?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the urban youth justice committees are few and far between. In fact, I'm not aware of any formally made up yet. There are a number of communities, Edmonton and Calgary specifically, that do want through community leagues to implement the youth justice committee. There are three in place in Alberta right now that are formally operational and successful. I look forward to the urban initiative. It has to be that; it has to be an initiative that comes from the community and works up and is not imposed by the government or officials. You need to work closely with the judiciary. That's certainly our position. Again, I don't expect the election to have any effect on the implementation of such.

#### **Members' Statements**

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

#### **Privatization of Liquor Sales**

MR. CHADI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm thrilled to have the opportunity today to make my statement. My statement will be on privatization. I would like it to be known that I am in favour of privatization. I know we on this side of the House certainly are as a whole. The selling off of public enterprises to the private sector is fundamental. It should be done, and it must be done. We ought not as a government to be in competition with the private sector, and it's high time we started to get into some of these things, like the ALCB, AGT, et cetera.

My comments today are going to reflect the ALCB privatization. When we talk about privatization, the one thing that comes to my mind is: why in the world were we involved in the enterprise in the first place? Why were we involved in the selling of this merchandise? Why couldn't it have been done by the private sector to begin with? If that rationale that brought us to the understanding that we should be involved still exists today, then we ought to be looking at that and saying that maybe we should be. I think the reasons that existed in the '30s and the '40s and the '50s and the '60s perhaps don't exist today, and that's why we have to look towards the '90s and the new century.



With respect to ALCB – a half a billion dollar enterprise, \$500 million, a government entity that is a jewel of Crown corporations – we have had no debate in the Legislature whatsoever. I represent Edmonton-Roper and the people of Castle Downs. Let it be known that we privatized a half a billion dollar corporation without having the benefit or the courtesy of a debate in this House. I and every single member of this side of the House and also members on that side of the House, every single backbencher and the people that they represent . . . [Mr. Chadi's speaking time expired]

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

### Deficit Spending

MR. SOHAL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is committed to providing a healthy, educated, tolerant, and prosperous Alberta society. However, to ensure future generations of Albertans will be able to enjoy programs like quality health care, social services, and education, we must not mortgage their future. We only have to look at how other governments have had to deal with their fiscal crises. Only by doing so can we understand the potential risks and penalties which might arise.

New Zealand's fiscal crisis has been a popular example for the media as well as many governments. For many years New Zealand was a pioneer among industrialized countries in the development of a social safety net. Among these programs was a comprehensive universal health care program. Problems for the country started to arise when exports of New Zealand goods sagged after Britain joined the European Common Market. Government revenues decreased in relation to public expenditure. Rather than control spending, the government responded by incurring deficit budgets. However, the economy did not improve as was predicted. Taxes were raised in order to try and generate more revenue to pay for programs as well as a means to control the deficit and the debt. The day of reckoning came after the 1984 national election when foreign lenders would no longer let the new Labour government borrow. A society accustomed to high standards of life bolstered by the social safety net now had to deal with the shock of drastic cutbacks. It will be many more years before New Zealanders will be able to give their children a clear title to their country.

What lesson can members of this Assembly learn? Deficit spending should not be seen as a catalyst for expanding the economy. If this were the case, Canada would be in the midst of a boom with all of the cumulative deficits from all levels of government. We must never let Albertans face the same financial crisis as in New Zealand.

Thank you.

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

### Grande Cache Hospital

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to focus the attention of the House on the very unique case of the hospital in Grande Cache in my riding. Under the present funding regulations small rural hospitals are exempted from the general HPI funding formula. Now, the minister has assured me that she's preparing a funding formula for small rural hospitals. That would be a great improvement because at the moment funding for those facilities is arbitrary to say the least.

For instance, Grande Cache's hospital with 31 beds has a budget of \$1.8 million while the hospital in Whitecourt with 24 beds

receives \$3.1 million; the hospital in Killam with 30 beds gets the enormous amount of 7 and a half million dollars: all providing more or less similar services. I can cite many more rural hospitals which receive far more funds than the Grande Cache hospital. Actually, most of them do. Clearly, this hospital is vastly underfunded, and it is in fact in desperate financial straits. This situation came about in spite of very efficient financial management and many voluntary contributions by staff and by community organizations.

I make a public plea to the minister and to this government to hasten the decision of an equitable funding formula for small rural hospitals and to keep in mind that Grande Cache, due to being located 150 kilometres from Hinton, does need acute care and long-term care facilities. At this moment, Mr. Speaker, the outlook is so bleak that without an immediate increase in funding Grande Cache could find itself without a hospital.

Thank you.

### Point of Order Oral Question Period Rules

MR. N. TAYLOR: Points of order?

MR. SPEAKER: Points of order time. The hon. deputy opposition leader.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and to the Member for Redwater.

I rise under *Beauchesne* 409(3) regarding a question asked today by the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat to the Member for Rocky Mountain House. Mr. Speaker, 409(3) reads:

The question ought to seek information . . . cannot be based upon a hypothesis, cannot seek an opinion, either legal or otherwise, and must not suggest its own answer, be argumentative or make representations.

I'll have to take some reading lessons, Mr. Speaker.

I submit to you that the supplementaries to the question from the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat were in fact contrary to 409(3) under at least three of the qualifiers and therefore out of order. It clearly asked for an opinion. It clearly suggested its own answer. I would ask you, therefore, to find that in fact those supplementaries were out of order.

2:40

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, referring to *Beauchesne* 409(3), as related certainly to the one question, one of the supplementaries that I heard from the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat, I tend to agree with the member opposite. It was probably out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair was going to say in any event that all members should become more familiar with what's written in this green book, because there were other questions asked today that had that tendency. I think the Chair would also like to comment on the fact that many questions are being framed asking the government to make a comment on something. The Chair really feels there's a little difficulty with that method of asking questions. That's really not a question seeking information directly. So while the Chair does not disagree with anything the deputy Leader of the Opposition's had to say or the Deputy Government House Leader, I would urge a little more attention to these sections in *Beauchesne* in drafting the questions.

The hon. Member for Redwater.

### Point of Order Factual Accuracy

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My referral is under *Beauchesne* 484, referring to members in debate. The Premier

took poetic licence, if you'll pardon me for saying it. What I said last week in the debate on the Senate – and I thought page 1000 in *Hansard* is an easy one to remember, halfway down the page. I give my quote again. It says, referring to the election for Senate:

Well, why did you break it up? We had something going for ourselves. We were rolling nicely. We were electing Senators. We were something that everybody in Canada was looking up to. Then we go back to the oldest system of all, as any Liberal or Conservative can tell you; that's putting a bag man in the Senate.

Now, how you can possibly say that that was supporting a nonelection I don't know.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, obviously there's a disagreement between members as to the interpretation of words.

#### Point of Order Parliamentary Language

MR. N. TAYLOR: There's a second point of order. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, they turned me down on my law exam, you see, just being a lowly engineer, so I'm having lots of fun here.

With regards to the interpretation you gave when the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud said that someone over there had misled the House, I'd like to respectfully suggest that you may possibly be reading from a different volume of *Beauchesne* than I am, because under category 490, halfway down page 147, it says, "Since 1958" – and that's about your and my vintage, Mr. Speaker – "it has been ruled parliamentary to use the following expressions," and misleading is one of them. That's halfway down page 148. I know he did it in the heat of the moment, but as many Liberals are just by instinct correct, I guess . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Well, the Chair would refer to *Beauchesne* 492, which says, "deliberately misleading."

MR. DECORE: He didn't say "deliberately misleading."

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is prepared to look at the Blues, but the Chair definitely heard "deliberately misleading."

MR. KOWALSKI: Exactly. Check the Blues. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair considers this matter closed. The hon. member did withdraw, as he should have done, and the Chair welcomes that. It didn't require a great deal of encouragement from the Chair, so I think we should all consider this matter closed.

#### head: Motions under Standing Order 40

MR. SPEAKER: Standing Order 40. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

#### Federal Election

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on Standing Order 40. I don't believe it's necessary to read the motion again. I have distributed the motion to all hon. members. The need for urgency, sir, is that the election has just taken place. I think it appropriate that we congratulate people who sought and have been selected for public service, that we congratulate the leaders. I think it is important for us to set out today some of the matters, some of the concerns for Albertans that Alberta representatives need to go to Ottawa with. I think Ottawa needs to know some of the concerns of this Assembly, of the people of Alberta. So I ask for unanimous consent to proceed with the matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly grant unanimous consent to the proposal of this motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.  
The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Moved by Mr. Decore:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly recognize the achievement of the October 25 federal general election by sending congratulations to every successful Alberta candidate as well as sending congratulations to each of the leaders of the two parties which elected members in Alberta, Preston Manning and Jean Chrétien, and, further, that these messages of congratulations should convey the expectations of this Legislature that the newly elected MPs will keep in mind the best interests of Albertans and all Canadians when fulfilling their duties in the House of Commons.

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, first of all, I would like to congratulate the men and women who did seek public service and particularly those who were selected for public service. Every member of this Assembly knows that there is much that you give up in public service: with your family, in your own life, your life-style. This public service commitment is not an easy commitment. There are some in the public that are rather critical of those who are involved in public service, and I wish some of them had the opportunity to sit and to follow and to see exactly what all of us go through. So my first point is that our caucus congratulates every man and every woman in Alberta who was part of the democratic process.

The next issue is congratulating the leaders, as I have set out in the notice of motion. I congratulate Mr. Chrétien for truly an incredible, impressive, stunning victory, an election that was well run, that was decent. I don't think I've heard commentators, as I heard last night, commentator after commentator, say how decent people were during the election night in congratulating each other and wishing each other well. That's something, I think, that's the wonderful part of our democratic system. We go through hot debate, we find that there are many issues that separate us, but in the end we are respectful of each other's positions and of the system. This caucus congratulates Mr. Chrétien for his stunning victory, for the huge majority that I think bodes well for the financial well-being of Canada and, I think, for the constitutional well-being of Canada.

I'm worried, Mr. Speaker, that we do have the Bloc Québécois with quite an incredible agenda, that agenda being to divide, to take Quebec out of Confederation. It's almost beyond belief that Canadian taxpayers are going to be paying money, it looks like, to an official opposition that will have special perks, special ability to make their case. Their whole *raison d'être* is to simply take Quebec out of Confederation, and the taxpayers will be paying for that strategy. I don't like it. I'm glad there is a strong federal government, and I'm glad there's a Francophone, frankly, that leads the Liberal Party, that can best deal with this particular problem.

Mr. Speaker, I think it important as well to congratulate the members, that represent two parties, who have been elected from Alberta. It looks like our party, the federal Liberal Party, has elected four members in the Edmonton area. There is a recount on one of them. That is good news for Alberta because Albertans will have an ability to provide input into cabinet and to provide input into caucus. For a long time Liberals who have seen a

federal Liberal government in existence have not had that opportunity. That's good for Alberta. I also want to congratulate those who have been elected on behalf of the Reform Party. Nobody can deny that Mr. Manning has built up a truly incredible success in a very short period of time. Whether you like the policies of Reform or not, we must acknowledge that tremendous success and acknowledge, too, that many of the issues that Reform holds high, places great importance on, like parliamentary reform and holding a government to fiscal responsibility, are issues that are indeed important in today's Canadian life. So we congratulate the Liberals and the Reformers, congratulate Mr. Manning and Mr. Chrétien.

## 2:50

I now think it important that we put on the record some of the concerns and the anxiety that we have as Albertans for our own elected representatives and for those in Ottawa who will get this message. Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about our economic well-being. We have a huge debt. We have consistent deficits. I'm glad that Mr. Chrétien has promised that a plan and a program will be put in place to deal with that deficit and debt problem. It's going to be a very interesting challenge for the federal Liberals to work through the matter of creating opportunity and jobs, most particularly dealing with infrastructure job creation, and still maintaining a program of dealing with deficits and debt. This issue of infrastructure repair, infrastructure job creation is not going to be an easy one to tackle. In our own province I recall the city of Calgary through its then mayor, the now Premier, representing that the infrastructure problems of Calgary were not as serious as the infrastructure problems of other cities in Alberta. If that is the case, then this is going to have to be accounted for in the strategy that the federal Liberal government employs. How are you going to deal with cities or communities that don't have an infrastructure problem and those that do? How are you going to ensure that governments that have a plan to deal with deficit and debt are not strayed from that program, not taken from that track of dealing with deficit and debt? This caucus will do everything in its power to ensure that we help meet that challenge at the provincial and the federal levels.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important things for our newly elected Alberta Members of Parliament is to ensure that all provinces are treated equally. I must say that I am disturbed about comments that Mr. Bouchard has made on behalf of some people in Quebec, and particularly on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, comments that say that somehow Quebec hasn't been treated fairly in allocation of financial resources in Canada. We have had two extensive analyses done of this particular problem, one by an economist in Calgary, another by an economist who now happens to be part of this Liberal caucus in this Assembly. Those reports, those analyses clearly indicate that if anything Quebec has been treated most generously by all of the people in Canada. Somebody who stands and – I was going to say “misleads” – attempts to fool the people that elect him or her on this issue, I think this is most dangerous for Canada. Our elected representatives have to be armed with the necessary information, and perhaps the government and its resources can make that information available to ensure that that myth is debunked and to ensure that all people are treated equally.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for this Assembly, for Albertans to tell Ottawa through their elected representatives that there should be no tinkering with the Canada health care system to take away the kind of medicare system that we enjoy and like and that the issue for some governments where they muse or think about or try to implement some sort of user-fee system simply is a system we

do not want. Our elected representatives should be there saying that.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that the federal Liberal leader has indicated his desire to put the issues of the Constitution on the back burner. It looks to me like Mr. Bouchard won't be a very accommodating colleague in that regard. But it does raise the necessity to deal with one constitutional matter that continues to give Albertans difficulty, to give all Canadians difficulty, and that is the solving of problems for aboriginal Canadians. There are many issues in Alberta that are outstanding that need to be resolved. I remember that when I visited some of the aboriginal communities in the north, I was shown roads that were paved to a certain point and then stopped. Somehow, some way people were waiting for the resolution of Indian claims to do the rest of the road paving. These things have to be dealt with and have to be dealt with quickly.

