

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Wednesday, April 20, 1994** 1:30 p.m.

Date: 94/04/20

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

As Canadians and as Albertans we give thanks for the precious gifts of freedom and peace which we enjoy.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we rededicate ourselves to the valued traditions of parliamentary democracy as a means of serving our province and our country.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Calgary Sandy Moreland, one of the mothers of a child attending the Alberta Children's hospital, presented me with a petition signed by 5,600 people asking that the Alberta Children's hospital be left intact where it is. I wish to file the petition.

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

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition signed by Albertans who are very, very concerned that this government not

alter the level of support for all benefits for Alberta's seniors [at least] until seniors have been consulted and have agreed to any revisions.

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce a petition to the Assembly urging the government to maintain full funding for kindergarten and to make sure that every child in Alberta [has] the opportunity to receive 400 hours of . . . instruction, without placing undue financial stress on the families of Alberta.

DR. PERCY: I beg leave to introduce a petition that urges the Government not to alter the level of support for all benefits for Alberta's seniors until seniors have been [fully] consulted and have agreed to any revisions.

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

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce two petitions. The first is a petition begging the Legislative Assembly

to urge the Government not to alter the level of support for . . . seniors until [all] seniors have been consulted and have agreed to any revisions.

The second is a similar petition signed by petitioners in Slave Lake.

Thank you very much.

head: **Reading and Receiving Petitions**

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, may I request that the petition I presented on the 29th of March regarding seniors' lodges be now read and received.

CLERK:

We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government not to alter funding arrangements for Alberta's Seniors Lodges and Seniors Subsidized Apartments until Seniors have

been consulted and have agreed to any revisions to funding arrangements.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give notice that following question period today pursuant to Standing Order 40 I'll seek unanimous consent of this Assembly to move the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta urge the government of Canada to [immediately] significantly strengthen the Young Offenders Act to allow judges sentencing youths at either the youth or adult court level to impose lengthier sentences [where appropriate] and to allow, where warranted, a more expeditious transfer of young offenders to adult court.

MR. RENNER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give notice that before Public Bills and Orders Other than Government Bills and Orders are called, I will seek the unanimous consent of the Assembly for the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Assembly waive Standing Order 8(3) in order to now allow the Committee of the Whole Assembly to give consideration to Private Bills 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, and 15.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

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

### Bill 27 Rural Gas Act

MS HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 27, the Rural Gas Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill updates legislation that has been in place for many years and has overseen the successful extension of natural gas service throughout rural Alberta. The Bill puts in place provisions to handle urban annexations of areas served by rural gas co-operatives in a fair and equitable manner. It also eliminates outdated requirements affecting rural gas co-ops. Supporting this government's deregulatory objectives, Bill 27 is the result of extensive consultation with rural gas co-ops and their federation, the natural gas utility companies, and others such as the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association.

[Leave granted; Bill 27 read a first time]

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 27, being the Rural Gas Act, be moved onto the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

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

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table today 505 coupons from residents all over the province of Alberta. They're titled "Don't cut education, Ralph. Protect it!" They also say: Ralph, take our kid's future off your hit list.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to note that of the 500 that I'm presenting . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Enough introduction.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table with the Assembly copies of the 88th annual report of the Alberta Department of Education.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to introduce to you and through you 64 students from the city of Fort Saskatchewan Win Ferguson school. Win Ferguson was a lady who contributed significantly to education. They're accompanied by two teachers and seven parents: teachers Mrs. Pat Sprague, Sandra Godue, and parents Patricia Galloway, Bob Stepchuk, Moanne and Guy Buchta, Margaret Lavrentiadis, Pat Jabusch, and Michael Delay. I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House. They're seated in the public gallery.

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

MR. STELMACH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to introduce to you and through you to Members of this Legislative Assembly 59 students from Lamont elementary school. They are accompanied today by teacher Miss Molly Tymchak, vice-principal Mr. Clarence Kitura, parents Mr. Melvin Starko, Mrs. Kathy Starko, and Mr. John Helton, who is our fire chief in Lamont as well, and bused here by the very famous Mr. John Danyluk from Lamont. Would you please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today it's my pleasure to introduce to the Assembly and to you a constituent of mine: Mr. Don Cheeseman. Mr. Cheeseman is in the communications industry, and he's managed projects nationally and internationally. For many years Don has championed the manufacture and use of special telephones for the deaf across Canada. He has consulted successfully in the fields of education and manufacturing throughout the years with CIDA and for various organizations in Japan, Korea, Zambia, Europe, Australia, and United States. It is very fitting that Mr. Cheeseman visits us today during Volunteer Week, because in addition to all of his professional duties Mr. Cheeseman for the last 14 years has been a director of the Alberta Easter Seal Ability Council. He is here today celebrating 35 years of service to the community while employed with AGT. I would ask Mr. Cheeseman to rise and urge the Assembly to give him the warm welcome that he deserves.

1:40

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Little Bow.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly today Anne and Francis Hanson from Enchant, Alberta. Anne and Francis are an active community couple and a business couple from a small community near the central part of our constituency. This is their first time in the Legislature Building and their first opportunity to take in question period. Would they please rise and receive the traditional welcome of this Assembly.

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

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly three parents who have come to observe the debate today. These are parents who are very committed to their children's education, and they're very interested in the debate that's going on in the Legislature about the future of our education system. They're in the public gallery. If I could ask Rhonda

Ouimet, Mona Luth, and Sandra Moore to rise, I would ask the Assembly to give them the traditional warm welcome.

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

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly the very competent staff of the Edmonton-Mill Woods constituency office: Linda Jeffels and Pat Edmonds. With your permission – they're in the members' gallery – I would ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly three guests from Thunder Bay, Ontario. Neil Maunula, who is owner of his own company, Shuniah Forest Products Limited, is a gentleman that I went to elementary school with many, many years ago. He's accompanied today by his wife, Erna, and their daughter Krystal, who someday wants to be Prime Minister of Canada. If they would stand in the public gallery and receive the warm welcome of the House.

head: **Oral Question Period**  
**Children's Hospital**

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, by now more than 30,000 Albertans, mostly in southern Alberta, have signed petitions supporting the continued operation of the Alberta Children's hospital. The cost of closing and relocating the Alberta Children's hospital has now been determined, has been I think better defined in terms of dollars and cents. A consultant's report says that it would cost as much as \$193 million to duplicate the Alberta Children's hospital at the Foothills site. Mr. Premier, what's the sense in spending up to \$193 million to relocate a hospital that already exists and functions well?

MR. KLEIN: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I take strong exception to the leader asserting or at least trying to imply that these decisions have indeed been made. They have not been made. As a matter of fact, as the hon. leader of the Liberal Party was familiarizing himself with the Children's hospital and the General in Calgary, the hon. minister was meeting with the chairmen and the administrators of all the hospitals in Calgary. The agreement coming out of that meeting – and this is the only thing that has been decided, to my knowledge – is that, number one, there would be one board for Calgary, one CEO and one management board, that there would be four working groups formed, as I understand it, to look at the form and structure of the new single administration and the medical staff, and a working group would be established on how the Children's hospital might fit into programs at Foothills hospital, and working groups on the responsibilities of the new Calgary community health care centre, which is now the Bow Valley centre, the General hospital, and a working group on the future of the Holy Cross hospital as a long-term care centre. Those are the only decisions that have been made, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, will the Premier agree to stop the anguish, anguish amongst doctors and nurses and technical people and mothers and fathers that are leaving the hospital daily and getting petitions signed to leave this hospital as it is? Will you do that?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, if there is anyone who knows the need for rationalization of health care, it is the hon. Leader of the Liberal opposition.

MRS. SOETAERT: Answer the question.

MR. KLEIN: I am answering the question. The answer is that there is a process, an ongoing process to achieve that rationalization and to achieve within the Calgary hospital system, the Edmonton hospital system, and the hospital systems throughout this province new and better and more effective ways of delivering services, delivering services at less cost but at the same time maintaining a high level and a high quality of service.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, will you tell Albertans that this isn't part of some Machiavellian scheme on your part to get people all riled up and then walk in like a hero and look like you're saving the Alberta Children's hospital? Will you say that? [interjections]

MR. KLEIN: All I can say to Albertans . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair is also interested in hearing the answer to the question.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, all I can say to Albertans is that that is probably the silliest assertion that I've ever heard. I've heard some very silly assertions from the opposition, but that one takes the cake.

Mr. Speaker, if you want to talk about Machiavellian attitudes, then I would throw it right back to the hon. leader of the Liberal Party, who said on May 21, 1993, in the *Edmonton Journal*: let me make it clear; the government could save tens of millions of dollars by shutting down hospitals; let me make that clear.

MR. DECORE: I guess it means, Mr. Premier, that the anguish continues.

#### Calgary Trauma Centre

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Hyndman report calls for the closure of one of Calgary's inner-city hospitals, the General, and the relocation of shock trauma to one of the suburban hospitals in Calgary. If you look at the traffic patterns and you look at the incidence of shock trauma in Calgary, the trauma centre at the General makes good health sense. Doctors in Calgary say that if the trauma centre is shut down in the centre of the city, lives will be at risk. Lives will be at risk. Mr. Premier, tell us how you're going to solve this problem when Calgarians will be at greater risk if the trauma centre is moved into the suburbs.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, all of these recommendations and these solutions have been not brought about by government. These solutions, these recommendations, these thoughts, and these ideas are the result of the people directly involved in delivering health care services in the city of Calgary getting together and doing the planning. These are the recommendations of the people in Calgary who are closest to the situation. They are not our recommendations.

1:50

MR. DECORE: It's as foolish as saying that bureaucrats made us do . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, what sense is there in moving a trauma centre that because of its central location handles 75 percent of the most seriously injured people in the Calgary area? What sense?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, again, that decision has not been made. It's only been made in his mind. I don't know where he gets this information that that decision has been made. Certainly I sit in caucus, this caucus anyway, and I know the decisions that have been made, and I can assure you that that decision has not been made, and it hasn't been made by Executive Council. So the only one out there falsely leading people to believe that these decisions have been made is the hon. leader of the Liberal opposition, the same person who only a year ago was running around the province saying: let's close hospitals.

MR. DECORE: Is the Premier prepared to put people at risk in Calgary by forcing ambulances to take trauma patients a greater distance to a suburban hospital? Doctors say that there is that risk, Mr. Premier. Yes or no?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, what this government is intent on doing is doing what is right based on what the health caregivers in the city of Calgary tell us is best for them.

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

#### Hospital Services in Calgary

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Health department's own business plan says that Albertans can get by with 2.4 hospital beds for every 1,000 people. The four Calgary hospital closures being threatened by this Premier will leave Calgary with fewer beds even than that objective. My first question is to the Premier. How can the Premier even begin to justify cutting Calgarians closer to the bone than his own business plan calls for?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to have the hon. minister supplement. I can only repeat: this is all part of a planning process that is now taking place. Let it sort itself out. The people who are directly involved, the closest to the situation will ultimately be the people who will come up with recommendations as to what is right for the city of Calgary, certainly not the Liberals.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify for the hon. member – and I really did think that after four hours of committee and some more time in the House that he understood this – that 2.4 beds per thousand is a provincial average. It is a goal. I think the hon. member if he were being thoughtful would realize that that will vary considerably. In fact, Edmonton may have a higher or a lower number, Calgary may have, Drumheller may have, and Medicine Hat may have, and the reason is because they have different programs. Calgary offers different programs in high tertiary than perhaps Edmonton does or other areas. So if the hon. member would put it in his mind that 2.4 is a provincial average goal consistent with a national average goal, I think it would help this conversation.

MR. MITCHELL: Could the Minister of Health please tell us how the average works when in her constituency there are 10.2 beds per thousand and in Calgary they will be left with 2.1 beds per thousand? How does that average work?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd be delighted to further enlighten that urban group. First of all, there is no place,

nowhere in my constituency that you're within six minutes of a tertiary care centre. The hospitals there are 65 miles apart for the most part. That's an average in my constituency. The other thing is that the urban statistics that are used are different than they are in the rural, and they have used rated beds, which is available beds not open beds. Now, that was clarified for hon. members. Obviously, if you are 65 miles from an institution, you may have to be detained, whereas if you're six minutes from the closest one, you may be able to go home and come back.

MR. MITCHELL: Let's talk national averages. Let's talk national averages. Why is it that when the Premier finishes closing four Calgary hospitals, Calgary's bed ratio will be lower than any other provincial bed ratio in the country?

MR. KLEIN: Well, first of all, that simply is not true, and secondly, I can guarantee the hon. member that the Premier will not be going down to Calgary to say: you're closed, you're closed, you're closed, and you're closed. No, the Premier won't be saying that. I know that this gentlemen over here is down there saying that, and that is astounding coming from the man who only three months ago sent an open letter to Albertans saying: our health care system is more expensive than it needs to be and more expensive than we can afford, and these costs must be reduced through rationalization and regionalization and finding more effective and new and better ways of doing things.

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

#### Young Offenders Act

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has become very clear to myself and many Albertans that the federal Young Offenders Act is simply not effective in dealing with serious youth crime. I am not speaking here about the kid who steals a candy bar or breaks a window. What is disturbing to me is how it fails to adequately deal with those who commit acts of extreme violence or who are chronic offenders. My question is to the Minister of Justice. What has the Alberta government done to strengthen a law which to many young offenders is simply a joke?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt that the Young Offenders Act has become the lightning rod for crime and violence that's happening in our society, especially by youth. This Act came into place in 1984. It's nothing to crow about, but Alberta was one of the last to even agree to the Act because at that time we thought there was an imbalance between the two objectives, which are protection of the rights of the youth and the protection of the rights of society.

I think society has evolved in those 10 years such that perhaps we were right and there is an imbalance, more pronounced now than it was then. That's why my predecessor has and I have in the last month talked with the federal minister about doing a complete review of the Act, to get all the input from all the stakeholders, the largest stakeholder being the public, from the experts and even from the youth, as to what they think a young offender Act should do and from that develop either a brand-new Act or make substantive changes to the Act we have and not try to piecemeal fix, because when we do fix in one place, another problem pops up at another. That is our initiative, and I do think that with the federal minister we have in place now, the Hon. Allan Rock, that procedure will commence shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Young Offenders Act seems to be weighted in favour of the offender. What changes would you make to correct this?

2:00

MR. ROSTAD: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the Act is under federal jurisdiction, but from the Alberta perspective we can do as attorneys general from across Canada are doing: coming to the table with responses from their experiences and responses that they're hearing to try and effect some changes. But, as I said, in the last meeting in Ottawa I think the consensus, although I'm sure the federal minister will be bringing forth some amendments, was that what needs to be done is that we have to back up, look at the entire Act, and come forward with some substantive changes. I think that's what will be coming.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you. Will the minister consider imposing tougher sentences on first-time offenders and scrapping the alternative measures program?

MR. ROSTAD: Well, Mr. Speaker, the sentences that are imposed are done by the independent constitutional body being the judiciary, and we have no influence as to what sentence would be meted out other than how we prosecute a case on the facts of the case. However, in the Act, also, there are provisions for alternative measures. Alternative measures are used where the police in consultation with the Crown determine that the offence the young offender has committed and admit that they've committed is such that if that person were taken outside of the judicial system and given community work or assistance – youth justice committees do quite often administer these alternative measures – the young offender then does not have a record and is helped through peers or community groups to come back into society and not repeat. In fact, 96 to 98 percent of the young offenders that go through the alternative measures do not re-enter the system at all.

I think that is a positive adjunct to the Act. Although there is some frustration that the sentences aren't high, I think the debate that's going on, and I think an informed debate, not just a reactive debate, can send signals to the judiciary and certainly to the legislators that changes should be made or at least a thorough analysis should be made of the Act because there is a serious problem.

#### Rural Hospitals

MR. GERMAIN: Mr. Speaker, the Premier tells us today that no decisions have been made on hospital closures and to let the planning process unravel. Well, in rural Alberta, Mr. Premier, they know that they can't march 15,000 strong to keep their hospital; they can't get 30,000 signatures to keep their hospital. Yet they know . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

The hon. member.

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you. Yet they know in rural Alberta that as sure as a crocus follows spring, hospital cuts are coming. My question is to the Minister of Health this afternoon. Madam Minister, are there secretive reports even now in the works like the Hyndman and the Atkinson studies dealing with rural hospital closures?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Absolutely not.

