

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Monday, March 14, 1994**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 94/03/14

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

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

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

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

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

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek leave to introduce a petition signed by 1,086 Calgaryans, many of them residents of Calgary-Varsity and Calgary-Foothills. The petitioners urge two things upon the government: firstly, to abort the announced plan to restructure education and then, secondly, to ensure the opportunity for every Albertan to have input into future restructuring of education.

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

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would beg leave also to present a petition, signed by 405 Calgaryans. Very briefly, the petition urges the government of Alberta to ensure that every Albertan has the opportunity to participate in the restructuring and also reminds the Premier of his promise in the last election to commit more money to education.

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

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce a petition signed by 88 residents of Sherwood Park, Strathcona county, and surrounding area urging the government to maintain the Grey Nuns hospital in Mill Woods as a full-service, active facility.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce a petition urging "the government to maintain the Misericordia Hospital as a Full-Service, Active Hospital and continue to serve the West-end of Edmonton, Spruce Grove and surrounding area."

head: **Reading and Receiving Petitions**

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

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the petition which I presented on March 2 now be read to the Assembly.

CLERK:

We petition the Legislature to urge the government to take immediate steps to stop any measures that will reduce the availability of post-secondary programs, and to begin a phased-in approach to ensure

accessible post-secondary opportunities for students in the next 10 years.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the petition I presented on March 2, asking that Mill Woods' Grey Nuns hospital remain an active treatment hospital, now be read and received by the Assembly.

CLERK:

We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government to maintain the Grey Nuns Hospital in Mill Woods as a Full-Service, Active Hospital and continue to serve the south-east end of Edmonton and surrounding area.

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

MR. ZARIWNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask that the petition I tabled on March 2 be now read and received.

CLERK:

We petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the government to work with student leaders to develop a thoughtful, judicious tuition fees policy that meets the needs of both students and post-secondary institutions.

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

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the petition I tabled on March 2 be now read and received.

CLERK:

We respectfully request the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to refrain from introducing legislation which would enable

- the provincial appointment of superintendents
- and
- the seizure of locally levied school residential taxes.

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

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

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

The petition I presented of Leonard Anderson and Mandy Anderson for the Mandy Anderson Adoption Act was advertised prior to November 1, 1993. This petition was advertised in anticipation of being heard during the last session. Standing Order 86(1) requires that advertising be commenced not earlier than the November 1 preceding the session. The petition otherwise complies with the requirements of Standing Order 86. The second petition is that of Anna-May Woodley for the Travis Trevor Purdy Adoption Act, for which the advertisement will appear in the *Alberta Gazette* on March 15, 1994. The petition has otherwise complied with the advertising requirements under Standing Order 86.

The Private Bills Committee has had these petitions under consideration and requests that the Assembly unanimously suspend Standing Order 94 with respect to these petitions in order that these Bills may be introduced today and referred to the committee.

I request the concurrence of the Assembly in this recommendation and report.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly concur with the request and report of the hon. member?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

head: **Notices of Motions**

DR. NICOL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to give notice that after question period today I'll rise under Standing Order 40 to ask unanimous agreement of the Assembly to place the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta send its congratulations to the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns men's hockey team on the occasion of their winning the 1994 Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union hockey championship, known as the University Cup, in Toronto on March 13.

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

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to give notice that following question period today I will seek unanimous consent under Standing Order 40 for the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta congratulate the town of Slave Lake and the 1994 Slave Lake Arctic Winter Games Host Society for their success in staging the 1994 Arctic Winter Games, and be it further resolved that the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly convey this congratulatory message in the usual manner.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

**Bill 8
Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1994**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 8, Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1994. This being a money Bill, the Administrator, acting on behalf of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 8 read a first time]

**Bill 9
Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings
Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division)
Interim Supply Act, 1994**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 9, Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Interim Supply Act, 1994. This being a money Bill, the Administrator, acting on behalf of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 9 read a first time]

**Bill 10
Appropriation (Lottery Fund)
Interim Supply Act, 1994**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 10, Appropriation (Lottery Fund) Interim Supply Act, 1994. This being a money Bill, the Administrator, acting on behalf of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been

informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 10 read a first time]

**1:40 Bill 5
Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 1994**

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 5, the Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 1994.

The first aspect of this amendment is to provide the Energy Resources Conservation Board with clear jurisdiction to order abandonment of wells and a method of ensuring that the order is complied with. The purpose is to prevent orphan wells – that is, wells that have no responsible owner – from being a drain on the public purse.

The second aspect of this legislation is to provide a fund which will be paid for by industry through an annual levy to cover the cost of abandoning orphan wells or, where there are insolvent partners, to pay for the insolvent partner's share. The amendment will also provide a method of collecting any money which may be owing to the fund.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill is the result of extensive consultation between the board, the Department of Energy, CAPP, and SEPAC and is fully supported by all of these organizations.

[Leave granted; Bill 5 read a first time]

**Bill Pr. 1
Mandy Anderson Adoption Act**

MR. JACQUES: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 1, being the Mandy Anderson Adoption Act.

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

**Bill Pr. 2
Lethbridge Foundation Amendment Act, 1994**

MR. DUNFORD: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 2, being the Lethbridge Foundation Amendment Act, 1994.

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

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

**Bill Pr. 3
Companions of Angela and Francis
(Koinonia Association) Act**

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 3, being the Companions of Angela and Francis (Koinonia Association) Act.

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

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

**Bill Pr. 4
Concordia College Amendment Act, 1994**

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 4, being the Concordia College Amendment Act, 1994.

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

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

Bill Pr. 5
Suk Yin Poon Adoption Act

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 5, being the Suk Yin Poon Adoption Act.

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

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

Bill Pr. 6
Gimbel Foundation Act

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 6, being the Gimbel Foundation Act.

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

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

Bill Pr. 7
Scott Peter Lavery Adoption Act

MR. HERARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 7, being the Scott Peter Lavery Adoption Act.

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

Bill Pr. 8
Shaw Communications Inc. Act

MR. DUNFORD: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 8, being Shaw Communications Inc. Act.

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

Bill Pr. 9
Tammy Lee Barnes Adoption Act

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 9, being the Tammy Lee Barnes Adoption Act.

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

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

Bill Pr. 10
Janna Adella Marie Kinnee Adoption Act

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 10, being the Janna Adella Marie Kinnee Adoption Act.

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

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

Bill Pr. 11
Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre Foundation Tax Exemption Act

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 11, being the Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre Foundation Tax Exemption Act.

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

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

Bill Pr. 12
Travis Trevor Purdy Adoption Act

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 12, being the Travis Trevor Purdy Adoption Act. I am introducing this Bill on behalf of the hon. Member for Bonnyville.

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

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

Bill Pr. 13
TD Trust Company and Central Guaranty Trust Co. Act

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

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

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

Bill Pr. 14
Jody Anne Van Overmeeren Adoption Act

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 14, being the Jody Anne Van Overmeeren Adoption Act.

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

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

1:50 **Bill Pr. 15**
Silvia Kathleen Miles Adoption Act

MR. ZARIWNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill Pr. 15, being the Silvia Kathleen Miles Adoption Act.

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

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to table documents in response to Motion 155.

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

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table four documents in anticipation of tomorrow's debate on Motion 506: firstly, a copy of the Calgary Mayor's Task Force on Community and Family Violence from March of 1991; secondly, the May 1992 report entitled Toward a Safer Edmonton for All; thirdly, the status report from October 1993 of the city of Calgary Action Committee against Violence; and, finally, the report of December 1993 from the Edmonton Action Group on Prostitution.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure today to table a copy of a report on my mission to Asia in November of

1993. It provides an overview of the mission's objectives and achievements, and it says who we met and what we did. I believe it offers an all-too-rare glimpse of what Alberta companies are doing in that part of the world, and it takes a realistic look at our opportunities in Asia. I'm pleased to file this report today.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

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

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce through you and to you two very kind, capable, and hardworking people who work with me in Calgary: Diane MacDonell and Terri Douglas. Terri and Diane are in the members' gallery, and I ask that they please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly 60 visitors from the St. Anthony school in Drayton Valley, most of these being very bright young students in grade 6. They are accompanied here today by teachers Mr. Ricard and Mr. Hoven and parents and helpers Geraldine MacKinnon, Mrs. Anna Barker, Mrs. Barb Lotnick, Rick Babb, D. Aldersley, Steve Phillip, Rhonda Oulton, and Cecilia Gustafson. I would ask that they rise in the members' gallery and receive the warm welcome of this House.

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

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly six members of the Edmonton 1994 Forestry Capital Society. Edmonton has been designated as the 1994 National Forestry Capital in recognition of its status as a green city, having one of the largest urban parkland areas per capita in all of North America. These forested areas, particularly the spectacular river valley parks system, are enjoyed year-round by local residents and really are a part of Edmonton's attraction for visitors from around the world. This combined with Edmonton's role as a gateway to northern forests clearly has positioned Edmonton as an emerging major corporate industrial service and educational centre for the forestry sector.

Mr. Speaker, the society is made up of very hardworking volunteers representing all segments of our population. As an honorary patron of the society I am very pleased to introduce Chairman Ken Pilip, board members Mrs. Sally Hall and Mr. Jim Martin, Dr. Teja Singh, and Dr. Ray Rasmussen. As well, Dr. – pardon me; Mr. – Bob Rosen, who I don't think is working on his doctorate, is here representing the honorary advisory committee as is Doug Ford, who is the executive director. All of these fine folks are now standing in the members' gallery, and I would ask all hon. members to give them the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm privileged today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly a group of 25 students from the Holyrood school in Edmonton-Gold Bar. They're accompanied by their teacher Mr. Cherkaoui

and two parent helpers Mrs. Forestier and Mrs. Bogner. They're seated in the public gallery today. I'd ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the members.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly a wonderful, brilliant group of students, grades 5 and 6, from Brookwood school in Spruce Grove. Their teacher Mrs. Tina Hayes is with them and their assistant Miss Duncan. Mr. Hayes, on his day off, agreed to be the designated driver. I'd ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have the great pleasure today to introduce eight students from Grant MacEwan College at the city centre campus in my riding. They're studying social work at the college, and they're accompanied by their instructor Mr. Alan Knowles. They're here to see how the decisions that are made that affect their future careers operate in the Legislature, and I had a very interesting discussion about the kinds of challenges facing social work in the future. If they could rise, I'd ask that the Assembly to provide a very warm welcome to them.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister without portfolio.

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly two very important people who are in the tourism industry in Calgary: Mrs. Susan Costello, who is the chairman of the board of the Calgary Convention & Visitors Bureau – she's also a constituent of Calgary-Glenmore – and Henry Kutarna, who is the president and chief executive officer of the Calgary Convention & Visitors Bureau. They're seated in the members' gallery. Would you please rise and receive the warm welcome from the Assembly?

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to introduce two visitors from Ontario with us here today. One is Ms Susan Dowler, who is the executive director of the Ontario Tourism Education Council. She actually left Alberta and took her well-deserved expertise down to Ontario; she was formerly the executive director of the Alberta Tourism Education Council. Also visiting with us is Mr. Jim Burke, one of the substantial players at the Ryerson institute in Ontario, and he is presenting at the TIAALTA conference today. I'd ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly two active constituents from Highwood: Mr. John Coleman, who's president of the Foothills Ratepayers' Association, and the vice-president, Mr. David Pope. I'd ask these two gentlemen, who are seated in the members' gallery, to rise and receive the warm, traditional welcome of the Assembly.

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

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce a very good Albertan, a very supportive Albertan, a family man who has nine children. Five

were not enough, so he adopted four more. When he's not too terribly involved with his family, he finds time to be the chief executive officer of Capital City Savings and Credit Union. I'd ask Mr. Harry Buddle to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **Oral Question Period**

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

Catholic School System

MR. DECORE: Thank you, sir. Mr. Speaker, Catholics in Alberta have always had the opportunity to run their own school system. It's their legal right and their constitutional right, but without warning, the province is now taking that right away. The government's unilateral action has forced Catholics to go to the courts to protect their legal rights. Mr. Premier, why do Catholics have to go to the courts in Alberta to protect their rights?

2:00

MR. KLEIN: Well, I assume that the hon. leader of the Liberal Party is doing his research in the newspapers again, but even if he is, he should read very, very carefully the statement of Shirley Valentine and some of her colleagues, Mr. Speaker. The statement clearly says: if the Catholic school districts believe that their constitutional rights will be violated, then they will look at court action. If.

MR. DECORE: Well, if the Premier read once in a while, he'd know that the Catholic school boards have decided that they will all take action against the government. Mr. Premier, why don't you simply agree to sit down with the Catholic community in Alberta and sort this matter out immediately?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, I know that the hon. minister has indeed met with various Catholic school jurisdictions throughout the province regarding this matter. But, again, I have to reiterate that the Catholic school boards have not said that they will take us to court. They said that if it is deemed to be a violation of their constitutional rights, then they will look at it.

MR. DECORE: Well, let me put it more clearly for you, Premier. Will you, not the minister, agree to meet with the Catholic community in Alberta and sort this out? The matter needs to be sorted out, sir.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'll meet with anyone anytime. Sure.

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Premier.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're welcome.

MR. DECORE: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat still aspires to that position, Mr. Speaker. He'll have a long wait. [interjection] And arrogance isn't good enough for that role.

Students' Finance

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, Albertans have always had freedom to pursue their dreams of education and employment in this province. Now the province wants to dictate what a student can and can't learn. Student loans will be denied to those in college and university programs with a default rate set at an

arbitrary limit. Mr. Premier, how does a government that preaches freedom in the marketplace justify this kind of central control?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not so sure that the hon. leader of the Liberal Party is factually correct in his assumptions, and I will defer to the hon. Minister of Education.

MR. JONSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the minister of advanced education I would just make a couple of comments in general terms, and I will refer the matter to him. First of all, the hon. Leader of the Opposition was not clear on this, but I believe he is referring to the private vocational colleges, which are private businesses, and also to some of the programs at colleges and universities. It is only financially responsible for the default rates and the viability of those programs that are associated with those default rates to be examined. It's fiscally responsible, something that I think the members across the way should take note of.

MR. DECORE: Well, we have a minister contradicting a Premier. I want to go back to this, Mr. Premier. You don't know the details of your own budget again. Are you prepared to examine this issue to ensure that the marketplace prevails, that students can learn whatever they want and go and work wherever they want?

MR. KLEIN: I'll do that.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I want the Premier's assurance that the principle here is one that he believes in and that his government will clearly get behind, and that is that there won't be a system for the rich and one for the rest of Alberta when you get these kinds of arbitrary rates or levels that are set that deny students access into certain programs.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'll have the hon. Minister of Education supplement, but fundamentally what we're trying to do overall is to put in programs and systems that are deemed to be fair. I would like the hon. minister to supplement.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development will, I am sure, provide the Assembly in due course with all the details in terms of these programs, but the fact of the matter here is that we want to apply the money that's available in advanced education as effectively as possible to the programs which are in high demand by students and which have good career opportunities and broad application in terms of sound education. There are programs that do not always maintain their currency. They go out of date. They're not necessary. They're not ones that lead people towards jobs in business and industry and in the general society. I think to examine that, to review it and to apply the money as effectively as possible is a good thing to be doing.