AN HON. MEMBER: He probably went to Nick's riding.

MR. DECORE: Well, I'm trying to be as generous and as fair as I can in this presentation and not too political, Mr. Speaker.

Now is the opportunity for us to alert our representatives and to alert Mr. Chrétien and his federal colleagues that all we want is fairness, all we want is an economy that is strong, all we want is to be heard, all we want is a sensitive government. I'm sure that with Mr. Chrétien's experience we will get that, and we will get it by the involvement of all members of this Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Premier.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, we welcome the opportunity this afternoon to participate in the Standing Order 40 debate with respect to the motion as proposed by the leader of the Liberal Party in the province of Alberta. The Premier of Alberta has already conveyed written congratulations to the elected representatives in the province of Alberta and the leaders of the various parties that have received representation in the Canadian House of Commons and asked me to echo this afternoon his personal congratulations in this Assembly to the new Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Chrétien, to Mr. Bouchard, to Mr. Manning, to Ms McLaughlin, and to convey congratulations as well to the former Prime Minister of Canada, Ms Campbell.

There's no doubt at all that in 1993 there have been great experiences across the land. There have also been very positive experiences in the province of Alberta. There is a similarity between what happened in the province of Alberta in the spring of 1993 and, in fact, what happened across Canada yesterday. It's my understanding that of the 295 members of the Canadian House of Commons, some 200 were new, elected for the first time. In the spring of 1993 in the province of Alberta of the 83 members elected to this Assembly, 49 were elected for the first time. Without any doubt, I guess when the winds of change occur and the opportunities do occur for the democratic principle to unveil itself and the great opportunities for people from across the land and certainly for people in this province to participate, that's fundamental to parliamentary democracy as we know it. It's the instrument that affords the greatest opportunity for all men and women who believe in peace and who believe in participation in an open way. It just doesn't ride with anything else.

Even though the total number of people who voted yesterday in Canada was down perhaps some 4 percent from that in the last federal election, still the participation level appeared to be at the 70 percent level. Mr. Speaker, I say that because in recent weeks

as one talked to individual Albertans, there seemed to be a frustration in the hearts and minds of some who would say, "Well, why should I participate, and why should I vote?" Yet the visuals that we've seen from across the world just in the last month would suggest to all of us in this country that democracy is not only worth defending and fighting for, but democracy is something that must be protected. One could remember that it wasn't very long ago, as well, that we woke up one morning and tanks were in the streets in the city of Moscow, and tanks were being used to shell individuals who sat in a Parliament. Although perhaps in a very naive way they attempted to control that Parliament; they were nevertheless duly elected. It was just a few days ago in the country of Haiti that a minister of the Crown was assassinated by his own police force because he dared to say that the police were doing something wrong. Yet in Canada and certainly in Alberta we've never had that tradition, other than the one unfortunate situation – was it in 1970? – where in fact Canadian Forces were hauled out in one part of this country to deal with law and order.

3:00

Mr. Speaker, we echo again the positive messages taken by the Leader of the Opposition today in terms of those congratulations, and to those individuals who now have the enormous responsibility to represent the people of Alberta in the Canadian House of Commons, in addition to congratulating them, I suspect that in the short term there's going to be an opportunity in fact for all of us to convey certain messages on behalf of the people of Alberta. In essence, of the individuals elected only one has been in the Canadian House of Commons, and that happened to be a lady who was elected in Beaver River and elected perhaps in a strange way.

AN HON. MEMBER: Two members.

MR. KOWALSKI: Are there two? Sorry. Mr. Kilgour as well.

AN HON. MEMBER: Three.

MR. KOWALSKI: Three? Okay. Three, Mr. Speaker, with parliamentary experience in Ottawa. In the short term there will be an opportunity for them to discover that new exciting life working in a parliamentary opportunity, but they're also going to get to Ottawa – and I sincerely hope in the same way that the message has been debated here in the province of Alberta by the Premier of Alberta and then to all of us saying, "Do not get captured by the dome," that in essence the same advice can be provided to our new MPs who will be going to Ottawa.

My experiences, limited as they are and with great reluctance and certainly nothing comparable to those of the hon. gentleman in the Chair – but my understanding is that when one ventures east and gets to that capital created by the taxpayers of the country of Canada, all of them, sometimes we live in an artificial land of great splendour and great opulence, and perhaps you forget the basic roots that you come from. One message that we would certainly want to do by way of conveying our expectations would be to at least convey to our newly elected Members of Parliament that they in fact do not ever allow themselves to become captured by the entity known as Ottawa and the bureaucracy and the system and the cocktail parties and the opportunities to go elsewhere, then to come back to Alberta and be a part of the citizenry of this province, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of MPs in the past who dutifully came back to Alberta every Thursday night or Friday and then went back Sunday afternoon and did that for all of their lives and all of their careers. They came to be known as greatly successful and grass-roots politicians in this province. Our

messages to our new Members of Parliament would be much the same: it is to Alberta and to Albertans that they owe their loyalty first and foremost and it's not to any other system and institution that may exist in other parts of the country.

We would ask as well that our newly and duly elected Members of Parliament would recognize that Alberta is a very important part of Canada. While it may very well be true that the majority of the members elected in the province of Alberta may very well sit on the opposite side of the House from the governing party, that should not be a method and there should not be any intent at all from the governing party to basically say that these men and women who are elected from the province of Alberta are not worthy of being considered as equal men and women in the Parliament of Canada. Secondly, when they do rise in their places, they have earned the right to rise in their places and the messages they convey are to be listened to. Mr. Speaker, those are very important parts because I believe our Members of Parliament are instruments. They're being sent to Ottawa to build, to create, to represent: to build and to create a better Canada and to represent the people of Alberta in that regard.

I would certainly hope as well, Mr. Speaker, that they might want to learn from what happened in Alberta in 1993. This parliament used to be a very acrimonious place. There were times in the past when hon. men and women in this Assembly who were duly elected in fact truly disliked one another, and perhaps that dislike and that acrimony really conveyed across the way how things were done. I really believe since the last one or two days of August of 1993, because of the determined efforts of my leader, the Premier of the province of Alberta, and because of the determined efforts of the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in the province of Alberta, that the method of reform and the opportunities for reform that have come about in this Assembly are really quite unique and quite remarkable. While it is true that we sometimes do have a bad day and Mr. Speaker must rise in his Chair and he must really take the pedantic approach to dealing with his flock in this Assembly, it would seem to me that for the most part there has been a maturity and there has been an improvement in the conduct of the men and women in this Assembly on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. Speaker, we would sincerely hope that such would be the new – the new – approach in the Canadian House of Commons. We daresay that of the 295 members who were elected – and some 200 new ones were elected – there was absolutely no doubt in any of our minds, and we know it to be true, that Canadians have lost a great deal of respect for their parliamentarians. Part of that loss of respect has been the conduct of those hon. men and women and the manner in which they have conducted themselves in the Canadian House of Commons.

So there is an opportunity for a new beginning. There is an opportunity for a new approach. Mr. Speaker, I know that the House leader of the Liberal Party would echo what I'm going to say: we take a great deal of pride in some of the reforms that were brought into this Assembly. We believe very sincerely in reading the party platforms of the federal Liberal Party and the federal Reform Party. In fact, there is quite a matching of similarities when it comes to reform of Parliament itself. The opportunity is there. It is now up to those men and women to ensure that the opportunity turns into fact and reality. It would be quite regrettable if in fact they showed up in the circus and immediately reverted to their old traditional ways of dislike and distrust and mistrust, because at no time in Canadian history that I can understand are we ever going to have a more unique situation than the one we have now. We have a large national majority government with the Official Opposition represented only

from one province with a particular mandate of its own. The possibilities for regionalism or parochialism or provincialism in this country have never been more acute.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the motion put forward by the leader of the Liberal Party asked for some expectations and some suggestions. In addition to those generic ones, we would hope that our Members of Parliament would recognize that the vast majority of this province – in two elections now in 1993, the provincial election of 1993 and the federal election of 1993, the words of fiscal restraint and responsibility I think echoed loudly and clearly across all sectors and all quadrants of this province of Alberta. First of all and at the outset, we would ask that our new Members of Parliament remember that. Remember what the mainstream thought is in the province of Alberta in 1993. These individuals I really sincerely believe must follow the Alberta model of recognizing what we mean by fiscal restraint and responsibility.

Now, in looking at the programs and the platforms of the federal Liberal Party and the federal Reform Party, both of them say that they want to balance the budget. Both of them give different time frames. There has to be a meeting and there has to be a bridging and there has to be a commitment to balancing the federal budget, Mr. Speaker. It would be most irresponsible if in four and a half years we came back and found out in the federal budget that there had been no moves made in that regard, but certainly and clearly and without doubt whatsoever that's a very important area.

It would seem to me that our new Members of Parliament would want to do what we've done here in the province of Alberta. We've reduced the salaries of cabinet ministers. It would probably be a very important new step that could be announced in the next number of days. In fact, it could also be a very important new step for the Prime Minister and some of the other leaders of the other parties to say immediately that they are going to reduce the salaries of federal Members of Parliament. We've eliminated the Alberta pension plan for MLAs in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if that same degree of commitment can be found at the national level. Perhaps in a matter of days we'll be able to find that out as well, if there really is concern about this fiscal responsibility and this fiscal restraint that we've talked about and initiated here in the province of Alberta. We've done more than talk about it; we've initiated it. There is an opportunity there. We're looking at reductions in the whole expenditure of government. We're looking at reductions in the expenditure of caucus fundings and other things. There is never a better time than now for the Canadian House of Commons to take some initiative with respect to that again, and the whole list and the whole litany can go on.

There are some practical concerns as well. We know what the unemployment level is in Canada today. We know what the unemployment level is in the province of Alberta. We also know that the new federal government has basically said that they have a plan that talks about a national \$6 billion infrastructure program with \$2 billion in federal funds over two years. It basically talks about a federal job creation program that says that federal dollars must be matched by the new provincial and municipal spending. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference across this country in terms of the fiscal reality and the fiscal availability of various provinces. There also is a difference in terms of what has been the magnitude of public investment by the taxpayer in different provinces for municipal infrastructure. It is really important that there be absolutely no misunderstanding at all in Ottawa today in terms of what job creation should be.

### 3:10

There has been some claim erroneously going around that at a recent meeting of Premiers, at their last annual Premiers'

Conference, all provincial Premiers supported an infrastructure program, and there seems to be a misunderstanding here. The Premiers did not discuss municipal water, sewer, or public transit projects, all of which are identified to be fundamental under the new federal government's plan of job creation. That has never been identified by the Premiers at the Premiers' Conference. What they talked about is infrastructure that would assist in connecting the various parts of the country together: programs and infrastructure that will allow us to improve our ability to export, such as national highways, rail, airports, communication, and energy infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. We would sincerely hope as we go forward that there is no misunderstanding of that identification and that the Members of Parliament from Alberta would go to Ottawa and recognize that the infrastructure that is being looked at by Premiers across this country is basically one that looks at stuff that unites Canadians and allows trade to go on and allows for greater interchange among Canadians, not things that are just simply projects that might occur willy-nilly here and there.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the new federal Liberal government has basically set a goal of reducing the deficit from its present level of 5.2 percent to 3 percent of the gross domestic product by the end of fiscal 1996-97. It says that it's going to do it through spending cuts, job creation, and economic growth. We sincerely hope and we sincerely hope very shortly that the new Prime Minister of Canada will be inviting all the Premiers of this country to a meeting to discuss the major issue facing Canadians; that is, economic regeneration in this country. It's job creation; it's fiscal responsibility; it's getting Canadians to work.