MR. GERMAIN: Would the minister agree that her budgetary goals in health cannot be met without hospital closures?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring this discussion to something that is a bit more, I think, productive and useful. That is why we are changing the roles of many of our institutions in this province, changing the roles, and that is really what's being discussed, not closures.

If hon. members have the opportunity to read a letter from Dr. Tyrrell that's in the *Journal*, I think a very respected member of the medical community, he lays it out very succinctly, a number of the medical changes that have occurred that require us . . .

MR. HENRY: How much did that cost you out of your research budget?

MRS. McCLELLAN: That is an insulting thing to say, sir, and I think you should retract it.

The reason for changing roles, Mr. Speaker, is because of changing technologies, and these are positive. These are positive to people's health. Today you do not have to stay in an acute care facility for days for procedures that very short years ago, even months ago you did. This is positive. The changes in acute care, downsizing, are positive. The changes to community care and people being able to access treatment in their homes near their families are positive. If the hon. members want to use in a political way positive advances in medical technology, in which Alberta can take a great deal of pride through our research, I feel very sorry for them, because this is an exciting time in health.

MR. GERMAIN: What's the final day, Madam Minister, by which you must have hospital closures to make your budget targets this year?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows – and he should, because he represents an area that has been very progressive in changing roles, despite those attitudes. He might want to refer to a news release that was given by Fort McMurray on some changes there.

Regional health authorities will be in place in this province, announced on June 1, and they will do the decision-making as to the roles of the facilities in their areas. Certainly there is nothing in my budget that suggests openings or closures or any date thereof for either of the two.

MR. KLEIN: I'd like to supplement just for a moment, Mr. Speaker. I'm somewhat surprised at the hon. member's great concern for hospitals in rural areas, because it seems to me that it was the leader of the Liberal Party who said that we should be closing down these hospitals in rinky-dinky little . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjection] Order.  
The hon. Member for Three Hills-Airdrie.

### Job Creation

MS HALEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier indicated in last year's election campaign that this government would create 110,000 new jobs over a four-year period of time. Could the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism please explain how we will reach this goal if we have, as the media states, rising unemployment?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, first of all, we do not have rising unemployment in the province of Alberta. All members will recall about a month ago there were a few questions raised in the Legislative Assembly about labour force statistics on a month-to-month basis that were provided by Stats Canada. The most recent statistics are now out for March 1994, and they show the following. In March 1994 there were 1,274,000 people employed in the province of Alberta. One year ago at this same time there were 1,232,000 people employed. In other words, there have been 42,000 new jobs created in the province of Alberta over the past 12 months.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, on this very point, the number of unemployed has reduced itself pretty dramatically over the last 12 months in the province of Alberta, with 14,000 fewer people unemployed today than there were a year ago. Accordingly our unemployment rate has decreased itself rather dramatically from 10.1 percent to 8.9 percent in March of 1994. This government will only be happy when every citizen in the province of Alberta is employed and will only be happy when in fact we've met the commitment, the Premier's commitment for 110,000 new jobs in Alberta. To this point in time we've added 42,000, and we're on the way.

MS HALEY: Could the minister of economic development alleviate the concerns of Alberta women with regard to job creation on a full-time versus part-time basis?

MR. KOWALSKI: These statistics again are also rather impressive in terms of what's happened with respect to full-time female employment in the province of Alberta. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, there has been a move in the right direction in this regard as well. In March of 1994 there were 407,100 women employed full-time in the province of Alberta. As a percentage of the total number of people in the work force, Alberta has the highest percentage of female participation. That's the result really, I think, of the changes in the Alberta economy. As well, the number of part-time women has increased. So there's good progress being made in terms of employment opportunities for women in the province of Alberta.

### 2:10

MS HALEY: My final supplemental is to the Deputy Premier. What initiatives will the government take to create the jobs that Albertans are striving to get?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, the most important thing that we can do is follow through on the plan outlined by the Premier of the province of Alberta in terms of our fiscal responsibility in balancing the budget. What is very, very clear is that if we look back over the last number of months, in essence several things are very important. We've had 42,000 new jobs created in the province of Alberta. Investment in the province of Alberta in 1993 on a per capita basis was \$6,135. That's the highest level of investment in Canada. It's some 35 percent above the national average, and we consistently rank ahead in that regard. As well, if people are employed and if they have the lowest taxes in the country, that means they have the highest disposable income. If we lead the country in terms of investment, that allows Albertans again to have the highest retail involvement per capita, and we're 15 percent above the national average in terms of what people in this province spend in small business. So you get a momentum being built that is very progressive, is very aggressive.

I think the Premier should be very proud and all members of this Assembly should be proud, regardless of what the Liberals

say, who are the depressive kind of people who want to go with doom and gloom. We're encouraged, Mr. Speaker.

**Tolko Industries Ltd.**

MR. N. TAYLOR: Back to the Deputy Premier. I hate to go back to the same fertilizer pit, but I'll try it. Although there are concerns about the adequacy of timber supply, many people welcome Tolko Industries' proposal to build an oriented strand-board mill in High Prairie and the 240 mill and woodland jobs they'll create. There are plans, Mr. Speaker, to contract with the Metis and maybe Indian bands for the timber, but these people need jobs just as much as a market for the trees. Now, does the government have a written commitment requiring Tolko to hire a certain proportion of their staff from the aboriginal people in the area? [some applause]

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, again I have no idea why the thumping goes on in one corner of the Liberal Party. Obviously they've forgotten the question and the answer. I've already responded to that question in this Legislature. It is in *Hansard*. I've done it publicly here. I'm sorry some of them were asleep at the time. The answer to the question one more time is yes. Again, yes, yes, yes. I'll say it four times so they don't have to come back and repeat it again. Two million bucks a year for research, and they ask the question repetitively.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to spend some of the money so he could learn English.

The fact of the matter is that you've got a promise that they would hire. I'm talking about a written contract. If there is a written contract, will you file it in this Legislature?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the news conference that was held with Tolko Industries was held in High Prairie, Alberta. All of the media were invited. In fact even the Liberals were invited. Some of them received personal invitations from me to come and hear firsthand. What they would have heard are statements by the president of Tolko Industries on this subject matter. They would have heard representatives from all of the native communities in the area, thanking and applauding the progressive aspects taken with respect to this. This is an arrangement among the native bands in the area and Tolko Industries.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, all I want him to do is file the written agreement in the Legislature.

By the way, I was invited, but it was delivered by the Department of Health. It came in a day late.

Will he not only file that agreement, Mr. Speaker, but will the Deputy Premier tell us what programs he has in place to train the aboriginal people so they can take jobs in this area?

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm going to ask my colleague the Minister of Family and Social Services to supplement this answer, because no one is more empathetic to the needs of native people in this province, Mr. Speaker. No one has worked harder to ensure job opportunities than himself and the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, both of whom are natives.

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

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course, our whole plan with my department – and part of it

involves aboriginal affairs – is to move forward and make sure we provide every opportunity for aboriginal people to become self-sufficient and independent again. In the past one year alone in my department we have moved 11,000 individuals off welfare into training programs. I don't like it when the opposition members come into the House to try and use it as a political advantage. Just recently in *Hansard* they said that we dumped the students, and I'm not proud of that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Little Bow.

**McGregor Reservoir**

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Go get 'em, tiger.

MR. McFARLAND: I'll do a grass survey.

Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Environmental Protection. Nearly every lake south of Calgary is an artificial, man-made irrigation reservoir that benefits and was originally designed and built for irrigation users downstream. I understand that this summer there'll be some reconstructive rehabilitative work done on the north McGregor dam. I would like the minister to explain to this Assembly the extent of the work that will be proceeded with, I understand, this summer.

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

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed there will be quite a substantial amount of work done on the McGregor dam this summer. The dam was actually built between 1909 and 1917, and as a result of that, there's a need for some maintenance work both on the existing slope protection and as well on some problems of seepage in the west arm of the dam. What we are going to be doing during the summer is reducing the lake level by about 15 feet. That's necessary to be able to do this rehabilitative work. That is about two feet lower than the last time the dam was lowered, back in 1977, and we are very conscious, of course, of maintaining the activities that occur around and about the dam. It was built for irrigation purposes in the first place, and we are concerned that there not be any adverse effects on the environment in that area. We've done a number of studies on that. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Spruce Grove . . .

MRS. SOETAERT: It wasn't me.

MS LEIBOVICI: It was me. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Well, then Edmonton . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Point of order.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I know that the hon. Member for Little Bow is concerned about his communities around and about McGregor reservoir. In particular, Milo and Lamond are going to have to examine their water supply and their intake to ensure that water levels are sufficient to meet their needs, but I think that can be done.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister indicate what steps are being taken with the private irrigators who are licensed to withdraw water from the shoreline of McGregor reservoir as the summer approaches and the water is required during the growing season?

MR. EVANS: There, again, Mr. Speaker, we did a water balance study on the area to ensure that the needs of the irrigation farmers as well as the recreation users, as well as the industrial use from TransAlta in that area are all going to be met. We have had focus groups with them, and they are aware of the repairs. They are onside with the need to do the repairs. I'm confident in working with the Bow River irrigation district that they will continue to monitor the levels and that we will have a successful project which will raise the lake levels as we continue through the review and the repair process.

2:20

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. McFARLAND: Right. Will the minister be able to indicate to this Assembly if the domestic water supply for the village of Milo will be put behind the importance of the fish habitat?

MR. EVANS: That is a very good question. That's what being comprehensive in the way that we deal with our natural resources is all about. That's why we have a Department of Environmental Protection. We have to look at the local needs as well as the needs of those who use the reservoir for recreation purposes and for commercial fishing purposes. We feel that we are involving all of the stakeholders, through news releases, through focus groups, and that we have found a balance, hon. member, so that the needs of those who are using the fish resource in the reservoir will not impair the needs of the water users directly and vice versa, that the water users will not have a negative impact on the people who are using the dam both for recreation fishing and for commercial fishing.

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

### Tire Disposal

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the Minister of Environmental Protection continues to fiddle with the Tire Recycling Management Board another 10,000 tires are burning out of control. The irony is that the tire fire this time is in the town of Trochu, Alberta, and that was the town that was given the hollow promise of a tire recycling industry. While tires burn in dumps in Alberta, Albertans are getting nothing for the tire tax that they continue to pay. My first question to the Premier: how many more tire fires have to occur before the Premier puts some heat on the minister to do something about tire recycling in this province?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the tire board has been set up. It's an industry-run board in accordance with government policy to really make those who cause the problem be responsible for the problem. Relative to the so-called tire fire in Trochu, I'm not aware of the fire. Perhaps the hon. minister can supplement as to what caused that fire and whether it had anything to do with the program.

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

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member opposite has addressed specifically the reason why we have set up a Tire Recycling Management Board and why we are taking this issue so seriously in the province of Alberta. We have between 6 million and 7 million tires that are landfilled around this province, and we are generating about 2 million tires as used tires, adding to that number each and every year. That's why we have set up the Tire Recycling Management Board: to give us high end recycling, to deal with the cottage industry that's developed in this province, to do research, development, to use tires in the processing, as we have with the tire derived fuel at Inland Cement in this city and as well with the Lafarge plant that is now approved.

I met today, this morning, Mr. Speaker, with the Tire Recycling Management Board in Red Deer at one of their meetings to discuss these issues and to come forward as quickly as possible with comprehensive solutions. The hon. member opposite who made a snide comment about who is on this board – I want to describe for the people of Alberta the representation on this board. This board is made up of people from the rural and improvement districts of Alberta. It is made up of people from the Western Canadian Tire Dealers and Retreaders Association, from the Alberta . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. [interjections] Order please. Hon. minister, perhaps it can be supplemented further at the supplementaries.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Environmental Protection: will the minister fire the Tire Recycling Management Board and replace it with some people who can take action and who support small business?

MR. EVANS: We have membership, Mr. Speaker, from far and wide in this province: the Alberta environmental network represented on this board, the Recycling Council of Alberta represented on this board. What we talked about this morning was the need for tangibles, and the board said to me: you know, we have got to move quickly on this, because people in this province are not understanding the complexity of dealing with this situation. Notwithstanding that they represent small municipalities, large municipalities, the environmental community in this province, the board has not been able to get their message out. I'm glad to have this opportunity to again confirm how dedicated they are to getting this message out and dealing with this problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I suppose in geologic time we are moving quickly.

My final supplemental to the Minister of Environmental Protection: will the Tire Recycling Management Board use some of the \$10 million that's sitting there doing nothing to get the tires out of the landfills and to tire recyclers?

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, we have an agreement in Edmonton with Inland Cement to deal with 625,000 passenger tires. We have a contract with Alberta Environmental Rubber Products in Edmonton for high-end recycling, 600,000 passenger tire equivalents. We have the process ongoing to sign an agreement in southern Alberta with Lafarge for at least 800,000 passenger tire equivalents. We have a cottage industry in this province dealing with small quantities of these wastes. This is under control, hon.

member. Less than 20 percent of the tires that are generated in this province are not covered by existing or ongoing contractual negotiations for disposal of tires. We are not satisfied with that either. The board is working to make sure that that's 100 percent and that in turn we enter into agreements to deal with the accumulated tires that are . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That's enough.  
The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

#### Advanced Education Access

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development. I understand that the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfers has recently produced a report on their project to determine the number of duplicate student applications that exist in the postsecondary education system. We have an access problem in this province. My question to the minister is: is this report helpful in determining the number of qualified students not getting into our postsecondary education system?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, all members of this Assembly are interested in knowing the actual numbers of qualified students who are not obtaining access to our postsecondary education system. Even the Liberals are interested in that, but when they do their calculations, they count up every application that was ever made in the province at every institution, and they call that the total number of students that don't get access to our institutions. That's typical Liberal research. Many students do, in fact, submit more than one application to various institutions, and for the past two years the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfers has been conducting a duplicate application detection project to determine the actual number of applications in our system. The project is highly beneficial, and institutions find the information of identifying the extent of duplicate applications within the system very useful.

2:30

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the report, what is the level of students that are filling out and entering more than one application to the public postsecondary education system?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, that's the very thing that the committee is trying to do. I won't take much time to explain that, but I should tell you that in 1993 there were 101,643 applications reported. Approximately 4,350 were duplicate applications within one institution. That left a total of 97,288 applications that were actually bona fide to be processed. It was determined that 65,740 of those applications were single applications and were in fact bona fide applications for one program, but 13,449 applications were seen to have generated numerous applications in addition to them. In other words, some students put in three or four to make a total of 31,000 applications out of 13,000.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplemental question to the minister is: with all these numbers and data that you've received, is this report going to help the minister deter-

mine what the actual waiting list to access postsecondary education is, not the artificial one?

MR. ADY: Well, I assume that by "artificial" he means the number that the hon. Leader of the Opposition uses so often when he is stumping around the province.

It's clear that all institutions have some common applications with other institutions. On average, about 32 percent of each institution's applicant pool is duplicated elsewhere. So, Mr. Speaker, duplication of applications is the thing that is leading us astray in determining this number. This ranged from a high of 85 percent in one institution's applicant pool duplicated elsewhere to as low as 9 and a half percent. This kind of information is useful to us. The data will help with our cohort study of university transfer program students and hopefully build on progress to make and improve application processing within our system. When I have the final report from the committee, I look forward to tabling it in the House.

#### Point of Order Anticipation

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on my earlier point of order, and in doing so I'd also like to register another point of order, which I'll proceed with after this one.

I rise in the first case under *Beauchesne* 409(12) with respect to a question asked earlier by the Member for Little Bow of the minister responsible for the environment. It was clearly, Mr. Speaker, a case of anticipation, because the heritage savings trust fund, capital projects division, is up for debate tonight. That's been clearly scheduled. We know it is. We don't deny that this is a very, very important issue. Of course it is. Irrigation and water projects in Alberta are very important to all Albertans, to agricultural Albertans in particular, but the fact is that we are trying to adhere to that question of anticipation when something has clearly been scheduled for debate later in the day. I think there would be no question but that this particular incident would fall into that category.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, with respect to the question of anticipation in regard to estimates under the Alberta heritage savings trust fund, the Chair, before making a final ruling on this, would like to review the situation as to the authorities in this regard, because the Chair is of the view that traditions that have developed and have been reported in *Beauchesne* and also in our own Standing Orders are based on the thoughts of main estimates.

