

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Tuesday, February 15, 1994 1:30 p.m.**

Date: 94/02/15

[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

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

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to present a petition from 36 residents of the town of Jasper. These people are petitioning the Minister of Education to guarantee continuation of Catholic schooling and funding thereof.

CLERK: Reading and Receiving Petitions.

MR. HENRY: Mr. Speaker, can we revert to Presenting Petitions?

MR. SPEAKER: Is there unanimous consent to revert to Presenting Petitions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I tried to catch your attention, but I think you were looking at notes.

I have two petitions. The first petition is signed by 25 students and parents from Okotoks and area indicating "that the projected budget cuts for education are unacceptable for" continued health of student and parent life alike. I'd like to present that petition.

The second petition, Mr. Speaker – and I'll just briefly hold it up and then fold it – is signed by 125 students, and it accompanies the petition I submitted yesterday from 14,000 parents. These are 125 children in ECS who are saying: don't cut my program, please.

head: Notices of Motions

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(2)(a) I am giving notice that tomorrow I will be moving that written questions and motions for returns stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

head: Introduction of Bills

Bill 201

Electoral Boundaries (Reduction) Act

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, the Electoral Boundaries (Reduction) Act, being Bill 201.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill will reduce the number of constituencies in Alberta from 83 to 65 and create a new electoral boundaries commission, consisting of the Chief Justice of Alberta, to begin

the process of drawing the 65 boundaries. Politicians will in no way be involved in drawing these boundaries.

[Leave granted; Bill 201 read a first time]

Bill 202

Alberta Task Force on Education Act

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Alberta Task Force on Education Act, Bill 202.

This Bill will create a task force whose function it will be to prepare a model for the future of education in Alberta. Representation on the task force will include consumers and providers of education. They will conduct an intensive review of education from preschool through to adult education. This kind of a review has not been done since 1972, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 202 read a first time]

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

Bill 203

Citizen's Initiative Act

MR. HAVELOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Citizen's Initiative Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to allow any elector to propose that an initiative referendum be held to require the Legislative Assembly to introduce a Bill.

[Leave granted; Bill 203 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Bill 204

Retirement Savings Plan Act

MR. HLADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being Retirement Savings Plan Act.

This Act will allow public employees to take their pension funds out of the pension funds and invest them in a retirement savings plan.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 204 read a first time]

Bill 205

Information on Privatization Act

DR. PERCY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill being 205, Information on Privatization Act.

This Bill requires a detailed cost/benefit impact study and business plan to be prepared every time the government privatizes a Crown entity or service. These requirements will ensure that any privatization entity is preceded by a careful analysis.

[Leave granted; Bill 205 read a first time]

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

Bill 206

School Amendment Act, 1994

MRS. FRITZ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being 206, the School Amendment Act, 1994.

The purpose of this Bill is to enhance school boards with measures to ensure that their schools are safe and positive learning environments.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 206 read a first time]

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

Bill 207
Adult Adoption Act

MR. RENNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Adult Adoption Act, Bill 207.

The purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to allow adult Albertans to adopt adults through the court system rather than having to petition the Legislature for special Bills through the Private Bills Committee.

[Leave granted; Bill 207 read a first time]

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

Bill 208
Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1994

MS HANSON: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1994, Bill 208.

This Bill will strengthen the child protection provisions within the Act and put the needs of the child in the forefront. These reforms draw on many of the recommendations made by the former Children's Advocate in his report to the Legislature in the fall of 1993.

[Leave granted; Bill 208 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray.

1:40

Bill 209
Commencement of Actions Act

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce a Bill being the Commencement of Actions Act.

This Bill, when passed by this Assembly, will ensure that civil actions must be started in the judicial district where the dispute arose allowing all Albertans timely and convenient access to the judicial system.

[Leave granted; Bill 209 read a first time]

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

Bill 210
Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1994

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1994.

The purpose of this Bill will be to increase revenue to the board, decrease expenditures from the board, and help expedite the unfunded liability.

[Leave granted; Bill 210 read a first time]

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

Bill 211
Economic Strategy Act

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 211, the Economic Strategy Act.

This Bill is based on a similar Bill in Oregon. It will encourage the creation of flexible networks of Alberta companies for their joint benefit, allow the government to participate in education and creation of these networks. It will also encourage greater co-operation and trade with Mexico through a mechanism to twin cities in Alberta and Mexico and also to hold trade seminars focused on trade with Mexico.

[Leave granted; Bill 211 read a first time]

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

Bill 212
Whistleblower Protection Act

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 212, being the Whistleblower Protection Act.

Mr. Speaker, this will provide protection to employees who raise serious government wrongdoing, whether it's a matter of a waste of public money or a public health or safety hazard. It's an appropriate companion, sir, to a strong freedom of information law.

[Leave granted; Bill 212 read a first time]

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

Bill 213
Loan Guarantees Statutes Amendment Act, 1994

MS CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being Loan Guarantees Statutes Amendment Act, 1994, Bill 213.

This Bill will end the ability of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to provide any form of loan guarantee. Existing loan guarantees would continue to be honoured for legal reasons through a transition clause.

[Leave granted; Bill 213 read a first time]

Bill 214
**Members of the Legislative Assembly
Remuneration Review Commission Act**

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 214, Members of the Legislative Assembly Remuneration Review Commission Act.

This Bill is long overdue. This Bill will set up an independent commission of Albertans from various regions and sectors of Alberta to review all aspects of MLA remuneration and report by June 30, 1994. The report of this commission and its recommendations on MLA remuneration, including pay, subsistence allowance, committee fees, and other perks, will be legally binding on the Legislature.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 214 read a first time]

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

Bill 215
Non-Smokers Health Act

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being Bill 215, the Non-Smokers Health Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is designed to reduce the number of children who smoke tobacco products by regulating the sale of these products. It will also ensure that all employers provide a smoke-free area for employees who must take their breaks on the worksite.

[Leave granted; Bill 215 read a first time]

Bill 216
Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994

MR. BRASSARD: On behalf of my colleague the Member for Calgary-East I wish to introduce Bill 216, the Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994.

This will more clearly define responsibilities towards maintenance and the enforcement thereof.

MR. SPEAKER: It was the understanding of the Chair and the Table that this Bill was not going to be proceeded with at this stage at this time.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Bill 217
Motor Vehicles Statutes Amendment Act, 1994

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce Bill 217, the Motor Vehicles Statutes Amendment Act, 1994.

This Bill will require all vehicles that have been written off and rebuilt to have a rebuilt designation placed on their ownership certificates so buyers are aware of the previous condition of the vehicle. Out-of-province vehicles will require mandatory inspection before they can be registered to ensure that Alberta is not a dumping ground for dangerous vehicles.

[Leave granted; Bill 217 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Bonnyville.

Bill 218
Water Resources Amendment Act, 1994

MR. VASSEUR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 218, Water Resources Amendment Act, 1994.

The Bill changes the Water Resources Act to ensure the long-term conservation of both nonsaline groundwater and surface water. In the case of surface water the Bill requires the controller of water resources to consider the volume and timing of water flows needed to maintain a healthier ecosystem when issuing new licences. The Bill legislates the policy for the use of fresh water aquifers for industrial purposes. No new licence would be issued for the withdrawal of nonsaline groundwater for oil field injection, but existing licences could be renewed while implementing the phaseout of fresh water. The Bill also sets up a water conservation technical advisory committee to advise on the protection of water resources.

[Leave granted; Bill 218 read a first time]

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

1:50
Bill 219
Natural Resources Conservation Board
Amendment Act, 1994

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Natural Resources Conservation Board Amendment Act, 1994, being Bill 219.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill will increase the powers of the Natural Resources Conservation Board so that it can review not only projects on their mandatory list or referred to them by cabinet but also activities for which an environmental impact assessment is mandatory. The NRCB may also review other activities they consider to be in the public interest. In addition, this Bill will protect Alberta's groundwater and surface water by enabling the NRCB to review large-scale projects that extract nonsaline groundwater or surface water for commercial or industrial use. Such projects are currently exempt from the EIA mandatory list.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 219 read a first time]

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

Bill 220
Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, 1994

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce Bill 220, the Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, 1994.

This Bill will delete section 8 and amend section 55 of the Employment Standards Code to add more provisions for employer responsibilities prior to and during layoffs. It will also amend section 11 of the Employment Standards Code to provide more protection for employees affected by a change in the employer's business. It will further amend division 10 of the Employment Standards Code to reduce the qualifying period for maternity and to increase parental leave provisions. It will also add measures which ensure part-time employees receive prorated benefits equivalent to what full-time employees receive.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Leave granted; Bill 220 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Before proceeding to the next order, the Chair would like to include these private members' public Bills. The Chair has received advice that Bill 216 is to proceed at this time. Therefore, the Chair is prepared to put that motion, but perhaps the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury would like to put it again.

Bill 216
Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994
(continued)

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce Bill 216 on behalf of my colleague from Calgary-East. It's the Maintenance Enforcement Amendment Act, 1994.

This will enable further enforcement of maintenance and define the responsibilities therein.

[Leave granted; Bill 216 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Community Development.

Bill 2
Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks
and Wildlife Foundation Act

MR. MAR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce Bill 2, being the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation Act.

This Act creates a new provincial agency by amalgamating the Alberta Sport Council and the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation.

[Leave granted; Bill 2 read a first time]

Bill 4
Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, 1994

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill being Bill 4, the Employment Standards Code Amendment Act, 1994.

There will be mechanisms in this Act to expedite the appeals process and to also allow for serious offenders on the employer or employee side to gain a greater appreciation of the working relationships.

[Leave granted; Bill 4 read a first time]

Bill 2
Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks
and Wildlife Foundation Act
(continued)

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has noted that Bill 2 is denominated a money Bill. Did the hon. minister wish to confirm this?

MR. MAR: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I will confirm that.

MR. SPEAKER: That the Bill has been approved by the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor? Could the minister confirm it?

MR. DAY: We'll take that under advisement and do all the necessary checks on that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: No. The Bill indicates that this is a money Bill, and the material is at the Table. Can the hon. minister advise as follows: confirm that having been informed of the contents of this Bill, the Lieutenant Governor recommends the same to the Assembly?

MR. MAR: I so confirm, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

head: Tabling Returns and Reports

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to table six copies of a return to Motion 202.

Further, it is also my pleasure to table copies of the document Meeting the Challenge, a summary of the public response to the education consultation and roundtables. This document summarizes the feedback from more than 17,000 submissions received from 31,000 Albertans on changes to the educational system.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to table six copies of a return to Motion 195.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to file with the Assembly today a report consisting of three documents dated

January 1994: Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta, the final report; Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta, the summary report; and a report titled Addressing Problem Gambling in Alberta, the report that was prepared for Alberta Lotteries by Wynne Resources Ltd. to determine the prevalence of problem gaming in Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to file with the Assembly today the Children's Advocate's annual report for '92-93.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Taber-Warner.

MR. HIERATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As chairman of the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices I would like to present the annual report of the Auditor General, 1992-93, which is submitted pursuant to section 19(4) of the Auditor General Act. Copies were distributed to members on January 12, 1994.

head: Introduction of Guests

MR. DAY: M. le Président, il me donne le plus grand plaisir à vous introduire le conseil général de la France, qui est avec nous aujourd'hui. M. Pierre Marchal was appointed as consul general of France to Alberta in October 1993 with jurisdiction for Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northwest Territories. He's accompanied today by Mr. Prieur, who serves as the cultural attaché with the consulate. France continues to maintain a relatively large and active consular presence in Alberta with the consulate general in Edmonton staffed by approximately eight persons as well as the consular general agency in Calgary. I'd like to emphasize that Mr. Marchal, the French consul, is a valued and important asset to both Alberta and France. I would invite the members to extend to them the warm welcome of this Assembly.

2:00

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Energy.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you members from by constituency who are visiting the Legislature today. We have Mrs. Arlene Felstrom. She's accompanied by her friend Ms Margaret Johnson, and they're in the members' gallery. I'd ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly two distinguished guests in the public gallery from my riding of Edmonton-Rutherford: Ernie Turnbull, former trustee of the Edmonton separate school board; his wife, Barbara Turnbull, a former educator. If you'd please stand and receive the warm welcome of this House.

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

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce through you and to you three representatives of the 140 Canadian Auto Workers who are currently on strike at Engine Rebuilders in Edmonton. They are Stan Horodyski, the national

rep of the Canadian Auto Workers; Doug Faucher, president of local 1085 Canadian Auto Workers; and Bud Sarasin. They're in the public gallery. If they would please stand to receive the warm welcome of the House.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly a gentleman who was originally from the Lesser Slave Lake constituency and left to move to Edmonton: Mr. Fred Dumont. Mr. Dumont has been active in municipal government and the educational field for many years, from mayor to chairman of Northland School Division to president of AVC, Grouard, and was the administrator of the Electric Energy Marketing Act and is now consulting on his own. He has served in many other capacities too numerous to mention here. He is seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask that he rise and that the members give him a healthy, warm welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: A member would like to table something. Could we revert to that order before calling Oral Question Period? Is there unanimous consent?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**
(*reversion*)

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to table in the Assembly four copies of a report issued by the Parent Advisory Committee of Crestwood school, a public elementary school in the constituency of Edmonton-Glenora. The committee met to discuss the Meeting the Challenge roundtable process. They concluded that that process was a very flawed process, and they asked that this report be received as a strong, unanimous, nonpartisan statement of basic principles for education.

head: **Oral Question Period**
Job Creation

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier deny that since he made his promise to create jobs in May, the Alberta economy has actually lost 29,000 jobs?

MR. KLEIN: Well, you know, what has been achieved in this province seems to confound the left-wing predictions and assertions coming from the Liberal Party, [interjections] Well, I'll tell you, your red buttons looked a lot better on you than the black ones today, much more fitting.

You know, I would like to quote Robert Mansell, professor of economics at the University of Calgary, in response to the Liberal report that was filed yesterday in the Legislature. He says: "If 1993 was any indication, Mr. Klein should put little stock" in the report tabled yesterday by the Liberals "even though the provincial government cut spending by \$700 million and trimmed 3,000 civil servants," and, I would say, through attrition, early retirement programs, in a compassionate, humane manner. [interjections] Just have them listen; I want this on the record. "Alberta had the highest economic growth rate of any province in the country. The Conference Board" – not this government, the Conference Board

of Canada, a very reputable outfit – "estimates Alberta finished the year with an annual growth rate of 5.1 percent," the highest in the country.