The leader of the Liberal Party is absolutely correct in his discourse this afternoon when he said that he hopes that the big issue for the next four and a half years will not be constitutional matters. Canadians told us clearly in October of 1992 that that is not the issue that dominates and should dominate the national agenda in this country. They want to focus on deficits, they want to focus on jobs, and they want to focus on economic revival. We sincerely hope and we would welcome – I know the Premier of Alberta would welcome a meeting as quickly as possible in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, the new federal government basically said that for fiscal relations their objective is to, quote, maximize predictability and stability, end quote, for each order of government. We would welcome that. The days of willy-nilly arbitrary handouts by the federal government and then having provinces in this country be in a catch-up mode with respect to what those priorities and directions are have to end. We're looking at two years, three years, and even four years in this Assembly. Our ministers standing up in this Assembly are talking about the direction for the next two, three, and four years. That's a remarkable reform and honesty in this Assembly that is now arrived at for the first time, in my memory, in this Assembly. That idea of stability for Canada is extremely important so that our Provincial Treasurer and all of our ministers and all of the legislators in this Assembly can work together and ensure doing that.

We need to know what the expectation level is about our commitment to the North American free trade agreement on international trade and the GATT arrangements. We need to know soon. The new federal government must know that we expect to continue aggressively marketing and trading Alberta products out of this province, and we need to work hand in hand with the federal government. We are not in competition with the federal government, Mr. Speaker. We know that one of the major party platforms in the new federal government basically is to look at reducing internal trade negotiations, and we're up against a deadline of July of 1994 to in fact minimize the barriers in Canada

and maximize the opportunities. We would sincerely hope – we would sincerely hope – that the new federal government will recognize that and all of our Members of Parliament will go there recognizing that that is extremely important.

The whole question of overlap and duplication is an expectation that we think needs to be dealt with. We're questioning whether or not provinces need certain departments, the federal government needs certain departments. Do we have to have a federal department of consumer and corporate affairs on one side of the street and a provincial department of consumer and corporate affairs on the other side of the street? Our view is no, Mr. Speaker. There's only one taxpayer. That one taxpayer must be protected, and that one taxpayer must be defended. It's our expectation that our new Members of Parliament will really work to eliminate this overlap and this duplication. We believe we have to be very aggressive in terms of the training of people who want to get into the labour market. We have to get away from the willy-nilly handouts of temporary assistance programs that just give a dollar or two extra an hour bonus. We need to train Canadians for the future.

I watched Mr. Chrétien, and I thought he was a classy man last night when he said that he wants to be the leader that leads Canadians into the next millennium. We applauded him for doing that, and as long as he understands the expectations that we're talking about, there's no problem at all.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal agenda says that they want to re-examine with the provinces the funding of the health care system within the five Canada Health Act principles. We welcome that. It tells us that in fact the federal government now wants to consult with the provinces something that has been off the table for a long time and in the same way that Albertans are now being consulted with by their provincial government in terms of health care matters. We believe very strongly – very strongly – and would welcome and would expect that our Members of Parliament would know full well when we talk about consultation that we mean an exchange of ideas. We do not mean simply sitting down at the table and saying: "This is our position. We're intransigent. We can't move." Health is bigger than that. It's interprovincial. It's across the country. It's Canadian. Every province is being hammered in a large way in terms of the preparation of their budgets in this particular area, and we need to work together. It's the expectation of this government and this Assembly – it has to be – that our Members of Parliament will understand the need to co-operate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one matter that is very important to the province of Alberta and very important to the men and women of this Assembly – all members will recall that it was this government that took the previous federal government to court over the question of the goods and services tax. Alberta took the federal government to court over the goods and services tax. We lost. We lost. But on this day of October 26, 1993, we want to remind our newly elected Members of Parliament that we have an expectation. We've read the programming. We've read the positions of the federal Liberal Party, the new federal government in Canada, and they've stated – and Mr. Chrétien did – a commitment to reduce and replace the goods and services tax with, quote, something fairer for consumers and easier to administer for business, end quote. We expect that promise to be made good on.

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

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, I certainly perhaps won't be as eloquent as the Deputy Premier, but I would like to congratulate the people, all members, that ran in the election, as well. I remember recently, as a new member winning

an election, the excitement and thrill of winning. So all of those who ran need to be congratulated whether they won or lost. It is a sacrifice. I'm sure all new members are learning that one has to make a family sacrifice and a commitment to serving the people of whichever consistency you represent. I also would like to congratulate the various leaders of the parties that ran and won and of course Ms Campbell, who wasn't so fortunate.

In particular I'd like to congratulate the members from the Reform Party that will be representing Alberta. Some of you may have noted my considered comments before the election on preferences, but I think the Reform Party carried the agenda of this Conservative Party forward to the federal level. It is very clear that the people of Alberta have in some way vindicated the agenda of the Reform Party by electing I think it's 22 or 23 members, depending on the recount vote. Not only have they vindicated that agenda, but they have vindicated the agenda of this Conservative Party: the agenda that we are trying to put through in trying to bring Alberta back on track, in spite of opposition from members opposite. Now, I trust that members opposite will note the agenda of the Reform Party, note how many members the Reform Party elected in Alberta, and then hopefully be more co-operative in the agenda of the Conservative Party, because it is quite clearly, Mr. Speaker, what people of Alberta want. Quite clear.

3:20

I also believe, Mr. Speaker, we have in the Reform Party a party that will represent Alberta in Ottawa. It's a party that will represent the views of the west. They are a regional party and are committed to the region, and that is Alberta and British Columbia. It's probably the only party that we could have elected that would present a strong western viewpoint. I must say that we need this strong western viewpoint at the present time. We have a Liberal majority government, and perhaps one could argue that it's well and good for economic stability that we do have a majority government. By the same token, we in Alberta have long memories, and we remember the last Liberal majority government and the destruction it brought to the economy of Alberta. So we need this strong voice in the Parliament of Canada to represent the strong Alberta views that we have, to represent the concerns that we have in Alberta in terms of economic issues. I believe the Reform Party will do that very adequately.

Not only do we have a strong voice in terms of economic issues, but we have a strong voice on social issues. Now, as you know, Mr. Speaker, we in Alberta are trying to make some major changes to social programs. These changes were once again vindicated by the election of Reform members. They have very similar positions. The Reform people have positions on health care that need to be heard. They have positions on deficit reduction that need to be heard. They cannot only present their own positions, but they can present the position of Alberta to the federal government, the position of Alberta on deficit reduction.

Mr. Speaker, we do not need public works programs that are going to increase the deficit of Alberta by causing Alberta to contribute on a 50-cent-per-dollar basis to create jobs that do not last, to create jobs that last six months and then are finished. That is not the kind of economic development we need in Canada. We need jobs created by small business, as our economic plan indicates. We will create 110,000 permanent jobs over the next four years in Alberta through small business. I would point out that it is small business that creates jobs not only in Alberta but in Canada. I know the figure is over 90 percent of jobs in Alberta are in small business. Those jobs generate \$456,000 of revenue, of income per day in Alberta by small business. That is the kind of jobs we need to create in Canada: small business jobs. Those

jobs are permanent. We do not create small business jobs by spending government money to create roads or to develop infrastructure. That is not the kind of jobs we need, and we do not want that in Alberta. We want permanent jobs, not temporary jobs.

Not only does Reform have a good position to express our concern on economics and deficit reduction – they, for instance, want to reduce, I believe, the deficit of some \$35 billion over three to four years. I heard just this morning that in fact the deficit may be substantially larger than the \$35 billion we were expecting. However, Mr. Speaker, with a program that Reform is adapting from our policies, it can be done.

Reform also has a parliamentary agenda much similar to our agenda. Reform wants to bring in free votes. I must say that this is an issue that was co-operated with by members on the other side as well, and I would congratulate members on the other side for working together with us to put forward our idea of free votes and accepting our idea of free votes. Now, realizing that we had the majority, they may have just gone along because they knew we would win the day anyway. They did concede to our free vote idea. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's usual to heckle when we're trying to congratulate on a . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, in my brief history in this Legislature I can assure you I have certainly never heckled on a Standing Order 40, and I would encourage the members to show the same kind of courtesy and respect. [Mr. Havelock waved a white flag] Oh, boy. How do you continue after that? Thank you, Mr. Havelock.

Not only does Reform have a position on free votes, Mr. Speaker, they have a position on members' Bills and members' issues. Once again it is a continuation of this party's agenda to allow private members to bring their Bills forward. In fact, if we check the records, not only will I vote in favour of this Liberal motion, I have voted in favour of several other Liberal motions in the past, and that is one of the advantages of free votes. That is one of the advantages of having private members: the availability of bringing their Bills forward and their motions forward. This as well is an agenda of the party that will be representing us in the west. I hope that the Liberal majority there will be as considerate and as concerned about these issues in terms of free votes, in terms of the availability of time for private members' statements, in terms of the availability of time for private members' Bills that these members opposite have.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that I have already contacted our new member as recently as last evening – I guess I'm not allowed to mention his name – the member from Medicine Hat. Now, he indicates a great desire to work with this government and with this party. In fact, the four provincial constituencies that are involved in the federal constituency – Cypress-Medicine Hat, Medicine Hat, Bow Valley, and one other one whose name has presently slipped my mind, represented by the member that sits over there. He is interested in meeting with us and discussing issues of common concern to the people of Alberta. He assures me that he will make strong representation in the federal Parliament on the basis of issues that we raise from southern Alberta. I would encourage all members, including those opposite, who are represented and who will be well represented by a Reform member to make contact with that member. I am sure they will all be more than willing to work with them and bring forth the Conservative agenda, the Reform agenda to the Parliament in Ottawa.

Now, in my present constituency this member is committed to working very diligently for us, but he's going to find it very trying. I know from discussions with the previous member for Medicine Hat that there are 10 hours' travel one way to get to Medicine Hat from Ottawa on weekends. That means the member must take up to 20 hours traveling back and forth every weekend, and that is a great time commitment. On top of that he will have a constituency that is about double mine. My constituency consists of approximately 10,000 square miles. It goes right to the Saskatchewan border, all the way down to the American border, and just past a small community called Burdett and follows the county line down to the American border as well. In my constituency I intend to hold public meetings in all of the communities. Now, I could list all of these communities, Mr. Speaker, but I see you nodding your head in the negative so I won't. [interjections] No, I won't list all the members of the constituency either. I intend to have public meetings in all these small communities to meet with these constituents and find out what their concerns are, and our new member assures me that he will do likewise. He will be traveling this vast and beautiful constituency to meet with these people and discuss with them the issues that are of concern to them. Those issues, of course, by his election we know are the deficit, we know are expensive social programs that we can no longer afford. So our new member is certainly interested in trying to find out and discover and meet with the people of Alberta, particularly southern Alberta.

Once again I would congratulate all those who have won, Mr. Speaker, and provide hope that they will adequately represent us from Alberta in the federal House. Once again, I'd just mention that I'm quite happy to support a Liberal motion.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

3:30

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I was hesitating because I didn't know if under our orders at 3:30 we automatically revert. I guess we don't.

AN HON. MEMBER: You can go 20 minutes.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's not my intent to go 20 minutes, and it's not my intent to get into a pile of drivel. I think what we're doing here is congratulating successful candidates and parties that were able to present their views to Canadians, to Albertans. They were able to present them in such a way that there was a comfort level, and I think that's very, very important. If one looks at what happened, one can, I guess, relate it to a mood for change. Certainly the politics of today is much, much more sensitive and much different than it was a few years ago. There is a great deal more responsiveness that is now expected on the part of the electorate and rightfully so.

If we look at what happened, I think we have to give credit where credit is due. Yes, the Reform Party did remarkably well in Alberta, stunningly well, and stunningly well in British Columbia for a new party. If we look on a national basis and we look at the new government, what Jean Chrétien did was really, really remarkable. The numbers, the fact that it's a majority government caught most people off guard. I think the reason why: he offered Canadians hope; he offered Canadians expectations. It's fine to stand up in this House and kick a bit because the type of program that may have been offered is not to a member's liking. Nevertheless, Jean Chrétien did offer Canadians hope. He did not get up there and say that there will not be any jobs for the

next four or five years. That was a very, very important factor to Canadians. It's a very important factor when our children get out of university and they're faced with doom and gloom and they're faced with a realization that there's nothing there for the next four or five years. That's not acceptable to Canadians. That's not acceptable to parents. What the Liberal Party of Canada was able to offer was hope.

What happened in Quebec, I share the comments fully that were made by the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry. For us the taxpayer, for Canadians to have to pay for the strategy, for the research, for the resources that this party is going to put together because they want to separate, they don't want to be part of us: it's strange; it's astounding. It's difficult to comprehend. It's difficult to comprehend why in a federal election Act we wouldn't see a requirement that there be representation from a minimum number of provinces to try and avoid the regionalization that we can see occur. I guess what really makes it more difficult is that because of the fact that the Bloc Québécois was able to achieve Official Opposition status, we not only pay them what they would normally get for research and resources, but they're going to get extra because they have that Official Opposition title: the extra resources, the extra pay, the extra perks, and so on. I don't know what's going to happen. I don't think any of us know what's going to happen. We don't know if the strategy by that particular party will be to try and separate from Canada within the next three, four years. It's difficult to say. It is extremely difficult to comprehend that we could wake up the morning after the election and find that what happened happened. I guess the very, very positive fact is that it was a majority government elected, which of course then minimizes to a great degree the damage, the harm, that can be done by factions across the country, one representing basically western provinces, the other one representing one province. We spoke on that the other day in the House when we dealt with the budget for FIGA.