Senior Citizens' Programs

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, the tragic saga of seniors' cuts continues. The minister and the Premier are now running around the province in damage control, frantic consultations after the fact. The Premier doesn't even know there's a published deadline. My questions are to the Premier. Will the Premier tell the House: is the amount of money in the budget allocated for seniors' benefits a fixed amount? [interjections]

MR. KLEIN: Well, it was a puzzling question: is it "a fixed amount?" Mr. Speaker, basically we are consulting with seniors

now very quietly on this side. Our MLAs are out and they're meeting. You don't read about those things, and you don't hear about them, because they aren't Liberal-organized protests. They're reasonable, sound, sane kinds of meetings with seniors throughout the province, and basically we're finding out from the seniors what is right for them. What do they think is fair? So in answer to the question, I can't see how it is a fixed amount. We have put in some benchmarks, and we have said: "Is this right? Is this fair? If it isn't, tell us what is fair."

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, clearly the Premier dodges the question.

The chairman of the Seniors Advisory Council is saying that there's a fixed total amount. The Premier is saying: but the threshold is negotiable. Okay, Mr. Premier. Tell us. If there's a fixed amount of money and you're going to raise the threshold, what are the programs that you're going to cut to do it?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, again, let fair public consultation with seniors take place, and at the end of the day we will bring forward a program that is fair based on what the seniors have told us is right for them.

MRS. HEWES: They've told you over and over what's right for them.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: why not save us a whole lot of pain and torment and anguish and just scrap these punitive cuts? Scrap them.

MR. KLEIN: Again, Mr. Speaker, I know that you can't call someone hypocritical; right? But you can refer to the whole aspect of hypocrisy; can't you? These are the people that say: four reasons to feel good when you vote Liberal. Well, I'll tell you what one of the reasons is. One of the reasons is that they promised to cut . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the clarity of seniors in Alberta can the minister explain the level at which the federal guaranteed income supplement is clawed back from seniors by way of income tax and compare it to the proposed levels of the Alberta seniors' benefit?

2:10

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, the federal government starts clawing back the guaranteed income supplement at \$10,432. We look at that figure, and under the proposed Alberta seniors' benefit levels such a person would receive an additional \$1,916. Accordingly, the point at which we would start to reduce benefits would be at \$12,348, compared to the \$10,432 instituted by the Liberal government in Ottawa.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister clarify the level at which the guaranteed income supplement ends and compare it to the levels at which the proposed Alberta seniors' benefit ends as well?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, the point at which you would receive no benefit under the guaranteed income supplement program federally is \$16,200, and provincially it is \$17,000. I would point

out that the claw-back rate federally is 50 cents, whereas provincially under the Alberta seniors' benefit that reduction would be 25 percent for each dollar of private income.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to the comments on the previous question, does the minister intend to follow the federal Liberal model, which I'm sure is supported by the Alberta provincial Liberals – as was stated, with punitive cuts – by raising taxes to seniors?

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

MR. MAR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The province of Alberta provides a generous tax reduction for lower income Albertans, which benefits low-income seniors. The federal government provides no such similar tax relief. Accordingly, there are 20,000-some Alberta seniors who pay federal income tax who do not pay personal income tax in the province of Alberta. As an example, a single senior with \$9,400 of private income will pay nearly \$500 in federal tax, and the same single senior will receive the Alberta seniors' benefit and will in fact receive a grant of \$415. Also, that senior will have their health care premium paid for.

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

Alberta Research Council

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat has been the chairman of the Alberta Research Council, it has gone through some pretty tough times. Amid questions of public safety, accountability, and conflict of interest, two senior administrators have been suspended, and an investigation has now been started. Albertans have every reason to be concerned about the activities of the Alberta Research Council. My questions are to the chairman of the Alberta Research Council. Why wasn't the chairman able to deal with these problems before suspensions and investigations became necessary?

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

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly a pleasure to rise and address these particular questions.

AN HON. MEMBER: Then answer it.

DR. L. TAYLOR: If I get a chance, I will answer it.

First of all, there are two points that were raised. I would emphasize that, one, the Alberta Research Council has standards that exceed regulatory requirements when it comes to health and safety practices. Secondly, in regards to the senior administrators we have an example where we have taken an independent investigator, who is presently investigating these questions, and he will have a report available by Thursday or Friday of this week in regards to the questions that have been raised by the member opposite.

I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that I stood in this House about two weeks ago and talked about the good things the Alberta Research Council is doing, the fact that we're going to create . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order. Perhaps the supplemental will bring out . . .

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary, then, to the chairman of the Alberta Research Council: will this investigation include a review of the chairman's role in how these problems came about?

DR. L. TAYLOR: Once again, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that this investigation is looking at management practices within the organization and will be looking at management practice. We talk about creating jobs in this province and doing good things at the Alberta Research Council as opposed to what they're talking about on the other side.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a serious matter. To the chairman: will the chairman undertake to file the report of the investigation in this Assembly when it's done, regardless of what it says?

DR. L. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, once again I'd like to quote the political and intellectual inspiration for those people opposite. He referred to people like them as nattering nabobs of negativism, and that's exactly what they are.

We have due process happening here. There may be legal implications. Once the report is available, we will at that time decide.

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

Senior Citizens' Programs

(continued)

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister responsible for seniors. I was out in my constituency this last weekend talking with seniors, and they raised a couple of concerns with me. There's some confusion about what a threshold is. Could the minister tell our seniors and perhaps explain to the opposition the difference between the \$10,432 and \$17,000 thresholds that have been reported?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta seniors' benefit is composed of two very distinct parts. The first part is a cash benefit to seniors who are in need, and the second part is a subsidy paid by the government to offset health care premiums. There are many thresholds, and the ones referred to by the hon. member are those which apply to single senior homeowners. The \$10,432 figure referred to is the starting point for single senior homeowners in the province. The province supplements that under this Alberta seniors' benefit program an additional \$1,916, and accordingly virtually no single senior homeowner in this province will receive less than \$12,300. The second threshold referred to by the hon. member was \$17,000, and that is the point at which an Alberta senior who is a homeowner would begin to pay for a partial health care premium.

So, Mr. Speaker, the result is that between those two income levels, the \$10,432 to \$17,000 figures, individual homeowners who are seniors will receive a cash benefit. Those that are above \$17,000 will start to pay for a portion of their health care premium, and those above \$18,200 will start to pay for full health care premiums.

MR. AMERY: Mr. Speaker, could the minister tell the seniors what happens with a two-senior couple where one resides in a

lodge or a long-term care facility and the other one resides at their home? How will they be treated by this program?

MR. MAR: As presently contemplated, Mr. Speaker, individuals who are in those circumstances will be treated as if they are couples.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. AMERY: Thank you. Is the minister considering changing this situation so that they are treated as single seniors in terms of the benefits?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, this is a concern that has been expressed by people during consultations and roundtables with seniors. The concern, of course, is that a couple who live independently of one another for health reasons is treated as a couple, but certainly we would consider treating them instead as singles, and we have the flexibility to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

2:20

Alberta Research Council

(continued)

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Early this year contract researchers at the government's Alberta Research Council laboratories deliberately let genetically altered material escape into the air over Mill Woods. Two filters were removed to keep an experiment going. This is an issue of public safety. To the chair of the Alberta Research Council: is the government's policy safety first or dollars first?

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

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One thing I would say is that the hot air has all escaped over there.

Let me start by saying that I tried to pre-empt that question, if he had listened to my last response, by pointing out that the Alberta Research Council operates by standards that exceed the norms of regulatory requirements. There was no management decision made. An employee made a mistake.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since you're in charge, why would you allow such a release to occur?

DR. L. TAYLOR: As I've already indicated, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't a management decision. It was a decision made by an employee or several employees without the knowledge of any management.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

DR. MASSEY: Thank you. Have you changed your policy on these releases now that you've been caught?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, again. I would just like to comment on the organism that was released. The organism was a common food yeast. It's a nonpathogen. There was no danger at all to the health of the public. The

protein is not biologically active, and there were no pathogenics. It was released into the atmosphere, so there was no danger at all to the public. Corrective methods have taken place so that this procedure would not occur again.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister without portfolio wishes to augment.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, just to supplement the chair's answer, I want the public to be aware that occupational health and safety and Alberta environment have been on the scene and have declared the area safe.

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

Private Adoption

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In his judgment of the Baby M case Justice Mason urged the government to clean up unlicensed adoptions. Bernd Walter repeated these warnings. The Liberals have also asked for changes to stop our province from being a pipeline for shady adoption practices. To the Minister of Family and Social Services: will you tighten up the Child Welfare Act by calling for mandatory prescreening of all private adoptions, since this issue cannot wait for the commissioner's report?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, the same question was asked by the Liberals on Wednesday or Thursday of last week, and I'll give them the same answer. We are presently reviewing the whole process and will be introducing legislation early next fall in relation to that issue.

MS HANSON: While early next fall is pretty late, that's encouraging news though.

Will the changes include an amendment to the Domestic Relations Act to ensure that biological fathers get notice of an adoption and a chance to appeal?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what this minister and the committee is reviewing.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the changes also deal with unlicensed adoption agencies?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, I addressed that issue last Wednesday or Thursday, and again the answer is yes.

Wage Rollbacks

MR. SOHAL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Last fall the government asked people in the public sector to consider a voluntary 5 percent compensation rollback. It has been difficult to determine what type of response there has been overall on this issue. I don't even know if anyone is formally keeping track of who has agreed to this and who hasn't. Is the Minister of Labour keeping track of these numbers?

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, as far as we can, on a daily basis we do keep track of these numbers. I can inform the member that in Alberta some 35,000 people in one way or another have accepted a voluntary 5 percent reduction.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. SOHAL: My supplemental question is to the same minister, sir. Does the minister have a breakdown of which occupations and professions are included?

MR. DAY: I could give it exhaustively, but that would exhaust a number of people here. I can say, however, in detail that on the professional side groups would include chiropractors, optometrists, opticians, denturists, dentists, and doctors. On the management side right across the province we've seen significant uptake of the 5 percent reduction. When you look at the union agreements that have taken place on a local, sectoral basis across the province, we see it as varied as CUPE, with some 10,000 workers; we see an AUPE local, Calgary Foothills, with some 500 workers. This type of thing in the municipalities also is varied, Mr. Speaker: Wetaskiwin workers taking 5 percent, Edson and Peace River with a three-year agreement of freezing wages and taking 5 percent. So it is varied. We can give an exhaustive breakdown if the member would like that.

MR. SOHAL: Can the minister indicate progress being made among teachers on the voluntary 5 percent reduction?

MR. DAY: My information at this point, Mr. Speaker, is that so far at three school boards the teachers have agreed to the 5 percent. Whenever you're asking anybody in the public sector to take 5 percent, we recognize that is not an easy thing. For instance, the county of Red Deer just voted 80 percent that their teachers would take 5 percent. Teachers in that district earn anywhere from a high rate of \$56,000 a year down from there. Whether you're making \$56,000 as a teacher at the high end or even at the lower end, to ask for 5 percent is significant. The county of Red Deer teachers have taken this, the county of Lacombe teachers, their school board, have taken 5 percent, and Medicine Hat also has an agreement in principle to take a 5 percent voluntary reduction. That is the teachers. That's not just the support staff.

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

Sex Education

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just how far we are willing to go on sex education will be discussed this week at a five-day convention entitled Communicating about Sexuality: Facing the Challenge. Directly or indirectly taxpayers will pick up most of the tab. To the Minister of Education: can you please outline your department's financial involvement in this conference?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, there is no financial involvement of my department in this conference.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister of Education please indicate to this House the last time a thorough review of our sex education program in the schools took place in Alberta?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, during the latter year or two of my predecessor's tenure as Minister of Education the member for Lloydminster chaired a committee which did a thorough review of the overall sexuality education programs in the province, made a

number of recommendations. Those recommendations were reviewed by our committee structure and caucus, and a number of adjustments were made in the overall program.

I'd just like to mention one or two, I think, of the very significant ones. One was the reaffirmation of parents' right to opt their children out of a program; secondly, there were two or three recommendations which pointed to the need for liaison with the parents in the school community to determine the suitability of such a program; and thirdly – and this was a third very key recommendation – the adoption of some alternative to the recommended programs if there was not community acceptance of one of those. School boards would decide over all.

DR. WEST: Point of order.

2:30

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then my next question is to the Minister of Health. Why are we providing funding to a conference on sex education when a recent review indicates that our sex education programs have been deemed adequate?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health has provided some rather modest funding assistance to this conference. It is expected that there would be between 250 and 350 professionals involved in this that do counseling and teaching on these matters in all areas, not just in the secondary or primary education systems. One of the Alberta Health goals – I think it was goal number 8 – talks about choosing healthy behaviours. We think this is an important area to ensure that the people who are counseling in those areas have the very latest information. So on that basis Alberta Health did provide some modest funding to the conference.

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

Health Services Restructuring

MS LEBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've heard of restaurant hosts, we've heard of airline hostesses, and now we have patient hostesses in our hospitals. Descaling the health force is in full swing, and generic names such as "skilled enhanced health worker," "nurse enabler," "nurse enhancer" will be the order of the day. Our hospitals are becoming Americanized assembly-line operations. My question is to the Minister of Health. Is the minister aware that registered nurses in Alberta hospitals are now being called "patient hosts and hostesses"?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health is not responsible for what roles are played in the hospitals. Our insurance is to ensure quality patient care is there, and I believe that is there. If there are questions on some of those areas, certainly they have not been raised as a concern with me. I believe that the registered nurses that work in our institutions in this province fully understand their qualifications and what they do and are very highly qualified to perform those tasks whatever name might be placed in an individual institution. I have not any knowledge of that.

MS LEBOVICI: My next question is also to the Minister of Health. Is it part of your Health business plan to eliminate

exclusive scopes of practice for health care professionals and create generic health care workers?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, scopes of practice for health care professionals fall in two areas, some under the Minister of Health and some under the chairman of Professions and Occupations. There have been requests from all partners in health services to look at how they deliver services. There was a great deal of discussion in the roundtables throughout this province. I would remind hon. members that some 6,000 people participated in person, and hundreds of briefs and submissions were given to us to look at the opportunity for alternate providers, to look at the opportunity for workers to be working in multi areas. I believe that those issues are best dealt with by the health providers through their appropriate mechanisms and their associations, which are clearly in place in all of those instances either under my department or under the chair of Professions and Occupations to deal with those very issues, and I believe that is where they should be dealt with.

MS LEBOVICI: My next question is to the chair of Professions and Occupations. In your review of the Health Disciplines Act will you be looking at the scope of practice for registered nurses and changing it to reflect the new generic names?

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

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, the document Starting Points on page 14 has asked for a review. The roundtable discussions, the tremendous amount of professional input and consumer input have asked for a review of professional legislation in the health care professions. We are pleased to respond in whatever fashion we can to accommodate that review. Part of the discussion will be the regulations surrounding professional legislation. Hopefully in the spirit of correctness we can look for suggestions from both consumer, professional in the health care field as to deregulation. In fact, the issues of direct access to physiotherapy, direct access to alternate health care providers is going to be an important topic of that review.

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

Education Funding

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BRUSEKER: Are you going to ask about the ARC too?

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

DR. L. TAYLOR: I could ask myself a question, and it would be more intelligent than anything that came from over there.