Hon. members will realize that under the heritage fund's estimates, there are estimates concerning programs under many departments of government, and I suppose the Chair believes there could be estimates relating to health, also education under these estimates. So the Chair is of the present view that the Chair can't be as restrictive on anticipation under matters arising under the heritage fund as it has to be under main estimates, where it's quite clear that it's a single department. Otherwise, question period could be severely restricted during the times that the heritage fund estimates are reviewed. That's the view now, but the Chair would like to spend a little more time on this before making a definitive ruling on anticipation.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that you revert to introductions. I have a group ready to leave.



MR. SPEAKER: Well, because of the time frame, would the Assembly agree to reverting?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

head: **Introduction of Guests**  
(*reversion*)

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly 35 students from St. Augustine elementary school. They're in the public gallery today, and they're accompanied by their teacher Charles Stuart as well as three parents: Mrs. Marian Kowalchuk, Mrs. Nancy Omoe, and Mr. Ken Johnstone. If they would please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**Point of Order**  
**Brevity**

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

MR. MITCHELL: I have a second point of order. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise under *Beauchesne* 410(7), which refers to brevity in both questions and answers. I'm sure you're as concerned as every member of the House that again today we had relatively fewer questions than we would have had on better days. We certainly are trying to streamline our questions.

The fact is that I would like to make two observations today. On at least one occasion it was clear that there was a prepared question by a private member of the Conservative caucus eliciting an obviously anticipated answer by the minister. That answer appeared to have been read and overly lengthy. Secondly, we're noticing a trend . . .

DR. L. TAYLOR: Oh, and you don't prepare your questions.

MR. MITCHELL: We would expect that he wouldn't have to read an answer.

We are noticing a trend to supplemental answers. Many of us are aware that often we are only able to get half an answer from the Premier, but it's becoming a disturbing trend that he continuously has to ask for supplemental answers, and that of course is eating up time for all members of the House who have legitimate questions to ask of this government.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite continues to be annoyingly selective in his non points of order. The fact of the matter is that *Hansard* will reveal, as the Blues . . . [interjection] You know this little yappy thing over here, she asked earlier if we noticed she was gone. We said no, but we sure know she's back.

Mr. Speaker, it's very selective. The Blues will show very clearly today that in fact supplementaries by members opposite still have preambles to them. As far as prepared questions, they can hardly look up to catch a breath from reading their scripts every single day. So I think they should ignore this sort of selective finger pointing, and all sides should work together to make this an effective question period under your guidance.

**2:40**

MR. SPEAKER: Well, the Chair is going to take this point of order as a complaint and urge all hon. members to get back to the

traditions of this Assembly. There is plenty of blame to spread around to both sides in the last week or so. The Chair would again remind hon. members of the place where they're sitting and standing when they're speaking, as they should be, not speaking while they're sitting. There's just too much of this on both sides of the Assembly.

The hon. Member for Fort McMurray had a point of order?

MR. GERMAIN: No.

head: **Motions under Standing Order 40**

MR. SPEAKER: Standing Order 40, an application on the basis of urgency. The hon. Government House Leader.

**Young Offenders Act**

MR. DAY: In terms of urgency, Mr. Speaker, there's no question that there's motivation for this, and I'm just amazed to see the Member for Edmonton-Centre making mockery of a very serious incident that has happened here, making a hanging motion, mocking what's going on. This is a very serious situation that we are faced with, and the urgency does revolve around the fact that a serious incident, as a matter of fact a fatal incident, happened right here in Edmonton, and the urgency is – there is emotion. Of course, there is. Sometimes people would say that because an incident like this has happened and therefore there is emotion, nothing should be done. We should wait for emotion to subside.

I disagree with that, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the family themselves are so overwhelmed with emotion and grief at this particular time that they don't know specifically where to turn or how to see this situation resolved. That's where we as legislators need to step in and recognize that when justice does not appear to be happening, two very dangerous trends begin to emerge. One is that people have a tendency then to take the law into their own hands. In casual conversations on the street and at social functions over the last two days I heard people saying that they were going to tell their families, everybody, to get handguns and put them in their house because the government refuses to do anything about people bursting into people's homes and in many cases killing them, let alone robbing them or beating them. That's what we're hearing from responsible citizens just at social functions, people talking. That's one of the urgent problems we're facing: people want to take the law into their own hands.

The second is that people who would have a tendency to break the law see no apparent sanctions, and therefore even with this very serious incident that has just happened, all the media reflect and citizens in general reflect that nothing is going to happen. So I believe that at this moment we have young people – and I'm not talking about minor first offences where we need a program or kids need a good talking to or something to sort of bring to attention the error of their ways. We're talking about serious offences of robbery, of people being beaten. We see this trend increasing even here in Edmonton and in other cities, where young people seem to have no fear whatsoever about breaking into homes, beating up older people and taking their possessions. This is something that is increasing, and because this incident has happened, Mr. Speaker, these two trends are at a very crucial danger point where people are either going to take the law into their own hands, or right now, even as we speak, to younger people who would be tending to move in this direction, this just confirms that nothing happens, nobody says anything, and the situation can go on.

So that is the issue of urgency, Mr. Speaker, that this message needs to be communicated to the federal government now to get

them to act now, not only to hopefully get some action but to send the message to society that we want to see these matters dealt with. It is a very urgent problem.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal caucus agrees that this issue is a matter of urgency and agrees that debate take place on the issue of the Young Offenders Act.

The Liberal caucus notes the anguish in Edmonton at this particular moment because of the horrible crime that just took place. We note the fear that exists in the minds of many Albertans, particularly in the Edmonton area at this time. We note the anger that is being expressed by Albertans. But we also note some of the outrageous, absurd comments that are being made even by people in positions of responsible office. It's important to deal with all of those issues, including the provincial government's responsibility in dealing with young people, the need for an education system at the earliest levels, a Head Start program, a childhood kindergarten program, programs for adults that don't allow adults to fear that they may have to go off and steal to keep their children going.

Mr. Speaker, we welcome the debate on this issue. This isn't simply an issue of lengthier sentences. This is a much bigger issue involving the provincial government. Let's get on with it.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the application for the presentation of this motion and the arguments made on the basis of urgency, all those in favour of it proceeding, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

Moved by Mr. Day:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta urge the government of Canada to significantly strengthen the Young Offenders Act to allow judges sentencing youths at either the youth or adult court level to impose lengthier sentences and to allow, where warranted, a more expeditious transfer of young offenders to adult court.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. As I've already indicated, I won't prolong this, though there may be others who want to speak. Certainly, that'll be their prerogative.

Mr. Speaker, again I need to mention the fact that I've been alarmed over the last couple of days at conversations that I've either heard directly or that I've overheard. People are frustrated, they're exasperated, and they feel that our legal system overall is not working. When an incident like this takes place, even though this is just dealing with young offenders, it reconfirms in the public's mind that the system has failed and it isn't working. We can sit here and look at our papers and look at the wonderful programs that we have and talk about the types of things that are in place to care for people and that we should have. But in fact it's not just justice being done; it is the appearance of justice being done that is absolutely critical to this issue and to where people are today.

We have to also recognize that simply making this adjustment to the Young Offenders Act, as we requested, doesn't solve all problems. We're not suggesting that it does, but it would very clearly send a signal that we as legislators here listen and that indeed we agree that in the area of violent crime and in the area of young offenders perpetrating these offences there has to be a message go out that it will not be tolerated. Yes, we love our

young people. Yes, we care for our young people. Yes, we will look at what we can do to make sure that young people who have gone astray can get onto the right path. But there has to be with that the very clear message: it will not be tolerated and severe sanctions will move quickly into place when these types of activities happen.

That's why I'm asking for that urgency, and that's why I would ask that we would vote and agree that this motion be sent to our federal counterparts.

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is not one amongst us in this Assembly who doesn't share the sense of loss recently suffered in Mill Woods. The tragedy that has beset that family is one that thankfully not too many of us have had to endure personally.

The extent of violence in our city, in our province, in our country is thankfully not out of control. The level of violent crime in this country is not to be tolerated, is not to be accepted, and is not to be ignored. But it doesn't do any good at all for decision-makers, politicians, to be adding fuel to the flames of a smouldering fire. What Albertans need so that they can feel safe is some certainty in their system of justice. They have to believe that when a crime is committed, the police will be in a position to respond, that the courts will be in a position to adjudicate fairly, and that the correctional system will be able to respond in a way that will be helpful and corrective.

2:50

Currently, Mr. Speaker, many Albertans don't have that faith in their system, and their anger manifests itself into calls for harsher penalties and rough justice. It is the responsibility, I believe, of legislators, of decision-makers, of lawmakers to respond to that outrage that Albertans feel but to do it in a responsible way, to let people know that there are alternatives, that there are other things that can be done, that should be done, that need to be done.

That starts with putting our resources into preventative programs, into interventions with at-risk youth and at-risk families so that we're not simply waiting for violence to happen, we're not simply standing by idle becoming worried and frightened and then reacting to crime, but instead we're taking a hard look at ourselves, at our society, at our relationships, at our institutions and making them more responsive to the needs of our families and our children, of putting resources to work where they'll pay off the highest dividends; and that is in preventing violence from happening in the first instance instead of just reacting to it once a tragedy has beset us.

Mr. Speaker, transfer to adult court was just made easier under the last round of amendments under the Young Offenders Act. Sentence length available to youth court judges and adult court judges for youths convicted of serious crime, violent crime, has just been extended. In fact, Alberta has the distinction, I believe, of transferring amongst the highest number of youths to ordinary court, to adult court. Alberta also has the distinction of having amongst the highest length of incarceration for sentenced young offenders in the country. It also has amongst the highest police charging rate of youth crime in the country. There are more young offenders on a proportionate level in secure custody in this province than in open custody and in a higher proportion than anywhere else in this country. We have the second highest rate of pretrial custody; in other words, young people simply accused of crime but not sentenced sitting in correctional institutions waiting to go to court.

Mr. Speaker, the Young Offenders Act is currently considered to be one of the most onerous documents and laws of its kind in the western world. It is a due process, rights and responsibility law, that is held out by many to be an overly onerous document, not one that is weak. The tragedy is that we haven't fully implemented it, and we haven't set up our other services and interventions to go along with it. We haven't gotten serious in our education system and in our social service system and in our mental health system in dealing with the needs of children and the needs of family before those needs get out of control and manifest themselves in a way that none of us are happy with.

Mr. Speaker, those people who believe the answer is to transfer more young offenders to adult court and then have those young offenders endure harsher and harsher sentences are often the same people that point their finger at the adult system and say, "That system isn't working either." It's an irony to me that people would think that one system that they think isn't working can be fixed by simply transferring the problem to another system that they have no faith in either.

What we have to do is take a look at our system of corrections and our system of laws and our judicial actions and make sure that they are consistent with the tenor of our times. They have to make sure that we have the programs in place so that we can deal with the problem when and where it begins, and that's in our homes, in our communities, in our schools. It doesn't make any sense to try to pass the buck. In fact, I'm quite dismayed at my colleagues on the other side of the House who feel that the best thing they can do is to try to shove this off onto the federal government and say it's their fault because it's a bad law. Mr. Speaker, nobody believes that an amendment to the Criminal Code or the Young Offenders Act is going to make our streets safer; nobody believes that.

What we have to do, Mr. Speaker, is pay attention to violence in the homes, to the attitudes that we bring to children, that we bring to women, to the respect that we must show to children and to parents, and to the supports that families and communities need. That's where changes need to be brought to bear. It is far too simplistic to pass this off as something to be dealt with with a law amendment at another level of government. It's about time that members of this Assembly accepted responsibility for what they can do to make our community safer.

Mr. Speaker, sentence length alone is not going to deter violent crime. Transferring to ordinary court alone is not going to deter violent crime. Pretending that it's somebody else's problem is not going to deter violent crime. When I hear members opposite talking about the abolition of alternative measures programs, when I hear members opposite talking about hanging 10-year-olds and 12-year-olds and then incarcerating their parents for the crimes of their children, I am shocked and dismayed and deeply disappointed in the simplistic, knee-jerk, and totally unacceptable level of response to this very serious, very complex, and very, very vexing problem.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wasn't going to get up and address this issue, but after hearing the Liberal pap from the other side, I just have to get up and address this issue. He talks about unacceptable; his views are the ones that are unacceptable. I for one am not afraid to stand here in this House and ask, request, the federal government to require tougher sentences. I'm not afraid, to use his term, to stand here and beg

the federal government for rougher justice, because that's what we need in this society.

It's quite apparent that rehabilitation is not working. These are repeat offenders we're talking about. Rehabilitation is not working. It's time to get back to a punishment model for some of these young offenders. For some reason in our society, in our prison system, in our Young Offenders Act punishment isn't seen as acceptable. Well, I see nothing wrong with punishment.

MR. HENRY: Hanging?

DR. L. TAYLOR: If necessary, yes. Once again it is typical of Liberals to blame society and call on society to cure the ills. It is time to call on parents and make parents responsible, to call on parents to take the responsibility for their children. Perhaps there should be some way to even charge parents and hold parents legally responsible for the actions of their children. We need to call on the federal government to investigate that possibility.

Repeat young offenders know the law. In fact, just the other day on CBC radio there was a policeman speaking, an expert on young offenders and the Young Offenders Act, and this is exactly what he said: repeat young offenders know the law, and they know that there are no serious consequences of them breaking the law. It's time to change that.

I call on all sensible thinking members opposite, if there are any, to join us in this motion and call on the Liberal federal government to change this law and bring some rough justice back into the Young Offenders Act.

#### **Point of Order Relevance**

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park is rising on a point of order.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: The motion says nothing about repeat young offenders, so we've gone off the debate on the motion. If we could stay to the motion.

**3:00**

#### **Debate Continued**

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

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the hon. House leader's motion from the other side, and I want to make a few comments in this regard. My comments stem largely from the feelings that were addressed to me by the bereaved husband and father and his family in this instance. In the words of Mr. Danelesko, in spite of the tremendous grief and tragedy and horror that he and all of us feel over this incident, he does not want to see this untimely and brutal death of his wife become a senseless one. Therefore, he has asked this House through me to do whatever we can to focus more attention on this issue, as I believe we are now doing, and also to do something about it insofar as our own powers and capabilities at the provincial level are concerned.

Some of those items I brought forward yesterday in question period on his behalf and on behalf of the larger community, Mr. Speaker, but there were a number of other things that formed part of our discussion which I would like at this point, since it is more appropriate, to share with you. Part of the things that I think we should be focusing on would deal with some early intervention strategies such as we might see available to neglected children, to

children who have problems managing their own anger, children who come from abusive situations. Clearly, we have that opportunity available through some of the many programs that exist or perhaps once did exist in the social services area. So there's a sincere request for a re-evaluation of those programs to take place.

Similarly, there's a strong urgency for the government to perhaps reconsider some of the effects of the municipal grants and more specifically some of the cutbacks that have occurred in the area of police grants and how they are being now applied. I spoke with the foot patrol officer, or what they call the turf patrol officer, in that area, and he certainly supports that view. No one is suggesting that cuts don't have to be made, but in this particular case safer neighbourhoods should be evaluated perhaps through a different microscope, and I would on behalf of everyone here request that that be done.

There is little that comes from closing down some of the group homes that try to wrestle with these early intervention problems, such as has been the case in the closure, I think, of the Strathmore group home. Neither, Mr. Speaker, is there anything to be gained from terminating some of the programs which have been already alluded to by previous speakers that might support young offenders and get them back into society to be meaningful contributors to our global good. I think earlier the Minister of Justice indicated that something like 98 percent of the programs for young offenders do in fact work, so what we're dealing with here is the need for a revamping perhaps of the 2 percent that don't and in particular a look at young offenders who are becoming repeat offenders, or what the police department would say, young offenders who have a list of priors. I would agree that there must be some way of handing out a stiffer penalty or a stiffer deterrence in those instances.

The other point I would make is that Mr. Danelesko in our discussions, as his family has also been, is very rational in spite of the tremendous frustration, anger, hurt, and pain that they and all of us feel. In requesting the government to do something on this, that rational approach still must be somehow maintained. I know that it's not going to be easy, and all members here know that it's not going to be easy, but we do need to look at this through the eyes of some rational, cool, calm approach. We need to look at some of the statistics that are available through the judiciary as well as through groups like Legal Aid Society of Alberta and see where it is that the problems in fact are occurring.