Mr. Speaker, it's very, very important that we send this message of congratulations to the leaders of the two parties that elected members here in Alberta and to all those Members of Parliament that were elected in Alberta. They're the ones that will be carrying our voice, will be carrying our concerns, will be expressing our desires, our demands in Ottawa.

On that note I'll conclude. Thank you.

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

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In rising to speak in support of this motion, I would like to begin by congratulating the hon. Leader of the Opposition for the manner in which he has used the words in the motion. As I was watching television last night and the numbers started to be displayed across the screen, and the Liberal numbers had gone from 140 to 145 and 160 and were moving upward at that point, I thought that it would be a rather interesting day in the Assembly of Alberta the following day, because certainly there might be a Motion 40, and it would be seen as an opportunity for the Liberals to really hammer at the Progressive Conservatives. That has not happened, and therefore I feel quite comfortable and actually honoured to be able to stand and congratulate them for the wording that's been used.

Breaking the motion into its three components, that I find most interesting, and just to deal with the recognition of the achievement. I am sure that today there are a number of Albertans who must feel like I felt on June 16. It was first, I think, shock and perhaps some amazement. I can remember saying to a dear friend of mine: "Thank God I've been elected. Now what do I do?" I suspect that there are a few Reform people around that might be

asking themselves the same thing. They're to be encouraged. I can empathize with the feeling of excitement and tension that they must feel as they make their preparations to head for Ottawa.

I'm sure there are many among them that find that this event has come upon them in very quick time. I believe, as I know do others that worked on my campaign that live in the constituency of Lethbridge-West, that the federal government, at the time then a Progressive Conservative government, had the opportunity to say to the people of Canada that it was time to cut the deficit, and in fact I believe that the communication spin, or the optics, as the word is sometimes used, had the people of Canada prepared. They had the people of Canada prepared for some cuts in the federal deficit. When the hon. member from Alberta whose constituency I'm not sure of but somewhere near Vegreville, as an MP, a very respected man – and I respect the man today – had that opportunity to cut that deficit, and in actual fact, if my memory serves me correctly, showed an increase in spending of 1 and a half percent, there were many people in southern Alberta who I think at that particular point in time turned their back on the present government and said, "Now, where are we going to go?" I'm sure that at that particular point in time there were people who rose from their couches and said, "I'm going to get involved in the process." In fact, some of them might have gone provincially, as I did, and others perhaps federally and got involved in the Reform movement. So they are rookies today. Again, I suggest that there are 49 of us here in this room that can empathize with them. Really, our hearts go with them on their way to Ottawa. I hope they're able to find a way in which they can contribute to the betterment of Canada.

### 3:40

In terms of the congratulations to the two leaders and certainly to Jean Chrétien, I think the story of this man is absolutely amazing. I'm not sure that he might be on the order of some of our American politicians who have gone into the outback and come forward, but certainly this man has been on the political scene for many, many years. I can't think of a politician other than perhaps Pierre Elliott Trudeau that sticks in my mind as much as Jean Chrétien. He's been on the scene, and I think he has made just a tremendous contribution to Canada. I'm actually quite happy for him as an individual. I might have some disappointments in terms of the party that he belongs to and the success, perhaps, that they had, but I feel very, very good about Jean Chrétien as an individual person.

Again, if we want to look at why some of the results happened in the way that they did, there was no surprise in southern Alberta, I think, to what happened last night. I can just remember the shock that many of us felt when we awoke one morning – I don't remember the particular morning, but it was late in the campaign – and there happened to be an advertisement that was being played on television asking us to think twice. Well, I'll tell you, a lot of Albertans thought two and three and 10 times about the sort of campaign tactics that were being used and in fact then, I think, also started to look elsewhere to place a vote.

So it's in this context that I want to also, then, congratulate Preston Manning. I want him to be aware of at least my impression of what happened last night. While of course we have to refer to them as parties, and in this case we refer to the Reform Party, I think last night was more of an indication of a movement than a party. I think that what happened last night was that there was an opportunity for people of all kinds of stripes, of Progressive Conservative, of perhaps Liberal, and certainly of New Democrat philosophies that grabbed ahold of a movement and voted Reform. I'm personally thankful that they did and that



we've had, then, this tremendous number of elected Reform officials now as MPs that are going to Ottawa. But any movement will be short in duration if they do not find the opportunity in the House. With the Bloc Québécois being the Official Opposition, I'm not sure how they're going to be able to do it other than, you know, maybe some backroom manoeuvring and certainly some astuteness within the House. But any movement, unless they start to define what it is that they are about, and rather than some of the populist, perhaps, planks in their particular platform that were presented during the election campaign – unless they are able to take those and make those truly characteristic of the Reform Party, I think then there might be some difficulty. Preston Manning certainly seems to show the strength of character, certainly seems to have the background, and seems to have a team behind him that has the experience and will be able to take this movement into a frontline party. I hope that I am seeing this correctly, and I wish him all the luck in that.

In terms of the best interests of Albertans, of course the federal budget is the prime interest that my constituents in Lethbridge-West have. Not only here at the provincial level but at the federal level this has to be wrestled to the ground. There is no question about this. The federal PCs had their opportunity and failed, and now I think it is paramount with this opportunity that the new majority government representing the Liberals find a way in which to reduce this federal deficit. I know it's going to be difficult when you run and are elected on job creation, but they must find that or they will bear the wrath I'm sure of the voters the next time around.

I'm concerned about areas of agriculture, again not because I operate a farm or a cattle business. I cannot ignore the importance that agriculture has to an urban riding such as mine in Lethbridge-West. I'm not sure exactly where the Liberals will be coming from, but there were different portions of their platform that were presented during the election that caused me some concern. I think that as provincial politicians we're going to have to be very, very observant and really keep our eyes and ears attuned to what is happening on the federal basis in agriculture.

My biggest fear, though, is in energy, and it comes from a personal experience. I happened to be sitting in Kingston, Ontario – and it happened to be a bar – the night that Marc Lalonde announced his national energy program. I was sitting there having a drink. [interjection] Actually by myself, Butch. [interjection] No, it wasn't nonalcoholic. I was part of the oil patch in those days, and I was a good member of the oil patch in those days. I remember that sitting at a table just next to me, one fellow turned to the other and said, "Now we've got those Albertans." That was the phrase that was used. Now, the reason I happened to be in Kingston was that I was trying to recruit people for an operation that we had been developing in the city of Lethbridge. It happens to be located in the constituency of my colleague for Lethbridge-East. We were down there pouring through the universities, and while we were there, we were going from city to city trying to pick up skilled people, because at that time we were short of people both from a manufacturing standpoint and also in the oil service group, that I was also particularly involved with. What we had within a period of – it seems like only six to eight months to me now. It could have been longer; it could have been shorter. I came back from that trip to Ontario, where I had been trying to bring jobs back into Alberta, and in fact was giving layoff notices. We were actually downsizing our operations. We were headquartered in Alberta, but we were operating throughout Canada in the oil patch, and instead of adding jobs, we were now sending layoff notices to people. There was no question as to what the reason was; it was the national energy program.

Job creation leads to training. I think, in that particular sense, that we have to again be very astute as to what job creation is going to mean on the federal level as it then translates and transfers itself here into the province. They talked at some length about the number of apprentices that would be added to the work force, and that's fine. I don't have any particular problem with that, but they're going to have to work with our people in order to have that accomplished. The current situation within Canada, whether it's right or wrong, would have us as having the responsibility in terms of the apprenticeship program, and I'm sure we'll want to work with them. But those apprentices had best be for real jobs. I don't think any of us, and certainly not myself, are interested in job creation just for the sake of getting a few folks into deadhead, dead-end jobs. It raises an expectation that can't be filled, and then unemployment numbers become even more magnified than what they particularly are.

Similar to my colleague for Cypress-Medicine Hat, I had the opportunity – first of all, I phoned the federal PC candidate in my riding and expressed of course the concern that I had that he had not been successful. He indicated at the time that one of the concerns he had was that perhaps provincially Albertans were moving too quickly. I pointed out to him – I didn't try to do it bluntly, particularly, but I did want to indicate to him that the platform of the Reform Party showed a deficit reduction that would have, in our terms, much quicker and much deeper cuts than what we were doing here in Alberta.

### 3:50

I then took the opportunity to speak to the winning candidate. You can't really call him a rookie, I guess. In the case of the Lethbridge riding, the person has spent many more hours and days than all of us 49 rookies combined, at least to this particular point. I did address him then as a person that would be heading for Ottawa for the first time and wanted to assure him that I would work with him in whatever way I could in those particular areas where both federal and provincial matters might be concerned.

It does remind me of a question that I was asked last night at a phone-in show that was being held in our constituency. The asker of the question seemed very, very concerned that now we would have the Reform Party representing us federally and in Lethbridge, provincially, a Liberal on one side and a Conservative on the other. My answer to that question last night – and I feel the same way this morning – is that I don't believe the Member for Lethbridge-East and I will have any difficulty at all working with the new federal MP. In fact, when I talked to the new federal MP he felt just the same. I think there's an opportunity here now for the citizens of Lethbridge and district. Representing all of the particular interests that are now on the political scene, it should in fact create good government for the citizens of Lethbridge. That of course is my wish, and I'm sure it's the wish of the Member for Lethbridge-East as well.

So we find silver linings, sir, in whatever happens. There's a new Canada. There's no question. Just what I am probably most excited about with the Bloc Québécois is that now we Canadians can face up to the fact of two nations. We no longer can hide behind two federal parties that might or might not be the same. The Bloc Québécois is going to be in the House. The Reformers are going to be in the House. We're going to have a truly interesting time. We shall be counted. They shall be counted, and we shall be counted. It will be very, very interesting what our own particular visions of Canada now are, and we will have an excellent opportunity to take us into the next century. I guess I stand here today looking at that silver lining and almost feeling, Mr. Speaker, that we in fact have been blessed, because now we

can face up to those issues that are in front of us. We can get them out of the way before the turn of the next century, and then we can be truly great.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member for Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I only want to take a few minutes. This resolution seemed to take on a life of its own. It was intended to be congratulations and also to wish the very best to everyone.

As I think the New Testament says: there's a time for living and a time for dying; there's a time for loving and a time for crying. I thought we were on the time for loving, but I heard a lot of crying over there. All I wanted to get across was that as somebody that's won and lost many elections, I think that anyone that serves in a public spirit deserves congratulations. Let's face it; already the members opposite were starting to bring up some of the brickbats that they were ready to throw. So I think this should be a day when you're congratulating and wishing them well. There will be lots of other days when you can say nasty things and wonder what they're doing. I wanted to sort of bring the debate back to wishing them the very best.

Also, to those that may be concerned, I have shared a constituency with a Reformer for some years now. The only Reformer in the House is from my district. We seem to get along. I think you can get along even with Conservatives, Mr. Speaker. There are so few of them now. [interjection] I'm sure that it would be almost downright inhumane to say anything there. As a former leader who has seen my party wiped out when I was the leader, I know a little bit of what she feels like, too. We didn't have congratulations here, but anybody that serves in the public sector deserves congratulations.

I don't want to get into discussing what's going to happen with Reform or Bloc Québécois or the Liberals or the Conservatives or the NDP. I just feel that this is a very good day for Canada, and I want to wish everyone well.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Labour.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise, too, being moved by the Leader of the Official Opposition here in our House to also join him and others in responding to this particular motion. I see it broken into a number of parts, much as the Member for Lethbridge-West has identified some.

First, I'd like to say, where the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry talks about achievement, that there was quite an achievement in terms of what happened last night. Obviously we have to deal with the federal PC numbers. They seem to have diminished somewhat. There's a message there for us. It's a hard message, and it's a very tough one. It's the message that political life is temporal at best, that none of us should think that we can continue in an indefinite way forever but that times of reckoning do come. I'm not saying it was reality, but there was a perception that the federal PC Party had not been listening for some period of time, and different people will identify when that may have started or not. I'm not commenting whether that was a reality or not, but that was the message, and when people think you're not listening, they will give you a very, very strong message. To me there was something achieved there, though, at tremendous personal cost to the worthy PC candidates who ran in that particular election. I think that for Mr. Charest to be elected is somewhat historical: one of two in the entire country. I guess the positive side for him is that if at the next election there are eight elected, if he is leading in the House, he may be the only House leader federally

to have quadrupled the numbers in one election span. So there are positive things to look forward to, even though I'm sure he must be considerably torn at this particular moment. Those are some things for us to contemplate in terms of political longevity. The voters have indeed the final say, and that is where our respect has to remain.

An achievement for the Liberals obviously. For whatever reason a message went out, and people somehow felt they deserved their support. We can't deny that; we have to acknowledge that. They didn't fragment. They managed to keep a certain agenda throughout the campaign. Whether or not we agree with the policies, that was an achievement in that lengthy campaign. I think all of us can identify with the fact that that's painful: the number of days that that campaign has to go on. I think probably Newfoundland has the best idea of any. I think their campaign length is 21 days. That spares the electorate a lot of pain and certainly those involved in it. It was an achievement. They got a message across that they deserved support. Now they have the formidable task of course of earning that support, and they'll need to be applying themselves to that.