On the weekend I met with a number of school boards. On the whole, these meetings were positive and characterized by a can-do attitude. However, there were several concerns that they raised – and I would like to raise them with the Minister of Education – regarding financial information that is necessary for them to have in order to plan budgets and to plan amalgamations of the various boards. As I represent a large rural riding, this is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

DR. L. TAYLOR: In this large rural riding the individuals and boards need to know the formula for sparsity and distance and

have this formula available to them before they can plan adequately. When will the minister make that formula available?

MR. JONSON: First of all, just for the Assembly to be clear, the school boards do know what provincial grants are available to them for the 1994-95 school year. If there are any gaps in that information that had not been anticipated, I would certainly welcome the hon. member's specifics with respect to that.

Mr. Speaker, we do recognize that in planning for September of '95 and beyond, school boards do require information on the new provincial fiscal framework or funding formula, and we are working on that now in terms of gathering data. We are going to have additional steps involving the stakeholders, and other leadership will be provided by government with respect to that consultation activity. We're moving ahead as quickly as possible because we know that information is important – but not of course until it's supplied in terms of a planning process or in the actual budgeting for '95-96.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you. It was indicated to me that the details of funding regulations for special needs students are necessary to plan. When will these be available?

MR. JONSON: Well, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I do not understand the question completely. Once again, the grants are available for this year in terms of their amounts and their application for special-needs students. The special-education programs of the province, the costs of those per student will have to be considered as part of the overall fiscal framework or provincial grant structure that I was referring to in my previous answer.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Will the Department of Education allow the boards a five-year building renovation plan as was past practice?

MR. JONSON: In the case of school buildings and renovations, Mr. Speaker, there the situation for the next two to three years is quite clear. We have announced through our three-year business plan the amount of money that is in the budget to the end of 1996. A new five-year plan or three-year plan, depending on what the decision is, will be made by government. There is money in the estimates for the first year of that new plan, and that's 1996-97.

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

2:40

Distance Education

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To follow up on rural Alberta, with government cutbacks to education more and more rural Alberta students are going to have to rely on distance education courses in order to finish their high school. Unfortunately, this government over the last three years has cut back distance education by 16 percent. I'd like to ask the Minister of Education: why is he cutting back distance education when other cutbacks are going to make that service even more important for rural Albertans?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think the hon. member's initial assumption is incorrect in terms of the number of students being served through distance education and the expansion of distance education programs and curriculum offerings in this province. That has been an effort, a priority for the department and will continue to be so in the future. Also, if

the hon. member would look over the business plan, he will see one of the directions that we are taking, looking to the future both in terms of the application of technology and the need for quality distance education programs. That direction is in our business plan.

MR. HENRY: Mr. Speaker, he should talk to some school boards and get the facts.

I'd like to know why in the minister's business plan he is planning more cost recovery on the distance learning centre, otherwise an education tax on rural Alberta students.

MR. JONSON: Well, Mr. Speaker, let's keep in mind here that distance education is available to every student in this province. Perhaps a student's whole program is offered through distance education. It is a cost for which certainly the local jurisdiction has some responsibility to pay. If you're offering a total program through a distance education mode, certainly there should be some payment for those materials and for that service. It's very cost-effective. It is not, of course, the ideal situation where you have the school and the teachers, but in some parts of the province this is the best way to go, and it is being offered effectively.

MR. HENRY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like the minister to tell us which sparsely populated school districts told him to increase fees on correspondence courses.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate to you and to the member across the way that when you recognize that you are providing a program which is providing savings to a jurisdiction's budget, it is reasonable then that you charge some fee for that particular service.

MR. HENRY: Which ones told you to increase the fees?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member across the way does not like the answer, which I think is very logical.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Wainwright.

Special Places

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister of environment regarding the recommendations from the Special Places 2000 report. The recommendations from this report could dramatically change the way a lot of people are doing business now. There is great concern by the outdoor motorized recreation vehicle industry that public access for all-terrain vehicles will be extremely limited along the Eastern Slopes as well as other parts of this province. Could the minister indicate what the status of Special Places 2000 report is, where it's at, and what are the next steps in this report?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The advisory committee on special places tabled a report to myself and the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism in the late fall of last year. We have reviewed that report, and in the first part of February of this year we made that report public. We indicated at that time that there would be a 60-day review period so that Albertans could consider the report and give their comments back to us. Now, the reason we're doing that kind of extensive public consultation is that we want Albertans to be onside with this initiative. This is an initiative to legislatively ensure that we have

the representative landscapes in this province protected for all time, and we want to be sure that Albertans recognize what this is about and where we're going with this policy. So what we will be doing, hon. member, is once this 60-day public process has been completed, we'll be taking the information that we receive back – we will be going to one of the standing policy committees of this government, and then we will be bringing the policy forward to cabinet for endorsement.

MR. FISCHER: Can the minister assure the Assembly that sufficient land will be set aside for the people that are involved in the motorized sport industry?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think what the hon. member is referring to is a concern that was raised by a number of people at the outdoor show this past weekend in Edmonton. There were some concerns about whether the Eastern Slopes policy and anything in Special Places 2000 would further restrict the use of motorized vehicles on public lands. Well, certainly there are restrictions in place today on the use of motorized vehicles in prime protection zones. That's a reference in the Eastern Slopes policy, and it's not the intention of Special Places 2000 to further restrict. In point of fact, I would point out that other than prime protection zones in this province, there are considerable areas on unoccupied Crown land where motorized vehicles are allowed, and our staff are continuing to work with the outdoors folks, the Snowmobile Association, in identifying trails throughout this province.

MR. FISCHER: My final supplementary is to the minister of economic development. Could the minister indicate to the House that tourism generated by this industry will not be negatively impacted?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, Special Places 2000 was commissioned by my predecessor, the hon. Don Sparrow, and he did it in his capacity as minister of economic development and tourism to basically look at the concept of sustainable economic development, the balancing of economic drives in this province along with the protection and enhancement of the environment. That certainly was a philosophy that this government bought into. We did it in 1986 when I had the privilege then of being a signatory to an international document that put that into place.

Mr. Speaker, the all-terrain vehicle industry in this province is a very significant industry. Part of the climate that we live in gives us a long period of winter, which means that we have to enjoy and get out and participate in the outdoors. There are literally hundreds and hundreds of dealers in the province of Alberta who sell all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles. Most of these people that want to use the outdoors live in the city of Edmonton or the city of Calgary. They need to, have to go someplace. We've clearly identified, as my colleague the Minister of Environmental Protection has indicated, that there will be places in the province of Alberta set around. It was only a few days ago, in fact last Wednesday, when the public report . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. Time is flying. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

Health Services Restructuring (continued)

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity. We've heard much talk about health work force

readjustment in this Assembly, but all we've seen are thousands of Albertans losing their jobs. Now, my question first to the chairman of the Professions and Occupations Bureau: will this subcommittee studying health work force rebalancing be holding public hearings? If so, will they be open, or will they be invitation only?

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

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely and without question. Thank you.

MR. SAPERS: That's a yes twice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's great. Maybe they should let the public know they're about to be invited.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. SAPERS: Thank you. To the Minister of Health: are all of the layoffs in hospitals tied to the coming commercialization that the Premier has mused about?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that question hardly dignifies an answer, but I will say that hospitals in this province are responsible for managing their affairs. They manage their affairs, I believe, in a very responsible way. They are making decisions on work force as to the needs of their institution. Certainly there is quite a downsizing occurring in our acute care sector, but we have to remember why. The reason is that we do not need the number of beds that we've had in this province in the acute care sector. I have outlined in this House many times, I think enough times for the hon. member to understand those reasons. I would just invite him to read *Hansard* or indeed talk to some of the people in the institutions to understand the need to downsize the number of acute care beds we have in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. The people that I've talked to in the institutions are the ones that are worried about their jobs. What categories of workers, minister, were you referring to in the Department of Health's business plan where it states that fewer workers will be employed in health, and those that are left working will be earning less money?

2:50

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, what we are referring to in Alberta Health's business plan is a change in the way we deliver health services. The hon. member would know that we set aside some \$20 million for a work force adjustment strategy, that we have in place a tripartite committee to look at how we utilize those dollars. The way we deliver health services is changing. It is not just changing in Alberta; it is changing all over the world and all across Canada. There will be differences in numbers. There will be less workers in some areas in health care, and they will have new roles, and some of them will be making lesser salaries.

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

The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs indicated that he wished to raise a point of order.

Point of Order Clarification

DR. WEST: It's actually a point of clarity, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Citation.

DR. WEST: Twenty-three (i). I just wanted it clarified. The Minister of Education had indicated that the member for Lloydminster had been the chairman of a committee. That's the past member that now doesn't sit. The boundaries were changed – Vermilion-Lloydminster – and I just wanted it clarified so that it didn't direct an allegation to me that didn't exist.

**Point of Order
Imputing Motives**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat had a point of order.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Under Standing Order 23(i), *Beauchesne* 484(3), and *Beauchesne* 69, imputing motives. The hon. Leader of the Opposition suggested by a comment that he thought I had made, while I was in fact sitting quietly in my usual fashion, that I wanted to be Premier. I made no such comment. I would ask you to require the hon. leader to apologize and withdraw his comment, as that type of comment tends to inflame the House and inflame emotions in this House, and I'm sure he wouldn't want to do that. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order. The Chair must admit that while the Chair didn't actually hear the full comment that led to the hon. Leader of the Opposition's comment, the Chair didn't think it came from the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat. It came from somewhere. Nevertheless, the Chair would remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that – he may wish to comment.

MR. DECORE: Oh, I regret that I called the hon. member arrogant. I take that back, Mr. Speaker. If I have somehow offended the hon. member in sort of deflating his ego, I apologize for that too.

DR. L. TAYLOR: I accept his humble apology.

head: **Motions under Standing Order 40
University Cup Victory**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, under Standing Order 40 on the question of urgency.

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During the past weekend the University of Lethbridge men's hockey team won the University Cup, signifying the championship in the CIAU playoffs. I would ask for unanimous consent of the Legislature to acknowledge this award for this group of young Albertans.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree to the request of the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed?
The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

Moved by Dr. Nicol:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly offer congratulations to the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns hockey team upon their victory in winning the University Cup from the Canadian

Interuniversity Athletic Union in the Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, on Sunday, March 13, 1994.

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Assembly for this opportunity. The motion, which I explained, has been circulated. I'd like to begin by just acknowledging the Member for Lethbridge-West, who agreed to allow me to introduce this. The university is actually in his constituency, but I have a special interest in a number of the people on the team. They were students in my classes during the previous life that I had before coming into the Legislature, and, also, my nephew is the captain of the team.

Mr. Speaker, the achievement that the Pronghorns have brought to the University of Lethbridge is based on motivation. The team began as just a club enterprise working out of the university playing with other teams in southern Alberta, and then 10 years ago they managed to secure permanent funding from the university and membership in the CIAU as a fully participating team. When we look back on the history of the Pronghorns, we can see this is truly an achievement that marks a year of triumph for them. Previously they've had less than a sterling performance. This is their first year over the 500 level, and they've gone all the way to the championship. The achievement is especially noteworthy in the sense that the University of Lethbridge is a small university playing against all of the universities across Canada. The university only has 4,200 students. They've been able to bring together from southern Alberta and across western Canada a team that really motivated itself this year, and under their new coach they were able to bring forth this championship.

The future for the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns is really uncertain. The faculty council has voted to disband the intercollegiate athletics as part of their budget-cutting process. I think this activity this weekend will really bring the community to bear on the importance of athletics within the entire framework of a university, and I hope it gives both the faculty and the board a cause to re-evaluate their decisions. These young men through their dedication have brought recognition to their university, they've brought recognition to their province, and especially to themselves. I would just like to have the members of the Legislature recognize them and congratulate them on this opportunity.

Thank you.

MR. DUNFORD: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by perhaps apologizing for some confusion as to who was bringing this motion forward. It was just such a critical situation that we had to make sure that someone from Lethbridge was to bring it to the House. I'm pleased to say that the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East has deemed that he would do this because even though the two of us share an interest and an attachment to the university, we say here, certainly in our caucus – and we should be saying always in the House – that family comes first. Alberta was built on that principle, and we must maintain that both now and into the future, into the next century. So he has something, then, with this university Pronghorn hockey team that I am unable to have at this particular point in time, and that is to have a family member on that. I want to applaud the Nicol family, then, for raising such a fine son and such a fine hockey player.

This story of the university Pronghorns – the Member for Lethbridge-East has touched on it – is a story that should be written about. This story should go much further than just a brief debate here in the House on a Monday afternoon. The adversarial positions that this hockey team has had to overcome have only been briefly touched on. The first season that this hockey club

was in the western university league, they managed to win one game, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HERARD: The other team didn't show up.

MR. DUNFORD: Yes, the other team did show up. We had one victory. For those sports fans that exist in the Lethbridge area, we didn't have a party like we did yesterday, Mr. Speaker, but it was a big and great event because we'd finally entered into the win column.

After that, year after year after year it was extremely difficult to watch these young people from this small university have to go through all of this trauma of continuing to lose hockey games. There's a certain amount of pride that exists in the south. Certainly the Lethbridge area and southern Alberta generally have raised tremendous hockey players, and our inability to break through at the university level was a cause of some concern. I believe that it unfortunately perhaps led to situations within the university, as they of course were required to refocus on their dollars, as to what was going to happen then to an athletic program and in particular the Lethbridge Pronghorns hockey club. So for the last number of years these folks have been living on the edge, and the stress and the pressure that must have been on them to perform just has to have been of great magnitude. I think it further exemplifies that the victory that they had yesterday was much more than just a simple victory of two teams on a sheet of ice trying to get pucks into nets.

3:00

These questions about funding have been there. They have continued. One of the things that I find frustrating, being in support of this government's initiatives, is that we have a situation where we want to see things done. We want things to happen as we go forward in our restructuring, whether it be in health care or in education. Because of our own particular philosophy and indeed because of the things that have been done by this particular government, we've placed these autonomous boards into place. So we don't have direct access into how these funds are to be expended. Nor should we. I'm not standing here arguing for more central control within the province of Alberta, but it is frustrating for people like myself who have followed the history and the developing character of the Lethbridge Pronghorns hockey club to see what has gone on and the fact that they would have been placed in some jeopardy.

The funding for the next three years is in place. The members of the House should be aware that they will have to contend, if they are from Calgary and are supporters of the Calgary Dinosaurs or if they're from Edmonton and supporters of the University of Alberta hockey club, with the Lethbridge Pronghorns in the immediate future. What can't be seen to be guaranteed is that that will go on further in the future. So we want to encourage the people of Lethbridge, the parents of these boys, who come from all over Alberta, and certainly the people of Alberta in their congratulation to the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns hockey club to, one, get behind this club obviously spiritually, but, also, we want to see them start to contribute in a more direct fashion. I don't know how many members of the House have gone and watched a university hockey game. Mr. Speaker, this is exciting hockey. For those of you who are used to watching NHL or perhaps go to the junior games and see the restriction that a person is placed in by a simple red line in the middle of the ice, you will enjoy going to a university game where that red line is ignored. It speeds up the game, and it is fast and furious action. It's worth the \$6 that it would cost to go and watch them play.

I want to say before I'm finished that while I was not able to be in Toronto yesterday, I was able to be in the arena when the Calgary Dinosaurs and the Lethbridge Pronghorns played the final three games. These were fast, hard-hitting affairs. Now, either team could have represented the west with lots of pride and lots of talent, but in our particular case it was the Lethbridge Pronghorns, and they did Alberta proud.