Let's take a good in-depth look at it. We know that in other provinces, Mr. Speaker, such as Manitoba and B.C., they have set up something like 60 and 35 I believe they're called community sentencing panels, which take the caseload off the provincial judges dealing with youth crime and allow the community to deal with some of the lesser serious crimes. There are a number of problems in the provincial courts as a result of this backlog, where provincial court judges dealing with young offenders are handling everything from parking tickets to speeding tickets to liquor infractions to trespassing and so on. I understand that those are also important transgressions of the law. However, I would think that if the models in other provinces are working, we should perhaps be adopting some of them here, and that way our youth court judges' time can be more appropriately applied to the much more serious matters.

It is again our responsibility as a provincial body to bring in programs, and this particular government has a responsibility for building the institutions, also for appointing those judges, as I said yesterday, and for running those programs and accounting for those programs back to us as to how they are or aren't working. Here we see an instance clearly where programs perhaps have failed. In fact, I can take "perhaps" out of that sentence, because

clearly in the example of the weekend in the murder of Barb Danelesko we know that the program hasn't worked. The community, as the family, as all of us here are wondering: what is a 14 or 15 or 16 year old doing out at that hour of the night? So we have a chance to impact this from many different levels. I would urge members to consider that in their deliberation as they're looking at this particular motion.

On behalf of the family I will remain rational and I will remain in support of any actions that can curtail further horrendous crimes like this taking place in this province, and I will be supporting this motion.

Thank you.

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

DR. WEST: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me first start by saying the sense of shame, almost fear or anxiety, that I feel as I start to talk about this, and also let me say that my heart goes out to this family. It's not that I feel directly responsible, but as a society and as a previous solicitor general of this province I have to ask: could I have done more? Could the people that were lobbying in Ottawa over the last couple of years to have the Young Offenders Act done more? And perhaps, just perhaps, could we have prevented this tragedy happening this time? With the present set of circumstances that we have in our criminal justice system, I'm not assured at all that this won't be happening again, even this afternoon as I talk.

We have abrogated as a society our responsibility to a complete generation of youth that are developing in this society. In 1984 we brought in the Young Offenders Act after a tremendous amount of deliberation and study on the Juvenile Delinquents Act. Indeed, there hadn't been major changes done to that Act for years. The work up to 1984 was done during a time when civil libertarians were beginning to evolve and socially engineer the social policy of Canada. In 1982 we had just brought in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms based on the purest of philosophy. I bring that point up, because the first crack that was seen in the abrogation of complete responsibility to a society was the Charter of Rights, because from that day on when you applied all legislation that previously had been formed, including the Young Offenders Act, to an absolute right of citizens under the Charter of Rights, all of those pieces of legislation fell short of their intent and thus the problems with the Young Offenders Act. It was built on great principles. Fairness, give the youth of this country a fair chance. Don't brand them for life by naming them. Bring them through the growth of their problems by counseling. Give them legal aid and a fair chance. Set up correctional institutions that would rehabilitate them, educate them, and give them counseling for their problems in society. But under the whole system thus came the problem.

**3:10**

I'm going to go back first before I get to that biggest problem. I go to the Member for Edmonton-Glenora, who said that the Young Offenders Act in essence was a good Act but that we have to go back to society, we have to go back to all of the problems we have, because the blame lies there.

Well, I came out of a different generation and not that long ago, and there are people here older than I am and many younger. There's one thing I was taught when I was brought up: there were consequences for your actions in a society. I soon understood that in the normal society as you grew up, you had a wide corridor that you could go down trying it, trying the trials and tribulations of life, but over there was the wall, the wall of

consequence, and if you went too far, you had a response immediately. That consequence for your actions started very young by discipline in your home, by bringing you up with the principles of what violence would bring, what stealing from your brothers and sisters or within the family would bring, what abusive language meant, how you acted in front of seniors, the fact that you never touched private property or other people's property without consequence, respect, the fact that education was a privilege, and it goes on and on. The fact of killing somebody or maiming them for their rest of their life was absolute. At that point in time there was still a death penalty. That was taught to us day in, day out in our schools, in our homes, in our churches, by our grandparents, by our peers, by the community.

I was raised under that, but in the meantime I was allowed to grow up. I was allowed to make mistakes. I was allowed to go close enough to that wall, and sometimes I hit it and I bounced back off it. I had parameters, because I knew that if I went any further in my weaknesses, the frailties of mankind and its growing up, I would be in a lot of trouble. I remember as solicitor general that I couldn't believe you could steal cars 10 times and go into the Young Offender Centre of Edmonton and come back out each time. When I was a child, touching a vehicle was grand theft, larceny. You didn't touch anybody's vehicle. That was taught to us. We never tested the wall. I wouldn't go and steal somebody's car. You'll say, "Well, maybe you were afraid of your father or afraid of this." Something in society told me that. And, yes, I didn't want the teachers to tell my parents that I'd been bad at school. I wasn't very afraid of the teachers, but I knew the consequence of my father, and I certainly didn't want the rest of my family to know some of the things that I was up to. So the peer group, the circle, justice, was fair enough too.

Well, now we're in 1984. During that period I was relating, the Juvenile Delinquents Act worked on many of those principles. But the civil libertarians and social engineers said: "We're going to make a pure society; we're further advanced than this draconian-style discipline, consequence for your actions." My gosh, they strapped people with a black strap in the class. Can you believe they would do that to a child? Corporal punishment, what a terrible thing. Consequence for your action? No, no. Find out where it's wrong someplace else.

In 1984 the hell starts. The generations of children that make their first mistake are not taught in the schools or any place else the consequence for their actions. Go first to the big house.

MRS. HEWES: Did you make any submission in 1984?

DR. WEST: Yes, and I'll get to that. I did to Ms Campbell, and she didn't take it either.

Go to the big house. "Oh, it's not so bad in there. You know, they gave me 10 days. I got out in three. The ink wasn't dry. The first time, well, the poor policeman, he stayed up all night writing up the reports, but he missed a technical detail that my lawyer from legal aid found and got me off. The second time I went in there the ink wasn't even dry as I entered, and I was out in three days. Now, it's the seventh time in. I've taken seven cars. I've been in break and enters six times."

#### Point of Order Relevance

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is rising on a point of order.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Rising on *Beauchesne* 459 and Standing Order 23(b). I know that the hon. minister has a great deal of experience and he has a great

deal to say about the issue, but I know that there are lots of other members who also have points they want to make that relate specifically to the motion before us. You'll appreciate we have a great deal of business to attend to. This could be a very long debate, and perhaps we should stick to the motion. I think the point of order is in order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair would say that the Chair been able to follow the relevance of the minister's remarks, because the motion concerns sentencing and treatment of people who are in breach of the Young Offenders Act.

The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

#### Debate Continued

DR. WEST: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I was trying to do is tell you some of the exactness of what's going on in our young offenders centres.

#### Point of Order Questioning a Member

MR. SPEAKER: Another point of order. The hon. Member for St. Albert.

MR. BRACKO: Yes, Mr. Speaker. *Beauchesne* 482. Would the member entertain a question? He's lost me.

DR. WEST: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BRACKO: Is the member in his comments speaking about himself, or is this someone else he's talking about?

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, a question like that in this Assembly on what I'm discussing is one of the most irresponsible uses of his time that I've ever seen.

#### Debate Continued

DR. WEST: I was getting back to when I as solicitor general looked inside some of the cases that were there and the length they'd been there and the largess of their performances, the stealing of cars and break and enters. Every report that I looked at after they had been there six or seven times – they learned the system very well. Pretty soon what was showing up was that they learned fast: I can blame society, my parents; I don't want to go back and live with them; they abused me. Every case had the same thing, and they learned that if they used the system well enough and accused somebody else, they would spend most of their time in all types of programs for young offenders. They wouldn't have to have any consequences for their actions, and very shortly they'd be out doing it again. They learned to manipulate the system so well because they hadn't met consequences for their actions the first time.

These young offenders should be identified quickly after they start repeating their problems. There should be incorrigible sentencing in these to put people away for a long time, because they're incorrigibles influencing other children. They should start at 16, and it should have no limit below. The parents should be directly involved right at the beginning, and the sentences should be hard and absolute and directed. And, yes, it should have more punishment than this bit about going in and re-educating them and all that, because they don't get the picture if you leave them in there six or seven times through six or seven crimes.

You know all the things that were said by the Member for Edmonton-Glenora about the Act being recently changed? Those are placebos done by a government that won't admit that what

they created is a monster. What we have in Ottawa – and it doesn't matter which political party it is. They will not address this, because they do not want the orchestrators of the Young Offenders Act and all the dangerous offenders Acts, the parole system and everything else, to admit that all that work through the '60s and '70s and the Charter of Rights was a mistake, that they applied principles against utopia and not a real society. The sooner we get in and disembowel this legislation once and for all and bring out some absolute measures that make consequences for the action, punishment, a reality back in the system, we can get on without abrogating our responsibility to these kids.

3:20

You know, it may be true that the mass of children out there are good. And that's true: there are a lot of tremendously good young people in our society. Tremendously good. They're raised by families that do know what I was just talking about. But the group that we keep rotating slowly start to affect more and more of our youth in our society, and the violent crimes become more hideous. In Edmonton and Calgary the police chiefs told me that if they could round up some 125 repeat offenders in both cities and put them away for a long period of time without parole, without letting them back through the swinging doors of the young offenders centre, they could control a lot of the problem, because they're the ringleaders and they have peer pressure on a tremendous amount of other youths.

I started out by saying that my heart goes out to this family. That sense of shame is a shame that I have because all of us have a gut feeling in our stomach when we hear one of these, and it says to us: what have we done wrong? Why that family? What did they do to deserve this? There isn't one of us in here that if somebody breaks in and enters our home – maybe they don't end up brutalizing us and killing us, like those individuals did – we feel violated forever. If any of you have ever had a place broken into where they took something or maybe vandalized, it's never the same, because we have pride of ownership and respect, and we've been taught in this country that our home, our freedom, is our protected zone. When we go home at night with our families, it's a place of respect and protection. When somebody can come into it and offend it, maybe not personally, physically, that has been violated forever. I know people that never get over that, never get over the fact that somebody broke in. They fear what's down in the basement at night. I know older people are very sensitive to that. Very sensitive to that.

So if there's one thing we can do, we can hammer the heck out of our legislators to put legislation in place that brings this whole society back to focus on who we are and what social normalities are in our society. I don't mean to chide anybody here politically. It's not an issue that we should do that with. Somebody says: you believe in the death penalty? And you said: would you start at 16 or 17? I'm afraid so. The respect of justice, it may not be a deterrent, but you have to start in some way to focus on society that there are reasonable limits on what we will tolerate, no matter what you say the reason that was for. You can blame anybody any day.

So I leave with the Assembly today: please think and support this, and support all the efforts of all citizens to change what's going on in Ottawa and help us refocus our criminal justice system.

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

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My heart also goes out to the family, not only this family but families across this

province, across this land that suffer injustices. I know it's a heart wrenching and a very emotional time for these families and for our society as a whole. I will support any measures to protect our constituents, our Albertans, and our fellow Canadians. I really have some concerns, concerns that we're looking at the Young Offenders Act only. We should be looking at the old offenders Act too.

I've sat in this House for almost a year now, and we have a \$35 billion debt, a great deficit. You know, I've listened to garbage speeches from ministers on that side who take no responsibility for that debt. Their role modeling isn't there. They're saying: blame it on someone else; it was that dictator Don Getty that did it; he forced us to. They have done things. The role modeling is there. Listen up and take responsibility even today. It has to start here with each of us, both sides of the House.

So we need to take a look at this. What role model are we presenting to the young people? We have school groups after school groups and other groups coming to this House for a question-and-answer period. A question is answered.

#### Point of Order Relevance

MR. JACQUES: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti is rising on a point of order.

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to cite *Beauchesne*, specifically 459 on relevance. How dare this individual in terms of a serious matter that is before this Legislature come in here and start using a political soapbox in terms of, using his expression, the "dictator," of the previous Premier, of the ministers not doing that, of schoolchildren coming in here. I mean, that's an insult to this Assembly. It's an insult to his members. It's an insult to everyone across this House. It's an insult to this total Legislative Assembly, and it adds no relevance whatsoever to this debate. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Chair always gives the hon. members some introductory latitude, and the Chair was doing that in this opportunity, but the hon. member will realize that we're dealing with the Young Offenders Act this afternoon.

MR. BRACKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really appreciate your words of wisdom here.

#### Debate Continued

MR. BRACKO: I know that this is a very serious matter. You look at any of the radio stations, news media. Everyone is concerned. Our lives are at stake. I've had people break into my house, and I know what it means to have my privacy invaded not just once but twice. I know what it's like to have to put a security system in, to put bars on the windows, when a few years ago I'd leave the door unlocked. So anyone saying that I don't take this seriously is out to lunch. I take this very seriously.

I did a survey in St. Albert on the Young Offenders Act, and they wanted things to change for repeat offenders for the major crimes. Ladies and gentlemen, as we look at the young offenders, where did they get their actions from? The older generation. We are responsible for what's happening. Let's take this responsibility and make the changes that we need.

I was mentioning that in question period in the House here young people come in. I had a class in here, and one of the

assignments was to see how many questions were answered. There was one question directly answered in the whole session. So what they have learned from this is: evade the truth or don't give the answer. If they would at least say, "No, I refuse to answer it," or if they say that . . . [interjections] Listen up. This is a serious matter. This is what we're role modeling to our young people. As educators we were responsible completely, and we watched every action we did so we could set that role model, so we could give leadership, so they couldn't come back and say, "This is not appropriate."

As we look at it, we also look at our freedom of information Act. We have asked for information on these Acts. What do we get? Zero. Cover your butt. So the young people learn from us that this is the appropriate thing to do. I want to mention this, because it's important that the leadership comes from here, that the young people take their role modeling from adults, and we are not taking that responsibility very seriously. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we have to start here in the Legislative Assembly, look at our own selves, both sides of the House, and make appropriate changes so we can give the role modeling, the leadership that is needed and lacking in many parts of our society.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I also would like to say in conclusion that it's only appropriate that we look at this carefully. I will be supporting the motion because I feel that it's in the best interests of my constituents, of Albertans. This is just a small part of what has to change in society. It's not just the law; it's the whole attitude in society, responsibility with consequences.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Energy.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I cannot let the opportunity to speak in favour of this motion pass. It's a motion that I feel is long overdue, and it is irrelevant to me as to which government is in power in Ottawa. There has been no action on the amendments to this law that are consequential to protect the population of this country

3:30

I will go back to a comment that my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs indicated: part of our problem goes back to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms that was brought into this country. It is going to be the absolute abomination and ruination of this country if that in fact is not changed. Mr. Speaker, I read a Supreme Court ruling recently that dealt with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and I'll never forget the comment by the Supreme Court judge that said that this Charter of Rights and Freedoms was there to protect the minority from the wilful destruction of the majority. I thought, "What a recognition to send out to this country, that the majority of the people could not be protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms." That told me right there that that Charter was wrong, and it would be the ruination of this country. I think it needs to be addressed as well as the Young Offenders Act.

Mr. Speaker, the events of last weekend in Edmonton are tragic. They're unforgivable. They're unforgettable. We must as government send a message to Ottawa and stand together to have these changes made. We have experienced similar incidents in Calgary, as they have in every other community in this province. We've sat back. We've analyzed them. We've double analyzed them. We've studied them. We've looked at them. We keep coming back to the same Caspar Milquetoast approach to dealing with this: it's society's problem to re-educate, to train. I even heard on a show in Calgary the other day that it was the

government's responsibility to provide parenting programs so that people would learn how to be a parent, to raise their child. I practically put my car into a light standard when I heard it, in an absolute rage, and thought, "Well, this is another psychologist or sociologist coming up with some flako idea of what was required to bring our youth to tack in this country." That's just not the answer.

We've got too many psychologists and sociologists running around psychoanalyzing society and forgetting that, as my colleague from Municipal Affairs said, there have to be consequences to your actions. That's the bottom line, and the time has come to say: "Stop. No more. We will not accept this in our society, and if in fact you're going to act in a certain fashion, you will pay the price.— The end of the debate at that point. "And these are the consequences that will happen to you if you pursue these actions, and there will be no leniency." It's called tough love. It has to come into society. It has to enter into the home. It must be the parents' responsibility to put in responsibility to their children and respect.

We've said that it has to be in the schools. Well, that is absolute bunk. You go into a school. You've asked the teacher to be the teacher, the social worker, the psychologist, the nutritionist: everything else but teach. That is absolute nonsense. It's not fair, and it's high time that we accepted responsibilities as parents and dealt with the disciplining of our children at home. Mr. Speaker, when I go into a school, whether it be an elementary school where my son goes to school, and I hear children saying, "I can do what I want because I have rights," I explain to them in no uncertain terms that they have no rights. This nonsense of six- and seven-year-old children saying, "I have rights, and I will phone 911 if I don't get my own way": I have said to my own son, "Pick up the phone and make the call, and when the policeman comes to the door and I explain I've asked you to clean your room, you tell him what's going to happen."