MR. DECORE: Doesn't the loss of 29,000 jobs, Mr. Premier, tell you that what you're doing isn't working and that you're actually destroying the Alberta advantage?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the gain of 35,400 jobs tells me that we're doing something right. I know that the Liberal Party wants to talk about the misery, the doom, the gloom. My caucus, 100 percent of my caucus, not 68 percent of them, would like to talk about the 90.7 percent of the people in this province who are employed.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like the Premier to tell Albertans how many Albertans have to lose their jobs before he wakes up.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, clearly Alberta leads the way relative to employment. I stress again: I would like to talk about the 90.7 percent of the people in this province who are employed and gainfully employed.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier uses a figure of 35,000 jobs that were created for the whole of last year, despite the fact that after he made his promise in May, 29,000 Albertans lost their jobs. It's a disgrace that the Premier says that these 35,000 jobs represent the Alberta advantage when Statistics Canada says that two-thirds of them are part-time jobs. I guess only John Oldring gets the Alberta advantage by getting a full-time job. Given that 22,500 of the Premier's jobs are part-time, why is the Premier faking reality?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, to answer the question, I am not faking reality, but if the hon. member, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, wants a lesson in reality, I'm going to have the hon. Deputy Premier give him one.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Premier.

2:10

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, a question was raised of the Premier. Unfortunately, in his attempt to respond and of course in the attempt that I had to respond, there seemed to be a marshaling down, so I do want to thank you, sir, for the intervention.

Mark Twain once made a statement with respect to statistics. We can't use the statement in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker. Statistics are freely available to any citizen in the province of Alberta. I have in front of me a sheet that looks at the unadjusted employed figures for the province of Alberta going back to 1977. They're freely available information in the public venue that looks at the numbers of people who are employed in any given month at any given time over the last number of years. Now, you know, the January 1994 information provided to us from Statistics Canada is very clear. Those figures, December to December 1992 to 1993 or January to January 1993 to 1994, clearly show the number of jobs that were created in the province of Alberta.

In order to understand what employment figures are, you have to go on an annual basis. You can't go from one week to two weeks later or one month to two months later. It's very clear that in the province of Alberta there has been created 35,400 jobs over the time frame of the last 12 months. Anyone who would want to distort that is, I think, making a terrible, terrible mistake, because it's not going to work. The figures are there; the statistics are

there. The Premier would be very, very happy to provide any citizen in the province of Alberta who is watching today who wants to contact the 1-800 number in the Premier's office the statistics so they can clearly understand what the truth is. And it is the truth that my Premier talks about, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DECORE: Does the Premier believe that when people can only find part-time work, they are truly enjoying the Alberta advantage?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I would assume that there are some people out there who prefer part-time work, who want part-time work. I'm not saying that that is the end-all and the be-all for anyone. There are many, many people who want full-time work, and the majority, the 90.3 percent of those who are gainfully employed in this province, I would say are full-time employees. But there are people who enjoy and want part-time work.

What I found most offensive was just recently when the hon. leader of the Liberal Party referred to those people who might be earning their way through university, who might be supplementing an income by, as he puts it, flipping hamburgers or selling handkerchiefs in a department store. What a terrible thing to say about people who want to work and want to be employed.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, I don't want you to hand this one off; I don't want you to fudge on this one. Just tell us how many of the 110,000 jobs that you promised last May are going to be full-time jobs for Albertans. How many?

MR. KLEIN: We know that 35,400 of those were very good jobs. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, without handing this question off at all – and maybe the question will come up during one of the supplementaries or maybe from one of our own members – I'm sure the Minister of Energy will outline in very clear and very precise terms to this House how energetic and how . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: How many? How many?

MR. KLEIN: You have four years to find out. Stay tuned.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Energy to supplement the answer. [interjections] Order. [interjections] Order.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious the opposition do not want to hear the answers. [interjections] If you would be quiet, you would hear the answer.

Mr. Speaker, last year there was over \$5 billion of capital investment that came into this province to support an activity level in the oil and gas industry.

MR. HENRY: How many full-time jobs? Answer the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, would you be quiet.

MRS. BLACK: What that meant is that we had a record year in activity in the oil and gas sector. In summary of what that meant in jobs, Mr. Speaker, from January of 1993 through December of 1993 in the oil and gas industry we had an increase of 15,400 direct jobs for oil and gas development and service, full-time. Now, that included . . .

MR. DECORE: Fifteen thousand people moved out of Alberta.

MRS. BLACK: If you would just be quiet, you would hear the answer. [interjections] Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult to give a rational answer in this House when the rabble-rousing comes from the other side.

Mr. Speaker, the breakdown on that 15,400: in the direct crude oil and natural gas side, 6,900 jobs; in the service sector, who have service rigs, et cetera, that went out to get involved in the drilling activities, 6,600 jobs; and in the pipeline transportation sector, 1,900 jobs. We don't have a tracking yet on the other jobs that were created in addition that were outside of that direct sector of the oil and gas industry, but I will say that with over \$5 billion of capital infusion into this province it was a record year for activity levels with almost 88 percent rig activity occurring in this province in 1993.

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

Health Care Workers

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 4 the Premier promised that his work force adjustment strategy would help health care workers to move – and I use his words – "into other areas of the workplace" so that they could "continue to support their families." Months later literally thousands of health care workers have lost their jobs, and what we have is a government that is still just talking about its \$20 million work force adjustment strategy. To the Premier: how is the Premier's work force adjustment scheme, which we have yet to see, going to help all those thousands of health care workers who have already lost their jobs?

MR. KLEIN: I'm looking for my hon. minister. Here we are right here. Right. Stockwell. Right.

Just before I get into this . . .

MR. DECORE: He's going to read his notes there.

MR. KLEIN: No, no, no. I'm quoting the hon. leader of the Liberal party, who when he talks about these questions in general and he talks about the government's program to eliminate the deficit by the year 1996-1997 and when he talks about our plans to create jobs – I have to remind him, before I defer to the hon. member, that this is the man who went out through the province and promised \$1.1 billion in brutal cuts the first year alone.

Now I'll defer.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I think any job numbers referred to by the opposition have to be taken into account very clearly, because when we announced not too long ago that there would be a few people laid off in the public service, the figure that was being boldly proclaimed was 40,000 by the members of the opposition. In fact it was 335. So there's a fair bit of discrepancy there.

2:20

On the issue of work force adjustment, in fact the tripartite discussions – there was a three-day session just recently. In the area of compensation obviously there wasn't total agreement, but in the area of work force adjustment, which the member has raised, both sides made considerable progress and both sides acknowledge some \$20 million coming from the Department of Health to assist workers in upgrading, retraining, job counseling, whatever it might be, \$20 million. Very significant progress in those discussions. It wasn't just talk; it was clear action.

MR. MITCHELL: I wonder whether the Premier could tell us in answer to my first question whether there was specific clear action on what kind of work force readjustment assistance will be given to all those thousands of Alberta health care workers who have already lost their jobs.

MR. KLEIN: First of all, the hon. minister answered the question. But quite simply we have put in place a very meaningful program of job retraining, skills upgrading, re-employment, deployment programs for those people who have taken the voluntary severance package, for those people who have moved out of the work force. The program, Mr. Speaker, is very comprehensive, and I think that the minister did an excellent job in answering the hon. member's question.

MR. MITCHELL: He certainly did a better job than the Premier. Given that we are now anticipating another \$100 million cut in health care services in Edmonton and Calgary, which will inevitably see hundreds if not thousands more health care workers laid off, will the Premier stand in this Legislature and guarantee that his work force readjustment plan will be in place before any more Alberta health care workers lose their jobs?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, insofar as the government's program is concerned, it is in place and has been in place for some time. [interjection] Certainly. Our human resources people will work with the health care sector, even those sectors that are not directly accountable and responsible to government, to make sure that proper work force plans are put in place, and we're doing that as I speak. That is now happening.

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

Helen E. Taylor School

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, February 14, the county of Grande Prairie school board ordered the permanent evacuation of 150 students plus staff from a portion of the Helen E. Taylor school in Wembley. Two separate and independent engineering reports have condemned the structural integrity of the roof system. Regrettably, plans for the replacement of this 40-year-old structure have been deferred indefinitely as a result of the announced spending cuts. My question to the Minister of Education: given that the condemned structure contains a library, staff room, boiler room, and six classrooms, will the minister please advise what funds and other resources will be made available for a short-term solution?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to this particular matter officials from my department met with those involved in the Grande Prairie area, and I can advise that students will be moved to the Helen E. Taylor school, which does have the library and ancillary rooms that the hon. member is referring to. In addition, emergency measures are being taken to move additional portable classrooms to the Helen E. Taylor to provide for these students while the overall situation is being assessed.

MR. JACQUES: Will the minister give a commitment to the parents and students that he will personally review the decision to defer the funds for a replacement school?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, yes, I can give the commitment that I will review the situation. It is one, as I've said, where we have already taken action. As I have also indicated and I'd like to

emphasize, action is being taken which will provide adequate classroom space for the students for this school, and they will have access to the facilities that the hon. member was concerned about.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister give his commitment to tour and inspect the school prior to any further decisions regarding its replacement?

MR. JONSON: Certainly, if time allows, I would be quite prepared to go to Grande Prairie and to visit this school. However, I think, Mr. Speaker, the matter of the assessment of the condition of the school and the need for additional space in that particular school area is one that also has to utilize the services of people expert in the area such as engineers and people who are taking very careful note of the enrollment in that area.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

Employment for Women

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's truly sad that the Premier never mentions that 4,200 women lost full-time jobs last year or that over two-thirds of the new jobs created are only part-time positions filled almost entirely by women who get low wages and zip for benefits. My question, then, is to the Premier. What is the Premier doing to stop this frightening and unfair drop in full employment for women?

MR. KLEIN: What we're doing, Mr. Speaker, is precisely what the public of this province sees and what the opposition sees but doesn't like. What we're doing is something that they're really fearful of. We're putting in programs to eliminate the deficit by 1996-97. We're putting in programs to create in this economy the most competitive tax regime of any jurisdiction in this country to attract new people with new dollars to create new opportunities for jobs in this province. That is precisely what we're doing. Right now as I look at the statistics, I see 90.7 percent of the population employed and meaningfully employed.

MRS. SOETAERT: Interesting figures.

What are the Premier's plans to deal with the growing number of women who can only find part-time work, or is that part of the Alberta advantage for women?

MR. KLEIN: We're not singling out women or any particular class, not like the Liberal opposition. We consider every Albertan to be equal and to have equal opportunity. The jobs that are being created are just as good for women as they are for men, as they are for students who want to maybe have a part-time job, as they are for other working people who might want to have a part-time job. Mr. Speaker, generally we are creating the economic climate for equal opportunity employment in this province. It's as simple as that.

MRS. SOETAERT: Won't do.

Mr. Speaker, my last supplementary will be to the minister responsible for women's issues. As the minister responsible for women's issues how do you plan to correct this economic assault on women?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has already correctly pointed out, in this province we are greatly concerned about great

opportunities for employment for all Albertans and not just for women. However, I would point out that we already have programs to improve training and educational opportunities for women to enter into occupations traditionally held by men. I would be quick to point out as well that we have been a leader in government with respect to programs that support female employees, and we have special placement programs as well for individuals that wish to have work experience that are individuals with disabilities and also for older workers.

MR. DAY: Just to quickly supplement that also, Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised we haven't been accused of an assault on men, because in fact in the last layoffs of government service jobs, significantly more men than women were laid off.

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

2:30 Education Restructuring

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the recent grant announcements on January 18 regarding education there were identified a number of areas which will require further consultation with various stakeholders. These include the issue of governance, the role of parents and communities, and the issue of charter schools. My question is to the Minister of Education. Can the minister clarify what process will be developed to address these restructuring initiatives?

MR. JONSON: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. The government has announced very important and significant directions in terms of the future of education in the province. These directions, these measures will require considerable work by way of planning implementation. Yes, the definite plan is to involve stakeholders, to involve parents in the consultation process in terms of implementation. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Could the minister please identify whether there'll be a specific role for MLAs in this process?

MR. MITCHELL: Looking for a job, Jocelyn?

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

The hon. minister.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, it is my plan to involve a number of government MLAs in task forces to assist me with the implementation of the overall program. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. N. TAYLOR: He gave a foolish answer.

MR. SPEAKER: It's not up to the Member for Redwater to characterize the quality of any answer.

The hon. minister.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, to deal with important areas of our initiatives such as the amalgamation and regionalization of school boards, the further definition of roles within the education system, yes, as I've indicated, we do plan to involve MLAs in that particular task.

MRS. BURGNER: Mr. Speaker, thank you for your assistance, because the parents in my constituency are desperately listening and waiting for these answers.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: will there be a time frame in place for these consultations?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I think it has to be recognized that the initiatives will go forward. In some cases they will be able to be put in by definitive deadlines; in other cases more flexibility will be needed. For instance, with respect to the amalgamation and regionalization of school boards I've indicated in answer to questions that I've received from many, many school boards across this province that the logical goal for this task to be completed would be the October 1995 elections. There will be similar . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order.

The hon. minister.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, after careful consideration we will set time lines for the other activities that will be outlined in terms of following up on our directions.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray.

Job Creation

(continued)

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The man on the street knows that secure, full-time, paying jobs are down, and jobs with a future are down in this province. The Premier says today in this Legislative Assembly: wait four years for answers. I ask the Premier today to refresh our memory on what his immediate job-creation strategy is in this province.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I find that question somewhat surprising coming from the hon. Member for Fort McMurray. Here is one of the most prosperous communities in the province of Alberta. Here's a community that is a beehive of economic activity, one of the most prosperous areas in the province, much of that stimulated by government. All the hon. member needs to do is look to his own community to see what the government and the private sector have done to stimulate the economy.

MR. GERMAIN: The Premier invites me, Mr. Speaker, to look to my own community. Last week 26 health care workers lost their jobs in my own community. I want to try again for an answer on the job strategy. What's the reintegration job strategy for health care workers that are losing their jobs today?

MR. KLEIN: Well, again this is so consistent with the Liberals' philosophy of gloom and doom and misery, the kinds of things that the hon. leader of the Liberal Party promised to spread throughout this province. I would rather talk about the thousands and thousands and thousands of people who are gainfully employed at Suncor and Syncrude and actively and gainfully employed in numerous industries that are supported by those industries, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Do I take back to the people who are in unfortunate trouble in Fort McMurray the

Premier's message that others in the community have jobs? Is that the message I take back to those out of work?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's a bad message to take back at all. If the hon. member really wants to do something constructive, he can take back the message that probably 95 percent of the people in Fort McMurray who want to work are working. I would say that it might even be higher than that.