Some specifics, Mr. Speaker, that you should be aware of. The most valuable player in the championship tournament was Lethbridge left-winger Trevor Ellerman. The Lethbridge goalie, Trevor Kruger, has now been a winner of two national championships. He was with the Swift Current Broncos when they won the junior A Memorial Cup, and now he has a CIAU national championship.

I want to conclude that this is the first national championship of a team from the University of Lethbridge, and we're all extremely proud of these young men, their coaches, their friends, and their parents, who come from all over this province.

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

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to speak to the motion, because I think that the motion reflects in effect the very fibre of Albertans and the ability for us to marry athletic excellence with scholastic endeavour and achievement. In fact, the foundation of democracy in ancient Greece was that they married sport to academics. In fact, the school that I graduated from, Notre Dame college in Wilcox, Saskatchewan, based its whole athletic program on that. I was then very fortunate to be able to play college hockey at the University of Calgary prior to the Lethbridge team entering the CIAU. That year, as a matter of fact, which was 1967, we had a particularly august record of three and nine.

What a small school can demonstrate with the heart and with the soul that this hockey team has put together really indicates what western Canada is all about: it's an ability for people to gather strength from few, to be able to work under adversity, and to be able to emerge successfully in a spirit of competition yet in a spirit of knowing that the competition from athletics is also integrated with a university education. Even the junior hockey league of western Canada has integrated a scholarship program with its junior players so that at the end of their junior careers they can attend colleges such as the University of Lethbridge, the University of Calgary, a small university up here, the University of Alberta, which has a particularly outstanding track record in intercollegiate hockey.

I think it shows that we probably can do more for Albertans when they do it for themselves. It's always been said: let's put hockey back into the sloughs where it belongs. Let's take it from its very roots of the game and let it develop into the excellent prospects and talent that Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba have exported not only to Canadian colleges but to university colleges and universities in the United States. There are Canadians playing in a tremendous amount of universities throughout the United States. Also, they're playing in the European environment and domain. It just demonstrates the importance of athletics and of combining it with university or postsecondary education. I know that NAIT and SAIT have excellent hockey teams as well.

I think that what Lethbridge accomplished in a very short period of time is of extreme merit. They did it under what I guess we would traditionally call a funding restraint, but they recognized it as an opportunity for businesses from the community to get involved, other areas of the university. Indeed the football program from the University of Alberta has been picked up by a

rather good old hockey player himself, Mr. Comrie. I think that this is the kind of initiative that comes forward from Alberta to be able to assist the young hockey players to be able to grow. A lot of hockey players, unlike myself, Mr. Speaker, will actually achieve something in this sport and go on to achieve something in other walks of life not directly related to politics.

I would say that the spirit in the dressing room of those 18 would have been tremendously strong as they went through the progression in probably the toughest province in scholastic hockey in Canada: I mean, the University of Alberta Golden Bears, the University of Calgary Dinosaurs, the Mount Royal Cougars, the Lethbridge Pronghorns. I don't know where that name came from, Mr. Speaker, but it certainly illustrates a lot of strength and being on the end of something, I would think.

The congratulatory message from this Legislature I think is very strong not only to the athletic achievement such as the Olympic team or the University of Lethbridge team but for the ability of these individuals to recognize how important athletics are as a part of their overall development from youth into full adulthood. Certainly I would be much poorer for it had I not been fortunate enough for it to be a part of my life. I know that there's going to be a bunch of new jackets being sported down in Lethbridge with CIAU champions, and I'm sure that every one of them will wear them proudly and that their community and their college will be equally proud.

Thank you.

3:10

MR. SPEAKER: Is the Assembly ready for the question? All those in favour of the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Let the record show that the motion carried unanimously.

The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

Arctic Winter Games

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The motion I'm proposing to the Assembly is to congratulate the town of Slave Lake and the 1994 Slave Lake Arctic Winter Games Host Society for their outstanding job of hosting the 1994 World Arctic Winter Games. I believe it is important for us to recognize Albertans who showcased the beauty of our province and the abilities of our citizens on the international stage and to congratulate those who worked to develop our Alberta athletes. That is exactly what happened in the 1994 Arctic Winter Games last week. I believe that the Assembly should offer its congratulations to these proud Albertans.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the Assembly prepared to allow the hon. member to propose the motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

Moved by Ms Calahasen:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta congratulate the town of Slave Lake and the 1994 Slave Lake Arctic Winter Games Host Society for their success in staging the 1994

Arctic Winter Games, and be it further resolved that the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly convey this congratulatory message in the usual manner.

MS CALAHASEN: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much to the Assembly for this opportunity. It was with great pride as aboriginal Albertans that my colleague the Hon. Mike Cardinal and I closed an outstanding show during the Arctic Winter Games closing ceremony on Saturday in Slave Lake, Alberta. During the week of March 6 to 12 Slave Lake saw an influx of 1,300 athletes; 400 coaches, officials, and dignitaries; and about 8,000 spectators from as far away as Tuman, Russia; Greenland; Alaska; Yukon; the Northwest Territories; and of course Alberta. Last week will be remembered for years to come.

The Arctic Winter Games are both athletic and cultural development with a heavy emphasis on culture. This week-long cultural exchange includes art, song and dance, and sports both traditional such as the knuckle-hop or the one-foot high jump and modern such as hockey or volleyball.

This is the first time Alberta has hosted the Arctic Winter Games, and never has such a large international athletic and cultural event occurred in Alberta since the 1988 Calgary Olympics. We were graced by such dignitaries as the Governor General of Canada, our very own Premier Ralph Klein, the vice-president of Greenland, the Hon. Gary Mar, the Hon. Mike Cardinal, and many, many others.

But many people deserve thanks, Mr. Speaker, for without them this would not be possible. The Alberta government through three different departments: first, Alberta Lotteries, with the enthusiastic support of our Deputy Premier, the Hon. Ken Kowalski; \$1.3 million indicates the commitment of this government to our youth. Secondly, Alberta Community Development minister, the Hon. Gary Mar, and his staff, who have been unending in their support. Thirdly, the Family and Social Services minister, the Hon. Mike Cardinal, and of course 312 corporate sponsors, from major oil companies to small businesses in my constituency. They, like us and the Alberta government, recognize that the money they give is an investment in our most valuable resource, the young people of our respective communities who will be our future leaders. And, of course, the town of Slave Lake and the 1994 Arctic Winter Games Host Society, which showed everyone action.

In 1991 when the international Arctic Winter Games bid committee came to Slave Lake, I'm sure they had their doubts. But the people of Slave Lake never did. They were like the little engine that could, and they did. Over 2,000 volunteers from a community of 6,000: not bad at all. They opened their homes to visiting athletes, used their spare time to help prepare Slave Lake, and worked long hours towards and during the 1994 Arctic Winter Games. The volunteers, Mr. Speaker, were the heart and soul of this event, and on behalf of the people of Alberta I thank them. They proved that small towns can run an event of this magnitude.

The theme song of the 1994 Arctic Winter Games was: where the trails meet. It reflected the fact that these games were a chance for Albertans to meet and compete with other people from the north. Rudyard Kipling once said, "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Well, Mr. Speaker, Rudyard Kipling was wrong. The Arctic Winter Games exemplified the new spirit of global competition as athletes from east and west and north and south met in friendly competition. I am so proud of Slave Lake and the host society for the great legacy of the 1994 Arctic Winter Games which they have provided, which will be the long-lasting memories of the spirit of friendship and camaraderie that developed over the course of the games.

Congratulations go to all the athletes, their coaches, and the fans, to the host society's president, Dave Redgate, and his directors, and the volunteers, to the games' manager, Rhonda Groom, and her workers, and, third, to the town of Slave Lake mayor, Peter Moore, and his councillors for the outstanding job they did. They did Alberta proud. My headdress goes off to them all.

Thank you.

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

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the Assembly will allow me to add just a few short comments to that eloquent submission on behalf of the town of Slave Lake in this motion. As the MLA in this Assembly living almost the furthest north, I want to point out to this Assembly that northern Alberta represents 65 percent of the landmass of the province but only 10 percent of the population. Any time that an event can take place in northern Alberta which attracts international attention to it, it is a highly deserved event, and when that event that attracts international attention is pulled off and handled in a sophisticated and virtually flawless way, it deserves the attention and recognition of this Assembly. I'm pleased to support the motion.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion proposed by the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Let the record show the motion carried unanimously.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Committee of Supply**

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call the committee to order. Before calling on the Premier, I would just let the people in the gallery know that this is the less formal part of the Assembly. Committee stage permits people to move around, to indeed take their jackets off, to have coffee or juice, and even to converse ever so quietly with one another. So it is the informal session as we go through the estimates.

head: **Main Estimates 1994-95**

3:20

**Executive Council
Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs**

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd call upon the hon. Premier to make his comments.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and hon. members. Once again it's a privilege to appear before this committee to discuss our new approach to government fiscal responsibility and accountability. As we enter the second year of our four-year plan to restore fiscal balance to the Alberta government, we have a clear and specific map for our journey. Our

budget of February 24 confirms that we are indeed on track. Our departmental business plans are a first for any government in Canada. They lay out details on their spending over the next three years, departmental objectives, and ways of measuring whether those objectives are being met.

This new approach focuses on long-term benefits for the province. Also, it makes each government department more accountable. On that basis it is my privilege to address the Committee of Supply on behalf of Executive Council as well as three organizations for which I am directly responsible: the personnel administration office, the Public Affairs Bureau, and northern development. Finally, I will report on the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs as its minister. I will speak briefly to each of these in turn.

On the policy side, Mr. Chairman, Executive Council will translate the overwhelming mandate given us last June into policy decisions and programs under the authority of the laws and the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. As such, Executive Council is responsible for fulfilling our mandate and delivering on the agenda for change set by Albertans, and it will continue to set the tone for leaner and more efficient government by finding new and more cost-effective ways to provide Albertans with the services they need.

In terms of budgeting, Executive Council includes not only administration, the offices of the Premier and the Lieutenant Governor, but also the personnel administration office, the Public Affairs Bureau, and northern development. This year's total net budget estimates for Executive Council as a whole are \$24.7 million. This represents a reduction of 10.5 percent from last year's net forecast of \$27.6 million. Over the course of our four-year plan from 1992-1993 to 1996-97 the overall spending reduction will be 33.7 percent, but because revenues will increase during that period due to initiatives like the increased sale of government publications, the net reduction will grow to 36 percent.

The personnel administration office, or PAO, is the central human resource arm of the Alberta government. Its job is to ensure we manage our employees with fairness and consistency. In 1994 PAO will help departments set up systems to measure their overall performance, link what employees do with their departmental goals, and recognize and reward highly productive departments and employees.

PAO will co-ordinate the Premier's forum, a new initiative to bring together about 50 representatives from universities, colleges, school systems, the health sector, municipalities, and the Alberta public service to open dialogue on managing change and improving the ways of government. Other key tasks for the PAO include negotiating a collective agreement with our unions. Our mandate, of course, is a 5 percent decrease in the first contract year. The PAO is also responsible for organizing the delivery of government training and development programs to give our employees the tools they need to better serve Albertans. It offers a wide-ranging package of career and financial support to employees affected by government restructuring, and it helps to match laid-off employees with vacant essential positions in the government. The PAO keeps employees informed of our major decisions through newsletters and other regular communications.

Mr. Chairman, in 1994-1995 the budget for PAO has been reduced from the 1993-1994 forecast of \$8.9 million to \$8.4 million, or 5.6 percent. Over the course of our four-year plan the overall spending reduction will be in the neighbourhood of 26.2 percent.

The next organization on the agenda is the Public Affairs Bureau. The bureau is a governmentwide, full-service agency that provides support to government in its communications with

Albertans. In this period of great change the need for Albertans to understand what we are doing and why we are doing it is absolutely critical, and it is equally important to meet Albertans' demands for more and better information and communication. The bureau addresses these needs by providing communication support services and staff to departments and agencies as well as operating the regional information telephone inquiries, or the RITE system, the Queen's Printer bookstore, and the Alberta Communications Network.

Over the next three years the Public Affairs Bureau will improve Albertans' access to government through initiatives like using technology to modernize and streamline the RITE network, establishing a provincewide government RITE number, increasing the use of government 1-800 numbers – more than 20,000 Albertans have called our toll-free lines in the last few weeks alone – assessing communications functions across government to make them more effective and more co-ordinated and cost-efficient, and expanding the range of government information available through the Queen's Printer bookstores.

This year, Mr. Chairman, the Public Affairs Bureau's net budget is reduced from the 1993-1994 forecast of \$9.2 million to \$8.7 million, or a reduction of 5.4 percent. Its total decrease in expenditures over the course of our four-year plan will be 24.8 percent, but because the bureau's revenue will increase during that period, the net reduction will be 30.4 percent.

Mr. Chairman, the northern development branch of Executive Council consists of the Northern Alberta Development Council, or NADC, and the administration of two development agreements that are cost shared between our province and the federal government. The council's purpose is to address and advise government on special issues affecting northern Albertans. Based in Peace River, it is an important vehicle through which government policy and programs are implemented in the north. [interjection] Thank you. In supporting the social and economic development of northern Alberta, the council provides ongoing services like giving northern Albertans an opportunity to discuss their concerns and ideas at public meetings, responding to requests from northerners for technical help on community and regional development projects, encouraging communities to support the council's student bursary program and its new bursary partnership program to help northern students attend postsecondary schools, funding training projects in remote communities to help people build for the future . . . [interjection] Thanks, Nick – and helping community-based initiatives that encourage local employment in areas of resource development like energy and forestry.

Because the development agreements with the federal government will be phased out over the next few years, northern development will reduce its budget substantially in that period, including a reduction from the 1993-94 forecast of \$6.2 million to \$4.5 million this year, or a reduction of 27.4 percent.

This brings me, Mr. Chairman, to the last item on my list today, and that is the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, known as FIGA. This department is responsible for Alberta's relations with other provinces, the federal government, and the international community. This covers a wide range of important areas, ranging from dropping international trade barriers to improving our federal system.

Over the next few years Canada will undergo dramatic change as it deals with deficits, debts, and globalization. We are going to see a major restructuring of our federal system, and Alberta will need to remain strong in advancing its interests at home and abroad. During that time, FIGA will work toward a number of goals: removing overlap and duplication in federal/provincial activities, eliminating trade barriers within Canada by 1995,

continuing to reduce international trade barriers, pursuing an active and focused international role for Alberta, building a more effective federal system while diligently advancing Alberta's interests, and remaining actively involved in addressing the challenges of national unity.

In 1994-95 the budget for the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs has been reduced from the 1993-94 forecast of \$6.4 million to \$6 million, or a decrease of 6.3 percent. FIGA's overall spending reduction by 1996-1997 will be 20.8 percent.

Mr. Chairman, this is simply a brief overview of the organizations for which I am responsible. I would be pleased to elaborate further in responding to questions from the Committee of Supply. In addition, I'm sure that the chairman of the Northern Alberta Development Council would be happy to supplement any answers I might give relative to that agency.

Thank you very much.

3:30

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Premier, the committee has in the last little while frequently had those people who held chairmanships or whatever make general comments, if they wished to do so at this time, and then have the answers.