I agree with the Minister of Municipal Affairs. When I went to school — and I'm not as old as he is, but I'm also not the youngest in here, Mr. Speaker — I, too, learned respect for school. School is a privilege. It's a privilege that we have in this country, to go to school. It's not a right; it's a privilege that they don't have worldwide. We have it here in Alberta and in this country, and we must honour that privilege. You also must have respect for that institution. I also knew and was taught the same lesson: that if I got into trouble in school, I knew I was going to get it double at home, so I'd better smarten up. I also had the threat of a strap in the school, and I can tell you that when that was brought out and waved around, you thought twice about what you were going to do. That has to come back in.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Was I your principal?

MRS. BLACK: No, you weren't my principal.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen a society that has gone to a point where there is no respect. There's no respect at home. There's no respect in the school. There's no respect in the community. There's no respect in the churches. As a result, we show very little respect in this House. The hon. member just a few moments ago talked about when he brings students to this Assembly. Well, I'm ashamed to bring students to this Assembly, quite frankly. I don't want them to see how full-grown adults sit and are rude and disrespectful of this wonderful institution that we have the privilege of being elected to. I'm ashamed to say that I don't encourage any students to come to this institution because it's embarrassing for me to see how full-grown adults behave, chirping away and yelling and screaming like banshees in this

place, and you having to get up and discipline them as if they were in kindergarten.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Both sides of the House.

MRS. BLACK: We just had another example, Mr. Speaker. I was talking. That's another rule we were taught: that you do not interrupt someone when they are speaking, that that's absolutely rude, thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to get on to this motion. I look at the constituents in my riding. I've heard people say that the people that are involved as young offenders come from single moms, depressed socioeconomic situations, and bad families. Well, that's absolute nonsense, because my riding is probably one of the more affluent ridings in the city of Calgary. We have one of the highest educational levels, we have one of the highest professional contents, we have an upper middle-class socioeconomic area, and we have just as many children in trouble with the law in my constituency as we do in any other constituency in the city of Calgary. So that is just nonsense.

The time has come, Mr. Speaker, for us to take a stand and to take it now, because if we don't, God help us. These young offenders are going to grow into adults, and how will they pass on any moral teachings to their children?

MR. MITCHELL: You don't want them to grow into adults?

MRS. BLACK: We're having rudeness from the Member for Edmonton-McClung again. It's usually his finger waving, but now it's his mouth.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that we be examples of . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Shot through the heart, Pat. That's very quick.

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MRS. BLACK: Here we go, again, Mr. Speaker, where you're having to intrude to calm down hon. members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that if we don't take control today and build respect back into this system, we will be in utter chaos with this next generation coming up, because I can tell you, with a son that's 10 years old and watching his friends – some of them already have said to me: "It doesn't matter. I have until I'm 18. I can do whatever I want, and you can't stop me. So come and try it." Because nothing will happen until they're 18. Well, it's pretty tough to rope in children when they know that they have that much leeway and nothing will happen to them if they show disrespect within our community.

Mr. Speaker, I think the time has come when we take down the political lines and we say: let's deal with the protection of this society, bring it back in tow. End this utter nonsense of trying to rehabilitate, psychoanalyze, go through a sociological discussion and try and make everything better and make it all go away and make them all happy, because it's not going to happen. Deal with reality. We've got some kids that are out of control. They're going to have to be reined in, and there are going to have to be strong disciplinary actions taken against these children. Either you lock them up or you can bring back corporal discipline into the school systems. You put pressure on parents to assume responsibility. Someone said to me yesterday, "How do you do that?" Well, it's very easy. If your child goes and trashes a car on my street, you're going to pay for it because you are responsible for your child until the age of 16. If your child goes down the

street and breaks windows and damages cars, well, it's coming out of your pocketbook. That puts people into a mode of responsibility.

Unless we change this Act, Mr. Speaker, people just walk because they have rights.

MR. SAPERS: That's a lie.

MRS. BLACK: They have rights. We have to strengthen this. [interjections] We have to show that there are consequences, so I support this motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Say that outside the House, hon. member.

MR. SAPERS: It's a lie. Sure I will.

MRS. BLACK: Well, I gather there's some debate going back and forth again, Mr. Speaker.

I say let's support this. Let's take down the political lines and get on with the job and say: "No more. We will tolerate no more in this province or in this country."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3:40

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

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a few comments with respect to the motion. I rise this afternoon to in fact speak against the motion for a number of reasons. Some preliminary comments. The mover of the motion, the hon. Government House Leader, made reference in his opening remarks to the fact that there's a tremendous amount of emotion that is being felt right now in our communities because of the horrendous crime that befell the family in Mill Woods, the Danelesko family. Nothing other than shocking can describe exactly what happened this weekend to that family in this terrible tragedy. Whenever those things happen, whenever a situation like that occurs, we are always filled with emotion. We grieve for the family. We're filled with anger. As the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs said, we wonder: "Where did we go wrong? What could we have done to prevent this from happening?"

So we do have a tremendous amount of emotion. Certainly other people who are talking to him, talking to me, talking to other members of this Assembly are going to in fact express their emotion, express their concern, and ask for and look for some action. But I think it's important that we have to, whenever these situations occur – and they're not frequent, but they're not isolated. We have many other situations where murders occur in this city and in this province that do not receive the same level of exposure that this particular incident did. We had a situation that occurred in Edmonton virtually days earlier than the Danelesko murder where a woman was kicked to death in the streets of Edmonton, but no publicity. She didn't come from a two-parent, two-kid, middle-class home, and it didn't get the same publicity. It was a murder nonetheless. These things are not isolated. Hopefully, thankfully, they're not frequent. We can't, I don't think, in the circumstances react the way we are reacting in the form of this particular motion.

Mr. Speaker, I went back and read the Blues on the question that was asked earlier today in question period of the Minister of Justice. He quite clearly indicated to the Assembly that in fact what was necessary was a complete review of the Young Offenders Act. I don't think any member of this Assembly would disagree with the fact that 10 years after that legislation came in at the federal level, we need a complete and comprehensive



review of the Young Offenders Act. I also believe that the Minister of Justice indicated that attorneys general across this country are working collectively and working with the federal Minister of Justice to bring this about and to take concerns from each of those jurisdictions to Ottawa, to the federal level, to receive and get this complete, comprehensive review of that legislation. Now, that in fact may include a review and an overhaul of sentencing and of transfers to adult court.

What we do in the motion is isolate a particular aspect of the legislation. We come forward and it is abundantly clear and apparent that it is a knee-jerk reaction. We are, I believe, undermining the work that the Minister of Justice is doing in his efforts as the Minister of Justice of this province in taking the concerns of our constituents to Ottawa to lobby for and to receive the full review of the Young Offenders Act. It goes beyond, certainly, to other aspects of the Criminal Code as well. So I don't want us to get into a situation where we as the Legislative Assembly respond in this way to our federal counterparts, which would then in fact detract and take away from the energy that's being expended to look towards this full review of the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Government House Leader, who moved the motion, indicated in his opening remarks that this particular motion was not necessarily in respect to first-time offenders; it was not necessarily with respect to less heinous crimes; it was not necessarily dealing with mischief. There's nothing in the motion itself that makes any distinction between a review of this legislation from the perspective of a violent crime or the perspective of a crime against property or some other crimes such as break and enter, crime against property. The motion doesn't deal with that. The motion says by what's not in there that this is a knee-jerk reaction. We haven't thought very carefully about this, and I think we need to allow the Minister of Justice to get on with doing the job that he is charged to do in moving forward to lobby the federal government on the concerns that have been raised in this debate and will continue to be raised by ourselves, by our constituents, by us on behalf of our constituents. All of those emotions, all of those statements, all of those pleas for action should be taken by the minister to his federal counterpart.

Mr. Speaker, I would be concerned that in the consequences of this in fact we don't have our constituents lobbying their Members of Parliament and urging them to pass a motion of the House of Commons urging this government to take responsibility for its area of jurisdiction in dealing with the root of crime. Because if the other were to occur, I don't think that we as an Assembly would take that and say, "Well, this is our call to arms," so that we would get on with doing the job that we have to do. We know the job that we have to do. The federal minister, the federal government, regardless of party politics know the job they have to do, understand the feeling of society in 1994, different from 1984, and know that changes must be brought about.

So, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the effort of the hon. Government House Leader in bringing the matter forward. I appreciate the debate that we're having this afternoon. But ultimately I accept the word of the Minister of Justice that there is a process in place, and I would encourage all hon. members to allow that process to occur, a levelheaded, straightforward, rational approach to this, and to not support this motion.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Little Bow.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier on in this debate I was encouraged and challenged to get up and express my point of view, and I don't hesitate for one minute.

I've never met the Mill Woods family who have just lost a mom, a wife. However, my sincere condolences and those of the residents of Little Bow go out to them.

I don't hesitate for one minute to rise in support of this standing order. Repeat offenders and murderers have had it easy for far too long. People in our constituency have asked the federal government time and again to change the length of sentences and the consequences for serious crimes, for far too long. Our society does not condone brutality and senseless murder, nor does it condone bleeding-heart attitudes towards rehabilitation of murderers and repeat offenders. This debate isn't about group homes or budget reductions. This has to do with morality and ethics. This has to do with the consequences for serious criminal actions.

People today, Mr. Speaker, at least in our riding, are sick and tired of the attitude that has developed among many people, and in this case, on this particular subject, a younger generation that has adopted the attitude: "If it feels good, do it. If you want it, take it. Everything is up for grabs. There are no consequences." This standing order brings about the real issues that we see happening around us. The cowardice of two or three or more people who confront individuals, young or old, the cowardice and the disrespect these perpetrators demonstrate when they viciously assault, rob, beat, or murder innocent victims on the streets or within the confines of their own private property is abhorrent.

3:50

Mr. Speaker, some can forgive, and I admire those that can. Many can't, and I have to admit that I'm one of them. I can't imagine the feelings that any one of us would have if it was our wife or our little girl or our little boy. I have to be far more honest than that. If I were the perpetrator, I think I'd take far greater solace knowing that I was confined to jail for the rest of my life than to be looking over my shoulder, looking for this mad gentleman hunting me down. I would make that a promise. I know many of my constituents who take that same attitude, and I make no apology for it.

Many of our residents in Little Bow respect laws and legislation, and they've conveyed to me for the past two years the sincere and demanding wish that the time has come for substantive change. Mr. Speaker, I don't have to go on for a great length of time, and I'm not going to, but yesterday - it's quite coincidental - I read a quote that is attributed to Justice Robert Bork, an American constitutionalist. He's made the comment that in a constitutional democracy the moral content of the law must be given by the morality of the legislator, never by the morality of the judge.

Thank you.

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I woke up this morning and grabbed my cup of coffee along with a couple of the newspapers, in particular the *Edmonton Sun* with the blazing headline "Hang 'Em High." It was ironic that this afternoon I introduced visitors in the galleries from Ontario that had come out to western Canada, and one of them remarked to me: I didn't realize I was coming back out to the old western days.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question, absolutely no question in the mind of almost every Albertan that the Young Offenders Act has to be reviewed, and there have to be changes done to it, and there has to be some toughening up. We have all heard instances where there have been young offenders that have flaunted the law simply because they knew that they could get away with it one time, two times, a dozen times, sometimes two dozen times. But there

comes a time when there has to be a bit of reason, there has to be a bit of rationale to the arguments that are presented.

It was in this very House a couple of years ago, and the current Minister of Justice was then the Attorney General, when I raised the question of the two young offenders that had been sentenced to the time they had already served plus community service and probation for their participation in the brutal three-day torture of a mentally retarded individual that led to that individual's death. There was an outcry in Alberta at that time, and there was an appeal on the particular case. Those two individuals did end up going to jail, and they ended up getting a two-year sentence, which was, possibly, not even sufficiently appropriate.

When I hear the comments that are coming forward: hang 'em high; put the parents in prison; hold the parents accountable – how many of us can sit back and say that we don't know good, decent parents that have tried their very, very best, but for whatever reason their children have gone astray? I've been fortunate. I have one son, and we've never had a problem with him, but I know many others. I cannot fault those parents in any way, but for some reason some outside influence had a greater hold on those children than the parents did. To hold those parents accountable and to say that those parents should go to prison has got to be one of the most ridiculous statements I have ever heard, Mr. Speaker. But that's what we're hearing, and that's what we're reading in the paper. That is just totally irrational. It just totally lacks logic. I'm shocked and I'm saddened when I hear some of the comments that are coming.

It's almost like there's a certain pride in being a so-called redneck, right-wing, vigilante, hang 'em high cowboy, shooting-type dude out here in western Canada and being proud of it. I cannot believe it. Stop and think. Stop and think of the comments made by the Premier to the press. We're talking about individuals that may be as young as 12. To suggest a possibility of executing them. Twelve years old. Even Third World countries I doubt have that type of harsh punishment. Like, who's the one that's going to tie this noose and so-called hang 'em? Or who's the one that's going to inject the lethal drug? Or who's the one that's going to pull the switch? Stop and think. I think one of the most appropriate, one of the most logical, one of the most reasoned approaches is coming from the Minister of Justice when he states: a reasonable approach to it. I would think that the members of that particular caucus should be respecting what that minister is saying.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker – and I'm not saying this as criticism of the Premier; I'm saying it because that's the way it appears to me – it's almost like this government at times is being led by polls. If the polls are saying, "Hang 'em high," then the statements are "Hang 'em high." Then the next day if the polls suddenly change, the winds shift, then there's a change in supposed philosophy over there. The decisions, the statements don't seem to be based on principle. I don't know how one can just lightly, casually make a statement: execute them. I know and nobody has to tell me – I know – that a life was taken here. I can feel the hurt that the survivors must be going through, those close to that person. But to compound the violence in this society by advocating that type of violence to counteract it simply doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Speaker, fortunately and possibly with some surprise the motion that has been brought forward by the Government House Leader really is a rational motion. There is no difficulty with the motion. The difficulty I have is with the statements that are made in conjunction with the motion. Let's just read the motion.

That the Legislative Assembly . . . urge the government of Canada to . . . strengthen the Young Offenders Act to allow judges sentenc-

ing youths at either the youth or adult court level to impose lengthier sentences . . .

I think we agree with that.

. . . and to allow, where warranted . . .

That's important: where warranted – of course to be determined by a judge.

. . . transfer of young offenders to adult court

so that they can be treated; they can be dealt with; they can be penalized in accordance. Now, that's a whole lot different. That motion is a whole lot different than the statements that are being made by some members on the government side. I must say I really don't think we're reflecting, let's say, brilliantly in the eyes of the rest of Canada when they read what our political leaders are saying, how they're reacting. I think it's time for members to kind of just pause a bit, do a bit of soul-searching, and take these statements that are being made just a little more cautiously, with a little more heart. There is a very, very emotional situation out there as it is, and to add to it the way that it's being added to is just wrong. It is wrong.

On the basis that the Member for Red Deer-North, the Government House Leader, has presented this motion, yes, I can support it. I would expect that each Member of the Legislative Assembly would do their part to ensure that the federal government does do the appropriate review of the Young Offenders Act, as has been promised in the red book, and that's the way to do it, Mr. Speaker. I would plead with members on the government side of the House: hold your tongue somewhat when it comes to some of these rather, I believe, vicious statements that are being made, statements that I feel can be very, very harmful.

On that note, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to conclude, because many other members want their say on this particular motion.

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

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today in support of this motion, and I would also like to pass my condolences to the family from Mill Woods, keeping in mind that we have other families that deserve equal condolences: Constable Sonnenberg, who was killed in Calgary, and Margaret and Stu Garrioch. This isn't a one-family issue. This is something that has been happening for a long time.

4:00

I've been involved with the young offenders and changes to the young offenders for about three years now. I am involved with a group called the Parent Support Association of Calgary, where I'm currently serving as a director. That's an association that helps parents deal with children who are acting out. People have a perception that a lot of these young offenders come from single-parent families or social or economically bad homes, and that's not true. The stats have changed on that. Most of the parents that I dealt with in the Parent Support Association and in the crisis team were parents from middle-, upper-class families, and they're generally concerned about what's happening with their children.