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

Private Schools

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've received a number of letters from my constituents who are supporters of the independent school system. They are applauding the government on a number of counts: focusing education on students in the classroom, giving more authority to schools and parents, lowering administrative costs. They're liking the approach on funding following the students, on parental choice, the open boundaries. These are parents that pay their taxes and also pay tuition on top of those taxes. I would like if the Minister of Education could explain to these parents why choice is limited to the public and separate schools.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, full funding is provided to the public and separate schools of this province, and all students have the opportunity to attend those schools. Where parents and students choose to go to independent schools, that is certainly their choice. However, it is the position of the government that it is important that we fully fund schools which are accessible to all students, follow the provincial program of studies, and meet the other requirements of the public and separate school system. In exercising the choice of going to an independent school, there does have to be some costs accruing to the parents.

MR. DOERKSEN: To the minister. There's also been some talk in terms of: can they become eligible for independent schools? Can you tell me . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No preamble. Ask the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair will remind the hon. member. Hon. members opposite do not have to remind the Chair that there are no preambles to supplemental questions.

A straight question.

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What changes will independent schools have to make to become eligible to have charter school status?

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask the Premier.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as I've . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order.

The hon. minister.

2:40

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, it is intended to establish a number of charter schools, to pilot them, and to evaluate them. The primary purposes will be that of putting forth and trying out innovations in educational delivery and to meet certain needs for special services in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with respect to charter schools – and I've indicated this on other occasions – there are criteria that have been established, and we have more details, of course, to work out. They must be accessible to all students. They are publicly funded. There would not be a tuition fee charged. They would be nonsectarian outside of the public and separate school systems. Providing those criteria would be met and they would serve the purpose of innovation or special services, applications and proposals would be considered.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Labour Relations

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At a time when the Alberta advantage means a loss of jobs, employers are in a strong bargaining position. Engine Rebuilders is a company that is now in a labour dispute, and this is not the first time. Since jobs are at stake, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Is the minister willing to give a commitment to meet with both sides to help resolve this issue before it turns into another Gainers or Zeidler?

MR. DAY: Well, I'll try and stay away from the inflammatory language. When there's a labour dispute going on, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that people recognize that there are two parties that are bargaining. The actual lockout took place, I believe, February 8; the strike vote was applied for on the 9th; the strike was formally advised of on the 12th. February 12 at 4 o'clock is when it formally took place. It's just been a few days. The natural process of negotiation has to work out. A mediator from our department has been available since October 15. We don't come leaping into these disputes. The mechanisms are there, and I believe this will be settled.

MS LEIBOVICI: As the minister is unwilling to give a commitment to meet with both sides, and as the mediation process has failed these employees, what are you going to do to fix it?

MR. DAY: I am just overwhelmed, Mr. Speaker, by the lack of knowledge of the labour process here. We have two parties who are negotiating. A mediator is available. The strike formally took place and notice was served on Saturday at 4 o'clock, and now the member opposite is asking for Big Brother, or big sibling I guess, to leap in and settle this. These are intelligent adults who are working on this dispute. We know it will be settled. I'm glad that we come from a province that has the lowest number of days lost due to work stoppage of any province in this country.

MS LEIBOVICI: Seeing that there is a need for a stronger mediation process, why is the minister intent on privatizing these services?

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, we've made very clear, as will be evident in business plans and as we've already made publicly evident, that anything the government, is doing that can be done more effectively somewhere else should be given consideration. Already there is a process whereby mediators who are in the private sector can be drawn on for their wisdom and experience, and we may well see that progress.

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

Energy Industry

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Over the past few years the oil industry has been going through significant price restructuring which has impacted on my constituency because of the level of oil and gas production in our area. Oil prices seem to be stabilized between \$14 and \$16 per barrel, and I am concerned about future job opportunities in this industry. To the Minister of Energy: could the minister indicate what the future holds for my constituents in this industry?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, the oil and gas industry is very important for this entire province. I'm pleased to see that the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury is raising this question. We have experienced soft prices on the oil side in the marketplace over these last few months. However, what we have also seen is a firming up and a strengthening on the gas side as we've been able to access new markets and enjoy additional activity. In balance, we see the activity is increasing, and there is every expectation that that activity level will continue on for this next fiscal year.

MR. BRASSARD: In that every \$1 change in oil prices impacts \$100 million on our budget over a period of a year, could the minister tell us what effect the current oil prices are having on our budget projections?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, as you know, the government is now putting out quarterly reports. In the second quarterly report we reflected that trend of oil prices going down, but we also reflected the trend of our gas market and our gas prices going up. In addition to that, we were able to show the enthusiasm and confidence that was gaining back in this sector through the capital investment, which was reflected through the tremendous increase in interest in our land sales over this year. So we have had a banner year in 1993 with over 7,000 drilled wells in Alberta. We've seen over 15,000 jobs as a result of that activity level, and we expect this next year to follow the same route. When you have over \$5 billion of investment come into this province, that shows that there is sheer confidence in this government.

MR. BRASSARD: Recognizing the budgetary challenges the federal government is facing, which led to the national energy program of the past, could the minister bring us up to date with any conversations she's had with the federal minister of energy to indicate that consideration of such a program is not part of their budgetary solutions?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, what I will say is that I have had several conversations, as have many members of this Assembly from both sides of the House, to express concerns over a future NEP. What I've said is that the government of Alberta would not look favourably upon any national or provincial program which would preclude from the development of our natural resource. We need to have a stabilized environment so that investment activity continues as it has this last year, and we need to have clear, concise policy directions not only from the national government but from all governments. Any form of disruption or intrusion in that fashion would not be acceptable to the province of Alberta.

I might also say, Mr. Speaker, because of the importance of this industry, that we have been working with our industry to streamline our processes and have asked that our federal counterparts do exactly the same thing to cut out administrative burdens and additional costs to the industry and to governments.

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

Agricultural Exports

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've had the free trade agreement, we've had NAFTA, and now the GATT is being signed. Canada is still having trouble getting its agricultural products into the U.S. market. I'd like to ask the minister of agriculture why he's not doing more to get this access opened up for our farmers.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you very much, and certainly a question that we have been working hard to try and deliver a response to our agricultural producers in Alberta. Obviously, agriculture plays a very vital role in this province. It's been identified as one of the leading potential industries for growth.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are you doing to help? That's the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

2:50

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Do you want to answer the question?

The opportunities that NAFTA and GATT have presented to the agricultural community in Alberta are just overwhelming. We are a province that moves 63 percent of everything that we produce out of our borders, so obviously export and market opportunity are very key and very important. It was with this point that we negotiated with the federal minister and suggested to him that the bilaterals for GATT should be agreed to prior to December 15. Unfortunately, that didn't happen. We're now caught up in a scenario where we're trying to negotiate bilaterals with the American government regarding agricultural access into the United States. We strongly – strongly – have been recommending to the federal government that it's vital that we deal with agriculture as an industry, not specific areas of agriculture and trade away certain benefits of agriculture at the expense of others. Unfortunately, to date we have not been able to successfully negotiate on behalf of our grains and oilseeds industry. We strongly support the initiative that the grains and oilseeds industry must be balanced with the supply management, with all other aspects of agriculture for access into the United States and all other parts of the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the minister again if he has looked at the possibility of trading off Alberta's efficient dairy industry in order to gain access to the U.S. market for our grain sector. We have one of the most efficient dairy industries in Canada, and it can be used as a trading position.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East is correct in that we do have one of the most efficient dairy industries in Canada and the world, and I'm proud of it. We actually outproduce the dairy industry in any other part of Canada with our dairy industry in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, I don't consider it fair that we trade off any aspect of agriculture against any other aspect of agriculture. I think what we must do is negotiate to the benefit of all agriculture in this province of Alberta.

DR. NICOL: Mr. Speaker, that sounds good, but when the Americans don't handle it the same way, we have a lot of trouble in Canada.

I'd like to ask the minister if he's made any attempts to go into the U.S. and talk to the farmers in the northern part of the Great Plains area and provide them with the Canadian perspective so that we can prevent the kind of blockades that were incurring in Shelby in the last month.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago we along with the minister of advanced education and several MLAs that are close to the American border met with several Montana politicians, sat down and spent an entire afternoon in discussion as to how we can best resolve this impasse. Yes, indeed, we have been negotiating with the United States. However, the true negotiation has to happen at the federal level. Perhaps your input to your Liberal counterparts might be helpful in this instance, because this is being negotiated at the federal level. Until the federal department of agriculture meets with the American department of agriculture at the national level and resolves this issue, we can only have input. We have been doing that. We have agreement with the Montana people.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, just to supplement that answer. The trade discussions in Canada internally are going on, but I sincerely hope that my hon. friend from Lethbridge does not forget that negotiations on agriculture in Canada are conducted by the federal government, not the provincial government. The last time I looked, the federal government in Ottawa is a Liberal government, and they will conduct the final negotiation with the United States of America, not the province of Alberta. Perhaps the hon. member would be good enough to call one of his big brothers down there in Ottawa and say: "What are you guys doing to Alberta agriculture? Protect us. Protect us."

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period has expired.

head: **Members' Statements**

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

Job Creation

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The global economy and certainly the economy in Alberta is undergoing a fundamental restructuring. These forces are coming at us from two directions. First, firms are downsizing. Whether they're large firms or whether it's government, they're now finding it far cheaper to do outside the firm what normally they had undertaken within the firm. If you look at the statistics on job creation, it is small business, businesses under 19, 20 employees, that are creating the jobs, and in particular it is small businesses under five employees that are creating the jobs.

If you look at the international forces impinging on the economy, the growth in the industrialized economies and the growth in Alberta in particular is in those small businesses that deal with skills: skills that we apply to our resource base; skills that we apply to understanding our environment; skills that we apply to our forestry industry, our oil industry. It is the services from these types of industries that are being exported. If you look at the unifying theme, what gives us the Alberta advantage, Mr. Speaker? It is the skills and the training required to capitalize in those areas.

What are we doing? We have a Tax Reform Commission that comes forward with recommendations that are not tied to job creation. We have an economic strategy that yields job losses. We have no policies that deal specifically with the needs of small

business. We talk about letting the market do it. Every study that I have seen says that there is a role for government in creating an economic atmosphere. You can create a comparative advantage for Alberta firms and for Alberta workers. You do it by investing in education. You do it by investing in advanced education, in quality of life. There's a role for government. You don't abdicate your responsibilities.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Three Hills-Airdrie.

Education Restructuring

MS HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity to make a comment about something near and dear to my heart, and that's education. I have two sons in high school, so education does matter to me. It matters to me as an Albertan and as an MLA but most importantly as a mother. I have no intention of standing by and watching the so-called destruction of education in our province. Contrary to what the naysayers portend, cutting 8 percent out of total education spending will not cause the downfall of education in this province.

I choose to look at this as an opportunity to reshape and restructure our education system. I listened carefully to the rhetoric espoused here yesterday by members opposite hoping to glean something helpful, but instead I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that our Premier cared more about the price of booze than education. I guess that comment and others that are equally derogatory are supposed to impress Albertans, that somehow it elevates the opposition to great heights to be so cryptic and scathing in their comments.

I find it hard to understand how anyone can defend a system that now costs us over \$150,000 per year for a class of 26 students; a system that has allowed the cost of ECS to go from an average of \$250 per student in 1981 to over \$1,800 per year in 1993, as has happened in parts of my constituency, a program that ECS teachers in my constituency have told me can easily be taught in three to four months as a grade 1 readiness program; a system that in fact has spent over one-third of its budget, or over \$1 billion, on administration, construction, and supplies. If one were to listen to the members opposite, it is unacceptable to look at changing or even questioning anything inside the hallowed halls of education.

Albertans deserve better, Mr. Speaker. They deserve a fiscally responsible government. They deserve a streamlined education system that can deliver what our future needs.

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

Family and Community Support Services

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back in 1966 the Social Credit government of Alberta created the Preventive Social Services Act and developed the preventive social services program. The intent was to reinforce healthy community life by recognizing the importance of preventing social problems from arising or existing problems from worsening; to recognize the importance of local involvement in decision-making regarding what is preventive, what is necessary in their own community; to provide for the importance of local input in financing the program; and, foremost, to capitalize on the awesome power of volunteers to utilize the time, talents, energies, and caring of thousands of Albertans. Mr. Speaker, there's no question this program has worked.

It was changed in 1980 to the family and community support services to better reflect changing social trends in family life. It

was subjected to an intensive review in 1990-91. This review made 37 recommendations for continuation, expansion, and strengthening of the program. Now we learn of this government's intention to move family and community support services into the Department of Municipal Affairs. This thrifty, best-buy, productive, unique social policy program will be lumped in with municipal grants, putting Meals on Wheels, seniors' independence, family counseling, after school care, parenting, and so on, in competition with sewers, potholes, policing, defeating the mandate of FCSS, denying the voluntary commitment, Mr. Speaker.

I plead with this government and with Albertans who care: don't give this program to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Don't abandon family and community support services. It serves us very well.

3:00

MR. SPEAKER: Before proceeding to a point of order that the Chair understands the Member for Fort McMurray wishes to make, could we have unanimous consent to revert to Introduction of Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

head: Introduction of Guests
(reversion)

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise to introduce a member of my constituency, a businessman and a very active community member. I'm sure the Member for Three Hills-Airdrie would be interested to know that this gentleman is chairing an independent education forum that will be documented in a brief to this Legislature. I'd ask Mr. David Doyle to rise to accept the warm welcome of this Assembly.

Point of Order
Preambles

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray has a point of order.

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you, sir. I rose during the question posed by the hon. Member for Red Deer-South. I recognize, as do all of the members sitting on this side of the Assembly . . . [interjection] Yes. Thank you. Citation 409(2), *Beauchesne*, found on page 120: unduly long preamble.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Speaker suggested that one of the obvious results of long preambles is that you don't get to ask as many questions. The hon. Leader of the Opposition opened today's question period with no preamble at all, with a hard-hitting question addressed to the Premier of this province. I'm not debating today the quality of the Premier's answer or any lack thereof, but I am pointing out that when the Member for Red Deer-South goes on in a lengthy preamble, it deprives members of the Official Opposition their opportunity on behalf of all Albertans to ask questions that are important to everyday, ordinary Albertans.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, this taking of time of the Assembly, especially with an important motion like the leader opposite is bringing out later that we want to get into: you clearly addressed that. The member to which you addressed the problem with the preamble immediately cut short his comment. The thing was dealt

with, and here we have another case of just incessant dragging out of these procedural items, barring us from the debate that we want to get into.