The chairman of northern development.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did want to add some general comments to those of the Premier with regard to the Northern Alberta Development Council. As we proceeded into the development of our business plan this year for the year 1994-95, we really went back to the basic issues of what the Northern Alberta Development Council was involved with in terms of its mandate. While it is clearly defined under the Act, we did shorten it down to indicate that it is the promotion of the economic and social development in northern Alberta through practical advice to government and through the delivery of development services to northerners.

One thing that's very important when we talk about NADC and its budget for the forthcoming year is to recognize the uniqueness of northern Alberta. The hon. Member for Fort McMurray a short time ago in a related issue indicated the fact that northern Alberta in terms of the Northern Alberta Development Council does indeed represent 60 percent of the landmass of the province of Alberta and yet contains only 10 percent of the population. But equally important in fact, if not more important, is the fact that on average the population in the north is younger than the provincial average, and what is of concern, Mr. Chairman, is that the education, the literacy, and the income levels of northern Albertans are below that of the provincial average. If we talk about the issues of distance to markets and the delivery of services in this vast part of Alberta, then indeed those are the challenges that northerners face on a daily basis.

The Northern Alberta Development Council, Mr. Chairman, in regard to its mandate for '94-95 will use its input in various ways, through public meetings, for example, of which we will be conducting at least five in the year, and at those meetings we generally average 25 to 40 briefs. Those briefs are dealt with exhaustively by the council, and we attempt to put a reconciliation into place whereby the presenter ultimately is aware of what the action is of a particular department of the government or of a particular ministry. Indeed, we exercise a certain amount of judgment as to whether we present that brief directly to the minister at the outset or whether we put it directly to department officials.

The NADC also, Mr. Chairman, deals with major projects; for example, the one in December that was recently completed

involving the fish and game of northern Alberta. Within the last 10 days we have made that report public, and we have submitted it to the hon. minister with regard to recommendations that we believe should be enacted as it relates to northern Albertans.

The Premier has also touched briefly on the northern Alberta agreement. Mr. Chairman, one thing I did want to make note of is that effective in January of this year direct grants to businesses were deleted as a result of discussions with our federal counterparts, and indeed what we are doing is spreading the resources more into the community areas, into the research areas, and into the association areas.

Mr. Chairman, there's one other thing that I want to note, and that is with regard to the northern input into programs and policies with respect to this government. This has been a very important role and a very important interrelationship that has existed in prior years, in prior governments. As we proceed through the budget year and in years to come, that mandate and that role will be more important than ever. Northern Alberta is unique. We have a unique organization, and I applaud the Premier for the structure that he has set up whereby we report directly to the Premier. This has not always been the case in the past, and it has presented a unique opportunity for northern Albertans.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will conclude my remarks and am prepared to answer any specific questions as they may arise. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

The hon. Member for Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've just been fighting a losing battle with my loose-leaf here. They are inventing things now that are real mousetraps.

First of all, congratulations to the Premier for being alive and alert to be here to defend his estimates. I will also take the Premier's order of events and do the Executive Council first and FIGA later. I've always been very interested in northern affairs. My first two children were born when I lived in Peace River. Grande Prairie at that time was a suburb of Peace River, and they've come quite far since those days. I think it's fitting that somebody from Grande Prairie-Wapiti should be in. I might mention that, too, as I think one of my daughter's first law practices was in Grande Prairie. I don't recall the member's name being on the docket, so he must have been a good clean-living soul.

One thing I was interested in though. In northern development one of the criticisms I'd make maybe is a little unusual for this Legislature. I don't think you should cut in this area. This is an area you should raise funds in for two reasons. One is that the northern part of our province is an underdeveloped area. It's a hinterland. Edmonton and south have a tendency to look at the north in the same way that Toronto looks at Alberta, yet we never recognize the mote in our own eye. We think that wisdom and civilization and all good things beautiful originate south of Barrhead and everything north of there is a wilderness with a few animals and whites and nonwhites running around, that we can go there and exploit it and take out all the oil we want and all the gravel and so on and so forth.

The north, I think has been mentioned before many times, not only has 65 percent of our land area but has 80 percent of Alberta's disposable water, and if there's a shortage – and I mention this as an earth scientist – in the generations to come, it's going to be water, not even food, because we seem to be biotechnologically able to keep up with food for the growing population in the world, but we're not keeping up with water. Water's a

very critical area, so consequently we're going to be faced with either bringing the water south or bringing the people north. I think it's a lot easier to bring the people north. It's a nice climate; it's a nice area to live. I think, after all, if you want to establish preserves, maybe it should be over the south where it's dried out and bald. Do your development in the north.

That leads to a second question. A high percentage of our native population still lives in the north and will continue to live in the north. A lot of them are living in Third World conditions. If you've toured in the Fort Vermilion, Tallcree, Wabasca areas, it's not good. I think the Premier would agree with me. They have been short-circuited or left out of a lot of the government services that the south takes for granted. Not only do we have this barren area that I've mentioned but this huge native population that has been shut out of the normal run of progress over the last two or three generations. These should surely combine to make this an area of high investment. We should be increasing the money we spend here.

3:40

The last argument I make is that I've never heard of a northerner or a native burying government money in a can. It goes right back into circulation. It goes back and creates jobs. I think an economy that cuts off the north and cuts off our entrepreneurs, particularly our native entrepreneurs that are coming, out of access to money is cutting its own throat. It's the wrong way to do things, and we should be increasing the funds that we spend there, taking it out of other areas in the south if we have a shortage. I don't of course buy the government philosophy that every dollar you cut is a dollar saved. I think, just as I was in business for many years, dollars we spend drilling a hole are different from dollars that you spend building a building. It's different from a dollar you spend buying a lunch, which is different from the dollar that you spend for maybe painting a building. They're all treated differently taxwise, and some return money, some don't. If you pay a dollar to a foreign consultant that comes in and tells you what's wrong, that's a dollar lost. You never see it again. A dollar that a tourist brings in is a very, very good dollar, because all a tourist ever costs you, if worse comes to worse, is you might have to put him in a pine box and ship him home, but every dollar that they spend is a new dollar that they bring in.

So a dollar that we spend on the north and on our native people and on our entrepreneurs trying to get under way creates more work, creates more business, and is a very good investment indeed. Therefore, I would fault this government for being a little bit lemminglike in reducing the deficit in that this an area that is going to cost in the long run. It will hurt our society. I can hear the Member for Rocky Mountain House shaking his head right now. I'll be back later to tell him some of the reasons behind it.

While we're on Executive Council, those are the last nice words that you will hear, I think, Mr. Premier. I'm not so sure it's nice. I think, as I mentioned, that you and your advisers may be shortsighted in cutting money up there.

There was a letter written by the Member for Calgary-Currie last year dated October 19, 1993, asking for information, and it hasn't been answered. One of the questions that the member asked was the government's policy in the release of polls conducted by the Public Affairs Bureau, the Public Affairs Bureau that the minister mentioned as being of great advantage to the west. I doubt if it is. Later on I will be moving an amendment, Mr. Premier, that this department has its budget cut to one dollar. If you really want to keep them employed, send them up north cutting wood and helping in the north, but don't leave them down here putting out paper.

The second item: could the minister confirm whether John Doesberg has been hired to provide advice on privatization for the Premier's office or the government? If Mr. John Doesberg has been hired, what is his salary and function?

Could the Premier provide a list of all people under contract with the Department of FIGA who are not public servants? One of them would be, of course, a former minister.

Has the minister anything in the FIGA studies on implications to Alberta about negotiated side deals in NAFTA?

Now, one of the interesting things is that we see a slight reduction in the office of the Premier, but it was noted over the last few years that expenses for the Premier's office increased by about 50 percent. This was over the last three or four years. I was wondering if the Premier was aware of that. Although he's made a slight reduction in the last year, if you go back over four or five years, he has obviously taken on some new duties of some sort. I think otherwise it wouldn't go up. Maybe the Premier will get time to answer that.

Back to communications planning. The Premier mentions what a good job they are doing. He skirted the question earlier, but if they are doing a good job, why would the Premier spend \$50,000 to use the CFCN-CFRN fireside network when we could have got one cheaper? I know he called it fireside, which I think was an unfortunate slip, Mr. Chairman, because when I think of a politician and fireside, I think of Nero fiddling while Rome burned. In this case it was the Premier diddled while the province burned. The fact of the matter is that there was \$50,000 spent out of this budget that was unnecessary. The Access Network, although our Minister of Municipal Affairs sometimes questions what it puts out – this would have been a chance for him to put out the gospel according to St. Ralph rather than what our Minister of Municipal Affairs occasionally complains about. Actually, I think it's an unnecessary department, especially with as good a PR person as the Premier in charge. The Premier could, I think, save the public of Alberta three-quarters of a million dollars, \$753,999 to be exact, by doing his own PR. He doesn't need a department of that size – that's vote 4.0.2 – to spread his gospel. He does a very good job himself.

Now, while we're on Executive Council, another area we could have saved on – and I'm going to have to be corrected on this, possibly. House leader, is it a \$70,000 budget that we have for an office down south? Fifty thousand, is it? Fifty thousand dollars have been allotted to the Liberal opposition for an office in Calgary, which I think is rather silly, not that the Liberal opposition shouldn't have an office. But when we have a big building down there – they don't have the building network we have up in Edmonton, but there should have been some way that they could have sneaked their Liberals into a basement someplace. That would have saved the taxpayer \$50,000. You might have had to displace the janitor or the traffic cop or whatever it is around one of those government buildings, but surely there could have been some space for the Liberal opposition, and we wouldn't have had to spend the money.

To move on to FIGA. This has been near and dear to my heart for some time, because as a businessman the interprovincial trade barriers we have up here between provinces are really not as much regulatory as they are interpretations given by different bureaucrats from time to time. Consequently, I've always argued that there's no reason why we shouldn't have a GATT type of organization for Canada. We may not call it the general agreement on tariffs and trade. We might want to call it the provincial agreement on trade and tariffs or trade and restrictions. We could always pick out an acronym of some sort that was indicative of what it should do. The problems we have between interprovincial

trade, which are now very obvious because of NAFTA and the U.S. agreement – we have more restrictions between provinces than we have between an international boundary, between Mexico and the U.S. – mean that we should have an ongoing organization like GATT that spots and highlights these arguments. Now, hiring somebody at a thousand dollars a day to negotiate on something that they've been at for 10 years is not going to solve the issue at all.

We need to be able to make a high-profile cause out of interprovincial trade barriers. In this type of organization – and this is one of the few times, Mr. Premier, you'll get free advice from this side of the House. I'm suggesting the same type of system that you use in GATT, two or three members from every one of the provinces needing this organization having some authority – you can't give them too much authority but give them some authority – to at least hold up some trading or pass resolutions on trade, much as GATT has, but more particularly to say, "Hey, did you know Alberta is shipping chicken into Ontario and won't allow cheese in here?" or vice versa, Ontario won't allow Alberta. In other words, get it up to a much higher profile than politicians meeting around a table once or twice a year quietly discussing their little prejudices between each other. I think a GATT type agreement would be able – and we're on the cause of right. I think most Albertans think Albertans are usually right. Therefore, it works out to our advantage to have the argument take place in a theatre that everybody can see.

3:50

Two, three, four times a year this organization meets, although it has a secretariat going all year-round, and it highlights and says that Quebec is doing this and they shouldn't do it, that Alberta's doing this and they shouldn't do it, that Manitoba's doing this and they should. In other words, we need to have a higher profile because I think the public themselves will become more incensed if they see trade regulations back and forth or interprovincial trade barriers. I think it would be very easy to set up. It's worked out very well for the international community. It's only been set up about 15 years in the international community, and although some people complain about it, it's done wonders.

I happen to be old enough now to remember international trade before GATT was there, and it's almost as different as day and night. It's been a heck of an improvement on highlighting what does go on in trade. Before that, local politicians or different state politicians were always able to make cause and argue that they were being discriminated against and not mention the fact that they themselves were discriminating also. GATT put this into a public theatre, and it seems to have evened out a lot.

I notice a couple more things on page 15 in the business plan that the Premier had. For FIGA it promises to operate a number of "protocol events . . . on a cost-recovery basis." This was most intriguing. I could just see the Turkish ambassador fumbling around looking for Canadian dollars because he was charged admission for coming to Alberta. I'm just wondering how the heck we're going to work about getting protocol events on a cost-recovery basis, or is the Lieutenant-Governor going to have to get a Visa card before he can go out to some other functions? This is going to be very interesting, just how the Premier intends to get money recovered on a protocol basis. On the other hand, I suppose, the Swedish ambassador arrives; you could send a letter to all the people with a name like Johnsen or Johansson and ask for money because the Swedish ambassador's in town and you want to balance the budget. All in all, it doesn't seem too sensible.

The OSLO project, Mr. Premier, for some reason is in your department. I'm wondering if you could give us any more update on that.

Lastly, the whole department of FIGA. I can't find it here right now, but as I recall, we have more employees than Ontario in Federal and Intergovernmental – yes, here it is. Ontario has 60 employees and we have 74. We've reduced it from 77, but I don't think that's good enough, Mr. Premier. B.C. has only 15, and they're larger than Alberta too. You probably inherited the carryover of the Napoleonic dreams of the Lougheed era, where they thought they were going to take over the whole world, if not Canada, and you may have this small army of bureaucrats marching along singing *Solidarity Forever* or whatever they're doing back there, but I don't quite see why B.C. can get by with 15 and we need 74. I'd suggest you cut all that money back and put that extra money in native development in the north.

That, Mr. Chairman, is all I have to say, and I'll be along with a couple amendments later. One is to strike the publicity department's budget down to zilch. I can't do it to zero. I think I've got to do it to a dollar. The other will be that the Premier's FIGA department have an independent and objective system of performance measures developed to measure the calibre of operations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KLEIN: I can either take note of those questions and try and answer them later on or address some of them now, Mr. Chairman. I don't know what the procedure is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: However the committee wishes, Mr. Premier. If you wish to respond now, fine. If you would wait until a few more, that's fine too. Either is acceptable.

MR. KLEIN: What I'll do, Mr. Chairman, is I'll wait and see what other questions come forward and try and answer them all later.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

Calgary-Currie and then Calgary-Buffalo.

MRS. BURGNER: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on the issues regarding FIGA. A responsibility that I undertook shortly after the election was to be the cohost of the Canada/U.S. legislators' project that was held in Lake Louise in January of this year. My hon. colleague from Redwater spoke about the need for relationships with our other provincial counterparts, most specifically on the trade barrier issue. I can assure you that from spending two or three days with some colleagues from across Canada and from across United States respecting their particular state legislations we have a great deal of commonality, and part of that is just basically sharing information.

At that time the theme of the conference was two issues. One was health care reform and one was the issue of NAFTA. I think we in Canada struggle with the perception that our health care system is not only perfect but beyond reproach. Quite clearly, when you explain some of the benefits and strengths of our health care system and then you hold them up to the critique of another system, vis-à-vis what exists in the United States, you understand that what we have can indeed be looked at, can indeed be retooled, and in fact can be modified. The fear of a two-tiered health system as a result of having a look at some of the privatization models really bears further discussion based on some of the information that was shared with me.

I'd like to speak for a brief minute on some of the colleagues that I met at that time. Because as we deal with federal and intergovernmental affairs – and there are many, not just the trade and tariff issues that the Member for Redwater was speaking to but more clearly an understanding of what the issues are that

affect Canada and how we build relationships as politicians so that we can deal with them when they come to the table. I'm certain at any First Ministers' Conference that issues affecting Alberta will only be successfully advanced if there's been a relationship built, and I think it is the responsibility of MLAs to look at their counterparts in other assemblies, both in Canada and United States, to assist us in dealing with that.