What we have to understand here, under the Young Offenders Act and what has to be done, is that at this particular time the children have too many rights. They have too many rights in the system under the young offenders, and before anything can be changed, we have to start giving the rights back to the parents, to the teachers, and to the police. Until that's done, nothing is going to be done about the young offenders.

How many more people have to die, be broken into, assaulted? How many more petitions have to be signed before we do something about changing the young offenders? Mr. Garrioch,

who is a friend of mine, took to the Hon. Kim Campbell a year ago a petition of 250,000 names. I think that sends a clear indication to the federal government that we're concerned and we need changes.

We have to realize that when I was working with the children – one of the problems with the children is that they know the system. They know that they can get out of the system. They think the young offenders are recreational centres, somewhere to go. They're being told how to work the system. I've been working in the courts with the young offenders.

The other thing is that I saw in a probation office one time when I was in there with a child: pick your good friends before the bad ones pick you. I think that's an important part of the whole process. The peer pressure on these children and knowing the system the way they do is something that has to be addressed, and as soon as we start coming down with tougher laws for these kids, the sooner the root of the problem will be addressed.

You ask what we as a government have done. Well, we've encouraged the development of the youth justice committee to provide communities with greater voices in the youth justice system. That's an important process because that gives people in the system an opportunity to deal with these young offenders. Young offender work crews are operating out of correctional facilities to provide work in the community by young offenders as part of their rehabilitation. We have supported serious habitual offender comprehensive action programs that have been developed by the police, who know these young offenders. The Shunda Creek Youth Corrections Camp was established in Nordegg, Alberta. There is a work camp facility for young offenders. The Calgary Young Offender Centre is currently running a high-security behaviour unit to provide intense programs for serious, violent young offenders.

One of the other things that I would have to address is about the responsibilities of the parents. [interjection]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

Hon. member.

MRS. FORSYTH: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the things that I think I'd like to make a statement on is about the responsibility of the parents. In the last three years, when I've been working with parents who were involved with young offenders – it's difficult for a parent when they're dealing with a 13-, 14-, 15-year-old child that's towering over them. They're trying to bring something back into the home, some sort of order in the home, and all of a sudden the child is telling them where to go, how to get there, and saying, "You can't do anything about it."

I had an incident with one of the parents that I was dealing with. Her son had come home at 1 or 2 in the morning on a school night and told her promptly the facts of life according to him. She gave him a whack, and he went out to the Mac's store, phoned the police, and had her charged with assault. The kids are taught at an early age. I mean, there is a definite line in where we're going as far as what parents can do and what they can't do, and right now parents can't do anything in their own home. How can you teach a child anything?

So I'm encouraged by this motion, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important that the federal government realizes that Alberta is actively concerned about where we're going with the young offenders. We want some changes to the young offenders. We're concerned about the rehabilitation, but we're also concerned about the families who have lost members of their families due to young offenders deciding to take a knife or a car or whatever way they do it to destroy these peoples' lives.

So I thank the hon. minister for bringing this forward. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed any further, could we have unanimous consent to revert to the Introduction of Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development.

head: **Introduction of Guests**  
(*reversion*)

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to all the hon. members. I'm pleased to introduce seven prominent members of the Sturgeon Lake native council. The seven are part of the leading edge of economic development on their land, and I'm proud to recognize these leaders in the House today. I'd at this time like to introduce them and ask them to rise and receive the usual recognition of this House: first, Chief Alfred Goodswimmer, Walter Goodswimmer, Peter Joyce, Pierre Chowace, Louis Napio, Adolf Kappo, and Mel Goodswimmer. I'd ask the House to recognize these learned gentlemen.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister without portfolio also has an introduction.

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly very dear and close friends of mine, Mr. and Mrs. Carson from Calgary. I'd like to just indicate that Keith sits on the Alberta Tourism Education Council and has been a very active member. Could both of you please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **Motions under Standing Order 40**  
(*continued*)

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

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [some applause] I see that my caucus is still alive.

I rise today in full support of the resolution that's in front of the Assembly at this time under Standing Order 40, and I rise with sadness. I'm very sad to see that a fine lady in our society in this last tragedy has lost her life. She lost her life to assailants and criminals, people who have no purpose in life in my opinion. It's sad to see that this husband, this man, will have to go through life without the love of his spouse, and these two young, little boys will not have the environment of a family. They'll be raised by a single parent and sometimes raised by themselves because they won't have the tender love and care of a mother in the family. I think this is very tragic.

This is just one of a number of tragedies that we've seen in our community and our society over the years. I think it is time that we send a strong message to the federal government that they enforce or reinforce the laws, make the laws stiffer with harsher penalties for young offenders. I think it also goes for all offenders in our society.

Years ago we went into the new attitude that we have to be lax, we have to understand people, we have to listen to them, we have to rehabilitate criminals, and we have to counsel them and bring them back. In my community I, too, well remember in my life as a politician a lady that had a young girl. They had a single

child in the family. This child did whatever she wanted to do ever since she could talk or walk, and she was a spoiled little brat. All of a sudden they realized that they had a real problem, not because the child was to blame but I think the parents did not enforce discipline. What happened is that one time they went and saw a psychiatrist in the city here, and he reviewed the situation. He talked to the little girl, and he told the parents, "The best thing you can do is kill her with kindness and love, and in return she will eventually get to appreciate what you are doing, and she will change." When she was 14 years old, the mother was suicidal because it just went from bad to worse to worst. The little girl was in all kinds of crimes.

I think this is the same example here. These young boys at one time probably were decent young boys. They grow up, and they do certain little crimes. Society does not punish them. The school does not punish them. The law does not punish them too harshly. Everybody is trying to understand and go along, and what happens is eventually they fall into a major crime, and they're into murders. We see a lot of – I don't know if it's too harsh – bleeding hearts in society that always promote that we have to understand, listen, rehabilitate, and counsel these young people. I think that while society is trying to kill them with love and understanding and counseling, these people turn around and they kill our citizens with their guns and their knives. The free society and the honest people are paying the price because I think in the court system and in the laws of our society we have been too lax.

#### 4:10

I think we all have to take responsibility, and I'm not trying to blame any segment of society. It has to start at the family level. It has to go on to the school level. I know that when I went to school, if we got a licking at the school, you got back home and you got another one. Today the attitude is that if a teacher touches a child in school, he probably will get the licking from the parents the next day. The whole attitude has changed in 30 years. I remember in my school there was a sister there, and she was called Mother Superior. She had a long strap, and if you did anything wrong, you got a whack behind the head, and you'd probably close to pass out. People obeyed the system because they respected the system or because of fear, whatever. You had no choice; you obeyed the system. I think it paid off, because we have people in my class who are a postmaster, a director of nursing in a hospital. I'm here in the Legislature. We have a lawyer, and we have a principal in a school. I come from a small country school where most of us may turn out in life to earn a respectable living because we had discipline, not because we were smarter than the kids today.

The kids today are very smart, but they are left at free will to do what they want to do with their intelligence, and eventually they use it the wrong way. I think somebody has to focus that intelligence for the first three years in life, and that goes until age 16, until you become an adult. At that time you fly on your own, and you have to pay the price yourself. But before that the young people should pay the price along with the family unit. I think if a 10 or 14 year old does a crime, the parents should be expected to pay the price and be held accountable.

In my community you all heard about the Mandin case. Mr. Mandin was raised in St. Paul. He moved north, and eventually his young adopted son killed Mr. Mandin, his mother, and the two girls in a cold-blooded murder. That's another example of a fine, young, little boy who with some discipline would have made a fine citizen but was not stopped at the right time, was not disciplined at the right time. In the courts for the minor crimes he had done before, he had a little slap on the fingers. They said:

"That's not nice. Don't do that again. You should think twice." It evolved into bigger and bigger crimes, and everybody pays the price for these crimes.

I think it was mentioned today that some people are not ready to forgive, but I think we should take the attitude – I take the attitude that I'm ready to forgive the criminals. I think we have to understand that they're not the only ones responsible; the whole society is responsible. But as you forgive them, that does not mean that you don't punish them. They should be punished severely, and the reason you have to punish them is to protect the rest of society, the honest people that are living a decent life out in society. I think if you have harsher punishment, you send a message to these young people that it's not right to commit crimes, but you also protect other people in society. The lesser the punishment you have, the more crimes you're going to have.

People say it doesn't work that way. I believe it does. I remember a few years ago when we had a real flood of intoxicated drivers on our streets and a lot of accidents. People died in accidents. Innocent people were killed. Families were killed. What happened at that time is that when the laws became stronger, the penalties became stronger, the amount of money you paid was a large amount, and you lost your licence for a year or two, we saw drunken driving decrease in this province. It did not decrease because of the choice of the people who like to have a drink; it decreased because they feared the law. They feared to lose their licence to go to work. They feared to have to pay \$2,000. They feared to be humiliated in their own little community. It has decreased. People have listened to that because it was a strong message.

I support one hundred percent this motion to send a strong message, and I hope this whole Assembly will vote for it.

Thank you.

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

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will state at the outset that I would support this motion. However, I think it doesn't go quite far enough. I'm not rising today – and the motion was not precipitated by the recent tragic act, but it was brought about by a whole series. There are a lot of victims out there. Victims of young offenders are taking the focus. There was a comment made from the other side about the inadequacies of the adult system, and, quite frankly, it is inadequate also, and perhaps this would be a first step to review how we approach deviant behaviour in our society.

We have in this whole milieu something called criminal activity, unacceptable activity, deviant behaviour, whatever you want. The Young Offenders Act has only taken away society's ability to intervene at an appropriate time in such a manner that the age factor does not continue to aid and abet deviant behaviour.

One of the biggest factors we have that deals with the Young Offenders Act is something called age and our total misunderstanding of what age means. You can measure maturity or age two ways: one with a time clock and the other with behaviour. What we have chosen to do is say that, regardless of the behaviour, we will tie ourselves to time. We have stated that a child, no matter how deviant their behaviour is, is not accountable for their actions until their 12th birthday. There is nothing sillier than that. We go to the rest of the system that calls for intervention, and that intervention can't kick in, in a lot of cases, because of a lot of circumstances, very frequently because no charges have been brought about. The problem is that no charges can be brought about. We have very young people involved in activities such as car theft and going around and endangering peoples' lives,

literally, in vehicles. Then we take the other aspect: between 12 and the stroke of midnight at the 18th birthday, something magic happens. Well, I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, that it's the activity in here that we have to look at.

Now, I'll point out a very, very blatant inequity in our system when we talk about age. Whether you agree or not with the fact that 16 gives you the right to drive a car is quite immaterial. At age 16, as a driver you get all of the rights of the adult of 18, of 20, of 30, whatever it is, because you have been issued with a car licence. At the same time, if something should go wrong with your treatment of a lethal weapon – and that's what a vehicle becomes when you use it inappropriately, a lethal weapon, weighing some 4,000 pounds in many cases – if you do something criminal with it, your name can't even be published. You get all the privileges of the rules of the road, but you can't be tried. If you do an act at age 18 that would constitute an extreme sentence, jail or what have you, if you're 17 and a half and do the same thing in the same motor vehicle, it doesn't apply. That, Mr. Speaker, just blatantly points out what is wrong with our approach to this whole process, because if you are not accountable at age 16 for the actions on the same level as the responsibilities that you receive with that licence, then perhaps it shouldn't be issued until 18.

The same applies, Mr. Speaker, when we look at behaviours. If you take grown youth – because many boys and girls physically are quite grown up at age 16, 17. We say that the behaviours are very frequently brought on by peer pressures, but we forget to say that these peer pressures sometimes come from the adult category. What I'm referring to there is that if the 17 year old has a 20-year-old friend, maybe the 20 year old is the one who entices him to do the deviant behaviour, whether it be something extreme or not. When they step out of line, we turn around and we say, "Boy, we can't touch this poor little fellow because he is a minor." His behaviour does not make him, in my eyes, a minor. It's an arbitrary age that was thrown in there without forethought, without thinking, and we have hung our hats on it because we are afraid to say that it doesn't work.

#### 4:20

The best that we can wish on any victim would be that we would have had something called prevention before the crime. We have to talk about prevention. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker – and one of the previous speakers has alluded to it – that the best motivator to avoid an action is something called fear. I'm serious. I mean it. If you want to see where fear, although I don't agree with the extremes of the system, has worked very well, take the Singapore model, where they had some short 20 years ago criminal activity that they could not control and imposed sentences that I personally couldn't subscribe to. However, they had a problem. They went to the extent of death for trafficking in drugs, life imprisonment and whatever for being involved on a minor level. What has happened is that that country is drug free.

Now, you may think: well, we can't do it here. Maybe we can't. Maybe our society won't let it in here. But the thought behind it is what I think is relevant, and it's something called fear and something called knowledge of the consequences. Currently, whether our system is the adult one or the young offenders one, the best hope of the person who is being charged is that he will get off scot-free. If he's a first time offender, his biggest fear is that there might be a judge who might raise his voice to him and threaten him and wave his finger and say, "Don't you ever appear in my courtroom again."

In my career as a principal I had the occasion to live through the behaviours of young people before, during, and through the

Young Offenders Act. I will say unequivocally that upon the introduction of that Act, within a short period of time, within two years, long enough for the young people to figure out the system, behaviours started to go downhill and are accelerating on that downhill curve.

I for one – and I will say this publicly and anywhere you want – believe in using the strap prudently in school. I said prudently, because the strap is one of the best deterrents of deviant behaviour in a school that you can find. You will find – and I have found this very clearly – that in the emotional well-being of a child who has got the strap for having not done one action but an accumulated series of events, that child psychologically, and I stress psychologically, is better off because his slate is clear and he's then down to making another choice: does he accumulate the points to get him back in the principal's office, or does he choose a different route? I can say from my own experience, Mr. Speaker, that in the vast majority of cases they chose a different route. I'm speaking from experience. I happen to have been in a school that some people labeled as being difficult or whatever. I didn't see it that way.

I do have an interesting observation however. When it came to children under the age of 14 – and we had a junior high school, so that's just about every student – the police brought the kids into the principal's office to deal with crimes – and I call them misbehaviours – that they allegedly committed in the community. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they told me point blank that I had more control over the kids in school because I had more latitude, more leeway, even in dealing with their parents. That is a sad commentary on something called the Young Offenders Act, when police come to a principal and say: "It's not worth the paper. It's not worth the effort on our part because we'll just make it worse. You talk to him about breaking windows."

You know, Mr. Speaker, some people would condemn me for being a school principal and doing it, but I didn't mind, because the behaviour of that child in school, out of school, at home – if he had a consistent role model, then we had a hope of putting that kid on the right track. So if he broke a window out of schooltime or in schooltime, it was just as wrong to do it. You know what? I found that the students, the children, the ones that we're talking about here, understood it better than the adults. I had less fuss from children saying, "Oh, Mr. Woloshyn, you can't do that because it's outside of schooltime". The kids understood that wrong was wrong, right was right. The only matter was teaching them the differences. I had very, very many enjoyable years of dealing with that.

What I found inhibited, shall we say, the influence of the school was not the police but people, lawyers if you will, who would tell a 13 year old or a 14 year old that when the policeman came to the school to talk to them – and this is how it deteriorated in the years to come – I couldn't phone their mother. He had the right to tell the cop and myself whether he could have a lawyer in there; not his parents, a lawyer. This is why, ladies and gentlemen, when I hear people say that it's the parents – yes, if we're going to give the parents influence or give them blame for the children's behaviour, then we had better give them back the ability to deal with their own children so they can instill these values in them.

Mr. Speaker, currently we can't. We've heard examples in here of young people phoning 911 or whatever and accusing their parents of beating them. Well, certainly I would be the first one to condemn any adult beating a child and the first one to support any adult disciplining a child. I think because you tan somebody's backside, that's not a beating. That's getting a message through that hopefully, as that child gets older, will guide them to make the right choices.

So we've taken this Act, Mr. Speaker, and strangled our ability to prevent through learning. We've even gone so far as to say to young people under the age of 18: "No matter how many times you transgress, never shall your name appear in public: guilty, innocent, or otherwise. We don't care about your neighbours. We don't care about your friends. We are going to protect people, knowing what they are really like, at all costs. So make sure you don't ever let your name into it." I think that's wrong.