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

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My opening preamble was very necessary in order to set the context in which to ask the question, because they had to understand that the choice had been given to parents to move schools, the funding following the students, and the people from the independent schools needed to know why they were not – they saw the choice ending between the public and the separate school systems. So that context was necessary to frame the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, hon. members, the Chair has to admit that preambles do use time, but the Chair would also point out that heckling certainly uses a lot of time.

The Chair certainly found the Leader of the Opposition's questions today very refreshing, but I think that the record will show that even the Leader of the Official Opposition has used preambles on supplemental questions, that the Chair has not really pointed out. So I guess today we've seen substantial justice prevail with an averaging down of that. The Chair would remind all hon. members that the preamble to the questions should probably be shorter than the question. I think these points are all well taken. I know the hon. Member for Red Deer-South certainly responded to the suggestion that preambles are not permitted in supplemental.

The Chair would like to take this opportunity of saying that while today was not perfect, it certainly was much better than yesterday, and we'll try for improvements in a gradual way from here on in. The Chair hopes that it can continue to have the co-operation of members on all sides in that regard.

Thank you.

Orders of the Day

head: Public Bills and Orders Other than
Government Bills and Orders
Second Reading

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, so that second reading can proceed on this particular item, I would ask unanimous consent from the members to waive Standing Order 73(1).

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly give unanimous consent for the waiving of this standing order?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

Bill 201
Electoral Boundaries (Reduction) Act

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege and an honour for me to stand and speak to second reading of Bill 201, a Bill entitled Electoral Boundaries (Reduction) Act.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that every member of this Assembly has heard the Premier and members across the way talk about the need for less government and not fewer services. One way to ensure that there is less government and that there are not fewer services for Albertans is to show and lead by example. This Bill does that. The objective of Bill 201 is to reduce the number of MLAs in this

Assembly from 83 to 65. It is also, as a second objective, to take away the opportunity, the possibility of politicians drawing boundaries on a map of Alberta for the constituencies that they ultimately represent.

The principles, Mr. Speaker, of Bill 201 are first that the government should show some leadership. All of us should show some leadership. The Premier, cabinet members, and members of government are calling on Albertans to show sacrifices in a number of areas. They want school boards to be reduced in number. They want hospital boards to be reduced in number. They want a reduction in the whole of the area of administration in the province. Well, it seems to me that when you want others to do and to accept reductions, you must start cutting at the top as well. We must show by example.

The second principle that's involved in Bill 201 is an acknowledgment that we are overgoverned, that there are too many of us representing Albertans in this Assembly. I think it's important to compare Alberta to the other have provinces and other areas in order to see where we stand. If you look at the number of Canadians that are represented by one Member of Parliament in our House of Commons, it's 92,912. If you look at the number of people that are represented by one MLA in the Ontario Legislature, it is 77,677 people. In British Columbia one MLA represents 44,067 British Columbians, and in Oregon one elected representative in that state represents 49,650 constituents. The current Alberta average per riding is 30,904; that's for 83 MLAs. If we took the number from 83 to 65, each MLA in this Assembly would represent an average of 39,462.

3:10

The third principle that is involved in Bill 201 is fairness, fairness in the drawing of boundaries. Fairness is accomplished by allowing the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench working in conjunction with the Chief Electoral Officer – and that person would only be a resource person – to establish the boundaries for the constituencies in Alberta. Now, it's important, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge and to note that our Court of Appeal just a few weeks ago dealt with the issue of representation in this Assembly. The Supreme Court of Canada set some broad principles. The Court of Appeal of our province is now finessing, finalizing the principles that should be applicable for our province. So the Chief Justice is then going to have the opportunity to take those finessed principles, those finessed issues, and to thereby formulate the proper boundaries for our province.

I was interested, as I traveled through central and southern Alberta last week, to note that the hon. Member for Olds-Didsbury, one of many members, made comment that somehow this Bill would give an overrepresentation to urban Alberta. I don't know how the hon. member could make that kind of a statement, because it is at this moment that the Court of Appeal of Alberta is deciding the principles by which representation in Alberta will be determined. It may well be that there are more rural members in comparison to urban members under the new principles that the Court of Appeal comes forward with. So for somebody to jump up and immediately come to that conclusion is quite wrong. The Court of Appeal is determining the principles. We then use those principles to determine the number of constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, the process of fairness ensures that there is a nonpartisan process and that that nonpartisan process will restore faith, faith in the process, faith in ensuring that people are properly represented. We will not go through the kind of debacle that we saw in years past, very near years past, in getting people into this Assembly. I think the memory of members of this Assembly and

Albertans should be refreshed by noting that part of that debacle last time ended up in having five minority reports of five people that were part of the commission and no real recommendations, that moneys – I think it was a million dollars of taxpayers' moneys – were simply squandered because the government was attempting to manipulate the process. In the end, even after the representation by the Leader of the Opposition and by the leader of the third party, which was the leader of the Liberal Party, myself, at that time, when we went to the Premier and asked for his reconsideration, the Premier refused, and the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party refused to participate in that special select committee that eventually drew the lines for Alberta constituencies. There can't be any doubt in anybody's mind in this Assembly that gerrymandering, that fixing of boundaries took place.

Mr. Speaker, a fourth principle of this Bill is the fact that there will be cost savings. We estimate, and this is a conservative figure, not a big "c" conservative . . .

MRS. SOETAERT: Small "c".

MR. DECORE: Small "c" conservative; thank you, hon. member. . . . of some \$2.5 million per year. Now, that's not a huge sum in the scheme of a large budget of this province, but \$2.5 million can go a long way. When I was in Olds-Didsbury just last week, I stopped in at the hon. member's fine college and met with the chairman of the board and the president of the agricultural college in Olds and learned that the average tuition fee for a student at the college is about a thousand dollars a year. I also learned that of three people that apply as students to the agricultural college, two are turned away; only one is accepted. One of the most heart-wrenching experiences for me was to listen at a public meeting to a woman with her child talking about the fact that she had to leave the school because she simply couldn't make ends meet. She couldn't afford to stay in the school any longer and get her education.

Mr. Speaker, \$2.5 million would have gone a long way at the Olds agricultural college: \$2.5 million could give one year of hot lunches for 4,100 needy schoolchildren in our province; \$2.5 million would provide 616 spaces for children in the Head Start program; \$2.5 million would provide 112 new women's shelter beds in our province. The cuts by the Klein government in many areas have shown a lack of heart and a lack of intelligence. This is an opportunity – that is, saving \$2.5 million – to show some heart and to allow these moneys to go to areas where Albertans really do need help.

I want to remind hon. members again about the experience that I talked about yesterday, when I met some 40 women in my own constituency, representing the northeast of Edmonton, who talked about their inability to find enough money to allow their children to participate in kindergarten next year or the year after because they simply couldn't make ends meet, or to hear mothers say that their children had to remain in the classrooms because the \$25 per year allocation for school supplies that this government is now giving out simply isn't enough, to listen to mothers talk about the fact that they can't buy enough food – fruit and milk – for their children, that they can't live to Canada's food rules because there simply isn't enough money. Mr. Speaker, this \$2.5 million can help in a very big way.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, if there isn't heart on the other side, if there isn't the kind of belief that \$2.5 million could help in the areas that I've talked about, then take the \$2.5 million and apply it to the debt of this province that this Conservative government has created. That would make a big difference.

So, Mr. Speaker, to recap. This Bill shows leadership. It shows leadership by the government and by the opposition in cutting back on the amount of government in this province. It would put us in sync; it would make us comparable to the other have provinces of Canada. I don't think there is any member of this Assembly that couldn't and wouldn't be able to look after the additional number of voters that he or she would have in his or her constituency. This Bill allows for a system to click in immediately when it's needed to ensure that there is fairness in the drawing of boundaries, that politicians don't sit in glee – I'm sure that's the way it worked last time – and draw the lines on the map of Alberta to say, "This is going to be a Conservative constituency, likely, and this is going to be something else," and to work at thwarting the democratic process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of this Assembly to adopt and to support this Bill, to show leadership.

Thank you.

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

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to speak to Bill 201 sponsored by the opposition leader. I'll be speaking and voting against Bill 201 unless it's amended. I know this Bill is little more than a public relations move that's intended to divert attention away from the Liberal opposition's incompetence. In the last two days the Liberal opposition has shown that they are not only halfhearted, disjointed, misdirected but also that they don't have even a legislative platform. So I don't blame them for trying to change the channel on this one. In fact, Mr. Speaker, fewer Liberals would result in a more productive Legislature.

3:20

Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the two initiatives proposed in this Bill are being brought up at this time. Since the 1989 general election every Albertan has been aware that there would be a redistribution of Alberta's electoral boundaries. I do not recall the Liberals ever bringing forward a proposal to reduce the number of seats in the Legislature during those deliberations. As a matter of fact, I recall the opposition leader publishing an extensive document on parliamentary reform. Nowhere in this document was a reduction of seats or a change in the Electoral Boundaries Commission ever proposed. This issue, Mr. Speaker, was not brought up by the Liberal Party during the past election. I wonder why the issue was never mentioned. Perhaps the Liberals assume that while this Bill is hidden under the presumption that it will save the province money, they understand that the people across Alberta still want ready access to their MLA.

MR. TRYNCHY: When would this take effect?

MR. WOLOSHTYN: I don't know when this would take effect. I think, if you look in the Bill, it would probably be before the next election, hon. member. I believe, reading the Bill, it had some reference to 1995.

Reducing the number of MLAs by 20 percent could drastically affect rural citizens' access to their MLA if applied according to the Liberal formula. However, if applied logically, perhaps we could accommodate it, and that's where an amendment might be due.

Mr. Speaker, I was able to find a few occasions when the Liberal Party was willing to discuss electoral boundaries. They occurred during the public hearings of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, that were referred to, and also the Select Special

Committee on Electoral Boundaries. As I look at them now, the comments of the Liberals do not quite agree with the spirit of Bill 201. As a matter of fact, they contradict it.

MR. LUND: Oh, no.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Oh, yes, hon. member, they contradict it.

On November 28, 1989, the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo made a presentation to the Select Special Committee on Electoral Boundaries. At the time he was not a member of the Legislature, but he was speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party. He said, and I quote from page 239: "Clearly, there is room for expansion of the total number of MLAs." That's an expansion, Mr. Speaker, upwards from '83, not down. [interjection] Upwards is an expansion, hon. member.

In the same presentation he stated:

... the total number and, I guess, the additional cost to the province, the ancillary to that, rather than to overload MLAs by having them represent more constituencies than we think they can effectively represent.

And then he goes on, Mr. Speaker, on page 244: "We really think we wouldn't want to see MLAs responsible for larger populations than they are now."

Further to this, Mr. David Bell, who represented at that time the Liberals in Airdrie, said:

Why can't we change the number of elected areas? Then we could solve all these kinds of problems. The cities could have a few more.

We wouldn't object in the country as long as you leave us alone.

As a member of the caucus that's sponsoring this Bill, I think Calgary-Buffalo must be in quite a difficult position. Perhaps he is comfortable in his urban riding and sees the addition of a few blocks as a minor inconvenience and that rural members should suffer with constituencies twice their current size. Or perhaps he disagrees with his leader, in which case I'm sure he'll join me in voting against the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the only dissenting voice we hear from the Liberal caucus on the issue. The Member for Calgary-North West was a member of the special select committee that chose not to adjust the number of seats in the Legislature; he did not object. A motion was made by the committee on October 23, 1990, to fix the number of seats at 83. The motion was carried unanimously with the member in attendance on that day. We have a member of the Liberal caucus saying the number should remain at 83, another saying it should possibly be increased, and now they sit across the way contemplating support of their leader's Bill. I'm sure they'll also vote against his Bill.

When I look at the principle of Bill 201, I see no benefit in the passage of this Bill, no need to consider it further than this afternoon, as a matter of fact.

I'd like to take issue with the Liberals' mechanism for redrawing the commission. The Liberals claim that the new process would be nonpartisan and fair to all Albertans. I wish to disagree. The Liberals propose that one person draw the boundaries for provincial elections. The Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench would prepare the boundaries in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer. I do not see the logic used to justify their claim that one person drawing a line on a map will do a better job than a five-person commission. I believe that this is a very autocratic style of management, and I think it would be setting a very dangerous precedent. It would be a giant step backward in this democracy.

I think it's important to look at what the current composition of the Electoral Boundaries Commission is. An Electoral Boundaries Commission must be appointed as soon as possible after the data

is available following each decennial census. The chairman of the commission must be either a judge or a retired judge. There are four other members on the commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair hesitates to interrupt the hon. member, but pursuant to Standing Order 8(2)(b), we must now conclude this matter and move on to the next order of business.

head: **Motions Other than Government Motions**

Job Creation

501. Moved by Mr. Decore:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to make public its plans as to how it will fulfill its promise to Albertans to create 110,000 jobs by 1997 by developing a job strategy for Albertans. This strategy should include consultation, labour, the educational system, and the small business community. This strategy shall be released publicly by June 1, 1994.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Motion 501. In May of last year the present Premier of Alberta indicated that 110,000 jobs were going to be created over a short period of time. In fact, the Premier even specified the exact number of jobs in the various categories of the Alberta industry sector where these 110,000 jobs would come from. That was all smoke and mirrors, and in fact today we saw a Premier that couldn't even answer questions that related to the 110,000 jobs. We've seen today and yesterday and in the last few weeks a Premier fudging figures, a Premier talking about the creation of some 35,000 jobs and attempting to fool Albertans into believing that somehow he or his government had created these jobs as part of an Alberta advantage. The Premier hasn't been forthright in showing and clarifying for Albertans that the 110,000 jobs, first of all, are for a long period during which he wasn't even Premier and, in fact, doesn't even acknowledge statistics from Statistics Canada that say that from May to January – the most recent statistics show that in fact 29,000 jobs have been lost to Albertans and not gained.