The host of this conference was the Hon. Darren Praznik, who is the Manitoba Minister of Labour and northern affairs. Mr. Praznik in his opening address invited us all to share information in an impartial way. Now, obviously Mr. Praznik's government under the Hon. Gary Filmon is a Conservative government, but we had representatives there from Saskatchewan and from British Columbia giving us a New Democratic's perspective. We also interestingly enough had a representative from the government of Quebec, Mr. Benoit Fradet, who is the minister of youth for the National Assembly in Quebec, and I felt it was very interesting. He spoke to us about what the implications were of the rise of the Bloc and the PQ in the upcoming election in Quebec. So some of our informal discussions gave us an opportunity to get a sense of issues that were on the table, whether they were on our political agenda or not.

One of the interesting things in talking about NAFTA was the recognition – and I think it's significant to Albertans; it's coming to the surface as we deal with some of our fiscal restructuring – that the federal government is responsible for negotiating and signing a number of agreements including NAFTA. Because of the particular jurisdiction we have in Alberta, the provinces are often responsible for implementing some of these agreements. It certainly can provide us with a need for further discussion, because quite often we have to respond to national issues at a provincial level, and while they may have an overriding effect of our responsibility and a better understanding for our province, they also carry with them a significant financial burden, a cultural burden, and often a social burden. Some of the issues that we talked about were such things as immigration and such things as changes in health care and such things as changes in trade agreements.

If I could just speak briefly on the issue of immigration, although it was an informal topic, we had as an aside at the conference the fact that we have agreements with the federal government on immigration policy and have such things as the family unification process, which allows a certain percentage of immigrants to be brought into Canada. While we are all embracing and recognize the need to reunite families who have been separated because of war and other reasons, there is an implication of cost, as some of these family members are either very young or very old and certainly our young students have to access an effective ESL program and our elderly will be needing support through the health care system. Yet we as Albertans have no way of recognizing or addressing the financial implication. Let me make it very clear that the issue we discussed was not wishing to discontinue anything with respect to family unification but to have a chance to have that voice at the table. I can assure members in this House that if we were not colleagues across Canada and if we did not meet through such organizations as FIGA, the confidence to be able to go forward with proposals would not exist.

4:00

One of the issues also had to do with NAFTA and the fact that there are very serious financial penalties that are imposed through the agreement and that those financial responsibilities, if we do not meet the criteria of particular agreements, will be borne by the provinces. I can assure you that where we here in Alberta

have the right to raise and levy taxes, some of our counterparts in the States don't have some of that same opportunity, and it raised a real area of awareness of exactly what it meant to enter into a free trade agreement.

We also looked at opportunities for some of our professionals to move interprovincially and also across the border. We know how difficult it is with respect to green cards and establishing residency. So some of the strengths had come from the fact that what you have is a product and what you have is a market, dealing with that and trying to get rid of the technicalities and the bureaucracy.

We had a chance to listen to the American consul representative, Mr. Bill Witting, who is located in Calgary and actually finishing up his term. He will be returning to Washington. He spoke informally at one of our dinners about what it means to sit as an American in a Canadian jurisdiction and try and advance not only connections to assist people in making business arrangements under the new regulations of NAFTA but also giving some of that cultural and bureaucratic insight. Again, we have to have the opportunity and a format in order for us as politicians to see where the problems are, to see if we can work out things. On this whole issue of legislative reform, which would come out of this, we're simply saying: so what kinds of issues do you deal with, and how do you deal with them?

Another one of the interesting issues that came up that I thought was significant, because we often talk about reform within our government – we talk about it in terms of legislation – was simply the matter of decorum and how we in our House have a way through question period and through some of our more public positions in how we try to work with the opposition, but quite often, as you know, it has a very confrontational and negative impact. Interestingly enough, the comment was made that there was a greater deal of civility in the National Assembly in Quebec than exists in a number of the other Houses. Of course, this was prior to the reconvening of this session, because up until then we were still quite stellar in our performance. I think if some of my colleagues that I met at the conference had been watching since February 10, they might see that that had been torqued up just a touch.

The issue came up whether we should have television cameras in the House, whether we should eliminate the theatrics and just deal with issues, and how other Houses were dealing with that. What it created was a sensitivity that politicians were trying very hard to deal with the critical social issues, the reasons that they ran for office, the political agenda that was in front of them on behalf of their party, and how unfortunate it was that because of the media and because of the way things were structured, we had perhaps not given Albertans or Canadians an understanding of the issues that we deal with. It was regrettable that we all felt that Canadians judged their politicians based on question period. Those of us that are sitting here for the other seven hours of the day know very well that question period plays a small part in that.

I guess my concluding comments would be also the opportunity to feature and showcase the strengths of our province, in this case the beautiful setting in Lake Louise, which the hon. Minister of Environmental Protection never fails to reward in a positive way and advocate. We also had with us the cohost, the hon. Member for Taber-Warner. It brought sort of an urban, rural, and kind of environmental scenario together to showcase what was the strength of Alberta. Quite frankly, Lake Louise all by itself does that. On the other hand, tourism is part of the Alberta advantage, and for the various members who came from the United States, an opportunity to spend three days in the Rockies was unquestionably probably number two on the list beyond the issues that we discussed.

My final comment, then, would be to continue to advance an opportunity for various members of this government and of opposition to recognize their responsibilities to liaise and dialogue with their other colleagues in government, to keep the issues on the table, to develop friendships and personal acquaintances, because actually by having that kind of connection, we are able to serve Albertans better. If we know somebody who's involved, if we know a government that's got that as an agenda, we can get information. We can be more informed.

So I would, first of all, thank the Premier for giving me the opportunity to cohost this on behalf of the province and indicate that the success of the discussion was overwhelming because of the number of issues that were raised with respect to health care and NAFTA.

In conclusion, the relationships that were built interprovincially and across the border with the United States were a highlight of my, so far, six or seven months in office, so I thank you for that.

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. DICKSON: Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. After listening to the last couple of speakers, it occurs to me that my perspective and approach are going to be very different. I don't mean to minimize the importance of international trade missions and I don't mean to minimize the importance of the conference at Lake Louise and liaison with U.S. legislators, but, you know, I think we have to expect a lot more from both FIGA and from Executive Council in terms of advantaging ordinary Albertans. It's from that perspective that I wanted to make some observations and put some questions to the hon. Premier.

Firstly, turning to the Executive Council budget and specifically program 4, Public Affairs Bureau, a number of concerns. The first one has to do with 4.0.7, selling Alberta statutes. When I saw that, it put me in mind of something, Mr. Premier. When I was a part of your all-party panel on freedom of information, listening to submissions, a gentleman made a presentation to us in the city of Calgary. One of his concerns was that he went to the provincial government and wanted to be able to electronically distribute the *Statutes of Alberta* and ensure that people had access to statutes and orders in council and regulations. He was rebuffed. He was told: "No, no. We're monitoring this. We're not going to let this in the hands of a private operator."

It struck me, you know, the more I thought about it – and I had the chance to speak with this gentleman after – that we're talking about something that really I don't think anyone has a proprietary interest in. Surely every law we make in this Chamber and every regulation is here for the benefit of all Albertans. Some Albertans may not always see it as beneficial, but everything we do in this Chamber we do on behalf of Albertans. The more I thought about it, the odder it seemed that we would somehow say: "Well, we're going to be a bit selective here. We're not going to allow just anybody to be able to access government statutes and regulations and orders in council. We're going to maintain a little monopolistic situation, and if we allow anybody to do it, we may license it out." It seemed to me that if you followed the logic through, really what you're doing is charging taxpayers again for something that they own, not the government, not the Executive Council, not the Premier's office but Albertans themselves.

So I want to specifically encourage the hon. Premier to look at opening up the distribution of statutes. If there is an entrepreneur – we know there's one in the city of Calgary – who's anxious to

be able to distribute text of government regulations and instruments by computer, why wouldn't we look to facilitate that? There may be some reasonable safeguards that the government may insist on, but it struck me as being a reasonable suggestion and one that ought not to have been discounted or rejected out of hand. So I want to ask the Premier what he thinks about that: why in the past would his office, although I expect he doesn't have personal knowledge of it, discourage this kind of entrepreneurial initiative?

4:10

The other thing I wanted to touch on – if I look at vote 4.0.7, delivering information, I go back to another lesson that I learned on his all-party panel on freedom of information. We had some very eloquent and very effective presentations from librarians. We had these presentations, whether it was in Lethbridge or Fort McMurray, by people involved in providing information to Albertans at low cost or no cost in a way that was accessible. One of the things that we were told by librarians, Mr. Premier, was – you know, there are all kinds of government publications. I'm not talking here so much about statutes or statutory instruments, but I'm talking about booklets the government produces. I'm talking about draft plans. You know, those things are not available in a regional library system.

I'm going to suggest to the hon. Premier that if we really want to make government and government information more accessible, then we could do no better than to make what I think is probably one of the finest regional library systems in the country work. It's not enough to happen by happenstance and just sort of leave it up to the libraries to acquire what they can. I'm going to ask the Premier specifically: will he instruct people in his Public Affairs Bureau to meet with the people providing leadership in the library community in this province to address how we can make sure that all government publications – all government publications – are available not in McDougall Centre in Calgary, not through an office in Edmonton but in every public library in the province? I think that would be an important step forward in terms of access.

The third thing I want to address relative to the Public Affairs Bureau and program 4 has to do with the question of polls. I expect that the Public Affairs Bureau does undertake polls that are conducted either by the bureau or at least for the benefit of the government. I'm put in mind of the experience we saw federally, Mr. Chairman. This happened after the Meech Lake agreement, when a number of Canadians knew that there had been a poll done, a poll undertaken by the federal government of the views of Canadians in terms of constitutional reform. These Canadians went to the federal government and said, "We'd like to know what the results of the poll were," and they met resistance all the way along. They got to the federal Information Commissioner, Mr. Phillips, who looked at the application, considered the law, and said: you people as taxpayers are entitled to the results of the poll. The federal government balked.

This also shows, Mr. Premier, one of the problems if you have an Information Commissioner who only has the power to recommend and not the power to make binding decisions. The federal government said in effect, "That's fine, Mr. Phillips, but we choose not to share this information with the people that paid for it." They went to court, and after spending tens of thousands of dollars, ultimately the court said: "Yes, this is public information. The poll results should be shared with the taxpayers, with the people that ultimately paid for it." But by then the Charlottetown referendum had already occurred, so it was a hollow victory. So those people spent money to no good result.

I'd hate to see, Mr. Premier, the same kind of thing happen in Alberta. I'd hate to see Albertans frustrated in the same way that Canadians were with respect to that federal poll. So I'd just say to the Premier that I'd ask him to commit that if the Public Affairs Bureau undertakes an opinion survey in this province, that be available. I think it's not an unreasonable request.

The other item I wanted to raise – this is following on something raised by my colleague from Redwater – is the business of McDougall Centre in Calgary. As a Calgary MLA I've had a number of people phone me. In fact, one gentleman was quite hostile. He had driven by my constituency office on 11th Avenue. He wanted to know how much I was paying for rent and how much this was costing him and other taxpayers in this province. He said, "Why would you have a constituency office?" So I went through and explained what I thought were some pretty compelling reasons why I needed a constituency office. He said: "No, no, no. Why don't you have an office in that other place?" He meant McDougall Centre. We chatted a little more, and he was absolutely astonished to know that not just me but the other 19 Calgary MLAs don't use that building. We can't do constituency work out of it. What's more, he was surprised that only government members and Executive Council are able to use that facility. It's a public facility funded by tax dollars. He was even more excited and upset when I told him that in order to have a southern Alberta office for the opposition caucus, we had to go out and acquire independent space. At first we'd attempted to get space in McDougall Centre and had been refused.

I think the point that I make, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Premier, is I know that old habits and attitudes die hard, but I think Albertans for the most part have little patience for the kind of partisan nonsense that's seen as going on too much. I think most Albertans would be absolutely delighted to see that McDougall Centre be made available to all MLAs in the government as well as the Official Opposition, in much the fashion that the hon. Minister for Municipal Affairs loves to talk about: one-stop shopping. Well, I can't think of a better example of one-stop shopping than allowing every southern Albertan and every Calgarian who wants to be able to corner an elected member to be able to go to one building, and if he can't talk to somebody, at least there's a place he can leave his petition; there's a place he can leave his letter.

We'd be able to do that in McDougall Centre if this government were simply prepared to make provision, much as they have in the public facilities in the city of Edmonton. I don't think Calgarians deserve any less. You know, we happen to have only three opposition MLAs in the city of Calgary, but I can assure the Premier that we're hearing calls from those other 17 constituencies in Calgary. I don't say this for some partisan advantage; I just say that if you're an MLA for the city of Calgary, it means you hear from other Calgarians who don't live in your constituency. Why don't we make it easier for them to be able to use their MLAs?

Now, turning to FIGA, Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, just a couple of thoughts there. I think my colleague for Redwater made the point much earlier that we have a very large Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs department. I think it's the largest in the country. I'm told that we have something like 74 people working in that office. Ontario only has 60, which I find astonishing. B.C. only has 15. The opposition, of course, isn't able to force the government to reduce the size of their office, much as we might like to see that, so I'm going to go to the Premier and say: you've got this large number of people; I have higher expectations. I think we should be leading the country in a host of other areas. I think when it comes to federal/provincial negotiations and other issues, Alberta should be way out front if

we've got that many people and that much research capability, but in some respects we're not.

I'm going to suggest to the hon. Premier that there are other concerns. As important as foreign trade is, as important as dismantling trade barriers within the country is, as important as the energy policy is and the way we handle resource revenue – those things are all very important to Albertans – Albertans also have other concerns.

Mr. Premier, we still don't access civil legal aid. You know, this is the only province in Canada that has not participated in the Canada assistance plan to allow Albertans that want help in getting a divorce when they can't afford it to be able to access federal money. Now, I have looked back at old estimates debates, and this was raised by my predecessor from Calgary-Buffalo, and it's been raised, I think, by people before him. Why don't we access this? Now, I've asked the hon. Minister of Justice in past estimates debates, and the response – I hope I'm not being unfair to the minister when I say this – was: well, we're still trying to negotiate terms with the federal government. Well, you know, as year after year after year goes by, we're leaving well over a million dollars on the table that we could use so that women in this province that have no money and are trying to get out of abusive relationships can get a divorce and get out of it.

You know, Manitoba was the other last province to access the CAP funding for civil legal aid. I've talked to the director of the Manitoba Legal Aid Society, and I said: so how painful was it to be able to join the federal program? They have a system very similar to ours, or had at that point, and really it meant three or four changes on the application form. I guess what I'm able to infer is that for some reason in this province, in Alberta, we're so darn stubborn, that because we won't make a few changes on a legal aid application form, we leave this pot of money on the table. Well, Albertans have contributed to that pot of money in the Canada assistance plan, and I'm I think somewhat frustrated, Mr. Premier, that we're not accessing it when we see all kinds of cuts in legal aid, and that translates into cuts in terms of access. I'll just back up and say that this has a huge impact on women. You know, when we have two-thirds of women and children after divorce living in poverty, that's a problem, and it's got to be dealt with.