If that Act is reviewed, the one area that I could support is on first time offences. Yes, give them protection. I don't have a problem with that, because we're giving the child an opportunity to change, the first time only. I don't want to live next door to a young 13 year old whose parents can't control him through no fault of their own, whom the legal system can't control, because usually - we've done another terrible thing. We've provided legal aid for kids, which just draws the system out forever, adds cost to it, and makes them worse in the process. I don't want to have that child next door to me and not know that he's likely to come in and ransack my home. You know what, Mr. Speaker? That's exactly what happens, because we've got our head in the clouds and think that these young people are some kind of angels that need unlimited protection. The angels of the young people - and thank heavens the majority of young people are very, very good. It's a small minority, a very small minority. But if we don't take that small minority to task and do it quickly, the price we pay will be incalculable.

There's also the other aspect that we have to look at here, and that is something called punishment. Why is punishment such a bad word? I don't find it a bad word. The only problem that I have is: what is appropriate punishment? That's difficult. That's difficult at any level if you're to be sitting in a judge's place. But the way out from under the dilemma is certainly not to eliminate the concept of punishment totally. We'll stop for a moment and go back until we haven't got any method. There is no punishment to young offenders. Rest assured, there is no punishment to young offenders, period, and I'll underline that.

I'll take you to the Edmonton Young Offender Centre. The staff have to go outside to smoke and 15 year olds smoke inside, because that's their home. The staff are at work, and they've got a rule against smoking. I don't know if that TV set is still there that the previous solicitor general alluded to. I sure hope not. If it's there, I hope the cable to the outside is disconnected and proper taped programs - proper taped programs - would be what they would see on this television set. I wouldn't worry about the size or the colour, but I'd certainly worry about what they can drag into it. That would be terrible. That's an infringement on their rights. What about your rights and my rights and the rights of society? That person, whether it be a child or an adult, is incarcerated for a reason. If the reason is for being ultragood in society and we want to give him a luxury hotel to live in with all the amenities, then a young offender centre is a good place. If it's to look at punishment and to deter them from continuing, then perhaps we should review the situation that we have in terms of where we keep them.

**4:30**

I, for one, am very, very encouraged and have been for a long time, lobbying for this concept of having the young people sentenced to semesters in a work camp. Not a work camp, because the connotation of work sounds like it's terrible, but call it a responsibility centre if you will, where they would get up in the morning, they'd chop some wood, they'd go do their laps around the lake or whatever, go have breakfast, study, and learn something meaningful. And you wouldn't have visitations for the

duration either. Let them visit when the time of the break is, and then you shut the school down and let them all out, if they're good little kids, to go home and take a taste of society on the provision that they come back for the remainder or the next semester of their sentence, so we could build something called responsibility into them, so we could give them meaningful choices.

But, no, we have a tendency to get preoccupied. We have a tendency to think that an 11 or 12 or 13 or 14 year old can't hurt you. It's not true. We have this problem. I have a great deal of difficulty and at some point would like to bring in some influence to have a look at what happens to young people aged 14 who run away from police in motor vehicles. I think if at 14 they can make that choice, then any appropriate suspension from driving privileges that they would get should start at age 16, when they're eligible to get a licence. That might make them think twice about running away needlessly, might make them think twice about endangering everybody on the road. But, no, we'll pick up the newspaper and see that a young offender ran all over town. "Look at that. His poor single mom. We have to help her." Yes, we do; you better believe we do. But we can't help this family by making excuses. We can't help this family by having that child go through the legal system and take forever and come out with zero consequences. All we've done is program them to continue.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this motion is a good one. It's a good start. I would like to see it perhaps expanded at some point, not only in the legal system but somewhere else. I've heard in this House, I believe from the first speaker, that suddenly the responsibility for deviant behaviour is with schools or social services. If that isn't passing the buck, what is? Because I will suggest to you that you will find that most - not all, but most - young people who are in trouble with the law on an ongoing or frequent basis are not in the classroom doing honours work but likely hanging around the malls. I find it very difficult to imagine that the school can influence them when they aren't in school to begin with, and the older their age gets, the less likely they are to be in school. But we'll fix that. We'll find an excuse and blame the school for them dropping out, because it obviously can't be their fault. The school had to have done something wrong, the same way that school is terrible and doesn't offer them anything. Then when they get out on the street and get into trouble, it's the school's fault because they dropped out. We go around in a little circle of blame, but we don't stop and put that person who's in trouble up front and centre and say: "Miss or mister, you made a choice. You made a particular choice, and this is going to be the consequence. Not maybe, not only if you can't get a good lawyer, but this will be the consequence."

Yes, I believe in bringing the parents in on it. I've been into juvenile court or young offenders court many, many times. Mr. Speaker, one of the most distressing things that I've faced when I've gone into these courts is the fact that when that young person is called up, regardless of the behaviour they have while in there, which sometimes is less than complimentary to anything, there's never or rarely a parent there.

Mr. Speaker, on that note I'll conclude my comments. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

**MRS. ABDURAHMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in favour of this motion. The one thing that I heard consistently when I was knocking doors prior to the provincial election was the concern about the lack of safe communities that my constituents were living within. It saddened me to see what I can only describe in rural Strathcona county as the siege

mentality that had happened. This had come about because of the break and entries that had been happening within my constituency over a number of years.

So it's indeed tragic that here we are today speaking to this motion because of the tragic loss of a mother, but I also want to recognize at this time and convey my sympathy not only to the Danelesko family but to all families who have been the victims of crime where loss of life has been. We look back just over a year ago in the city of Fort Saskatchewan. Because of our lax parole system we lost a young couple at the hands of a murderer who committed suicide. We look at the tragedies in the city of St. Albert. We in Alberta I'm sure 15, 20 years ago never really believed that in Fort Saskatchewan or Mill Woods or St. Albert we'd be seeing this type of crime and too often being caused by young offenders.

The one thing that I have recognized, living within the city of Fort Saskatchewan and having a fairly direct contact with the correctional system, is that many people within our correctional system treat it as a joke. In fact, in my own community it's been suggested that many of our inmates actually have a better quality of life than some of our seniors have, and indeed it's gone as far as being called from the sieve now to the hotel in Fort Saskatchewan. I think it says something about the society that we live in when in many instances we see people being rewarded – and that's the way it's being interpreted – for the crimes that they've committed.

Now, with the Young Offenders Act I firmly believe that every one of us in this Legislature has to assume some of the responsibility for where we've got to in our society. It troubles me, and I reflect back on when I used to go to graduations as mayor and speak to the students. The thing that I'd talk to them about was the materialistic society and permissive society that we were living within, and it was my generation, Mr. Speaker, that was demonstrating these materialistic and permissive societies in the '80s. I firmly believe that that gave the wrong message not only to my own children but to the generation that are now young adults and indeed have children that fit into the age category of young offenders.

I also share some concerns, as colleagues on the other side of the House have identified, through our Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And I don't say that lightly, Mr. Speaker, with a husband who comes from South Africa, where freedom is cherished. But, you know, the one thing I have felt living here in Canada and in Alberta is that somehow we the majority have lost some of our rights. I think that is what we're seeing reflected in some of our institutions.

Now, I was certainly brought up with a rural Presbyterian background, and I think it's fair to say that the treatment my father had given to particularly my brothers and to some degree myself and my sisters would have been viewed as abuse today. At some times in my life I felt uncomfortable, but it was discipline, and there was some physical punishment. I can take it a step further and look at the educational system in Scotland. I'd have to be the first to admit that I certainly felt the strap. I probably earned it. I'm not in the education system, but I certainly have children within the educational system who are teachers. Just the thought of any of my children using any physical contact other than – and even an endearment I think can be interpreted in our society the wrong way.

4:40

So I say that the pendulum has swung far too far and that the lack of discipline within our educational system has done a disservice to our educators. It's done a disservice to our young

people as well, because you lead by example. I know there was some protest from the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, when we started talking about example in this House. I raised it in my maiden speech, that I was appalled by the behaviour in this House, and now I have to admit that I actually do some of the same behaviours. Now how do we get this turned around in our parliamentary system? I ask myself that continually. You know, today we heard some derogatory things being said to members on this side, but I'd say to the people that weren't here last night that I heard the same derogatory things being done to myself as well, and likewise backwards and forwards. It doesn't serve anybody well. You know, I had 60-odd students from Fort Saskatchewan in the gallery today. I usually say to them, "Now, what you're going into is a zoo, or then again it could be a circus, and then again it could be very civilized, showing leadership and integrity." That happens far too rarely within this House.

Now, there is another responsibility. This motion is back to the federal government, and yes, we need to act, but we also need to act provincially, Mr. Speaker. I've spoken to this on a number of occasions in the Justice estimates and to some degree been ridiculed. But let's face a reality: if we really want to get on top of this significant problem that we have with our young offenders, we have got to recognize when young people are in trouble. I use an example where we as a society in a system and an institution fail miserably, where this young boy – and he's not a constituent of my own, but he is a constituent in rural Alberta – attempted to kill his brother. This young boy is 11. He desperately needs help. His family is trying to find him the appropriate help, but what happens is that you get into a social welfare system that isn't equipped to deal with this type of clinical illness. So what happens is that they end up in the court system, and there's no money to pay for the clinical programs. That young lad is now before the courts. He needs help before he ends up doing something – and this is what his mother fears – that we are addressing today, some heinous crime to an unsuspecting family down the road.

Now, I'd like to also address the Counterpoint House program, and the hon. Minister of Justice has heard me speak on this before. All these young men within that program have been abused as early as three months old. These young men desperately need the kinds of programs that will prevent them repeatedly violating somebody else's rights or indeed committing some heinous crime. I've been told by the experts out there that we could have two or three or four programs like Counterpoint House to deal with these young offenders, because they are young offenders by the time they've got there.

Now, the other is about Alberta Hospital Edmonton. I have to ask the question: if we're looking at desperately needed programs, how long is it taking for the assessments in the southern part of the province, Calgary, to get these young people into these programs?

So I say to all Members of this Legislative Assembly: yes, we need to toughen up the Young Offenders Act. They have to get the appropriate punishment to fit the crime, but at the same time we have a moral obligation to ensure, when these young people are indeed juveniles and the system is looking for a support system to try and correct the problems, that we're there for them. There are psychiatrically ill young people out there that will, if they are not given the appropriate treatment, once again end up in our correctional systems, and it could result in some poor innocent person being their victim. If that psychiatric illness is treated and maintained, I think we can prevent. You don't only prevent through punishment. I don't disagree with many of the areas where the Member for Vermilion-Lloydminster and also Calgary-

Foothills and Stony Plain and some of my own colleagues are saying that, yes, punishment should be prudent, but it should fit the crime.

No senior in any part of the province of Alberta should be going to bed at night living in fear that their home is going to be broken into. When I was at a volunteer luncheon on Saturday in Sherwood Park, that's what my seniors were talking to me about. One lady has had her home broken into two times, but she continues to be the victim, and I mentioned this when we were speaking to the freedom of information. The fact is that her house insurance is now continuing to increase because twice her home's been broken into, so she continues to be victimized. We have to correct that. Likewise when it's young offenders in stolen vehicles, when an innocent person becomes part of that accident.

Now, we as a Legislature can certainly show some leadership here, ensure that the appropriate programs are in place, ensure that our judiciary within the provincial system is doing the job, and ensure that indeed our educational system is given the tools to do the job and also that parents are allowed to bring children up the way they feel is appropriate, without fearing that if you're seen spanking your child's bottom in an Eaton's or a Sears, you're going to be threatened with abuse. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I caution my children – and we have nine grandchildren – to never in this society today be seen in public smacking your child, even if it's on the hand or the bottom. I think that's where we've gone far too far in this society.

But I also want to say that there is a real danger – and I'm going back to South Africa. The pendulum swings far too far the other way, and I have heard some things that concern me. Hanging 12 year olds. Now, those statements I say entice people. We don't need statements like that being made out there. What we have to do is behave in a responsible manner and show the type of leadership that will correct the ills of the society that we live in.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak in support of Standing Order 40. There have been many speakers to this point. All have expressed similar views. They have all spoken with eloquence, many with compassion, trying to find understanding, and there certainly have been many common links that have been spoken to in this Assembly this afternoon. We are not talking about a partisan issue. We're not talking about a Liberal issue or a Conservative issue. And with all due respect to my colleague from Cypress-Medicine Hat, I don't think we're talking about rough justice. I think what we are talking about is fair justice, appropriate justice, and swift justice.

I found the act that happened several days ago in the city of Edmonton to be absolutely repulsive in terms of trying to understand it, yet the issue that we are talking about today has not accrued over the last two days or the last week or the last month. It has been accruing for a long time. Somewhere in the history of our province and, more importantly, in the history of our country things started to change.

4:50

I recall, Mr. Speaker, not that many years ago in a community that is only about a hundred kilometres, one hour driving distance, east of the city of Grande Prairie. It was a pleasant afternoon on a weekend. A family were attending their home, which was basically a hobby farm, and the mother was murdered with a rifle bullet. The father was murdered with a rifle bullet. Two children

were murdered with rifle bullets, and perhaps the most sad part of the incident is that the murderer was a 15-year-old member of that family.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

He was a youth of 15. It took over three years for our justice system to ultimately raise him to an adult court level. Notwithstanding psychological testing and everything else, to add the final indignity to this process, a plea bargain was made, and if our parole system continues to operate as it has in the past, in six years from now he will be out on the streets. Is that justice, Mr. Speaker? Is that swift justice? Is that fair justice to the remaining members of that family, to the neighbours, to the schoolchildren that associated with them, to the friends of the adults? Was it fair to our individual communities? I think with any reasoned debate we would say no.

Yet interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, today some people have challenged the motion on the basis of, well, it's emotional; we're reacting to something that happened in our community, and we're rallying around the cause. Well, the whole issue of our lives involves emotions, and whether we talk about love and hate or whether we talk about joy and sadness or whether we talk about revulsion or elation, those are emotions, and they drive us. They bring us together, and at times, unfortunately, they take us apart, but that is what we are as human beings. And we should not be apologetic for our emotions. In fact, we should encourage them, because ultimately they will charge us to do the right thing.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

I think it's time, as legislators and as leaders in our community and in our province, that we accept responsibility for that leadership. It has been said that the definition of leadership, Mr. Speaker, is that, for example, managers do things right, but leaders do the right thing. It is time for the leaders of this province and, perhaps more importantly, for the leaders of our country to do the right thing, to do the will of the people for the majority of the people of this country, of this province, and of our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, after this debate is over and we go back to the mundane things, quite frankly, that we deal with, I don't know whether we will come back to the basic issue that we are talking about here today and doing the right thing, because ultimately our political walls will come up and we will see the division. But I believe that today we as Members of this Legislative Assembly are here as a united force in representing our constituents and representing all Albertans and indeed representing all Canadians. In conclusion, let us do the right thing.

Thank you.

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

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My heart, too, goes out to the family and to all those families who have been victims of crime. This is not an easy topic of discussion for any of us, as we've seen by the debate this afternoon. There's much fear, there's much anger, there's much disgust when one looks at the actions that occurred over the weekend and the actions that occur in similar situations. I know that if a member of my family were hurt, I'm not sure how forgiving I would be.

People in Edmonton and I'm sure across Alberta are asking themselves why this is occurring, why this is happening. Hopefully, as the deputy House leader indicated, people are not looking at taking the law into their own hands. What we should



not be doing in this Assembly is catering to extremists. We should not be inflammatory in our remarks, as the Premier and some of the members of the government have been. What we need to do is be rational in our approach, to, as the hon. member before me just indicated, do the right thing, and to realize that laws are not the only answer and that this government cannot absolve itself of its responsibilities and to some extent the hypocrisy that we're seeing in this particular debate.

This government has in the past endorsed the family grid, and the deputy House leader is well aware of that family grid. What that . . .

MR. DAY: Government House Leader.

MS LEIBOVICI: Deputy House leader; I demoted you.

What that family grid was meant to do was, in effect, ensure that the policies of this government were good and were the right thing for families in this province. The government has conveniently forgotten that this family grid exists. We are seeing decisions that are supposed to be balanced with regards to the good of society, with regards to this government. What we are seeing are cuts to social services, cuts to education. We're seeing cuts to community policing, and most incredibly, this is a government that says that they want to get tough. This is a government that's looking at privatizing jails. If you can remember, this is a government that says: "Sure, criminals can get out of jail, and they can go to their own homes. We'll phone and see if they're there or not, and that's how we're going to supervise." That's what I mean by the hypocrisy within this debate. The decisions that the government is making are going to affect . . .

#### Point of Order Parliamentary Language

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader rising on a point of order.