3:30

Today the Premier wouldn't even acknowledge also what Statistics Canada tells us, and that is that two-thirds of the jobs that he's touting as the Alberta advantage, 35,000, are in fact part-time jobs. Well, that came out today, and it showed that he wasn't sure and wasn't clear and didn't have answers and couldn't explain the obvious, and the obvious is that 110,000 jobs were smoke and mirrors, and Albertans have to do something about that. Our role as the opposition is to ensure that we put pressure on the Premier and the cabinet and the caucus on the opposite side to fulfill its promise to Albertans: create 110,000 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, a deficit and a debt plan needs to go in concert with some other factors. One of those factors is to ensure that people are treated with dignity. One of those factors is to ensure that cuts are intelligent and not done so as to hurt an institution or whatever, a program that makes it more costly or perhaps even impossible later on to recreate. We don't see and I don't see the intelligence in the cutting that's being used. In fact, I see harm and harm to the economy. There must be balanced with a plan to deal with deficit and debt the factor of ensuring that there is creation of wealth. You must have that balance. You must have in the creation of wealth the creation of jobs.

Now, Albertans have been pretty impressive over the period of time that Alberta has existed. We have been blessed with people

that have come from all parts of the world and blessed by the fact that those Albertans have had a very strong entrepreneurial spirit. It seems that the first gave that entrepreneurial spirit to others, if they didn't have it, in the strength that those who came first had. When you mix that entrepreneurial spirit with the resources that this province has, that's why we have been so successful since the start of our province.

We have always been a province that has had its eyes on the future. We have always been a province that has had confidence that we were strong entrepreneurs, that we were risk-takers. In fact, if you look at the statistics, you will see that entrepreneurs in Alberta on a per capita basis put more risk capital into ventures than any other province in Canada. But, Mr. Speaker, that was then and this is now. Now what is happening is that the Premier's poorly constructed plan or the poorly constructed plan of his ministers is extinguishing that entrepreneurial spirit and that hope for the future.

The Premier seems to be oblivious to the fact that people are losing their jobs, that if you walk out onto the street you will meet people who don't have work or you will run into somebody of some family that says, "Do something because our family members aren't working." There is fear for jobs. There is fear that people won't be able to pay their mortgages. There is fear of business bankruptcy. There is fear that there won't be the kind of strength to hold on economically that there was in the past. That's something new for Albertans. We're not used to that.

Mr. Speaker, 29,000 Albertans lost their jobs since May of last year, and to add insult to the injury, a government through its Premier attempts to suppress, does suppress the labour statistics that are given out on the seventh day of each month so that the Premier and that party opposite can make themselves look better when the Speech from the Throne is read. I don't think that's something that we can be very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that the Liberal caucus has made attempts to start to poke the government into some kind of action, and hopefully this motion will do exactly that: get them moving, get them to create the jobs. I note with interest that government members voted down a Liberal motion in the heritage savings trust fund committee to establish a committee to see how the heritage fund could be used to stimulate jobs in Alberta. We just wanted to see if we could do it, and we were shot down. Not interested in that initiative at all. To Conservatives jobs are not important. I guess it's only important at the time of an election to throw out some ridiculous figure and then fudge it later on.

Mr. Speaker, by way of interest, it's important to look and see what others are saying about us and how others are analyzing us and how our own business community is analyzing the economic mood of Alberta. Informetrica – this is a company that's well known to Canadians – says that the Klein plan will mean a loss of 40,000 jobs by the year 1997. That's devastating to a fragile economy. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business survey of Alberta members says that two-thirds of the businesses will not hire people this year. That survey says that two-thirds of their business members will not hire individuals this year and 11 percent will downsize. That's 88 percent in total. So small business, the best job creator, will not make up for the 40,000 jobs the Premier will lose, let alone make up any part of the 110,000 that he boasted that he and his government would create or help create.

How does the Premier respond to this crisis in the throne speech, his big plan for the year? Well, he doesn't even talk about 1994 or 1995. The Speech from the Throne said: forget about 1994 or 1995; it's our tomorrows that we're looking at. Well, Mr. Speaker, what about today? What about people who are unem-

ployed today? What about the young people who are unemployed today? What about the young people who can't get access to the postsecondary institutions today? What about today for struggling small business?

MR. DINNING: Sixty-eight percent.

MR. DECORE: I note that the hon. Treasurer, Mr. Speaker, is part of the same phony plan that the Premier has crafted in setting up 110,000 jobs, and he should be ashamed of himself as well.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've identified the problem. We have attempted to poke the minister of finance in the rear end, and sometimes he needs a pretty strong poke – in fact, maybe even a two by four – and we're now prepared to give him some suggestions so that he can take these suggestions and really create employment for Albertans.

MR. DINNING: Like going to England on a tour; right?

3:40

MR. DECORE: Well, yeah. You could come with us too, Mr. Minister. You could come with us too.

Mr. Speaker, we note that small business creates 90 percent of the employment in this province. Most of that employment is created by corporations that employ fewer than five individuals. In 1991 this size of firm created 15,000 jobs, while larger companies cut employment by 15,000.

We say: here are some ideas, Mr. Minister of Finance and Mr. Premier and the members of your caucus. First of all, cut corporate tax from 6 percent to 4 percent on companies under \$200,000 net income. That will stimulate the small business sector. Number two, lobby the federal government to raise GST exemption from \$30,000 to \$50,000. Three, dedicate one-quarter of the revenue raised by the 5 percent hotel tax to promote growth in the tourism industry. Four, establish small business incubators throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, this one has been spoken to in this Assembly before. All of those small businesses that go into a small business incubator are 80 percent successful. Small businesses that do not go into an incubator are 80 percent in terms of failure. Five, promote access to capital by phasing out the financial institutions capital tax over the next three years and reduce the credit union deposit insurance levy from its maximum level of one-quarter percent to one-seventh percent.

Mr. Speaker, you need to promote partnerships amongst government, amongst business, and amongst educators. So sixth, more aggressively promote apprenticeship programs that will build on the specific skills of Alberta firms. Seven, the provincial government should promote the emergence of more co-operative employment programs between industries and postsecondary institutions in Alberta. Eight, centres of technology and development must be established in forestry and oil and gas to start with, and then look at other areas to build on. Nine, a comprehensive provincewide tourism marketing strategy needs to be put into place so that business and provincial marketing programs are aimed at the same targets. Ten, more can be done to ensure a faster transfer of creative thought from our higher learning institutions into the marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta cannot hold on for two years while the Premier chain saws through the programs of this province. We need to get Alberta back to work. We need to get the Premier to admit that he was playing a little game when he talked about 110,000 jobs. We need to have a Premier who admits that half of those 35,000 jobs being created are part-time jobs. We need a Premier to admit that 29,000 Albertans have lost their jobs since

May of last year. We need an Alberta Premier who is a little more honest with Albertans. We need action now on jobs. We need jobs for Albertans, and I invite the hon. minister of finance, instead of laughing about this issue, to actually do something about it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Macleod.

MR. COUTTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise in this Assembly this afternoon to speak to Motion 501. Last June this government was handed the mandate by the people of Alberta. We promised to get the province's economic affairs back on track. Over the next four years this government's budget will be balanced in addition to the 110,000 new jobs that will be created by 1997. I am pleased to say through my observations that the first goal is being met. Budget reductions are right on schedule, and following extensive consultation this government has promised to work with Albertans to find more effective and innovative ways of providing government services by doing better with less.

This government has also been working diligently to meet the second goal, Mr. Speaker. That is job creation. Job creation is central to the promotion of the Alberta advantage around the world. The Alberta advantage promotes this province as the place to do business. Alberta is one of the most competitive economies in the world. Major points of the Alberta advantage include the lowest taxes in Canada; a young, skilled, and educated work force; a well-developed modern infrastructure; an abundance and a diversity of natural resources; our respect in the international marketplace; and a strong commitment to research and development in high technology and medical research. There are also many factors although noneconomic which nevertheless enhance this province's reputation as a good place to do business and raise a family. These include a tolerant society, excellent educational institutions, relatively safe streets, a clean environment, a variety of recreational opportunities, beautiful scenery, and a stable political climate. All of these advantages help to create an economic strategy that ensures that Alberta is presented as a positive and vibrant place for investors to bring their resources to start up a new business and to create lasting jobs.

One of the main selling points of the Alberta advantage is our competitive tax system. At present we have the lowest transportation fuel taxes and the lowest personal income tax rate in the country. As well, Alberta does not levy any payroll or capital taxes. We are the only province without a provincial sales tax. All of this encourages investment and consumption in Alberta.

To illustrate the advantages of our competitive tax system, I would like to take members of this Assembly on a brief tour of the beautiful constituency of Pincher Creek-Macleod. As many of you know, my constituency is located in the far southwesternmost corner of this province. It shares its boundaries with the province of British Columbia. Many of you know that B.C. has a provincial sales tax of 7 percent. As a result, entrepreneurs from my area have a tremendous advantage over their competitors in southeastern B.C. Many people from towns like Sparwood and Fernie routinely drive across the border into my constituency and shop for groceries, clothing, building supplies. They fill their tanks with gas, and they have their cars repaired. They enjoy our fine restaurants in the Crowsnest Pass, and some even buy automobiles. Employers and employees alike have benefited from this bonanza. This has been a major source of economic growth in my area, especially through the recent recession. Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will find that the members from Vermilion, Lloydminster, and Medicine Hat also have similar experiences in

their constituencies, where cross-border shoppers come in from Saskatchewan to avoid a 9 percent provincial sales tax.

However, no matter how competitive our tax system is, it must never become so complacent that we will lag behind our competitors. This is why the Provincial Treasurer established the Alberta Tax Reform Commission last fall. This six-member commission traveled this province to gather input from Albertans. The commission sought new ways and ideas to make our taxes even more competitive and to help in furthering Alberta's economic growth and job creation as we move to the new economy.

3:50

As the economy shifts its emphasis from processing raw materials to processing information, lower taxes will play an even greater role as a catalyst for economic growth. Mr. Speaker, I believe such a strategy would not only be enlightening and beneficial; it would also reverse the flow of industries and human resources southward, westward, and eastward.

Another key element of the Alberta advantage has been this government's commitment to get out of the business of business. This philosophy has been demonstrated many ways in the Pincher Creek-Macleod constituency. I am sure that many members of this Assembly are aware of the southwest Alberta renewable energy initiative, otherwise known as SWAREI. SWAREI was started about five years ago by a previous minister of energy to explore the possibility of small power producers testing and marketing wind power. Through the province's small power research and development program, \$3 million were allocated to that program, and today, because of that program and because of that initiative, there are close to 50 small power generator facilities selling power through the private sector. Mr. Speaker, Canada's only and largest wind farm. The spin-offs for this constituency and the town of Pincher Creek and southern Alberta and this entire province in this matter have been enormous. Many jobs have been created during the construction of these facilities and the manufacturing of the equipment. People are employed in jobs maintaining and repairing these turbines and other equipment. SWAREI has been one of the many such programs with which this government has helped to facilitate job and wealth creation in Alberta.

Another area where government has helped entrepreneurs has been through its regulation reform initiatives. This has allowed responsible businessmen and women to have better dealings with government with very few interruptions. The Natural Resources Conservation Board has been most helpful to the developers of the Westcastle development. It is comforting to know that the NRCB can maintain its high level of trust in free enterprise while at the same time ensure that environmental standards are being met.

The Westcastle development is currently being looked at by private investors. If this venture takes off, it will bring a tremendous amount of economic diversification to my area and to the province. Westcastle will then turn around and be a year-round resort area including condominiums, a hotel, and a golf course that are planned to presently supplement the ski hill. Many short-term jobs will be created during the construction of this facility, and many long-term jobs will be created directly or indirectly once the project has been completed and the first round of golf is played.

In terms of the environment, I feel that the developers have a self-interest in maintaining a clean environment. Should the pristine scenery which brought people to this area in the first place begin to disappear, then skiers and golfers will go vacation elsewhere. One only has to see the environmental mess left in the former Iron Curtain countries to understand how too much government, too much red tape, and disdain for a free market can be detrimental. I feel that the environment of the province can be

kept better than we first found it. Perhaps a development like Westcastle in the southern half of the province will help to ease the pressure off the resorts in our national parks.

Simply, the Alberta advantage is all things that we are proud of in this province, and that is why we are promoting it: to let everyone know what a great province this is.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I must state that I cannot support this motion. The Alberta advantage and Seizing Opportunity are carefully thought out plans which will create jobs now and beyond. In my constituency there is no smoke and there are no mirrors. The windmills are there. The development can be there by private investor. All anybody has to do is look. I am confident that both electoral promises of job creation and balancing the budget will be met.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MS CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very interested in the comments from the Member for Pincher Creek-Macleod. He talked about the wind farms down there in his constituency. We recently visited those. To date I have yet to see one that is actually economically viable in this province. If you can provide more information on that, I'd be happy to hear about it.

Then he talked about Westcastle development. Now, there's a very interesting picture. This government to date has spent hundreds of thousands on that development, yet that development cannot provide to anyone or will not provide to anyone any balance sheets, income statements, projected cash flow information. Nothing financial. There's absolutely no financial data available on that development. This government is supporting a project which is going to be a big, great, wonderful idea but not a tangible project. So here we go.

What we need is a job strategy. A job strategy is what you should be supporting: one that would include consultation with industry, labour, the educational system, and the small business community, who now provides more than 90 percent of the jobs. Every study that we've seen nationally, provincially, municipally, or politically indicates that small business is the growth area for jobs and revenue: jobs for the people and revenue to the government. Big business and industry are gone in terms of being a major job creator. They're undergoing massive restructuring, and that relates to losses and loss of government revenue. So there's no question about the value of small business. Yet we are doing nothing in this province provincially to help this economic messiah. If you're going to create your 110,000 jobs, then you're going to need a messiah.

Let's talk about some of the reasons why small businesses can't get financial support and therefore economic viability in this province now. Let's talk about rural Alberta. The agriculture business is very soft. So if agriculture businesses go to the bank for money, they simply aren't interested at all. The banker's answer, "We've got four farmer's accounts at this branch already, and not one has made a single equipment purchase in the last year." So are they going to finance agriculture businesses in this economy? Not likely. Administratively it costs too much money for small businesses to go to loans, because the administration on a loan for \$10,000 is just as much as it is on a loan for \$100,000. Therefore, it isn't practical or profitable for the banks to put forward loans for small businesses with these interest rates.