The Bloc achieved their purposes. Their policies clearly are: Quebec first. That makes some people angry. That upsets some people, but we have to acknowledge that they were very open about that. They were very honest. They significantly got their electorate behind them. I will look forward with some curiosity in terms of how they are going to be, if indeed after recounting they are the Official Opposition – that has yet to be determined; I recognize that. In light of their own national dreams for the province of Quebec, it will be interesting to see how they salute the flag, take the oath of allegiance, and, indeed, represent all of Canada as an Official Opposition. That is the job of the Official Opposition. I will look forward with some curiosity to how they do that. Again, we have to acknowledge that they were open and honest. It was quite an achievement to get the number of people elected that they did.

4:00

Obviously, there was a huge achievement on the part of the Reform Party led by Preston Manning. Again, whether we agree with the policies or not and whether people are happy about the results or not, they conveyed a message certainly in western Canada that they could be trusted, that they would speak for people and concerns in western Canada and in one small area in Ontario. I think they've been officially campaigning in the province of Ontario only two years, and it's quite significant that they achieved something like 20 percent of the vote. Again, no matter what part of the political spectrum you're from, that is quite an achievement. They hit a lot of the right nerves.

Certainly their endorsement here in Alberta was in an indirect way an endorsement of our fiscal policies. We've been very straightforward in terms of reducing our deficit and being very determined on that. That was the main message they carried forward. Albertans are responding to that message. I think they triggered a response in people that they would speak for issues that both national parties, the Liberals and Conservatives, were perceived – and I emphasize “perceived” – not to be addressing. The deficit again comes up, the whole area of listening, reform of the institutions of government, dealing more significantly with issues related to crime. A lot of things that were at least perceived by people as not being dealt with over the last number of years – they said clearly, “We're going to deal with them,” and that got support. So the significant achievement of the Reform Party needs to be acknowledged.

The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry then talks about sending congratulations to every successful Alberta candidate, and I think that's proper. Speaking for myself in Red Deer, I will also be congratulating those who were not, quote, successful, because anybody who has the nerve, the courage, maybe the stupidity at times to throw their hat in the political ring needs to be congratulated for that. No matter what we think or people think of politicians or elected people, that's a significant achievement. Just to make that decision to put yourself in front of the public and say, "Here's what I stand for and here's what I believe", to know that people are going to disagree with you, to know that they're going to remember what you say, to know that if you make a mistake it will be recorded forever takes a lot of courage.

I will be congratulating Doug Fee, our former Progressive Conservative member. A very hardworking elected person who always put considerable and, I would say, even excessive time and effort into his constituency work needs to be and will be congratulated by me for working so hard as an elected member. Also, the NDP candidate, Karen McLaren, will be hearing from me. Although I don't agree with most of the policies enunciated by that party, again the courage to go forth under formidable odds, not really having any chance certainly in our area in central Alberta of being elected, and yet willing to put it on the line and speak up for things she strongly believes in needs to be acknowledged. I say the same for Joan Hepburn of the National Party and Ken Arnold with the Natural Law Party.

I had the opportunity to run against Ken, or he against me, in the provincial election, so he's now put his name on the line twice in a period of months, enunciating certain principles which, let's face it, have garnered no small amount of ridicule. The thought of not having to pave roads because you've developed a new mode of transportation: certainly when he enunciated that at our public meetings, he got quite a bit of ridicule. Yet he is continuing now in another arena, federally, to enunciate principles he believes in. I will say about Ken, too, that of all the candidates at our public forums, he was the only one who didn't actually get antagonistic. He didn't throw barbs and get caught up in the heat of the debate. I have to admit that even my own gentle self from time to time was moved to comments in the debates that could be deemed to be heated. Ken always floated above that and, I think, managed to set a bit of an example for the rest of us. So he'll be getting congratulations from me also.

Our Liberal candidate, Dobie To, again an individual in the face of formidable odds, is someone who's known in the business community and operates a business. Sometimes people worry that stating certain principles could hurt their business, but I would say Dobie set enough of a record of serving the public through his business that he knew he didn't have to risk that, that he would be respected for his stand even against formidable odds. I'll still stop in at Dobie's restaurant for the odd fortune cookie and give him my congratulations. Those congratulations will go to all the people who ran in Red Deer.

In terms of expectations for the best interests of Albertans, that certainly is where scrutiny will now lie for members elected from Alberta. I would say to the federal Liberals that we all need to give them the benefit of considerable doubt that many of us carry in terms of what their performance will be. We do need to do that, to wait and see their performance. As far as deficit reduction, we know they don't have a history of severe restraint on the financial spending side. We know they have a history quite the opposite, of not being concerned about large deficits and debt. So even though we've heard that there is some determination to reduce that, we will encourage them in that area. I certainly

withhold judgment, but I will be watching with some trepidation as to how they pursue that.

The policies enunciated by the federal Liberals during the campaign also cause some angst on my part and, I would think, on the part of some of my colleagues. When they talk about huge plans in terms of rebuilding infrastructure and getting people working, those are nice sounding things, but we know there are dollar figures behind them. I think they enunciated a figure of some \$6 billion in terms of programs. The difficulty for us will come when these are presented to provinces on a cost-shared basis, and where they may be looking at job stimulation programs we might not philosophically or even fiscally agree with. The hook of the cost-shared approach could impact on our own Deficit Elimination Act. We don't know that, but we're going to have to watch that carefully.

Some of their concerns about NAFTA don't coincide with most Albertans' and certainly not with mine. I was glad to hear them during the campaign talk about the fact that they want to look at reducing interprovincial trade barriers and overlap of federal/provincial duplication. We'll pursue that with them with optimism but with some degree of concern also.

We will be meeting with our Alberta MPs. Certainly I've already indicated to the successful Reform candidate in Red Deer, Mr. Bob Mills, that I want to be meeting with him and discussing issues of concern to us as Albertans, certainly shared areas of concern within our own constituency so we can work together in terms of addressing them.

I leave with a thought. If we're passing on congratulations, we know that all federal MPs will be poring over *Alberta Hansard* to see word by word exactly what all of us had to say. I'm sure that will be their first method of business. There's a really strong exhortation from a former political leader in years past that I'd like to quote. Actually he goes back quite a few years. He held political office for four decades and governed in a particularly precarious situation. He was a ruler of the country of Israel close to 3,000 years ago, but his words were faithfully transcribed down through the years. The person's name was Solomon. He actually was a historical figure. He did live and exist in time – that's a proven fact – so his words can be taken with some credence.

#### 4:10

I would pass on what he said to these newly elected people, but also to ourselves because his admonition speaks to me. He was offered the opportunity to have anything. He was offered that by the divine ruler of all people and all things. God basically said to him: have anything you like, because you have found favour in my eyes. Think about it; you're offered anything. Some people might want to be head of a committee or have a certain type of car, or they might want to be Leader of the Opposition. Those are things which could loom large in people's minds, usually toward personal gain. Solomon's response so impressed the divine, all-knowing ruler that in fact a lot of other things were added to him because of his response. That's the admonition I'll leave with our newly elected federal MPs, but reflecting back, I also take it to heart myself. Solomon said: give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure for me to rise today to speak in support of this motion. I have to be quite honest with members of the House and with you, Mr. Speaker. When I heard that the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry was going

to propose a motion today, I thought it could tend to be a little partisan, and I was very pleased with the wording of the motion. This motion is something I have absolutely no problem supporting. There has been a good deal said this afternoon on several different areas, but I would like to deal particularly with the last part of the motion where he suggests that a message of congratulations be sent to all the individual MPs who were elected last night.

Certainly, as a relative newcomer myself, I can well imagine the day those people are having, and I would like to offer a little bit of advice from my small amount of experience here in the Alberta Legislature. I'm sure that once these new members get to Ottawa, to a large extent they will be going through many of the same things new members here in the Alberta Legislature went through. I guess what I would like to convey when you do convey our words of encouragement to these newly elected MPs, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that they must remember their roots here in Alberta and the fact that when you look at the results of the election last night, the extremely strong showing of Reform in western Canada particularly and in Alberta shows that the people of Alberta are deeply concerned about debt and deficit reduction. That message came through very loud and clear in the recent provincial election campaign, and it's been said before that for some reason it seems the federal Conservatives were not perceiving that as coming through as strong as what they should have.

There's no doubt in my mind that the Reform members representing us in Ottawa must always keep in mind that they have to deliver on what they've promised. Certainly that's what we as a provincial government are doing, delivering on what we promised. It will be very difficult for them to do so in an opposition role. We have had experience here in this Legislature with the opposition in a minority situation, and they certainly have ample opportunity to affect laws and Acts that are proposed by the government. As we have seen, we've had some terrific debate in this Legislature, and the members opposite have brought forward some very timely and good advice. From time to time certainly we have considered it on this side of the House, and it has given us an opportunity to broaden our perspective. I hope the members representing Alberta in Ottawa will look at that role they will have and take an opportunity to have input as opposition members representing Alberta.

Now, we also have some Liberal members from Alberta that will be sitting on the government side of the House. Those members are the ones we need to send the strongest message to, because those are the members that will be in government caucus and must be delivering the message to the rest of the government in Ottawa that Alberta will not stand for some of the shenanigans that went on in previous Liberal governments. [interjections] Well, I look forward to Alberta representatives in the Liberal caucus carrying through on their election promise to eliminate the GST. I think that should be most interesting. Indeed, I look forward to that. It has been said by some – certainly not by me, but by some – that what they will end up doing is eliminating the GST and bringing in another tax of similar circumstance but with a different name. Certainly we would welcome the opportunity as Albertans to encourage our representatives to try and avoid that situation. I think the Deputy Premier made it very clear earlier that this government, the government of Alberta, was the only provincial government that in fact fought the GST, that in fact took the federal government to court on the GST. I don't think there would be any opposition from this government if we had Alberta representatives in Ottawa getting rid of the GST.

I also want to talk a little bit about what it's like to be a newly-elected representative, because the people from Alberta are going to be experiencing that. With the exception of one member, all

the members from Alberta will be brand new. [interjection] Two? Three? Excuse me. The vast majority will be new. I think it's important that they realize what they've gotten themselves into and that they be prepared to dedicate their lives, their personal lives that they no longer will have, serving their constituents. As a provincial representative from a relatively small constituency, I know that it's time consuming enough. The federal representatives with much larger constituencies, larger geographic areas in the rural constituencies and in the cities, the Calgary and Edmonton areas, will have a much larger role to play than we as provincial representatives. They have to be continually listening to what people have to say. If I've learned nothing else as a representative, I have learned to listen to people.

I was participating a while ago in a ceremony at the senior centre in Medicine Hat, and we had a terrific conversation with a number of people after the official part of the program was over. There were a number of people there who expressed to me deep concern about some of the cost-cutting this government is taking. I listened to all of them and they were concerned. But you know, Mr. Speaker, we talked a little while longer and started to talk about what debt is and what deficit is, and these people really didn't understand the situation we've gotten ourselves into in Alberta and the same situation in Canada. People don't seem to realize that we're not talking about eliminating debt. We're talking about eliminating a deficit, and that message has to come through. When these newly elected MPs are listening to their constituents, hearing their concerns, the message has to come through that government is no different than any individual sitting in this Legislature this afternoon or any of the people in the constituencies back home. No one, governments included, can continually live beyond their means without suffering dire consequences. I think we've seen the consequences of a government that permits that to happen. I think the people of Alberta particularly will no longer put up with a government that insists on living beyond its means. They've made it very clear to us as provincial representatives, and now I think they've made it extremely clear to the federal politicians in their role representing us in Ottawa.

I do want to thank the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry for bringing this motion forward, giving everyone an opportunity to speak to the motion, a very well-done, well-worded motion. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to it this afternoon. I, too, will be happy to support this motion.

4:20

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with pride that I stand to speak to this motion that our hon. leader put forward. I think it's very important that irrespective of what political stripe you come from, we indeed congratulate every successful Alberta candidate and send congratulations to each of the leaders.

It's with interest that I listened to comments from both sides of the floor. As a new Canadian and Albertan, the first thing that comes to my mind when we're looking at democracy and one thing that has always made me uncomfortable – and I hear it continually within this Assembly – is the phrase that we were elected, you were not. I wouldn't be sitting here today if I had not been elected. That is the democratic process. I think as Canadians we have something to learn and we should learn it fast, and I hope every newly elected person notes this: divisionary politics does not serve anyone; it doesn't serve your nation. If we indeed

are going to be successful in competing in a global market, we have to learn to work together. As a former subject of Britain watching the rise of the Scottish Nationalists party and separatism within Great Britain, it certainly has not served that country well.