4:20

Let me move on and talk about some other areas where we're not getting good value, Mr. Premier, for those 74 people we've got working in FIGA. What I'm talking about is this whole business of looking at reforming the Young Offenders Act. You know, there are all kinds of working groups looking at amending that federal statute, yet it seems for the most part that our participation as a province to the debate is resolutions, private members' motions, something in this House. I would think that we would be away out in front. With the size of FIGA, that kind of infrastructure, I'd expect we'd have papers, we'd have presentations, we would have four volumes in the Legislature Library of ways that Albertans want to see our young offender system reformed. Well, it doesn't exist, Mr. Chairman. It's not there.

We've got a national crime prevention council. Well, what kind of a role is this province playing in terms of trying to influence the direction of that council? There's a family law committee, Mr. Premier, that was created in June of 1990, and what's it dealing with? It's dealing with the fact of child support. We've got lots of problems with the way child support is fixed, with the way it's collected. Well, this thing has been going on and on and on. I've seen the reports. We've got a May 1992 report from the family law committee. I understand – and I'm

told by people in other governments, Mr. Premier – that there is all kinds of research work going on.

I would think that part of FIGA's responsibility is to make sure that when it participates in these federal task forces and federal reviews, it's somewhat reflective of what the concerns are, what the wishes are of Albertans. The best way you do that is you make some of that material available. Instead of simply hiring law professors to do a research project and funnel that down to Ottawa to another federal/provincial task force, I think it should be shared with us. I think we should table it in the House. We should put it in the Legislature Library. We should make it available to Albertans in a more general sense. That's not happening now.

You know, child support I think is probably as important as any other issue in this Legislature. Mr. Premier, I think child support is as important as trade with the Orient. I think the question of child support is as important as anything else we do. It seems to me that we should be focusing a heck of a lot more energy and resources to trying to sort that out. We still have a situation with tax treatment. We still have a situation where the custodial parent is paying tax on support payments that come from the noncustodial parent. But you know what happens is that some judges consider the tax treatment fully; some judges don't. So what we end up with is a patchwork kind of treatment that means that we don't have a uniform application of the tax treatment of child support payments. This is an area, Mr. Premier, where we could see real leadership from those 74 people working in the FIGA office, and I haven't seen it. Maybe it's going on, but if it is, it's invisible to the rest of us in this province.

Private adoptions, Mr. Premier. Why aren't we in this province sponsoring and doing everything we can to ensure that there's a national adoption registry? It's a great way to avoid some of the nonsense we've seen in some of the recent abuse of private adoptions, and some of our 74 people in FIGA in this province could be spearheading the move for that kind of an adoption registry. Well, that initiative isn't coming from this province. I don't know why. We're seen as an adoption haven to lawyers in California and Texas and other places. I would think that this province should be leading the way in that respect.

Anyway, thanks very much.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Labour.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A few brief comments. I'd first like to inform the Premier and applaud him for the initiatives that have been taken on in a number of different areas by Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I would make reference first to considerable work that was done not too many months ago in discussions as the NAFTA agreement was being finalized. A lot of people possibly were not aware, even though there was information in the media on this, that there were some interesting side agreements that had to be drawn up. I'm thinking specifically of those related to labour and also to the environment. Had it not been for some extensive, in-depth work that was done by officials at FIGA to inform us of some of the possible pitfalls that could develop if the Alberta position wasn't made clearly known, we might not be in as advantageous a position as we are today as related to what has developed with the NAFTA side agreements.

It was interesting to note that as we took part in those with the then minister on the federal side who was responsible, it was really only the province of Quebec that seemed to really identify with the Alberta issues related to labour, in that labour issues are indeed a provincial jurisdiction. If we hadn't made that point very clearly and gone into some detail, which I won't belabour people with today, with the federal minister and our provincial counter-

parts, there may have been some lost ground in terms of really being able to point out, especially to the Americans, that in Canada labour is a provincial jurisdiction. To allow for an agreement which would cause our particular standards to be compromised would have been a sad situation for Alberta, so I thank the Premier and his officials at FIGA for the preparatory work and the briefing which enabled us, certainly here in Alberta and in other provinces, to address these and get a real commitment from the federal minister at the time, who then relayed the message on that these are areas of provincial jurisdiction and would continue to be so.

It's also worthy to note the work that's being done and needs to continue to be done in terms of the interprovincial trade barriers and the task force that is set up there. Again, there are issues that if not properly identified and carefully handled will get away from us, and we could find ourselves clearly in a disadvantaged position. We need to encourage the good work that's being done there so that ministers and others who need to be involved in these discussions are brought up to date on it and can clearly focus, whether it's labour issues or environment issues or whatever it might be.

4:30

We need to use the vehicles that are available to us from the government and for the government to make some points known to the federal government on issues that are near and dear to Albertans. The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo talked about the fact of: are we making known the wishes of Albertans? I wonder if he's comfortable with the majority wishes of Albertans on a number of issues, issues that most Liberals squirm under when the vast majority of Albertans bring them to the fore, issues like immigration. We need to have compatible legislation or regulation, whatever it might be, a compatible facility with our federal counterparts in areas of immigration, along the same lines as Quebec has had for some period of time. We know that we talked about this a lot during the constitutional debates. We know that had we seen a yes vote, we would have achieved these in the area of immigration and looking at immigration policy as would be most advantageous to Alberta and also to immigrants who are looking to Alberta, who have heard that Alberta is a wonderful place to live and do business and raise families and everything else, but we need to be able to have a greater say in our own destiny.

It's been pointed out to us recently that the percentage of immigration now that involves business immigration or investment immigration is only about 2.4 percent of all the immigration that in fact happens. I would suggest that as we look to continued diversification of the Alberta economy, that level has to be raised. So I would ask the Premier, through the officials and through his abilities at FIGA, to continue to press Ottawa on this, that there's no reason Alberta cannot enjoy the same types of immigration negotiating positions as Quebec has. We would advocate for Quebec that they should be able to have those, but we need to see some equality. If other provinces aren't interested in that, that's up to them, but certainly in Alberta we're concerned about that. I know that's an issue that the Liberals are sometimes uncomfortable with.

Also, as related to the Young Offenders Act, to the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo, I can assure you that there are many Albertans, in fact the majority of Albertans, who recognize that there need to be changes in the Young Offenders Act. We hear about it on a daily basis. The member opposite has said that nothing has ever been brought forward on this. I would beg to differ on that particular one and would send him material showing in a fairly detailed way what the deficiencies are in the Act and

which need to be addressed. I know that we're doing this through the Minister of Justice, and that's to be commended. I would like to also see that we apply the abilities that we have through FIGA to communicate with our federal counterparts that this is an area Albertans feel very strongly about and want to see some movement in.

Similarly, even though the Provincial Treasurer is involved in areas of taxation that fall under federal jurisdiction, let's also use the good offices of FIGA to advance the cause and concern that the approach to taxation that the Liberals in Ottawa seem to be taking, which in fairness has been taken by other federal governments, tends to be a little more on the complicated side than we'd like to see in Alberta. Albertans are strongly expressing concerns about a more flattened tax regime, and we need to look at that. We need to use all of the resources available, not just through Treasury but again through FIGA, to impress these things upon the minds in Ottawa so that we achieve for Albertans what they'd like to see achieved.

I know that those officials at FIGA are being very vigilant about the approach to our energy industry in terms of our concerns and our worries about taxation there and things coming at us, for instance, in the guise of a carbon tax disguised as something other than a taxation on our natural resources. We know that in the past, for instance, it's been a concern that the Liberals have stood by while this has happened. We know that the present provincial leader of the Liberal Party was involved in drafting the original national energy program and stood by while that was put into place at extreme financial difficulty to Alberta.

MR. MITCHELL: Stockwell, that's a lie. And where was Ralph? You know, Ralph was a Liberal at that time.

MR. DAY: I can see that that's getting an embarrassed reaction from the Liberals across the way, but it is a fact. We need to really continue to be vigilant on this. We have to be careful of ways, Mr. Chairman, that the federal government can use to come in a back door, as it were, in terms of taxation. For instance, where are the provincial Liberals when an entire industry is now being taxed in a very unique and a kind of sneaky way by Ottawa? An example of that is those members of our working entrepreneurial community who have been able to have certain tax advantages when they work in foreign countries, that now being eyed as a target in a defective Liberal approach to continued and increased taxation. Isn't it interesting when we ask ourselves the question: what industries are most impacted by these new regulations and new taxation policies on those who are working in other countries? Well, what industry has more people working in the foreign field, possibly, than anything else? The oil and gas industry. And what province has more workers involved in oil and gas than any other province? Alberta. So whose workers are being hit with the greatest impact by this continued Liberal approach to wiggle and sniggle in more taxes? It's Alberta that's being hit again.

I think of a neighbour of mine who works for 28 days straight in the frozen wasteland of Siberia. He's away from his family for 28 days at a time, and I as a citizen of Alberta do not at all begrudge the fact that he used to enjoy some tax advantage by that incredible sacrifice of time away from his family. What happens? The Liberals spy that. They realize that it's Alberta that's going to be mainly affected, so let's slap them down. Let's get out a new tax and just nail these workers who are working 28 days at a time in 40 and 50 degrees below zero, away from their families, away from their communities. And they hit them. Where are the provincial Liberals on this? Again, the same way they were on

the national energy program, silently and quietly passing on congratulations to their Liberal counterparts in Ottawa.

These are the types of areas that we need to be vigilant about, Mr. Chairman, and I would encourage the officials at FIGA to continue to alert us. Don't let up the analysis there as we look for these creeping taxations coming from the Liberals in Ottawa. We need to be protecting Alberta citizens on this, and in speaking for Albertans we will actually be speaking for all Canadians, because it is actually all Canadians who are affected by the federal Liberal approach to increasing taxes. Unfortunately, in this particular case with oil and gas, it's unfairly being dumped upon Albertans.

I am very pleased, as are Albertans that I meet with constantly and some as recently as Saturday, in terms of the Premier's initiatives in Asia. I was just at a meeting on Saturday with local business representatives from the central Alberta area who want to do some follow-up on the visit and appreciate the doors that have been opened and the information that we can get to them. There's no question that the little dragon, so-called, on the Asia Pacific Rim – those are exciting opportunities that we need to follow up with, and I hope we will continue to do that in spite of Liberal opposition not to expand opportunities for Albertans. I hope that FIGA will not back off and that our government would not be intimidated but will continue to explore these great opportunities.

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

With those, let's not fail to look at the opportunities in eastern Europe. It was encouraging to see, in the Speech from the Throne and in other areas, that in fact we're not going to. It is, I realize, a highly volatile area, but I continue to be a strong believer in the corollary that it is always economic freedom that brings other types of freedoms, political freedom and social freedom. In working and doing what we can in encouraging our business community to be investing and working with eastern Europe, what are we doing? We're bringing increased opportunities for financial freedom to our friends in eastern Europe. I'm thinking especially of the Ukraine right now, where we have that wonderful historical base right here in Alberta. We need to continue to look at these opportunities, bringing financial gains to Albertans, financial freedoms to those in eastern Europe, and financial freedoms always lead to political and social freedoms. So I would hope we would continue, with diligence, looking at what there is in terms of eastern Europe.

That concludes my overview and general comments. Again, congratulations to the Premier, to officials at FIGA for the good work that they're doing in continuing to expand the Alberta advantage.

4:40

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, may I introduce a motion that I didn't have ready during my speech?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Premier was up. I wonder, Redwater, whether he could respond first, before we have to respond in terms of the amendment.

MR. N. TAYLOR: It's just the distribution I have to make.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure. Okay. While the proposed amendments are being circulated, the Premier is invited to make his comments.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the advice offered by the hon. member across the way. Some of his advice

is good advice from time to time. I've made note and we will discuss these things.

I look forward to his amendment as well, but I'm wondering if the hon. member would also include in his amendment, in anticipation of receiving it, that the Liberal Party's communication budget also be reduced to \$1. I have to remind the Liberal opposition that they received a substantial increase in their own budget, including \$50,000 to obtain office space in the city of Calgary. So perhaps someone might want to consider that amendment, as well, as we consider the hon. member's amendment.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member mentioned a John Doesberg, I believe it is. This is déjà vu all over again, as they say. It seems to me you asked that same question last year.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Yeah. That's why I . . .

MR. KLEIN: Well, right. But all I can tell you – I can provide you with the same answer as I provided you with last year. There is no John Doesberg employed in FIGA or any other area, and no one by that name has any kind of a contract with the government. I don't know where this name keeps cropping up, this John Doesberg.

MR. DAY: I wonder if they need more research dollars.

MR. KLEIN: Perhaps they do.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Redwater, you have a . . .

MR. N. TAYLOR: I think we all use the same researcher as the Member for Red Deer-North does. I don't know what I'm talking about then.

MR. KLEIN: The hon. member also talked about cost recoveries relative to FIGA. This indeed does occur. For instance, a good example would be the Western Premiers' Conference at Canmore, where rather than having the province host completely the function, the Premiers and other members of the delegation paid for their own lunches and certainly paid for their own accommodation. So there was indeed some cost recovery, and I think as time goes on you will see other jurisdictions doing the same. I believe at the next Western Premiers' Conference in Gimli, Manitoba, again everyone will be required to pay their own way, and the hosting responsibility won't be the responsibility solely of the hosting province.

Mr. Chairman, just while it's fresh in my mind, the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo raised what I thought was a good point. This was the point of the constituent coming to him and offering to contact the government relative to electronic access, I guess, to various statutes and regulations. I'm pleased to report that as of February 1 the Public Affairs Bureau through the Queen's Printer is entering now into licensing agreements with the private sector to sell electronic versions of Alberta's various statutes and regulations. So what the hon. member suggests is actually now under way as I speak. I'm very pleased that he brought this to our attention and that we were able to respond in a very, very positive manner.

Mr. Chairman, there were some other questions – basically they were comments, really, from my hon. friend across the way. There was some comment as to the size of FIGA, and I think that deserves an answer. You have to look at how various jurisdictions

address matters of federal and intergovernmental affairs. In many cases these responsibilities are divided amongst a number of ministers. In Alberta it's a consolidated function. But when you look at it overall, it's really hard to compare FIGA's budget with other jurisdictions because not all these departments perform the same functions. I would like to point out, relative to one area in particular, that in some jurisdictions the protocol function, for instance, is not within the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. While there was some complaint that we have too many people in FIGA, I would like to point out, relative to protocol alone, that our protocol office has five employees, Ontario has nine, British Columbia has eight, Saskatchewan has four, and Quebec has 16. So you can see that various jurisdictions operate in different ways relative to FIGA.

The hon. member also talked about various initiatives that we should be undertaking. He alluded, I believe, to the Young Offenders Act and some other functions. Well, these actually do take place. As you know, Mr. Chairman, there are ministerial conferences: the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment; the labour ministers meet, and the justice ministers meet on a continuing basis. Every time there is a meeting of that nature, people specifically trained and with expertise in that particular ministry are assigned to attend those meetings and to make sure that Alberta's interests are advanced as the ministers meet to discuss such things as the Young Offenders Act, job retraining, and reducing the amount of overlap and duplication.

So these things are indeed taking place. I'm very proud of our ministers, of the leadership role they have developed, along with the assistance of people from FIGA, in advancing issues of a national nature that of course are very specific to Alberta's needs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Can we just hold it for a moment? We're having a hurried consultation here with regard to the proposed motion.

Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: You have the motion, but it had a couple of typos or mistakes. It shouldn't be an amendment; it's a motion. It's to reduce it by \$753,998 to \$1, not \$753,999, because that was the total of the budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Well, we'll do the question when it gets to be about 5:20 p.m., if I may, or whenever you wish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair is unable to set deadlines as to when questions might be entertained. It may be that the question never gets asked, even at 5:29 p.m. We want to make sure that the motion that the hon. Member for Redwater is proposing reads the same at your hands as it does at the Table. So, hon. member, if we could just go over this for a moment.

4:50

MR. N. TAYLOR: All right then, Mr. Chairman. This is a standard motion of displeasure by any opposition in a parliamentary system, where you vote that you reduce the Premier's salary to a dollar or the minister's salary to a dollar. I'm moving

that the Communications Planning budget under Vote 4.0.2 . . . be reduced . . . to \$1.

That's to show our displeasure with even having one there at all. Naturally, if they're at all awake over there, it won't pass. If it did pass, it would be the first time. It happens about as often as a star in the east, but we could try it. So I'm not cutting into the

debating time of my partners, if they're ready for the question, I'm ready for the question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question has been called. Are you ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion as proposed by the hon. Member for Redwater, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Defeated. Call in the members.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:52 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Beniuk	Dickson	Mitchell
Bracko	Germain	Sekulic
Carlson	Henry	Soetaert
Collingwood	Hewes	Taylor, N.
Decore	Leibovici	Zwozdesky

Against the motion:

Amery	Gordon	McClellan
Black	Haley	McFarland
Brassard	Havelock	Mirosh
Burgener	Herard	Oberg
Calahasen	Hierath	Pham
Cardinal	Hlady	Renner
Clegg	Jacques	Rostad
Day	Jonson	Smith
Doerksen	Klein	Sohal
Dunford	Kowalski	Taylor, L.
Evans	Laing	Thurber
Fischer	Lund	Trynchy
Forsyth	Magnus	Woloshyn
Friedel	Mar	

Totals: For - 15 Against - 41

[Motion lost]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Government House Leader, you had a question?

**Point of Order
Admissibility of Amendment**

MR. DAY: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The Government House Leader has a point of order.

MR. DAY: I seek your guidance and the guidance of the Table officers. I apologize; I've developed a bad habit, and the habit is

that having become so used to Liberal amendments being totally without substance, I will confess before the Assembly today that there are many times when I don't look at them very closely. You just get used to them being without any basis in fact and substance. It appears to me that this particular request on the amendment was not signed. So for future reference, can we know and be advised whether such an amendment – I realize the member would be embarrassed about putting his name to it; I understand that. I'm asking for a ruling on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's a good point. The original was signed, and then we made a suggestion for a change. That's what came around to you, would be my understanding.

MR. DAY: All I can see is that the one that was circulated to us was in fact not signed. The glacierlike speed with which the members tried to jerk three of them up to their feet caught us off guard. We didn't even think it would come to a standing vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. Government House Leader. I think the advice is taken into consideration by anyone who may wish to propose further such motions. The House has decided the fate of this motion. Whether it was as properly crafted as it ought to have been, the original to us was signed.

I'll now call on Sherwood Park.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that ruling on the point of order that the hon. Government House Leader jerked to his feet to deal with.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: He staggered.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Yes, maybe he did stagger to his feet actually, Mr. Chairman.

The point is well taken. Perhaps he could have first asked if it had been signed before he started laying accusations, but that wouldn't fit within the proper approach, the way that the Government House Leader chooses.

Debate Continued

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Mr. Chairman, the points that I'd like to deal with in the estimates of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs relate to four issues, and I'll just deal with them very quickly, questions to the Premier. The Premier may recall that last year in estimates debate on Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs we did talk about the Premier's trip to Asia and the activities the Premier was undertaking on behalf of Albertans on that trip and the potential outcomes. I'm very pleased to see that the Premier has today tabled in the Assembly his report on the excursion to the Asian countries, looking for business opportunities for the province. I think it's important, and I'm very comfortable in congratulating the Premier for his office, for the FIGA office, providing to this Assembly, providing to us and to Albertans a copy of the report on what transpired on his trip to Asia, what successes he had, and where future opportunities lie.

The question we had asked in the last debate on estimates in this area revolved around whether or not we in fact could see a copy of the itinerary before the trip and the criteria that had been developed prior to the trip as opposed to what had come out of it after the trip. I suppose I might just ask the Premier if in fact there was a report or a document prepared by Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs on what the trip intended to accomplish. In other words, I'm talking about a document before the trip took

place: what the itinerary was and what the potential outcomes were from a report prior to as opposed to the report after.

I have not, Mr. Chairman, had an opportunity to read the report in detail, and although it does set out exactly what activities were undertaken in each of the countries that the Premier did attend to, it strikes me that much of what is in the report is what I would call forward looking. It talks about potential opportunities that exist, in many, many cases words like: potential for further investment, potential for further business opportunities, interest in Alberta, interest in joint ventures.

Maybe the way I can frame this question to the Premier is that while we read through the report – and again, as I say, it is in just a cursory fashion – we see talk about activities that are being undertaken by businesses themselves, by government leaders in those other countries. What I'm asking the Premier, I guess, is this: what specifically in the report is a direct consequence of the Premier's attendance in those countries? I know sometimes that's kind of hard to get a handle on, but the report is very broad in that perspective. What I'm asking, then, is: can the Premier tell us what direct benefits to Alberta took place because he was there, not the potential for future investment, not the potential for joint ventures but what direct benefits accrued to Alberta because of his presence? That's what I'm looking for from the report. We're looking for that and what the direct consequence was.

5:10

We've now had a matter of a few months that have transpired since the Premier's trip. I know that sometimes it's important that you strike while the iron is hot, so while I look at what direct benefits accrued at the time – in other words, when the Premier was traveling through Asia is the first part of what I'm looking for. The second part of what I'm looking for is: what exactly, what specifically is happening now as a result of some of the potential opportunities that presented themselves on the trip? Have we been able to solidify, have we been able to complete any of those potentials for opportunities in Alberta? Could the Premier then tell us if we were able to in fact strike while the iron was hot and complete or conclude business opportunities, whether they were joint ventures, direct investment, and so on?

In dealing with the report, Mr. Chairman, I want to suggest to the Premier that while it may be difficult to provide to us some of the direct benefits, this kind of report would be very helpful to Albertans if it could be provided in this kind of form or perhaps in a more detailed form from each of our trade offices. This is the kind of thing that we're looking for, that Albertans are looking for not just from the Premier's visit but from every trade office that is operating on our behalf, looking for business opportunities to Alberta. We need to have the kind of information this report provides as to who they're meeting with and what opportunities are being looked at, providing to us on a yearly basis exactly the kinds of activities and operations that are being undertaken. From that – and I'll leave this with the Premier – I think it's possible that we then go to a cost/benefit analysis on the operation of those trade offices, much as the city of Calgary is doing now. I think it's possible, I think it's something that we should do, and I think it will help to substantiate and justify the operation of those particular offices.

I want to just briefly touch on the business immigration program. I recall that the hon. Government House Leader also did mention this. The business immigration program is something I think we need to work on and we need to work on quickly. There are problems for us in that area. We are not leaders in this area. We've had some problems in Hong Kong and other places. I think it would be fair to say that we've got a bad reputation.

We need to polish that reputation. We need to improve our activities in the business immigration program.

Very quickly, Mr. Chairman, to the Premier. I think the Premier's recent tour of eastern Canada was also to some extent intent on looking for new business opportunities for Alberta from that part of Canada. I'm wondering if he might tell us whether the same kind of report on his activities there and perhaps who the direct benefits of his tour of eastern Canada looking for business opportunities for Alberta could also be provided to us in a report.

Mr. Chairman, the Premier will recall that I had the distinct pleasure of participating in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region conference last year. In looking through the FIGA business plan, I acknowledge that there is a statement made that the goal of FIGA is to "promote interprovincial and western regional cooperation." In part of that, the "effective use of intergovernmental mechanisms," the goal is to "clearly identify Alberta objectives." Following up from that conference, one of the things that Alberta needs to look at is the value-added component of timber because of the situation that occurs in the United States. This has become a very, very important issue, as the Premier well knows, for Alberta. Perhaps he could tell us what specifically our objectives are as we go to the next conference, which we are hosting, for the members of the Pacific economic region.

My last point, Mr. Chairman, so that the Premier does have an opportunity to respond. As the Premier well knows, we are in thick in the fight for Edmonton hosting the North American free trade agreement Environmental Secretariat. As far as we know, the decision hasn't been made yet. I know the Premier has been fighting on behalf of Alberta, and I just want to comment that I hope he continues to do so so that we have every advantage we can take to have that NAFTA Environmental Secretariat come to Edmonton.

With that, Mr. Chairman, those are my comments. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Relative to the first question, with respect to the itinerary, indeed there was a very detailed, probably the most detailed itinerary ever prepared presented to the media and to the Alberta public. It clearly set out what we intended to achieve during our trip to Asia and clearly outlined the places we would go and the people we would be meeting with. I think that is really the tone and the style of this government: to get as much information as we possibly can out there so the public knows full well that this isn't simply a junket or a frivolous trip, that indeed this would be a focused, well-thought-out, well-prepared, and a very, very busy, I might say, 21 days.

Indeed there was follow-up. We participated with many private-sector companies in Asia and spoke on their behalf. A good example would be in Hong Kong, where I spoke to a group of about 15 or 20 investors. These investors, Mr. Chairman, in the previous year had invested \$900 million in Alberta. They wanted to hear that we were still on a program of fiscal responsibility, that we were indeed going to balance our budget, that we were going to maintain a very competitive tax regime. On the basis of that, we were given some assurances that those investors who had invested previously would continue to invest in our province and contribute to our economic growth and prosperity.

In addition, we identified opportunities for Alberta businesses in various Asian countries. We have written and FIGA has been following up through phone calls and letters to companies that may very well bid on these projects. A good example is PCL.

PCL has a very good chance, Mr. Chairman, of winning the contract for the stock exchange in Shanghai. This, of course, will generate into dollars and jobs right back here at home.

So indeed this kind of follow-up is taking place. Certainly I'd be glad to provide a report. I believe it's now being prepared by FIGA relative to our trip to central Canada, where again we talked to investor groups and the business community about what we like to refer to as the Alberta advantage.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question's been called. Are you ready? Edmonton-McClung.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yeah. Speaking of questions, we have a few yet to ask, and I'd like to begin by raising with the Premier the question of bond interest rates for Newfoundland and how it was that he came to the conclusion that Newfoundland should be given some form of an interest rate break on the heritage savings trust fund's debenture with that province, one. Two . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, we're not looking at the estimates of the heritage savings trust fund. We're on Executive Council and Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

MR. MITCHELL: We're looking at the budget of the Premier's office, and I would like to know what portion of his budget was applied to the research, to the intelligence that went into finding out why it is that we should reduce interest to Newfoundland. I would assume, Mr. Chairman, that the minister responsible for intergovernmental affairs would have had a great deal to say about how we treat other provinces, one of which of course is Newfoundland, and I would say that reducing the interest rate on a debenture with Newfoundland is a way of treating Newfoundland one way or another. Having established that position, could the Premier please tell us exactly what set of criteria would distinguish Newfoundland from Nova Scotia? Of course now Nova Scotia is pursuing the same concessions.

Given that the motivation clearly expressed in this House by the Premier for this initiative was a sense of concern about the financial problems encountered by the residents of Newfoundland, I wonder whether he could indicate how he would differentiate between a resident of Newfoundland who under financial duress has to pay interest on a heritage savings trust fund debenture and a resident of Alberta who under duress is not getting an increase on an Alberta capital bond that that resident in Alberta might be carrying and holding on behalf of this province.

5:20

I would say, Mr. Chairman, for a Premier to take a public position to make this kind of offering to a province like Newfoundland is a very, very significant initiative, and he should be able to explain to the Legislature exactly how he came to that conclusion, how much of his budget was spent on determining that that was a good idea, what criteria he has established under his budget for making that kind of decision, and how it is that he is explaining it to residents of Alberta who have similar financial duress but don't seem to be getting the same kind of concessions that he's willing to make for people, Canadians albeit, all the way across the country.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, I have been working with a constituent who has encountered a profound problem in receiving maintenance payments from a former spouse who now lives in

British Columbia. This, I believe, is an intergovernmental affairs issue that has not been handled adequately. It takes just seemingly endless amounts of time for B.C. to respond to requests to garnishee, to track down spouses. It's my constituent who has to find out where her ex-spouse is, who goes through a great deal of cumbersome red tape and simply does not find British Columbia to be particularly responsive to this problem. This, of course, can cost Alberta money in some cases, I'm certain – not in this case because my constituent works outside the home and makes an income as well – because we pay social assistance to women by and large whose spouses have left and gone to B.C., from which we achieve and receive very, very little responsiveness. I would ask that the Premier in his capacity as minister of intergovernmental affairs pursue that issue with the province of British Columbia.

I am interested in the Premier's insights into the federal initiative to disband the department of Indian and northern affairs. Specifically, how will that affect his responsibilities under Executive Council with respect to the Northern Alberta Development Council. More generally, how does he as Premier see the issue of native self-government, and what impact will this federal initiative have upon his provincial government?

Anticipated events in Quebec. I wonder whether the Premier could indicate to the Legislature how he views the circumstances in Quebec, what kinds of initiatives or preparation he is undertaking now to confront whatever it is that could occur there. Will there be a need or a possibility for Alberta to assist in the debate that could surround a referendum in Quebec? I'm just interested in finding out what he would have to say about that.

As others have asked, I also would like to have an update on the kind of progress the Premier's department is making with respect to interprovincial trade. I notice in the business plan that one of the goals is to "eliminate internal barriers to trade" by 1995. That's a pretty ambitious and significant undertaking. If it were accomplished, it would be outstanding. I wonder whether he could list exactly which barriers he is proposing to do away with and indicate which of those would constitute success by 1995.

I'm specifically interested in a couple of the business plan initiatives. I say this almost tongue in cheek, and I'm sure that this department wishes it had a chance to rewrite this: the number one performance measure seems to be the "satisfaction of Premier and Cabinet with quality of FIGA's analysis and development of policy options." I wonder whether the Premier would indicate to us exactly how that will be assessed. Will he filling out a questionnaire on his degree of satisfaction?

Another performance measure will be the number of new federal/provincial arrangements created, but we don't see any specific measure to ensure the quality of these agreements or somehow to measure what their magnitude and significance are. I wonder whether the Premier could comment on that.

The business plan promises on page 15 that the department will operate a number of protocol events on "a cost recovery basis."

How does the department plan to do this? Will they begin charging admission for foreign dignitaries to visit Alberta?

The business plan also states that there will be an evaluation process by the Premier and by FIGA and by FIGA's other clients to provide feedback to the department. I wonder whether we could see the results of these surveys so that we, too, could evaluate the performance of the department against these performance measurements.

I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that we rise and report on this department's estimates.

Thank you.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Highwood.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of Executive Council and the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

I wish to table copies of all the motions considered by the Committee of Supply on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. All in favour of the report?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, if any?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Carried.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Assembly do adjourn and reconvene at 8 o'clock tonight in Committee of the Whole.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: You heard the motion by the Government House Leader. All in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, if any? Carried.

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