We have the small business loan Act now which provides loan guarantees to small businesses, but these again are too administratively costly for small loans. Anything under \$100,000 simply isn't economically viable to do. Banks won't guarantee small

loans at all, and you can't get a guarantee from the small business loan Act. So where do they go for money? If the land and buildings for small businesses aren't located in a major city, they're not good collateral for banks. So again that's a real hurt for rural Alberta, which is what you're saying all the time that you're standing up for, but the reality is that you're not. A good strategy which works with small business in rural Alberta would fix this problem. Businesses that have no track record, and therefore the banks can't assess their ability to achieve sales and cash flow projected, haven't got a hope of getting any financial support. These are reasons that handicap the few people who do consider self-employment now.

4:00

We've heard this Premier tell us time and time again that all of these thousands of people that are being laid off in the province now are going to go and become self-employed. Well, the real reality there is that less than 25 percent of the people who are currently being laid off in this province will become self-employed. In fact, those people will have home businesses for the most part, and they will employ themselves and perhaps a spouse, but all of those people will start off by being underemployed. So they're not equivalent taxpayers at the rate that they were when they had jobs within the structure.

We have to take a look at addressing those needs. When people come from government jobs and from hospital jobs and from teaching jobs, they don't understand the structure that's required in small business. They don't know how to market, how to do the bookkeeping, how to do all of the many administrative tasks that are involved in there. We need training support for these small businesses. We need it at the entry level for those people who are now considering being self-employed. This has been done successfully at the federal level, but we don't have anything here in the province.

The training that we need takes the potential entrepreneur step by step through the complete planning process of preparing a proper business plan and financial statements. They need to ensure that they have all their questions answered and some resource to go to for answering their questions. They need to establish what their true financial need is and truly identify, before they get into the game, whether or not their business is viable and whether it's in their best interest to go ahead and do that.

The federal programs we've had that have supported this kind of a program are tremendously successful. More than 80 percent of the people who are involved in these programs end up still being in business five years down the road and doubling or tripling or quadrupling their employment rates. I can't understand, if you're looking for job creation, why you don't take an answer that's so easy, and that's by providing support to these people.

We also need training support for existing small businesses. Many of these people are marginal in nature only because they lack information in areas such as finance and marketing, management, customer service, personnel management, advertising and promotion, inventory control, and technical innovation. There are many, many tasks that you need to be aware of and comprehensively able to perform when you're a small business owner. If people don't have those resources at their fingertips, where are they going to go? If we want them to be successful, if we want small business to continue to employ 90 percent of the people in this province, then we need to give them a small helping hand. The federal government is doing their part under the employment and immigration Community Futures program. When is this province going to start?

Something that we have to remember here is that this province needs this kind of support for their people, and it's a very cheap thing to do. I just want you to take a look at this figure. If you only took 10 percent of the money that you had dumped into NovAtel, you could run a program like this for more than 20 years. Now, that's pretty significant. It seems to me to be completely unfeasible that this government wouldn't support a motion like this.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure to rise today before the House and speak on Motion 501, sponsored by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry. As I read through this motion, I could not help but come to the conclusion that the Alberta government has already formulated an employment creation plan, expressed in this motion. In fact, I would like to make a comment at this time that perhaps the wording in the motion should be changed to congratulate the government of Alberta for its work and effort in helping create 35,400 jobs. That's in the last year. That's nearly one-third of the goal that we set of creating 110,000 jobs by 1997. Seizing Opportunity is the government's blueprint for job creation in the province. It deals specifically with employment creation and recognizes the role government will assume.

Like so many of the Bills and motions sponsored by the opposition last session, this motion is nothing more than another one of their soapboxes for the Liberals to stand on and express their views, views that were soundly rejected by the majority of Albertans when voting last June in the provincial election.

MRS. HEWES: Soundly?

MR. SEVERTSON: I would say soundly. We're sitting here in government, and you're chirping.

While this motion deserves little debate, I'll take it upon myself this afternoon to explain Seizing Opportunity. Seizing Opportunity is an economic development strategy which is based on the changing role of and the relationship between government, business, and individual Albertans. The primary goal of this strategy is to generate 110,000 jobs by the end of 1997, generating wealth which can be invested in Alberta communities and in businesses. Unlike jurisdictions elsewhere, this government will not try to buy prosperity through higher taxes.

Economic recovery and job creation cannot happen unless the spirit of the people and business have been restored. The greatest economist knew this. It should be noted that Adam Smith was not a professor of economics; he was a professor of moral philosophy. He understood human nature and how far it could reach. This is perhaps the reason why his policies, which make up the wealth of the nations, have endured for so long.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Is this John A. Macdonald?

MR. SEVERTSON: Adam Smith, to the hon. member.

I feel it is the role of government to act as a facilitator, to help steer, not drive, the economy. As stated on page 6 of Seizing Opportunity, the role of this government is to

- build a climate conducive to investment, wealth generation and job creation
- facilitate economic development by providing services and information
- support industry-led economic development

- build strategic partnerships with business and communities
- move away from direct . . . assistance to other means such as infrastructure development

instead of straight loan guarantees, which the hon. member opposite seemed to be talking about and they spoke against so much during the campaign, but now she wants to get into support for businesses.

- set up and maintain open and participative decision-making processes to develop effective solutions to social and economic issues

In the area of fiscal issues this government is going into year 2 of a four-year plan to balance the budget. This has been reflected in the Deficit Elimination Act, which received Royal Assent last year. This government promised Albertans that the budget would be balanced not by raising taxes. No society has ever taxed its way into prosperity. The reduction will be done on the expenditure side to balance the budget in four years.

As a result, all departments and their respective agencies, boards, commissions have been going through a self-examination with the help of the public and stakeholders. During consultations like roundtables they are finding ways to improve efficiencies. This government is delivering on its promise not to make cuts on the backs of those Albertans that are most vulnerable. In the end, taxpayers will get a bigger bang for each dollar that they contribute to taxes. With lower taxes compared to the rest of Canada, businesses here might be able to afford to take on one more employee or expand their businesses. For individual Albertans, having more disposable income after taxes will mean more money put back into the economy, hence helping employ more people.

4:10

Mr. Speaker, this is truly an invisible hand at work. Lower taxes will help sharpen our competitive edge by attracting new residents and entrepreneurs to this province. This is a win/win situation for Albertans because more people and businesses in this province will mean that there will be more taxpayers who will be contributing to help us balance the budget and pay our debt.

Earlier this month the Alberta Tax Reform Commission filed its report with the Provincial Treasurer. I might add that the commission was not made up of tax experts and bureaucrats; rather, its membership was made up of individuals of diverse backgrounds and experience.

Included in the report were many recommendations on Alberta's tax schedule. It could be more competitive. I know that members of this government are currently examining these options. Lower taxes will not be the only enticement for individuals and businesses to come to this province. This province has been working diligently to identify ways in which to cut red tape, eliminate duplications between government departments, intergovernmental overlap, which make businesses feel more welcome in Alberta.

Regulatory reform in the province is comprised of two phases. The first has called for every government department to have a deregulation action plan completed by this coming fiscal year. These plans will recommend revision, reduction, or outright elimination of unnecessary rules and regulations. The second step of the process will consist of implementing these deregulation initiatives following a public review of the recommendations. So the deregulation initiatives can be kept current, each new regulation will contain a sunset clause. This will require all regulations to be reviewed or terminated after a certain period of time.

Mr. Speaker, deregulation is not just happening within our boundaries. I am pleased to say that this government is also engaged in negotiations with both the federal and other provincial governments. Under the Canada/Alberta overlap and duplication initiative this government is co-operating to find new ways of

eliminating duplication and confusion for individuals and businesses. Last year the Canada/Alberta economic summit meeting saw co-operation in areas of agriculture, energy, environment, economic development, labour market training. The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment have worked to harmonize the environment legislation assessment and review process across all jurisdictions. This will encourage more investment without the red tape. The elimination of duplication and co-operation will mean tremendous savings to all levels of government as well as to the citizens they serve. After all, there is only one taxpayer.

Now with the economic reality of the free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico – it was inevitable that trade barriers, too, would have to come down. Interprovincial trade barriers in Canada presently account for \$6.5 billion a year in lost income to Canadians. According to Stats Canada, the 1989 figures showed that provincial trade accounted for \$146 billion worth of goods and services. This is only slightly less than the \$160 billion Canadians trade outside their borders. One can only imagine, Mr. Speaker, how much greater this trade would have been had goods and services been allowed to move more freely interprovincially. Internal barriers to trade only promote inefficiencies by raising the cost of doing business, increasing taxes, destroying jobs, and discouraging competitiveness. Provincial and federal trade officials commenced negotiations last June and hope to iron out an agreement within two years.

To speak further on trade, this government is helping to steer our producers towards markets abroad. Alberta is focusing on our strengths. These include agriculture, food processing, oil and gas, petrochemical, waste management, construction, building materials, computer software, tourism, and financial services. This government has focused its job creation forecast in these areas. Newly announced programs like the Global Business Plan will help match opportunities for Alberta producers with captive markets for their goods and services. Seizing Opportunity has targeted \$24 billion in exports by 1996. This will be achieved by greater exports of value-added products and services as well as tapping into markets to meet the newly developing countries. An Asia Pacific business strategy has been developed to help Alberta businessmen follow up on opportunities which were identified during the Premier's trip to the region last November.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at an initiative by this government like Seizing Opportunity, I see a plan that has been carefully thought out and sensitive to the needs of individuals and Albertans and businesses. I'm proud of the government's stellar record in leadership, openness, and fiscal responsibility. I am very confident that the budget targets will be met and more Albertans will be employed through our job creation plan. The 21st century will belong to Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to rise today in this Assembly and speak on behalf of Motion 501. I speak in favour of Motion 501.

Mr. Speaker, I'm quite disappointed when I keep hearing the phrase "seizing opportunity." That's exactly what this government has done. You have seized every opportunity. You have seized it. You seized it when 1,200 men and women came forward and said on the Gainers project that they wanted the opportunity to be able to buy the project. They wanted to be able to buy it, but what this government decided to do instead was give it away and pay to give it away. That's what you've done. You have seized

the opportunity of these men and women, and that is on your heads, all of you, each and every one of you. Absolutely. You sit there and you speak of creating a climate. You have created a climate or you want to create a climate so that you can stimulate the economy. Lord knows how many times Albertans have heard that. I don't know what the heck it means anymore, and I think you don't either. Every government in this country has been saying it for a long time. When you start saying you're going to create 110,000 jobs, then tell us how you're going to do it. Don't start telling us . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Read the plan.

MR. CHADI: You don't have a plan that'll create jobs. You have absolutely nothing in place, and that is what this motion is for. This motion is here for one reason, and that is that the development of a strategy including consultation with industry, labour, the education system, and small business will be called for, with the release date of June 1, 1994. It's quite simple. All we're saying is: let's get at it, and let's do it together; let's create a strategy to come up with 110,000 jobs. We know you buffaloed the people of the province when you suggested that you were going to create 110,000 jobs. We want you to create 110,000 jobs. We want you to create more.

4:20

DR. L. TAYLOR: Help us then.

MR. CHADI: That's what we're trying to do. Vote for this motion men. Vote for this motion. Vote for it.

We keep saying that we're going to create a climate. This climate has already been created. The Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake has suggested all the different ways of cutting the red tape and what has been done. That has all been going on for some time now, far before we all got elected on June 15, long before that. That climate has already been created, but that climate does not work, hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake. What we have to do is develop a climate now, and we have to do it with new, innovative ideas starting now, not what was already out there. Let's do it together is what we're suggesting here, and let us start, Mr. Speaker, by approving and voting for this Motion 501, which indeed is a good start in creating these 110,000 jobs.

When we start talking about 35,000 jobs being created, it's nothing that you or I did in this Assembly that created 35,000 jobs. It's the normal course of business that went about. If anything, this government, us included, has lost 29,000 jobs. Those are the net job losses.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Shame.

MR. CHADI: Shame. There's only one word, and that is shame. Shame on all of us. Shame on you, Provincial Treasurer. Shame on you, Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake. Shame on the Member for Pincher Creek-Macleod for saying that we have such a beautiful climate in this province.

DR. L. TAYLOR: No shame on me.

MR. CHADI: Shame on us all.

We have to look at different ways of creating jobs, not in actual job creation like let's get out there and make-work projects. That's not what we're talking about. That's not what you're talking about, [interjections] Well, that'll work. What we need to do is we have to look at the ways that our lending institutions

do business in the province of Alberta. We have to see ways where Alberta Opportunity Company, which is a wonderful company in the province of Alberta that was set up to do great things – all of a sudden it's not doing those things that it was set up to do. Why on Earth aren't we after it now and saying to the Alberta Opportunity Company, "Get out there and start educating and training people, not only lending financial assistance"? We've got to get out and help educate our businesspeople in this global marketplace that we are now faced with. That's what we've got to do. I'm a businessman, and let me tell you one thing: I'd get out there and I'd hire more people if I could.

MR. DINNING: You would have put Gainers down.

MR. CHADI: You put Gainers down. You blew it. Mr. Speaker, 1,200 men and women this province put out of work. Shame on you, Provincial Treasurer.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. I think the Chair would like to hear the hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper.

The hon. Member for Red Deer-South, rising on a point of order.

Point of Order Parliamentary Language

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under *Beauchesne* 489, or whatever this guy's called, talking about unparliamentary language, they use the phrase in here that to refer to "shameful conduct" is unparliamentary. There certainly could be a case made that to use the word "shame" repeatedly would be unparliamentary language.

MR. SPEAKER: No.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Roper.

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for that wise decision on your part.

Debate Continued

MR. CHADI: Since the Provincial Treasurer wants to talk about Gainers, let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that 1,200 men and women were denied the opportunity to take over this plant, and the province of Alberta under the guise of this cabinet in the front bench here, particularly the Provincial Treasurer and the minister for economic development, trade, and tourism, lost almost \$200 million, perhaps even more. We can't sit back and accept it. Albertans cannot accept it. We cannot. We have to now come up with a strategy.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. According to the Standing Orders, 55 minutes is allotted for debate on this motion, and the time has now expired.