What I'd say today to every elected person, Mr. Speaker, is that if it hadn't been for politicians not listening or not hearing, I wouldn't be standing here before you today. I decided to get back into the political arena to ensure that people are heard. I'd also like to point out that whether it be Conservatives, Liberals, or Reform, if you don't listen to what's being said, you do not serve your constituents well. One thing I would find refreshing if we could start to see it happening within this Assembly is to move forward and indeed, as some hon. members mentioned, start working together. I would say one area where we can all work together to ensure that Albertans and Canadians are heard is freedom of information, the right to recall, the very things the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat was identifying. We on this side of the House clearly speak on behalf of Albertans when it comes to freedom of information, so I'd ask all members: let's remove partisan politics from this motion and truly take the spirit of the motion and support it unanimously.

Mr. Speaker, thank you.

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

MR. HENRY: Mr. Speaker, a couple of very brief comments. I know we're going on in the hour in the debate. Firstly, I would like to thank my leader for bringing forward this motion and, as well, several members who have spoken, sometimes very generously, in favour of the motion on both sides of the House. I have to admit – and I think all of us in this Legislature, being a part of public life – that last night we had some joys, some excitement, but also some disappointments. There were many women and men across this country – many of whom I know to be good people who have a positive contribution to make – who did not get elected, many who did get elected from several parties. I would like to join in congratulating all those individuals. Public life isn't easy, and everybody in this House knows that. It is difficult, and I think we have a duty to commend those who put their name forward for public life.

I find myself shocked on this side of the House to be consistently lectured about deficit creation and deficit control, and I wonder where that's coming from, given relative histories. I also want to point out that in the parliamentary system there are times in the House when it is very partisan and there are different philosophies and different ideologies we take each other to task on. However, there are those times – the hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan has indicated that – where it is appropriate for us to rise above that. I want to put on record that I am disappointed by the level of some of the debate, particularly from the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat. I thought some of the comments were intended to provoke debate. Some of the comments were very seriously partisan. If I misinterpreted that, I apologize, but I regret those comments being made in the context of this motion.

I very much appreciated the words the hon. Deputy Government House Leader left us with, quotations from Solomon. I appreciated the Member for Lethbridge-West's comments as well.

I would ask all members again to put aside partisan bias. We all shared, I'm sure, excitement and disappointment last night with individual members we may have come across in our professional and personal lives, those who were elected and those who were not. I would ask us to rise in unanimous support of this motion. I would also offer to members that perhaps there are times when we need to recognize that when we have motions from both sides

of the House – and certainly the Government House Leader made some very positive comments – we need to rise above that; we need to speak in a nonpartisan way. Frankly, I believe comments made from a very partisan viewpoint on a matter that I think we all agree should be nonpartisan take away from any other comments made. Again, I want to go on record as expressing disappointment at those comments. I urge everybody to support this motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HERARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to congratulate all candidates and all leaders who ran in the federal election whether they were successful or not. I share the pain of those who were not successful, and I wish to congratulate in a special way those who won their seats in all parts of this great land.

I think it's important to congratulate all successful parties and all successful leaders, including Mr. Bouchard of the Bloc Québécois and Ms McLaughlin of the New Democrats. Now, I look at this motion and I listened very intently as the hon. Leader of the Opposition delivered his congratulations, and I noted that he did not congratulate Mr. Bouchard or Ms McLaughlin. I hope that was an oversight on his part. Mr. Speaker, this is not a time to snub any leader or any party that was successful in running for the federal government. I think it's particularly important not to ignore politicians who were successful in la belle province, the province of Quebec. Quebec is a unique province with its unique set of problems, but they're all Canadians like the rest of us and deserve no less in terms of our congratulations and our friendship. Indeed, we will have to work together for national unity. So while I support the principle of the motion, I certainly hope it was not meant to exclude those I've indicated, and I will vote for the motion in the spirit that it wasn't done deliberately.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion proposed by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Let the record show it carries unanimously.

head:

## Orders of the Day

4:30

head:

## Government Bills and Orders

head:

### Second Reading

CLERK: Bill 12, Liquor Control Amendment Act, 1993.

#### Point of Order

#### Sequence of Business

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

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

MR. WICKMAN: My understanding is that on the scheduling that was agreed to, Bill 10 is to be up for second reading.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared with Bill 10.

MR. WICKMAN: Well, that's the information we have from the government side.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Deputy Government House Leader have a . . .

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to check and see if that was indeed the information that was given on Thursday. We recognize that it's not absolutely written in cement, but wanting to continue the spirit of co-operation and indication that we've had if indeed – I don't have that in front of me, the projected business. But if indeed that is the case – it is? – then we will bow to that. Our member is ready with Bill 10.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, does the Chair understand that we'll be proceeding with Bill 10?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Order Paper does say that the business projected for this day would be Bills 10, 11, or 12. It may be Bill 10 and then Bill 11 or 12. It is a little equivocal.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Given the equivocation, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the indulgence of members opposite, and we will proceed then with Bill 12. I could see from your remarks it was the intent of the Government House Leader to indicate that it could be any combination of those, and we would proceed with Bill 12.

MR. WICKMAN: I think, Mr. Speaker, your comments were very clear: Bill 10, and then 11 or 12; not Bills 10, 11, or 12. Clearly, the information communicated was that we would proceed with Bill 10.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Order Paper says that for today any one of those three Bills could be called. It is always in the government's prerogative to call the business that it wishes to call.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, a point of order under Standing Order 7(5). Then we have a misunderstanding, because it was indicated to us, or certainly we were of the impression, that it was going to be in that order: Bill 10, and then 11 and possibly 12. We definitely thought we'd be doing Bill 10 today, so it does come as a bit of a surprise to us.

MR. SPEAKER: Just for the record, it's perfectly clear at page 993 of last week's *Hansard*. It states, "We would either be dealing with Bill 10, 11, or 12, depending on what progress might have been determined on Monday."

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: That is the state of intent. I'll assure members opposite that there's no attempt here of trying to mislead in any way. Bill 12 is indeed the intended Bill. We will proceed accordingly, and we thank you for your understanding.

MR. WICKMAN: Okay. I'm prepared to speak to it.

## Bill 12

### Liquor Control Amendment Act, 1993

MR. JACQUES: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to move second reading of Bill 12, being the Liquor Control Amendment Act, 1993.

I want to firstly make the general observation that as Alberta is becoming more and more a part of the global economy, the forces of interprovincial and international trade barriers are a detriment to economic development and prosperity. It is within this context that I wish to draw the attention of all hon. Members of this Legislative Assembly that the Liquor Control Amendment Act includes provisions to remove long-standing impediments to free trade in beer products between Alberta and our provincial and international trading partners. Specifically, the Liquor Control Amendment Act will allow for the first time any manufacturer of beer products who does not have a brewery in Alberta to warehouse and distribute their own products if they choose to do so. Under the existing arrangements, only Alberta-based breweries are permitted to warehouse and distribute beer outside the ALCB warehouse and distribution system. Upon passage of this legislation, all breweries, irrespective of where the product is produced, will be provided the same opportunities to compete on a level playing field in the warehousing and distribution of beer products.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to point out that the amendments will allow Alberta-based companies that are already in the warehousing and distribution business to expand their businesses by being able to add liquor products to the consumable goods they are presently warehousing and distributing across Alberta. It is apparent the carriers that presently deliver consumable goods to the retail system across our province can take advantage of this new opportunity.

A second area of significance covered in the amendments to the Liquor Control Act is that of the privatization of the ALCB retail network. Mr. Speaker, approximately 350 Alberta companies have been established or are in the process of being established for the purpose of opening a retail liquor store in the very near future. The great majority of these companies are family owned and will be owner operated. While everyone who opens a retail liquor store will not succeed, as is the case in any business venture, this initiative by this government provides an unprecedented opportunity to hundreds of Albertans who have the entrepreneurial spirit to assume responsibility for an area of service that for the past 70 years was under a government monopoly. While some may be critical of the process, nobody who believes in the ability of Albertans to succeed in business can be critical of this initiative and the hundreds of new direct and indirect jobs and additional spin-off benefits that will accrue to the small business enterprises and to the economy of our province.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

The amendments to the Liquor Control Act placed before this Assembly with respect to liquor retail initiative are primarily of an administrative nature. However, Mr. Speaker, I did not want the absence of major amendments in this regard to diminish the significance of the initiative that was announced on September 2, 1993, by this government.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 12, Liquor Control Amendment Act, 1993.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Rutherford.

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make a few opening comments, and there are other members in our caucus that are prepared to speak, including the other critic in Municipal Affairs, who is handling the aspect of the ALCB more so than I am.

During the second reading, of course, one tends to talk in terms of the principle of a Bill, and then in committee stage we start looking at amendments. It's at committee stage that we do want to consider the possibility of bringing forward some amendments. The reason we bring forward amendments, of course, is because we feel that a Bill can be improved upon. We feel that there can be shortcomings in a particular piece of legislation, so you try to correct them to make the Bill as good as possible, realizing that in all likelihood, whether we like it or not, the Bill will be rammed through by government.

When we talk in terms of privatization – and it's been said time after time after time – the concept of privatization can be good. The private sector is out there to do certain things: to deliver certain types of programs, to provide certain services. Government is there to fill a need, a need that can't be filled by the private sector, and to provide essential services. Basically, essential services to me are roadways, bridges, and the people programs, the delivery of human services.

I always have some difficulty when I hear talk about privatization of hospitals or privatization of lodges, but when we talk in terms of privatization of the sale of goods, something that could clearly be done by the private sector, that becomes a different story. So one can say, well, the concept of it isn't so bad.

In fact, I did a research study on the privatization of spirits a couple of years ago. I came to the conclusion at that time that Alberta was ready to test the sale of beer and wine in smaller grocery stores as an experimental project, basically in the initial stages restricting it to Canadian- or Alberta-produced wines and beers, which of course would have assisted the Alberta industry considerably. Then that would have allowed testing from the public as to whether they thought the privatization of spirits, of alcohol, was the right way to go. Of course, it happened differently. The minister stood up and announced that it's going to happen, like it's going to happen tomorrow. I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, that it caught me off guard. I'm sure it caught other people off guard, because it did happen very, very quickly. It wasn't a question of testing the market. It wasn't a question of certain aspects being privatized. It was the whole shot. Sell it off.

4:40

Obviously, there was feedback that was obtained by the government prior to that decision. I just make that assumption; it's too drastic a decision to be made on the basis of a whim. So I imagine there was some polling done or some method of trying to get a feel of Albertans' reaction to it. By and large, Alberta's reaction to it is probably favourable in the sense that privatization is fine provided it doesn't do certain things. One thing is the impact it's going to have on the widespread availability of spirits, and that I believe can be handled. We look at the European model. It hasn't really created problems. We look at Quebec, where wines and beers are readily available in stores. I don't believe that necessarily causes a problem, having it, let's say, a bit more available. However, any impact on pricing of course is of concern. Any loss of profits or loss of taxation as a result of privatization is going to affect Albertans in the sense that that revenue has to be made up from other means or else services have to be reduced accordingly.

The possible privatization of the warehousing or wholesaling aspect has to be of concern, because then the government does lose the ability to regulate prices to a degree to ensure that they obtain a certain profit margin, to ensure that that flow that goes on the books at the present time continues.

The most major impact, Mr. Speaker, in my mind is the impact on the 1,500 employees and their families. That has not been well thought out. The employees I don't believe have been handled fairly, have been treated reasonably considering the years of service they have provided to the system as provincial employees or employees of the ALCB. It's a bit callous as to what's happening to them. There's got to be a better way of doing these types of things. I don't think we should look upon corporations all the time as an example, because corporations at times can be quite harsh too. But when I look at some of the corporations like Safeway, Telus, and others that have done downsizing, they've done it in a much more sensitive method in terms of the impact on the employees and the families, much more sensitive. It was more planned out. There were techniques set up to assist those employees to make the transfer to other types of opportunities and such.

Another question too, Mr. Speaker, is going to have to be answered somewhere along the line, whether it's committee stage, whatever. I believe that we in the opposition, I believe that Albertans have a right to know as to who is going to be getting these licences, as to whether there's any favouritism. There has been a great deal of speculation. There's been a great deal of rumour. The Southgate one repeatedly comes up, and we know that the Southgate one is going to be awarded to a numbered company. We know that numbered company can be traced back to a certain company, but then who does that company act on behalf of? That becomes a question one can't answer; at least I can't answer it. Somewhere along the line the government's going to have to be front and centre and say, "This person, this person, and this person have an interest in this outlet, this outlet," and so on, because Albertans, the taxpayers, have a right to know that these types of decisions are being made fairly, that's it's a level playing field and there's no favouritism being shown, or that it's not used as a mechanism to reward persons that have been connected with government in the past or are friends of the government. That becomes very, very important, because we can look back at the example of the former administration in the distribution of the licences or the distributorships or the dealerships for the sale of wine. There was a great deal of concern as to whether that was being handled fairly or not.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to conclude to allow other members of our caucus to make their opening remarks.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Whitemud.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I welcome the comments regarding the efforts to harmonize our liquor control regulations in the free flow of spirits and beer across provincial boundaries and ensuring a level playing field. It's clear if you look at what has happened in Ontario, for example, that that provincial government deliberately used the warehousing system and the distribution of beer to provoke irritants with the United States and take a run at the free trade agreement. It was clear that they had focused on that as a means of, in a sense, exacerbating trade tensions. So the effort of the government to in a sense provide this base as harmonizing our legislation, ensuring compatibility with GATT, obviously is welcome and should receive the praise it deserves.