Ready for the question? All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the members.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:28 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Abdurahman	Germain	Nicol
Ady	Gordon	Paszkowski
Beniuk	Haley	Percy
Black	Hanson	Pham
Bracko	Havelock	Renner
Brassard	Henry	Sapers
Bruseker	Herard	Sekulic
Burgener	Hewes	Severtson
Calahasen	Hierath	Soetaert
Cardinal	Hlady	Stelmach
Carlson	Jacques	Tannas
Chadi	Jonson	Taylor, L.
Collingwood	Kirkland	Taylor, N.
Day	Kowalski	Thurber
Decore	Langevin	Trynchy
Dinning	Leibovici	Van Binsbergen
Doerksen	Lund	Vasseur
Dunford	Magnus	White
Evans	Mar	Wickman
Forsyth	Massey	Woloshyn
Friedel	Mirosh	Zariwny
Fritz	Mitchell	Zwozdesky

Against the motion:

Clegg	Fischer	Sohal
Coutts		

Totals: For: – 66 Against – 4

[Motion carried]

4:40 head: **Consideration of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech**

Moved by Mr. Friedel:

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

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

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

Moved by Mr. Decore that the motion be amended by the addition of the following words: Since the Klein government has embarked on an education restructuring program without the input or approval of Albertans, it is our duty to respectfully submit to Your Honour that Your Honour's present government does not have the confidence of this House.

[Adjourned debate February 14: Mr. Stelmach]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Vegreville-Viking.

MR. STELMACH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We left off the other day talking about the good things that are happening in the various constituencies, especially those that I visited in central and eastern Alberta. I'd like to continue supporting the Speech from the Throne but certainly speaking against the amendment.

We talked about the fact that our agricultural sales will far exceed all of the previous years, in fact going back to 1975, and the opportunity for greater sales looks brighter by the day. The

livestock sector definitely is improving, and if we can get some of our interprovincial trade barriers removed, we would create a better climate for jobs.

In fact, we do have a situation that exists in the constituency of Vegreville-Viking where, due to some rules, our entrepreneurs or businesspeople are unable to purchase eggs locally for cracking and must now bring eggs from as far away as Manitoba. These eggs have to be grade C nest run. These eggs are cracked and then sold as powder or omelet mix for various hospitals and other purchasers. What happens is that because of some interprovincial trade barriers, the individual has to buy the raw eggs in Manitoba, pay for the transporting of those eggs all the way to Alberta, crack them, dry them, and then sell them. But what happens, quite frankly, is that someone from Manitoba can purchase the eggs that they require, crack and convert them into powder, haul the powder here, and compete with the local producers and local processors here in Alberta, because it certainly costs a lot less to haul dry egg powder to Alberta. That's part of the problems that we have to deal with, and if we work together, we should be able to work our way through and improve agriculture in this province.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, we also have to re-examine our role as government. Part of that role is to ensure that all basic programs in Alberta are provided for in a cost-efficient and fair and equitable manner. In re-examining our role, part of our job is to set standards to protect Albertans in such areas as health, equality, education, and environment. Most importantly, I think we have to ensure that we have a plan in place that is fair, consistent, but most importantly predictable, creating a predictable regulatory environment. Really what this means is that if we were to increase taxes and not reduce expenditures, we would be forced to increase taxes in the near future. That, quite frankly, is an environment where business would not want to invest money, simply because the amount of tax that they'd be paying in the future would be unpredictable. Fourthly, we must ensure that we have in place infrastructure to support commerce, productivity, and communication.

I believe the Premier has laid out an excellent plan, and the Speech from the Throne goes a long way in informing Albertans on how we're going to achieve our goals. That is why I do not support the amendment that was put forward earlier by the Leader of the Opposition. I do believe that we all have a positive outlook for the future of Alberta and that as we continue on with our plan, we will be able to create opportunity for more jobs in this province simply because we're going to have a predictable tax environment, reducing our deficit and getting back to balanced budgets. That, ladies and gentlemen, will bring a much brighter future for our children.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to have the opportunity to speak to the amendment before us today regarding concerns that we are hearing, certainly on this side of the House, regarding education restructuring, which of course led to the amendment put forward by the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition. My constituency by and large is quite a young constituency in terms of the average age of the constituents, and because they are young individuals, a good number of them have young families, school-age and even, in fact, preschool-age

children. I can tell you that my phone in my constituency office has been ringing steadily since January 17, expressing – and vehemently expressing, I would even say – concerns about the proposals being made to change the education system in the province of Alberta. Of course, Mr. Speaker, much of that is indeed included in the throne speech. When we look at pages 8 and 9, it talks about "legislative program." In fact, there's a section in there on education, and there are five points that are highlighted.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I have attended meetings at Sir Winston Churchill high school, Bowness high school, Lord Beaverbrook high school, Bishop Carroll high school, Monsignor Doyle elementary, Montgomery junior high, Ranchlands elementary, St. Rita, Hawkwood elementary, just to name some of the schools that I've been to. Some of them, in fact, I've been to more than once, and the concern is from the people. I don't know how familiar you are with the boundaries of Calgary-North West constituency, but you may recognize that some of those schools that I've mentioned are outside of the boundaries of Calgary-North West. So you may be asking yourself the question – I'm sure some of the government members are asking themselves the question – why are you going to those meetings then? Well, the reason I'm going is because the people in the city of Calgary are not getting a response from their local Conservative members. So they're calling the opposition, and they're saying, "Will you please come?" Our answer on this side of the House is, "Yes, we will come; yes, we will listen; yes, we do care," as opposed to the actions and the developments from the government.

Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign – it was a scant eight months ago – we heard nothing from this government about the massive changes to Health, to Education, to advanced education, and the departments of Municipal Affairs and Family and Social Services, all of which had massive changes proposed as of January 18. What we talked about and what in fact the government talked about was that, yes, we need to get the deficit under control; yes, we need to work long-term to eliminate the debt. I don't think there's anyone in the province of Alberta that would disagree with that. What is the concern of many Albertans is the top-down approach that seems to be coming, the top-down approach that is making many Albertans extremely uncomfortable, that is making them wonder where it is that this government is going.

Mr. Speaker, in fact the concern that has been raised by many people of balancing the budget I think can be highlighted again in the throne speech, which is why I do support the amendment before us. The whole thing covers less than a page in the throne speech, less than a page. It talks about four-year targets. Okay; nothing wrong with targets, but it doesn't tell us the important thing. The important thing is: what kind of Alberta are we going to have when we're done, what kind of education services are we going to have in Alberta, what kind of health care services are we going to have, and so on in all of the other areas? That approach, I would argue, has created more stress, more uncertainty, and more concern about the future than in any other time, at least in my experience in this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the government talked about and in fact campaigned on we care, we listen as a slogan. Yet when you talk to individuals that were involved with the health care roundtables, they say, "Well, gee, we never said those things." When you talk to people about the education roundtables, they say, "Gee, we never talked about these things." So on one hand when they're looking for input and they go out and they hire something like a Tax Reform Commission – what they say in here is, "We will carefully consider," not "Gee, we listen and we're going to look

at." What they've said is: we'll consider it. So the input, basically the same: put it on the shelf; we're not interested.

4:50

On the other hand, they talk about things like clear action statements as a result of things like we'll consolidate, we'll change, we'll create, not saying, "Gee, we're looking for input," not saying, "We're looking for opinion," not saying, "We want to have ideas from people." In fact, the decision is already made.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that really – it's funny, you know, how different people I'm sure found different things that caught their eye in the throne speech. I'm sure that many of my colleagues will speak about different issues, but there are two words that kind of jumped off the page at me on page 7. I thought, you know, talk about wondering where they're going. The two words that jumped off the page at me were "restructure federalism." I thought: oh, oh; we've been down this road before. Myron Baloney, or something like that, who was once involved in politics tried to do that, and we know where that led. Certainly we don't want to see that happening in this province.

They talk about "deregulating and streamlining government." I think it would be interesting to see the amount of paperwork that a small business has to go through in order to incorporate in the province of Alberta. I think you'd find that really interesting. I don't think you'd find anywhere in the campaign literature that the Conservatives put out in the 1993 general election that it said they're going to grab all of the property taxes that are being paid now to education and they're going to take them from the municipalities and give them off and collect them provincially. That wasn't in there anywhere.

Mr. Speaker, I've looked at all of this stuff, and I said to myself: what's really happening here? We on this side have asked from time to time: where's the plan; what's the plan; is there a plan? [interjection] The member from Medicine Hat says, yes, there is a plan. You know what, Mr. Speaker? I believe there is a plan. I believe the plan came from another country in fact. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. No matter how provocative this debate may be, we don't need a chorus.

Would the hon. member please proceed to address the speech.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've seen many of them walk around with a book called *Reinventing Government*, which came from the country to the south of us of course.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Down under.

MR. BRUSEKER: No, no, not quite down under. That's another plan, *Unfinished Business*. Of course, we've heard that that's a working document, and they say, "Oh, that's part of the plan," but I don't think that's the whole plan.

There's another country that came out with another plan. We've seen them walking around with that book, and they say, "That's the working document, *Unfinished Business*." Well, in about another four years it's going to be finished business, that's for sure, because we know what happened to that government when they tried to implement that in that country. That's called unfinished business. That's another plan from another country, and I know they always look to other countries for good ideas. But you know, Mr. Speaker, those are almost positive. I think this is much more subversive than that.

I think we need to go to yet a third country to see where they got the plan. We need to go back just about 21 years, Mr.

Speaker, to August of 1973. Something happened in a town called Stockholm, Sweden. Many people have written articles about it. It's called the Stockholm syndrome. It's a well-studied syndrome. It shows the relationship between hostage takers, on one hand, and hostages on the other hand. In this case the hostage takers are the government. They're the terrorists here, and Albertans are the hostages.

Because I know they're all hanging on my every word, Mr. Speaker, let me outline the three phases or the three stages that typically are associated with the development of the now well-studied, after 20 years, Stockholm syndrome. The first phase – this is why I think it's such a perfect analogy – is the alarm phase. Very high emotional levels. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Thank you.

MR. BRUSEKER: You see the emotional levels are pretty high in the Chamber as well, Mr. Speaker.

Very high emotional levels. The hostages are feeling great discomfort because they don't know what to expect. That's the way Albertans feel right now. They don't know what to expect because this throne speech that we are debating today, that was delivered by His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor a scant five or six days ago now, doesn't really tell us any more than the news releases that occurred some time ago. So Albertans are still very much in the alarm phase. Then there are phases 2 and 3. The second phase is the crisis phase. This is what the government is hoping will happen soon, that the emotional levels begin to subside a little bit. Mr. Speaker, I would argue that the emotional levels are not going to subside. The alarm is still out there, and people are still concerned, and the meetings are still going on. We have members traveling to Calgary and members traveling to other places around the province to try to talk to people about what it is the government is going to do to them.

The final phase, which is what the government is really hoping for, is the accommodation phase. The accommodation phase, as the name implies, is when people begin to lose their spirit, when they begin to lose their sense of hope. That's what the government is hoping is eventually going to happen. They're hoping that Albertans are going to be quiet, that they're going to lie down, and that they're going to accept quietly what ends up happening to them. Mr. Speaker, it's been well studied that in situations where you have hostage takers and hostages, as we now have . . .

Point of Order Imputing Motives

MS HALEY: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Three Hills-Airdrie has a point of order.

MS HALEY: I would like to cite *Beauchesne* 484(3), where you "impute to any Member or Members unworthy motives for their actions." I think you have really overstepped the boundaries here, and I want it to stop. I don't appreciate being called a terrorist. I don't think Albertans are hostages, unless it's to this.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Perhaps the Chair was not listening carefully enough to this speech, but it was my understanding that we are dealing with a metaphoric thing, "like." But if the hon. member was referring to the members as terrorists, perhaps he might reflect on whether or not he did indeed do that. If so . . .

MS HALEY: He said it was an analogy.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. He might consider withdrawing the direct implication that they're terrorists and go with the metaphoric.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, I thought a metaphor was to keep the cows in. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, I . . . [interjections] What's a metaphor? To keep the cows in. I thought you rural guys would get that. You know these rural guys; I don't know.

Mr. Speaker, I was indeed drawing an analogy between the situation that has occurred in the past and an application that can be applied to Alberta. History.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I've been missing the point of order.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, I was responding to your point, Mr. Speaker. Shall I continue now with my speech? [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I just wanted to ask the hon. Member for Calgary-North West whether he was addressing the point that the Chair had made . . .

MR. BRUSEKER: Metaphoric, yes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: . . . that you were not implying or you were not stating that the government members were terrorists, but they were "like." Is that what you're saying?

MR. BRUSEKER: Yes. [interjection] A simile, not a metaphor. I was a science major, not an English major.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Erudition is pleasant. Those people who are schooled in English literature will know, of course, that a simile is a kind of metaphor, but it's very specific: like, as, or than. Metaphor covers the whole gambit of those figures of speech. So let us not continue to debate that point. I think the retraction is there, and we can continue with the debate.

Debate Continued

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The interesting thing about the Stockholm syndrome, just continuing in my analogy here – perhaps that's the correct phrase to use. It's a pretty clearly studied case now. There have been many situations in terms of airline hostage-takings and so on where in fact the authorities tend to simply wait until it happens to allow the situation to evolve through a normal series of events and in fact ultimately evolve to a point where it becomes safer to do things. . . Quite frankly, I think in that regard the government is hoping that soon it becomes safer for the government to do things.

5:00

Curiously, Mr. Speaker, along this line, because I made allusions to the two words "restructure federalism" that are in the throne speech, it reminded me of, first of all, the Meech Lake process that we went through and certainly the Charlottetown accord. In fact, when I sought a little research down in the library, I did find an interesting article in the *Globe and Mail*. The title of the article curiously was: "Meech Lake: Canada's Stockholm Syndrome." So these are some comments from a newspaper article, because I found some interesting analogies there.

AN HON. MEMBER: Plagiarism.

MR. BRUSEKER: Plagiarism? No, no. Plagiarism is when you steal it and you don't give credit. I'm giving credit.

AN HON. MEMBER: Pretty much a Liberal's concern.

MR. BRUSEKER: A Liberal interpretation, quite frankly, that's true, and I try to be frank whenever I can.

Mr. Speaker, the author of the article, Robert Sheppard, talks about at that time Mr. Mulroney. There are times when I'll interpret rather liberally here, sort of quoting appropriately from the article, as I've seen our illustrious Premier do, so I know that obviously research from the newspapers is entirely appropriate.

There's an interesting quote here, and I'll just substitute in the correct terms and so on. It says:

[Mr. Klein] is trying to recreate here [an Alberta] version of the Stockholm Syndrome whereby hostages tend to adopt a sympathetic attitude toward their captors.

This is interesting when you take the analogy from the Meech Lake accord experience and see what happened there, as reflected upon the ultimate failure of that particular accord and the Charlottetown accord, which in turn failed about a year and – what? – three months ago or so when it was overwhelmingly voted down. I think the end result was clear, and the reason for that was the lack of consultation, the lack of clear discussion with those people that were going to be directly impacted. Mr. Speaker, I would argue that Albertans feel the same way now about what this government is proposing to do with education, health care, et cetera, as what Canadians overall felt with respect to the Meech Lake accord and the Charlottetown accord. The analogy, the simile, or the metaphor, whichever is appropriate, is there.

The author continues with a little bit of an analysis of what went wrong. I'm offering this now as constructive criticisms, as suggestions for improving the system, because I would hate anyone to think we are simply negative on this side. I'm offering some concrete suggestions. One of the concerns is that clearly the mind-set of the public is different from the mind-set of those individuals who are in the decision-making process. In fact, Saskatchewan Premier Grant Devine is quoted as saying:

Nobody wants to go through this process again . . . It's a terrible, terrible process. It's unfair. We've got to change this system.

That, too, is a quote from the article, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be happy to provide a copy of that for *Hansard*.

Many of the problems that are being faced and many of the reasons, I think, why I and other members of the Liberal caucus are getting calls to attend town hall meetings, to attend organizational groups wanting to talk primarily about education are that it's very clear that those people are feeling a lack of clear understanding, a lack of clear knowledge about where the government is planning to take us, to take Albertans on this educational road. I think one of the things that government can and should do – they started on the right track with roundtable hearings, but unfortunately they didn't carry them through. I think if that had happened, many of the obvious flaws that we're now seeing and many of the concerns that are being raised by people could have been dealt with at an early stage.

I think that if we're going to make changes – and I think it's clear we have to make changes. We do all agree, I think, in this House that we have to get the deficit under control, but the way we have to do that is that we have to get a unanimous approach. We have to get around the straitjacket of simply a top-down kind of legislation.

I was pleased today, I must say, to hear the Member for Calgary-Shaw, I think it is, introduce his Bill that talked about citizens' initiatives, because quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, although I've not seen the Bill yet, I think that might be a good direction for the province of Alberta. Now, I haven't seen the legislation

yet, but I think there's a possibility here, and I'm hoping that his colleagues on the front benches will take it under advisement.

The end result will be, if we allow for referenda of whatever form to occur at the provincial level – and I'm sure most hon. members know that there are referenda available at the municipal level. I'm perhaps being generous in my interpretation of what his comments were earlier on, but it sounds to me like what he was saying was: let's take what's at the municipal level and apply it to the provincial level. That would allow for public input. It would allow open debate. It would allow for people to have a real opportunity to affect the course of events, and that, Mr. Speaker, I think is the key. People want to have an opportunity, a real opportunity, to have significant input and make an impact on what happens.

Unfortunately, what happens so often in this Legislative Assembly – we see what happens in the way our Legislative Assembly is structured – is that many times the cabinet in conjunction with the backbenchers will exercise the prerogatives that they have – yes, they do have the majority with 51 members – and they can put through virtually anything they wish at whatever time they wish if they so choose. It's interesting. One of the masters on the other side, of course, is the Deputy Premier. He has been here a number of years, and he is, I must confess, a master at his trade.

One of the difficulties – and all you have to do is observe question period sometimes, Mr. Speaker, and objectively look at the question that is asked and the answer that is there. It's pretty clear that sometimes the cabinet ministers seem to have the philosophy that if they don't get asked the question that they were hoping for, they just answer the question they wanted anyhow, whether or not it has any relevance to the question in fact being asked. Unfortunately, Albertans have a feeling that that's what's happening right now with many of the inputs that are being asked for with respect to education. So if we're going to have a structural change, if we're going to make a change in the way we operate, we need to change the way government is operating.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, because I think I've given the government members some food for thought, if you reflect back on the processes that occurred with respect to – and I go back to my original concern, the two words that jumped off the page for me: "restructure federalism." It may be clear in your mind about the somewhat dramatic change in the federal government's fortunes that occurred on October 25, 1993, when in fact the former government with 169 members went down to two. The government of Alberta needs to recognize that Albertans are in this alarm phase of the Stockholm syndrome right now. That's the way people are feeling. If government wants to avoid that upwelling of concern, the upwelling of alarm, they must rethink the strategy outlined in this throne speech and adopt a new approach.

I must say that I am concerned particularly with simply the phrase that the Premier has stated repeatedly time and time and time again, that he won't blink. For that, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support a government that does not look for input from its citizens. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HLADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour to speak to the throne speech today. I am proud of this government's commitments to restructure education, health care, and all the other departments that this government has.

I believe there are many things that we need to be looking at. One of the things is the downsizing that all government depart-

merits are in the process of making happen at this time. I believe the government is doing everything in its power to make things right. We've consulted the public. We spent a lot of time going through that process, and the Liberals at this time feel that we should continue to do the consulting rather than getting on with the process.

Right now the Liberals have shown us a lot of energy for the last two days, and it's quite an impressive show. We've really enjoyed it over here. But you know, the opposition is scared. They're very afraid. Their biggest fear is that we will actually do what we said we would do, and we're in the process of doing that. The only energy that they've got is a bit of fear running them right now. They were told that they were a poor opposition in the last session, and they figure they should be a better opposition this time, so that's all they can do.

5:10

Well, Mr. Speaker, we will do what we said. We have consulted the people, we have listened, and we will continue to do that. We will make the budgets work that we said we would. The opposition's strategy is to delay us as long as they can, and that will not happen. We will make things come together as we said we would to all Albertans. If we delayed in going ahead with the plans that we have and got off pace, as the Liberals would like us to do, it would simply cost Albertans a lot more money. We have to be on this pace to make the budget balance within the three years that we've set out.

The opposition would have Albertans believe we are a have-not province. Well, we do have a lot here, Mr. Speaker, and we would like to continue to have lots, and we'd like to have more. But we do have to get our spending under control, and that's what we're doing.

It's time to bring some accountability in here, and that's what we're here for, and that's what we're doing right now. We are presenting to the people and communicating to the people what the changes are in government.

The Leader of the Opposition is the one that's pitting the rich against the poor, not the people on this side of the House. What they're doing right now is fear mongering, getting out and telling people things that aren't true. He uses the New Zealand model as something to slam and to not follow. It's something for information, and we used that. Some of us have spoken; some of us have read it.

The New Zealand model: let's start at the beginning and go through it. In 1984 New Zealand was in serious trouble, and they had to do something about it. They were forced into that serious trouble. The Leader of the Opposition didn't mention that when he said that there were problems in New Zealand. The Labour government at that time decided what they needed to do was . . .

MR. WOLOSZYN: What government?

MR. HLADY: The Labour government. That Labour government in New Zealand, very similar to the opposition in this House.

They needed to do some changes. They were caught in a very tough situation. Fortunately, we are not forced to have to do that. We have some time to work with compassion and make sure that we adapt in a proper and communicating way. The New Zealand model had to go through a process. We are fortunate enough to work slowly, to take the time that we need to communicate and then go on with the process and make it happen over a three-year period.

The federal cousins to the people across the way here, the best that they can do out of their budget is come up with a 3 percent

deficit spending at best over the next three or four years of their gross domestic product. They will continue to spend more money than they have. I would have to think that the opposition would follow the same process and continue to increase our debt in the future, Mr. Speaker, instead of getting out of debt.

AN HON. MEMBER: We'll see in four years.

MR. HLADY: I don't know if you'll be here in four years.

Speaker's Ruling Decorum

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. I've already confessed to the Assembly that I have some difficulty hearing, and even with the aid of microphones and the wonderful things called speakers, this Speaker has difficulty hearing the hon. member making his speech. I wonder if we could keep our wonderful thoughts and express them at some time after the Assembly is adjourned so that we may hear the benefit of not only this speaker but subsequent speakers.

Would Calgary-Mountain View care to continue?

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I've heard every word, and you haven't missed a thing.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Perhaps that's more reflective of what I was trying to say.

Debate Continued

MR. HLADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Redwater doesn't have his earpiece in. I don't know if he really did catch all of that. [interjection] Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, as I'm speaking to the amendment put forward by the Leader of the Opposition . . . [interjections] It's not a microphone; that's right. Okay.

This province has lots to offer. We have to get things under control, and we're doing that. We're communicating to the people. We're communicating in every special area that we can, and we're not instantly responding to special interest groups. I think that's been a problem of government in the past: it's tried to give too much again and again and again. By responding to special interest groups in the past, they've been unable to balance their budget. What we're doing now is listening to everyone, but we're doing what we feel is best for the people by listening and communicating and gathering information.

The biggest problem, Mr. Speaker, seems to be the fact that the opposition is not offering anything in a positive or a constructive way. They don't offer us any alternatives. I was very fortunate to see the motion that was put forward, and it got passed. When they put something positive forward, we try to respond to that. That is the part of a caring, hearing, listening government, and we do try to do that. We do that when you come forward with something that is really legitimate, and we did on Motion 501. I think that if they could turn their focus and work from a constructive point of view, they would see a lot more productive things coming out of their caucus meetings as well.

The Member for Calgary-North West was mentioning something about an alarm, and I'd have to say that they haven't heard the alarm that we're spending more money than we have. They keep thinking that we aren't listening to the people out there, but we are listening to the people out there. We continue to listen to them, and we will react to what we need to do to make things balance and go forward into the future. I believe it's the Liberals, the opposition, that are not listening. I think it's time that they did listen and that they started working in a positive manner.

As the throne speech said, we're starting to turn the corner. As we're heading through this corner and we're going into the next phase, when we see the three-year plans come out on February 24, we'll start working for the future and getting on with the job of having jobs provided through the private sector. We have to create the kind of environment that's needed to make that happen, and we will do that in this next session.

We also have to go out and make sure that people want to come here, businesses want to come here, create the environment. There are many ways to do that, Mr. Speaker. I think one of the main ways is making sure that we have a competitive business environment in Alberta. By creating that, we will have companies and industries wanting to come here. There are many opportunities to see that happen. We have the oil sands in northern Alberta. Up there not only is there oil, but there are many other minerals and amazing investment opportunities to be done. The oil sands themselves: as the Member for Fort McMurray knows, there are many other minerals, metals that are contained in the sands. I think there's an expansion of industry that is only limited by the imagination that we can put up there and create and cause businesses to go to.

The future of other areas that we want to see happen is to continue to develop. I've been very fortunate, Mr. Speaker, to work with the Alberta sport, recreation, parks, and wildlife foundation as well. We're putting two agencies together and making them one, more effective, more efficient, and still balancing the budget and doing some serious cutting in that area while still delivering the services to the end users. It's a hard thing in every area of our society right now, and everyone understands it and realizes that what we have to do is balance the budget. Speaking with people in town hall meetings, at school board meetings, they all understand that the number one concern is to quit spending more money than we have.

The process of getting there is the communicating, and I think we're starting to do that. We can always do it better, and we're trying to address that at this time: communicating better with the public, whether it be the school boards, individuals in individual ridings where we have some hospital concerns.

I think these are all things that are going to be happening more and more and better through the government. The hardest point is the fact that unfortunately we have not had clear communication coming from other parties and not getting the clear results or the clear information out to people in the public. So I hope we can endeavour to create better information to the public in every area.

5:20

MR. BRUSEKER: Ten minutes, Mark.

MR. HLADY: Ten minutes to go? Is it nine or 10?

AN HON. MEMBER: You're doing great.

MR. HLADY: Doing great?

AN HON. MEMBER: Nine more to go.

MR. HLADY: Nine more to go. Okay.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're winning them over.

MR. HLADY: Are they coming over?

MR. BRUSEKER: Do you want me to send you my speech?

MR. HLADY: Yeah, I had a couple of other points on that, and if you could send that over, I could work on it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could we speak through the Chair, please?

MR. HLADY: Sorry, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are some other areas such as creating the ability for businesses to come in here and putting the public back to work. We have many to address in certain areas such as our social services and people that were on unemployment and welfare that want to get back to work and creating that environment. I think that's a serious area that we will be addressing in this next session. As we go through this session, we will see these things come together much more directly.

As we make that happen, the economy will start to flourish again. People will have more confidence. The money that the people have will start to flow back into the economy, and we will see a lot more growth. It's a snowballing effect that will make things much more effective in the future, and this will be the best place in Canada to live. As we make this happen, the rest of Canada is watching us in great detail and with great interest and with great jealousy. They are aware of what we're doing, and they want to make sure that it is possible to make this happen. They want to see that there is a government that has the political will to follow through on what it said it would do. We do have that political will, and we will follow through with what we said.

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you sure?

MR. HLADY: Can I say that?

I think the political will is there. We will make it happen, and the rest of Canada will follow suit. If they don't follow suit, there are some serious problems.

The federal government is sitting over \$500 billion in debt right now, started by the Liberals, by the way, yes. Anyhow, the continued spending of \$40 billion more than we have every year will only continue to cause an increasing debt, and within three years we could very well be closer to \$700 billion. When we see that sort of thing happening, we really have to question: what is the goal of that government? It's time to bring governments back under control, to downsize governments, to make that sort of thing happen. Government is false economy. We will have to look at that seriously and get government out of the loop of the economy. I think we need to minimize that as much as possible. The approach is being done at the federal level. I don't believe they are seriously considering that. They feel they can spend more money than they have and continue to create that.

**Point of Order
Relevance**

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Point of order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member has a point of order. West Yellowhead.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: It's 459(1), relevance. I think the member across is referring to the federal Speech from the Throne rather than the provincial. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Thank you. The hon. Member for West Yellowhead has brought an important point of order before us, and that is 459(1). Relevance, as hon. members well know, is almost in the eye of the beholder. In this case, on the

Speech from the Throne, it is traditionally wide ranging, and even on the amendment and the debate on the amendment to the Speech from the Throne, it's wide ranging.

I'm sure that the Member for Calgary-Mountain View is going to tie in his last remarks to the point he was making on the amendment to the Speech from the Throne and thanks, West Yellowhead, for bringing that to our attention. Hopefully within moments of tying that in, he would consider adjourning debate.

Debate Continued

MR. HLADY: I would, Mr. Speaker, and since I am speaking to the amendment to the throne speech and due to the hour that we seem to be at, I thought I would consider adjourning debate till this evening at 8 p.m.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View has moved that we adjourn debate. All those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

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

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been a very interesting afternoon of debate, and I would now move that the House adjourn and when we reconvene this evening at 8 p.m., it be to continue with supplemental estimates, day 2.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Deputy Government House Leader has moved that we now adjourn and that when we meet tonight at 8 o'clock, we do so in Committee of Supply. All those in favour of that motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no.

(The Assembly adjourned at 5:28 p.m.)