However, the Bill does more than just harmonization, and I'd like to discuss some of those other elements in discussing the principle of this Bill. Before I do that, though, I would like to make a comment about this Bill, as I have about the corporate registries and other Bills. Here we are dealing with a half billion dollar corporation. This Bill only deals with really the warehousing and distribution aspects and provides the legal framework to privatize that. This is in a sense the proverbial tail wagging the dog, because one would have liked to have seen the government come before this House to discuss the merits of privatizing the retail side. Not that we would disagree, but it would be an issue that does deserve debate, where Albertans have this forum to discuss those types of issues as to: why now, what are the benefits, what are the costs?

As we move down the road of privatizing the retail side, which we're doing, and as we move down the road of privatizing the warehousing and distribution aspects – and this Bill provides the regulatory framework for doing that – we'd like to know as well: what is the regulatory framework to ensure, in fact, that the longer hours in which spirits will be available will not be abused? What is, in a sense, the regulatory framework out there that's going to assure, as we move to privatization in these areas, that it is not abused, that we do not see in fact an increase in alcohol-related driving accidents, that there is not abuse in terms of selling spirits and alcohol to young children? So it's clear that there has to be that regulatory framework, but as we proceed down this path of privatization, it comes after the fact. We take it on faith that the government will ensure that that framework is there, but clearly it's not fair to this Legislature to work on these things on a piecemeal framework.

As I say, privatization itself ought to have been debated in the Legislature, if only in terms of a motion of support or disapproval. That opportunity was not afforded this Assembly. It sprung out of the air on September 2. Despite many rumours for months before that it was going to occur, it sprung immediately. Nor was there any type of benefit/cost analysis provided with it to justify it or to provide a business plan as to how it was going to be undertaken. It just occurred out of the ether. There was really no need for that, because there had been the budget the previous week. There had been the throne speech. The initiative arose on September 2; there was then the budget to come. It could have been brought in in either of those documents rather than springing as a policy out of the blue.

Again, these types of issues, when you're dealing with a half billion dollar entity, deserve debate. They should not just be undertaken through executive fiat. Although we can debate now the issues related to warehousing and distribution, perhaps the more salient issues were related to privatization of the retail side of this industry.

Now, with regard to the Bill itself, it's clear that a large portion of the amendments in this Bill deal with setting up the appropriate framework for the board to delegate its responsibility for warehousing. What I want to focus on, though, is section 13.1(1) of this Bill. The amendments here allow the corporation to discontinue the operation of retail stores. What the amendment also allows for is that in circumstances where subleasing is not permitted or where there is no interest in subleasing, it permits the abandonment of these leases. This of course means that the government may be required to pay penalties, and certainly I would hope, given that contracts exist, that there is a negotiation that's satisfactory to both the person who owns the space and the government.

4:50

It's clear that there will be losses involved here. If you look at the public accounts, which provide the data that outlines the time frame of these leases, it's clear that many of them were up to 30 years. But as I say, this sprang out of the ether on September 2, and it didn't appear that much thought had been given to the existing framework of leases that were out there, and we're now playing that by ear as we go along. So it's clear that section 13.1 is required. It's enabling legislation for the government to in a sense cut its losses after this sudden lurch in policy. What would have been very useful with this amendment, as my hon. colleague from Edmonton-Rutherford suggested, is a very clear statement, in this fiscal year as this activity is being undertaken, as to what the losses are, what the write-down of these leases is, what the bids have been and the actual tendered value for the property that's gone forward, and have that freely available now, not waiting a year or two to get it through the public accounts. Because there are losses associated with this, and these losses arise because there was an absence of a plan. This was, as I say, a policy initiative that sprung out of nowhere.

There was no business plan accompanying this initiative, and it has sort of evolved as they've gone along. Since it had been discussed publicly on a number of instances in the late spring, one is just amazed that there is actually no framework which accompanies this that suggests the full nature of the benefits and an accompanying business plan, because this government has told us time and time again that each department is working on a business plan. So one would have thought that as a corporation is being set up to handle the distribution of warehousing, a natural element accompanying this Bill, just to provide a better framework for the members on both sides of the House to assess the legislation, would have been the proposed business plan so we could see how it's going to be operated, how it ties in with the retail side, how in fact it may tie in with the regulatory framework that must accompany this legislation to deal with issues of social control and abuse of alcohol. So section 13.1 of this legislation certainly is a concern.

Now, section 29(2)(ii). These amendments allow for distribution agents who will be authorized by the corporation. Before privatization, distribution for hotels, et cetera, was handled through Alberta liquor stores, who ordered on their behalf from the St. Albert warehouse. It's clear that the St. Albert warehouse was an extraordinarily efficient entity, since it covered the province and it did so so that there were not complaints about the manner in which the warehouse accomplished its activities. It's not at all clear where this warehouse fits in the legislation. Here was an entity that actually worked. We can point to many areas in government that don't work and don't work very well. This was one that did, and it's interesting that again it comes sort of as an afterthought, as to the dismantling of this framework. So it would have been very useful, in terms of the preamble to this Bill, if what in fact happens to the St. Albert warehouse could have been discussed – Will it be playing a major role? Is it dismantled? – just to provide us information as to the nature of the distribution network that will arise.

Again, we certainly have no concerns on this side of the House with privatization, and it's not at all clear why the government was in the sale of liquor in the first place. The issue now is really one of the process by which we move from the distribution of alcohol and spirits through the provision of government to the private sector and the framework that emerges. Since this has been part of the Alberta framework for so many years, it was a shift in



legislative policy that easily could have been accompanied by roundtables discussing these.

After all, we know that this is an open and accountable government that prefers to talk to Albertans before it embarks on sharp, significant policy shifts. So of course it is somewhat surprising that we did not do this in this particular case, because it would have been useful to get the opinions of hoteliers, who now see that perhaps their livelihood is going to be adversely affected in some cases. It would have been useful to get the comments of various groups as to the possible social consequences of allowing a much freer distribution of alcohol and spirits. Of course, their concerns could have been assuaged if the government had come forward and said, "This is how we're going to monitor it; this is how we're going to use the distribution network to ensure that there's not abuse," but that did not occur. It would have been useful for members contemplating obtaining retail licences or for those contemplating getting into the distribution side to see the proposed business plan for this corporation, because that would have given them a very clear idea of how the government envisaged this operation working. None of that happened, Mr. Speaker. Again, it causes questions to arise as to why, because this side of the House thinks privatization makes very clear sense. There are areas where you may draw the line. So something like this, all it requires is better documentation, a much fuller disclosure of the initiatives, a provision of business plans, and some clear evidence that there is a plan at work.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Trust us.

DR. PERCY: Yeah. We trusted you with NovAtel. We trusted you with MagCan. We trusted you with a lot, and we're asked to trust that with Alberta Intermodal Services you'll do the right thing. I'm afraid there's a little absence of trust on this side of the House in light of the record of this government and the fact that many people who are on the front bench were involved in making those decisions. Of course, that was then; that isn't now. Somehow that whole record of how we went from having assets of \$5 billion to having a debt of \$28 billion belongs to somebody else, not to the members on that side of the House. It was that hard-driving Premier Getty who forced the members on that side of the House to spend, spend, spend.

So there is no trust on this side of the House when there isn't documentation, when there isn't full consultation, when there isn't an effort to provide the types of business plans that we have been led to believe exist, when there isn't a full disclosure as to the import of all the regulatory provisions, or when there isn't information on the tendering process and who gets what. All the request is for is additional information so that this Bill can be put in a broader context.

Also, the point I was making is that this in a sense deals with a relatively modest component of the whole liquor business in the province, the warehousing and distribution. It would have been useful to have this type of debate within the Legislature rather than focusing it on this rather minor component of an overall activity. It would have been useful for the government to do that, because it would again have allowed Albertans and various groups to talk through their MLAs to deal with the issues at hand.

So, Mr. Speaker, while certainly I concur that there is a need for privatization, the debate on the issue of privatization with regards to the retail sale of liquor is long overdue. In fact, we haven't had the debate. It has been through executive decision-making. I do have some concerns with regards to this Bill, but they can easily

be dealt with simply by tabling the business plan, simply by tabling the benefit/cost studies that show it's a good move to move out of the warehousing distribution network as it presently exists, and by tabling in this House the regulatory framework that will emerge in order to ensure that there isn't abuse associated with alcohol because of a much broader distribution occurring.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: St. Albert.

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans want their tax dollars used wisely. They want to see a plan. They want to see the steps that are taken. They want to have it discussed on both sides of the House. This Bill 12 came out of the blue. It came upon all legislators. I guess I'm surprised to see that even the private members on the other side are not raising a fuss about it. That's what they were elected to. At the AUMA I talked to delegates from all across this province, from Fort McMurray in the north to Manyberries in the south, from Lloydminster in the east to Jasper and Banff in the west. They said that members on the opposite side had campaigned on the policy of freedom of information and wise use of tax dollars. Then all of a sudden we get Bill 12 out of the blue upon us without any careful analysis, without a plan, without many other aspects that should be looked at. So taxpayers are asking the question: what is happening? I got many phone calls from many members of the constituency concerned that this government is continuing the policy they have over the last 21 or 22 years, and they're not willing to accept that. This government talks about understanding business and the market forces. There's a saying that a little knowledge is dangerous, and this government has proven that. What is needed is a well-thought-out and carefully analyzed business plan, but there is no plan to be seen. The government continues to do things as they have done them in the past.

It is disappointing that the private members again accept the old ways of doing business. There must be too much pressure on them. They came in here with enthusiasm to change the system, and this has not occurred. They're being forced into the old ways. There's a story that we learned in Sunday school years ago: you put one thread around you and it's easy to break; you put two and it's still easy; you put many strands and you can't break it. You can see that happening on the other side with the private members. They came in enthusiastic, wanting to change things . . .

5:00

DR. L. TAYLOR: We're still enthusiastic.

MR. BRACKO: But you tied into the old system. You have to break free from the old system and do things.

The Tories have not learned from the past and lack in understanding economics. In fact, a grade 6 class from Junior Achievement has a better understanding of the economics and some of the decisions made in the past by this government. They understand the simple economic principle that in boom times the government saves money and in times of depression the government spends money. However, this government . . .

DR. L. TAYLOR: It's easy for schoolteachers to say that with their [inaudible] incomes.

MR. BRACKO: Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Cypress-Medicine Hat, we appreciate your enthusiasm, but would you let the hon. member carry on with his speech? Thank you.

**Point of Order  
Decorum**

MR. HENRY: A point of order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The citation, Edmonton-Centre?

MR. HENRY: Standing Order 13(1) I believe talks about decorum. The Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat was very audible, a slander towards teachers, and I wonder if he'd withdraw that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There has been a question. I did not hear the slander. We'll have to leave it for the Blues to review that particular thing. In any event, Cypress-Medicine Hat has nodded assent that we'll go on uninterrupted.

The hon. Member for St. Albert, we wish you to continue.

**Debate Continued**

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with great pride that I am an educator and have been for 25 years, and I do not at any time apologize for being a teacher. I believe that if teachers had run this government, we would not be \$31.5 billion in debt. To add to that, every person here is a teacher, whether you like it or not, so you criticize yourself when you criticize teachers.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a simple economic principle that grade sixers in our elementary system understand. In a recession this government did the opposite; they stopped spending. In boom times they spent. This mismanagement of course causes greater recession, greater problems, greater harm, economic management with devastating effects. Further, in high school the Junior Achievement students form companies. They sell shares, produce a product, market the product. They develop a business plan. High school students do this. This is what all Albertans are asking from this government, from both sides, to press for: a business plan, a complete business plan, that has analyzed the total picture of a billion dollar industry in Alberta.

It's too bad that this government doesn't even have the basic skills. Out of the blue we get Bill 12, then the announcement. Going even further back, Lougheed's white paper on economic development was analyzed by the Fraser Institute and shown it would not work. However, this government went ahead, and the result was the economic devastation of our province. The NovAtels, the Gainers, the MagCans. The saddest part is the fact that the government had over \$200 million in research budgets – they criticize us for our research budget – \$200 million from the different departments in research to analyze and do this and no business plan. It is sad what can happen when you don't have leadership. Because of lack of planning, 2.6 million residents pay the price for this government's incompetence. The Tory government can be mighty proud of its economic contribution, Mr. Speaker, to all Albertans. A \$2.1 billion loss in loan guarantees. [some applause]

**Speaker's Ruling  
Brevity**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Hon. members are invited to show their appreciation for well-founded remarks of any speaker. However, carrying it on unduly then becomes less than parliamentary, so it is a matter of timing, as so many things in life.

The hon. Member for St. Albert.

**Debate Continued**

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud to be able to take back their applause to the citizens of St. Albert in their reaction to the loss of the \$2.1 billion in loan guarantees.

Another sad fact: students graduating last year will be paying off this government's pension debt till they're 84 years old. That's another proud legacy. Six decades of debt.

Thirdly, the projected \$40 billion debt by 1997 before the deficit is eliminated would take 100 years to pay off, 10 decades. That is an exciting legacy, again, to leave behind.

My question is: where's the blueprint, or plan, for the privatization of ALCB? We've asked for it. We've pleaded for it. We want to see it, but it hasn't been given. We're told that it's there, that they understand the market forces and so on. We want to check. Anyone starting a business must produce a sound business plan. The ALCB blueprint should be carefully examined by both sides of the House so that the best possible blueprint, or plan, is there. To paraphrase a strong Tory, Dr. Plain, who was Dick Fowler's campaign manager: we have the number one expert on this side of the House on the Alberta economy; you would think the government would use his expertise to make themselves look even better, but they don't. Common sense doesn't prevail.

Further, it should be examined by the business community, the Chamber of Commerce, and so on, the frontline people for their input, so they can check what is good with it, what is not. We can make provisions or changes at the committee stage to make it the best possible Bill. This is what all Albertans want. Since the ALCB is a billion dollar industry, a sound plan for privatization is needed. We have continually asked for this plan, but it doesn't exist, or the government lacks confidence and keeps it secret.

The Iowa study took six months to develop, and they say another six months was needed in order to come up with a good plan. Instead of a plan with accountability, it was a fly by the seat of the pants operation. Even the board of directors of the ALCB heard the announcement through the media. Questions are: where is the cost analysis that should have been done beforehand? How much more will consumers be paying for alcohol? They need to know this. It's one thing to support it initially when you do a survey; it's another thing to look at the total impact on all Albertans to see if that is in the best interests of all Albertans. What is the discount going to be to the retail stores? Is it 5 percent? Ten percent? Fifteen percent? Is there a difference between the different venues that will be selling the alcohol?

Individuals spent many hours and many dollars to realize that it was all wasted because proper information was not given. This was the case with several people that have told me that they'd worked on it. They spent hours, they spent money, only they didn't have the information up front. It was a waste of their time and energy. I'm hearing this all over the province. I was at the convention of summer villages where some people were interested, and the same thing was told to me. They wanted to know all the information so they could apply it if it was in their best interests.

**5:10**

Again, in Bill 12 there's no mention of the employees or what's going to happen or if an arrangement can be made, employees who have given 25, 28, 22 years of their time and have worked hard, like members of this Legislature, for the company because they had pride in it. They believed in working hard. They had the good work ethic. They heard in a very poor way, through the media, that their services were no longer required. They do not appreciate hearing this from a government that is supposed to be

a role model not only for all Albertans but for students right across this province.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude. We want the plan. We want to see it.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise as well to speak on second reading of Bill 12, the Liquor Control Amendment Act, 1993. As I understand it, the purpose of the Act is to set the stage for government privatization of the warehousing and distribution aspects of the Alberta Liquor Control Board wholesale operation.

I have some comments and some questions to raise. One of the issues that has been brought to my attention from some of my constituents with regard to the move of privatizing the sale of liquor in our province is as to what impact the government might project that would have on consumption. As I understand it, the research is clear that the more availability we have with regard to alcohol the higher the consumption is. Generic research suggests that. I'm wondering if there's anything in this Bill that is going to actually have more opportunities for Albertans to access liquor in, again, non government owned stores. There are some questions about that and some questions with regard to the social impact of having more consumption in our province.

There are several suggestions that are made to try to alleviate that. One suggestion has been made to me that I'd like the government to think about. In our society if we recognize that government does not have the role to protect every individual from every harm but does have a responsibility to deal with the social consequences of its action, the government might consider that when we are expanding opportunities for people to access alcohol in our province, we perhaps put more resources into remedial programs and services for those who can't handle that. The vast majority of people I think believe the move to more neighbourhood access to alcohol is not necessarily bad, but it is negative for some people.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

The suggestion that has been made to me is that we take all of the revenue we use from liquor and beer sales in our province and put all that money towards treatment and towards prevention. I think if you'd add up the figures, you'd find out that frankly some of those dollars are in essence being siphoned off for other purposes. So the government involvement in terms of taxing and in terms of profit from liquor sales is being used to actually fund the general revenue and fund the general expenses of our province. Meanwhile we have a shortage of beds for adolescent treatment; we have a shortage of early intervention programs. I'd like the government to perhaps consider that.

With regard to the entire move of privatization of liquor stores and the warehousing and distribution, Mr. Speaker - and I acknowledge being a bit of a neophyte with regard to interprovincial trade barriers - I'm wondering: is this still going to allow owners of small, independent liquor stores and beer stores to be able to have more freedom, not only to be able to contract with microbreweries, such as we have in Edmonton and in other parts of the province. I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, that I am a fan of some of the products of those microbreweries, but I wonder if there's anything in the privatization that would address the interprovincial trade barriers, that would allow a small entrepreneur from Alberta to go to another province to buy perhaps beer

or liquor and essentially bring it into our province. Does this in any way address any of the interprovincial trade barriers?

I don't see anything in here that does, but if we're really talking about free enterprise and opening this area up to the free market, surely then we need to look beyond just our provincial borders. If somebody can go to British Columbia and find beer or liquor at a cheaper rate than they could buy it wholesale in Alberta, the question arises: should they be able to go there? If they can provide a cheaper way or a more economical way of transporting it to Alberta, should that be allowed? I don't see anything. If we're talking about faith in the free enterprise system and allowing people to basically set up shop wherever bylaws allow them to and to sell beer or liquor, then perhaps we need to be considering going further and addressing the interprovincial trade barriers.

In terms of the specifics of Bill 12, with regard to employees that are going to be affected by the warehousing and distribution aspects of the ALCB being privatized, I'm wondering what the government's plan is for providing adequate notice and providing transition for those employees. It's easy to say that the law says X number of weeks per year of service or one month per year of service or whatever has been the experience in common law, but I think it's important as a government that we recognize that we're in very difficult economic times. We're not in a time where we can say to employees: "We've re-evaluated our role as government. Here we want to hive this off, and we know you'll get jobs elsewhere." It may be different in other parts of the province, but frankly in Edmonton there certainly aren't a lot of jobs available. I think we need to think about the human cost of making such a move. What you're really saying to many people, most of the ones I've run across who have families, is: "You may have to leave in the middle of the school year. You may have to sell your house in a market that's not booming, certainly not in Edmonton. You may have to take a loss. You may have to go and pull your children out of school, and you may have to find a new place where there may or may not be a job."

I think those are the kinds of things we need to think about when we make this move. It's not a matter of judging whether it is right or wrong to privatize the ALCB warehousing and distribution aspects, but it has to do with how we do that and the timing of doing that.

Mr. Speaker, I have some other questions in terms of dollars. I guess this is the cynic in me coming out, but I keep wondering if, indeed, when the government is selling off its assets, those moneys are really going to the long-term debt. It's a matter of trust, and frankly I'm not prepared to accept, "Trust me." I don't believe that my constituents and I don't believe that Albertans want to hear that. I think we need a very definitive statement, and we need some assurances that can be checked by the Auditor General that when we sell off our assets, that will go to pay down our long-term debt and not be used for current-year deficit reduction. We've seen what I believe are games, and I don't like them. I don't believe our constituents on either side of the House like those kinds of games.

I'd like to speak a little bit to the process with regard to privatization in terms of the ALCB and some other potential privatization that's already happened. On this side of the House certainly this member does not disagree with the notion of privatization. One of the reasons I got involved in political life and in public life was that I believed that government was out of control. I mean that in a generic sense in our province and in other provinces and nationally. I believe that we need to take a step back, and we need to re-evaluate the role of government in our lives. There are some things that I believe government has a strong role in. There are some things, frankly, that we need to

re-evaluate and say: maybe government doesn't belong in there anymore. Perhaps the public utility of government being involved in a particular sector has been served. I point to the AGT privatization. I firmly believe that at one point in the historical development of this province it was very appropriate for government to own AGT. I believe that the move to privatize AGT was a positive move, because I think that with increased competition, with increased availability the public utility of having AGT had been served, and I think it was appropriate. We need to do that more.

5:20

However, the process in terms of how privatization is being done by this government, specifically the process in this House, disturbs me. I would much rather participate in a process whereby a minister would come to an all-party committee and say, "These are the functions under my control," whether they be Crown agencies or programs or departments or others, and be able to put them on the table, and let's have a frank and open discussion about why we're involved in those things. There will be ideological differences, but I suggest that on a lot of the issues, a lot of the programs, and a lot of the Crown entities there may be some agreement on both sides of the House as to whether there's a valid, continuing government role for them or not.

If we could have a forum where we could exchange ideas on a less partisan basis and we could deal with each department on a multiparty basis, then I think we could come to some agreement faster than perhaps some members might think on what the role of government is and what things government should be involved in and what things we should be pulling back from. Then we could work co-operatively on developing a plan so that there is a plan available to all Albertans, a plan that says: here's our vision of what government is going to be like four years from now, when we all finish our term in this Legislature; here's what the average Albertan will see as government's role.

Unfortunately, the government has chosen not to act in this manner, so we're forced into the position of the government having announcements at 1:30 in the afternoon or right after question period to make sure the opposition doesn't ask questions on that issue, and the opposition doesn't know one day or the next what is happening in terms of what the long-range plan is. We haven't seen a long-range plan in terms of what this government believes the role of government to be and applying that to the existing structure. So I think it's important for members on the other side to recognize that what you're asking members on this side of the House to do – and I mean this sincerely. You're asking us simply to go on a lot of trust. You're simply asking us to trust that there is a plan there. You're asking us to trust that there is some rationalization happening, and we're going piecemeal, piecemeal, piecemeal.

Again, there is a minister responsible for reorganization in the government. I'm sure that if the Government House Leader approached our House leader, you would find a lot of willingness to perhaps go into Committee of the Whole and let's see the reorganization plan of government. I'm sure, knowing the minister responsible, that there is some rationalization in his thinking in terms of what criteria or what set of principles he's using to apply to each of the functions of government as he examines those. All members of this House, I believe, are free enterprisers. I believe we have value in the free enterprise system, and we believe in the integrity of the free enterprise system. If we could have that plan brought forward, then we could discuss it. We could discuss the principles. We could discuss how we would measure whether a particular function is of continuing value to the public in terms of

government involvement, and then we could jointly make those kinds of decisions. Then I think you'd find a lot less acrimony. You'd find that we could hear from groups, we could hear from experts about the historical significance or the history of particular organizations or particular functions and indeed what the potentials are for the future.

With those brief comments, when we get into committee, Mr. Speaker, I'll have several more questions about some of the details of the Bill. I want to be on record that I don't oppose privatization. We are free enterprisers on this side. We heard several people speak about a new politic emerging in Canada. Well, I would have hoped that when I got elected to this Assembly, the days of saying, "Just trust us, we'll do it, we'll give you the plan, and it'll be a fait accompli," would have been over. Unfortunately, I see that they're not.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to join the debate, first to establish my commitment to the idea and the process of privatizing certain government operations. I think it is extremely important today, if it hasn't been for some time, that government determine what it is that government must do. It should determine what it is that it should no longer do, and it should make absolutely certain that what it must do, it must do with excellence.

In my mind the Alberta Liquor Control Board and its functions are a prime opportunity for privatization. I think it is clear that government need not be in the business of selling alcohol. It need not be in the business of most commercial enterprises. I think there has been an argument that government in the past could have entered certain kinds of enterprises for control reasons, in the case of liquor perhaps, although even that may be questionable, certain areas in which there may be a private-sector monopoly if government didn't take it over and build it until such time as the economy is able to produce competition in that area. There are some justifications, but they are very, very few and very, very far between, and certainly they do not apply, in my mind, to the Alberta Liquor Control Board.

For those people who would argue against selling the Liquor Control Board because it may result in a loss of income to government, I would say a number of things. First of all, if the argument for government doing something is that it makes money, then where would it ever stop? I suppose that soon – and one wonders some days, given the orientation of this government – we'd have government selling pizzas or cars or whatever else it might be that they could see to make money. Clearly that cannot be a rationale for government enterprise. So I simply do not buy the argument that government should continue in this enterprise because it makes money. The fact of the matter is that this government makes money from the sale of cigarettes. It doesn't sell cigarettes. It makes money from the sale of gasoline. It doesn't sell gasoline. I think it could make money from the sale of alcohol. At this time it clearly needs what money it can get, but it doesn't have to sell or be in the business of selling alcohol.

But, Mr. Speaker – and this is a relatively large "but" – just because this government is able through its fog to embrace the proper objective doesn't mean that however it pursues that objective is intrinsically correct. That, I think, is what should be at the nub of the debate on this Bill: is the process of privatizing ALCB in this way proper? Could it be done better? Is it being done in a way that, in fact, could not be as advantageous as it

might otherwise be but could harm Albertans rather . . . [interjections]

That brings me to another point, Mr. Speaker. It is almost 5:30, and it would be appropriate for us to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has moved that debate be adjourned on this item. All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried.  
The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that when we reconvene at 8 o'clock tonight, it be in Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader has moved that the Assembly adjourn until the Committee of Supply rises and reports. All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:30 p.m.]