MR. DAY: I had sincerely hoped, Mr. Speaker, that this debate would be dealing directly with the very narrow elements, as proposed, in the Young Offenders Act. There is reference, first of all in *Beauchesne* – and I know you've ruled on this before, where in some areas "hypocrite" is ruled parliamentary and in other areas it isn't. Your rulings have suggested in the past that it would depend on the situation. I appreciate that, but again I was hoping the debate – and to this point it hasn't digressed into other things and other statements on government policy. This is a very direct question, asking the Assembly to ask the federal government to do two very specific things related to the Young Offenders Act. There are many other times, many other opportunities for members opposite to belabour the government for things we're doing that they don't like. But this is very important and tied very clearly to this situation, and I'd hope, on the point of relevance, the member would recognize that and stay on that track.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, the time is limited, hon. members. All questions concerning this motion must be put by 5:30 this afternoon, and the list is long. The Chair would hope that hon. members would use their time specifically on the Young Offenders Act, but the Chair also recognizes that in the debate there has been some ranging away to show examples as to why this is an important debate. The Chair is not going to rule the word "hypocrisy" out of order in the sense that it has been used this afternoon.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

#### Debate Continued

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reasons that I mentioned the items that I did were that the Young Offenders Act is an end; it is not a means to an end. It is an end result. If we want to compare the use of the Young Offenders Act to the use of a hospital, for instance, you use a hospital when you're sick, and the Young Offenders Act is used when crimes have occurred. It is not used with people who need to have help with regards to their situations.

5:00

So what I was trying to point out is that children are not inherently born bad and that this debate doesn't just centre around the Young Offenders Act, but it centres around the lack of hope of a generation in despair. It's about the lack of jobs and the future that we see. This debate does, in a sense, give an illusion that this government is concerned and doing something, and hopefully it is not to be seen as just a political platform that the members who have spoken can send to their constituents.

The motion in and of itself is somewhat of a nonmotion. It is something that the Premier could just as easily have sent in a letter to the Prime Minister. It's something that deals with issues that have in fact been dealt with, for instance in terms of the expeditious transfer of young offenders to adult court. That can happen within a day at the current point in time. So in effect and in reality this motion changes nothing.

I will support the motion, and the reason I am supporting the motion is that I think we do need to send a message – and if the Premier has not sent a message under his own signature, we can do it via this motion – to encourage the government of Canada to review the Act, so that the review of the Act can be expedited, and that the issues that are of concern to all of us in this particular Assembly can be addressed. I know in discussion with several of the members of the police force they have also indicated that they feel the Young Offenders Act does not allow them the ability to follow up as they would like, desire to do.

In supporting this particular motion, I would like to make it quite clear that I'm not going to let the government absolve itself of its responsibilities by saying that the crime is the consequence of a failure of a particular Act of government and that it's not the consequences of its own actions.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HLADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A little while ago we heard our Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti say that he believed we have to do the right thing and I hope to bring up in regards to why we're in this situation. I was fortunate enough about a month ago to hear a speaker. His name was Bob Vernon. He was the deputy police chief of L.A. during the Rodney King riots. He has seen a lot of things that have happened in our societies in North America, and what he went on to explain is that they have been a leader in trends in many different areas in L.A. There's also been a shortening of the trends. It used to take 10 or 15 years for their trends to spread around North America and up into Canada, things such as gang wars and so forth. That's something that we shorted out here in Alberta quite well, because the police here were able to stop it and get a handle on it before it got up here, and they did a good job.

It used to take a long time, and we had time to prepare for what we saw happening. In the last couple of years we've been finding that the trends have been getting here much quicker. He gave us

a couple of examples that described what he called moral flat-lining in our society. That is the basis, and this is only one area that we've run into the problems and we're seeing, is the moral flat-lining. We have become acceptable as a society to anything and everything. We accept whatever is. Whatever people say, we accept it, and that's what's wrong. This is a big part of the reason we've gotten ourselves into situations in many areas.

One of the examples he used was a case that he'd had going on while he was on duty. It was a young 18-year-old girl who had just gotten a new car. She'd taken out her young cousin for a drive in this new red car, and they were found on the side of the road shot in the head, gang-style killings. About half an hour or an hour later there was another red car. The same sort of thing happened. As it turns out, they caught the two guys that had done this and found out what it was. They were sent out to kill these two girls. One was a girlfriend of a guy involved with drugs. They'd taken the money and the drugs, whatever, and they'd made a mistake on these other two girls. Just someone out for a drive in their new car that their parents had given them. Upon questioning these guys inside the station, they said, "You realize you made a mistake, and you killed these two girls by accident." They laughed. They just laughed. They thought this was a big joke. It's moral flat-lining in our society.

The latest trend that's been going on down in L.A. has been break and enters. We've had break and enters here for a long time. They've had them there for a long time. The latest break and enter style is that they want to make sure someone's home when they break in, because, you see, it's more fun to break in when people are at home so you can beat them up. You can rape the women. You can kill people. That's what they want to do. That's what's happening. Now we find it coming here to our province. This is what's happening. We do not have control because of moral flat-lining. That's what's happening in our society, and it's time to get a control on it.

There hasn't been accountability, there hasn't been responsibility, because we haven't defined it. We've just let things happen. We accept whatever happens, and we say, "Well, we'll prevent it." Well, how do you prevent it? We keep spending more and more money. We do it through our education. We do it in our health care. We do it through our justice system. We keep putting more money to it, but that's not the answer. You're not bringing it back to the level of defining where accountability is, where responsibility is. That's where you get your prevention happening. It's not happening right now, folks. It's time to start getting ahold of it. I think we have to bring it back to the family level. We've lost our family values, and the accountability and responsibility has to start at our family levels. That isn't there right now. Prevention is being back at the family values.

I support this motion, and I hope all the members in this Assembly will support it and understand that we have a big job ahead of us to get back to the levels of accountability and responsibility in making things happen properly in this province.

Thank you.

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

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will support the motion in spite of the fact that I don't believe that incarceration works. However, I believe that we do have to do something and start to do things differently than we are now.

I firmly believe that youth crime has to be seriously addressed through the Young Offenders Act, but the problem's too serious and complex to be solved with just a simple statement. If

incarceration were successful in any area of crime, our jails would be empty rather than overflowing and full as they are now. It's been obvious for years that it doesn't work.

However, there are many things in regard to crime with children that we need to look at. Kids do need to be disciplined and given limits. Personally, I can't condone corporal punishment, and I feel very strongly about that. I think there are all kinds of societal things. People have talked about family breakdown, and that's true. Our moral standards. Kids are lost, many kids I think because their parents are lost. Children don't know what to believe in any longer. TV violence is something that I don't think we look at enough, because so many children start to watch TV when they're just little. They spend hours a day in front of it, and when they're very young, they don't know the difference between real killing and real blood and what happens on television. I don't know why we haven't addressed that more seriously in terms of the cause of youth crime and probably some adult crime.

I think the main thing is that we have to be willing as Canadians to take the time to look at this whole thing and look at it rationally and not emotionally. We're all, quite rightly, upset and worried this week and feeling very badly for the family whose mother was killed earlier. But when we look at the Young Offenders Act, we need to back up and be objective about it. Tinkering with it, of course, won't work.

We know, as I've said, that the result of incarceration is often just hardened criminals. We know that the problem is growing. Crime does grow historically when times are tough with high unemployment and family breakdown. People are getting frightened. Many people are frightened, and that causes reactions.

Crime isn't just increasing with young people; it's increasing among people of all ages. It's not just violent crime: white-collar crime, blue-collar crime, all kinds of little things. I think in families sometimes this becomes so common, just like TV violence, that people accept it or don't think about it.

### 5:10

There are many theories about the reasons for crime increasing. We get bombarded with them fairly frequently, and of course the common ones are poverty, family breakdown, lack of hope for the future. But they're not the only ones. We do need to look at how we're raising our kids, how we're giving them values. We have to go back to the root of the problem.

Amendments to the Young Offenders Act must be carried out only after very careful and thoughtful consideration, because it's too serious a situation to try to sort out just skimming the top. We'll just be back at it again in a year or two.

Earlier this afternoon there was a member of the Legislature, the Minister of Justice, who I thought summed up very well what our approach should be. I actually went and got the Blues, and if you don't mind, I'd like to quote your closing statements, Mr. Minister.

Although there is some frustration that the sentences aren't high, I think the debate that's going on – and I think an informed debate and not just a reactive debate can send signals to the judiciary and certainly to the legislators that changes should be made or at least a thorough analysis be made of the Act, because there is a serious problem.

So I would recommend that we take that direction. I will support the Act as one way of expediting it being looked at.

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

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've listened with great interest here this afternoon because I believe this is one of

the best debates that's taken place in this House in a good long time. I did want to speak on it briefly.

I'm one of the many people in this House that has a lot of faith and a lot of confidence in our young people, because believe it or not, they are going to be sitting in our places here at one point in time. I also believe very seriously, Mr. Speaker, that violent crimes deserve to be punished. They deserve to be punished severely and quickly so that there is no more continuation of that type of behaviour.

When we as governments both provincially and federally believed in putting in benevolent human rights protection Acts, they were done for a good purpose at that time: because there was abuse. There was abuse of young people. There was abuse of wives and spouses. They were put in to protect these people. But I make a guess, Mr. Speaker, that there's still abuse, probably more than there was when we put those rights protection Acts together and when we legislated rights for all people and special rights for young people. The abuse is still there, so we have to go back and look at it and increase the penalties, particularly for violent crimes, because they need not occur.

I think we have to look back at what causes people to do those things. I guess before the rights protection legislation came into place, there was a thing called first offence on the streets of the cities and in small town Alberta, and it was either the principal or the policeman that had some young kid by the ear, and he was walking on tiptoe, and at the same time there was some shoe leather laid to a certain part of his anatomy. That was the first offence. After that, it started to get serious. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, that changed a lot of attitudes in a very quick hurry. People learned manners. They learned respect, not only for other people, but they learned respect for themselves by going through that process.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs certainly summed it up properly. There needs to be an attitude adjustment. It has to happen. We're not going to solve it by just putting every child in jail that does something wrong, including misdemeanors and break and enters and things like that. There has to be an attitude there of respect for other people's property, and by doing that, they gain respect for themselves. That's what's lacking.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I heard awhile ago about a young child in Calgary. The police have been waiting for about two years now for him to reach the age of 12, when they can do something with him. They had evidence that he had stolen at least a hundred cars, and they couldn't do anything with him. The parents couldn't do anything with him. I'm saying that it's not the legal system, it's not the politicians, it's not society that's to blame for that child. It's the attitude that he was raised with that taught him that he could do that, he could do it successfully, and he could do it time and time again without any fear of retribution or fear of any kind of punishment. It's been mentioned here before that there's got to be a reaction when you hit the wall. Every action has a reaction, and everybody should be responsible for their actions. I don't care if they're 12 years old or if they're 30 years old or if they're 60 years old. When you hit the wall and you've gone by all of the common decency lines, then there has to be a reaction.

I believe that the Young Offenders Act should be revamped and brought into line, but that's not the only thing that we have to do. We have to go back, and we have to look at the rights protection of all citizens young and old. We're in a society today where your child, as has been mentioned here before, can phone a social services caseworker and have you in trouble for tweaking the ear or laying some boot leather onto the backside of a young child when they richly deserve it, and that's wrong.

We have a school in my constituency that's a very good school; it's a private school. A couple of years ago they got involved with social services and rights protection activist people, and it very nearly shut that school down. It's turned out a lot of very good people, people that have gone on to become engineers. There are people in this Legislature that have gone through that system and have become fine people and didn't start out all that good to be there. It's an excellent institution, but we inject this rights protectionism to the point that we've gone too far. There needs to be discipline in this world. There always has been, and we've just gone too far in letting it get away on us.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to keep my remarks brief, but we have to go back and have a look at the values in society. I would say that the vast majority of young people are good people, but we have a few that have to be looked at. I'd say that it comes out of the home much more than it comes out of society as a whole. In the meantime if you're old enough to do the crime, you're old enough to do the time. I would urge everybody to vote in favour of this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is certainly an important motion we have before the House today. I think every member of this Legislature that has talked to their constituents – and I know they all do on a regular basis – has heard concerns about this very piece of legislation. I will support this motion, and I think that by supporting this motion we here in Alberta can send a strong message to the government of Canada expressing our concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased with the motion as far as it goes in that it talks about increasing the length of the sentences and it talks about making it easier to move up to adult court. I wish there were a couple of more things in it, and I'll just touch briefly on them. But they're not there, and that's I guess all right too.

One of the things that I have heard in my constituency is concern about the age 12. I conducted a little experiment with my daughter, who is 11 years old. I said to her, "Is it right for you to go into somebody's garage and take their bicycle?" And she said, "No, of course not, Dad." She looked surprised that I would even ask the question. And I said, "So you know that it's wrong." And she said, "Yes, Dad, that would be wrong to do." So I think clearly if my daughter as an 11 year old can know the difference between right and wrong, then clearly other children should know as well. I think clearly that's a change that needs to be made.

The Justice minister earlier made some comments, and he said: you know, the big concern is really the repeat offender. I think most of us here have dealt and met with a lot of really good kids. I had the good fortune, Mr. Speaker, before coming to this Legislative Assembly to work with many really fine young men and women in our school system. But, you know, there are a few bad apples out there, and I think the thing we need to consider is the repeat offender. I've heard people talk about that before, and as I said, certainly the Justice minister has talked about it. I don't mean to be facetious by this comment, but maybe it should be like baseball. Maybe you get three strikes and then you're out. If it's three times and you're heard in young offenders court and you're there for a fourth time, then maybe it's automatic. Boom, up to the adult court. I don't care whether you're 12 or 14, but certainly a kid who has been before the courts a couple or three times – and I'm just throwing out three as an arbitrary figure admittedly. Maybe it needs to be moved up. The Member for Stony Plain says once. I'm prepared to be a little more lenient than that. But I think there should be an automatic move-up at

some point, and I think that should be given consideration whenever the debate occurs in the federal Parliament regarding changing this Bill.

5:20

Mr. Speaker, I have the Calgary Young Offender Centre located in my constituency. I wrote a letter to the Justice minister and asked if I could tour that facility, and such a tour was arranged. It was an interesting experience for me, I must confess, because I'd never had the opportunity or the need, I suppose, to tour such a facility. What was going on in there was interesting, because a lot of the kids that I spoke with – I had the opportunity to speak with some of them one on one – recognized why they were there. They recognized that they'd done something wrong. It varied from break and enters – some of them had long, long records. They recognized why they were there, and for the most part they didn't begrudge anyone the fact that they were in jail. In other words, they understood that there are consequences. But I think that the consequences – and certainly that's been at the root of much of the conversation, of the debate today – for many, many young people are not really significant.

I'd like to relay a couple of personal experiences that I had that I think highlight that. One of the schools that I taught in was a junior high school. It was an interesting setup, Mr. Speaker. I had students in my homeroom from grades 7, 8, and 9. I had a grade 7 boy in my homeroom who pulled a six-inch hunting knife on another student in the school where I taught. Not a little penknife; we're talking a six-inch hunting knife that was clearly a lethal weapon. We took the weapon away from the kid, hauled him down to the office, but the kid was 10 years old, 11 years old, too young for the Young Offenders Act to kick into force. The principal gave him a good talking to, as I'm sure the Member for Stony Plain would have done, and we called home. We figured: well, we in the school really don't have any authority; the law doesn't have any authority with this kid; we're going to call home.

It turns out that he's living with an aunt and an uncle, and the uncle shows up at the school and sits down and listens to me and listens to the principal describe the situation. He stood up, walked over to the kid, and he backhanded the kid. I thought: well, so far, so good. Then he said: "Here's the knife back. Put it away, and be more careful next time. Don't get caught." That was the message that this young man's guardian gave to him, and I thought: "You know what? What did we just teach that kid? What did he just learn?" He's going to be more careful about the crimes he commits in the future; not that there are consequences but that he has to be more careful in the future about crimes he commits. There was no repercussion for committing the crime. What he got the repercussion for was being careless. That's the wrong message to send.

Mr. Speaker, I had one that is even a little more close to home one time, another situation which highlights in my mind the need for a tougher Young Offenders Act. The constituency I represent – I know the Member for Calgary-Foothills knows it well – is fairly new. Lots of new homes are being built there, lots of show homes. There was a builder who was building these new homes, and they were sitting there ready to be occupied. They were installing microwaves in these for the new owners who would come in. The police were noticing that these microwaves were disappearing. Well, one night my doorbell rang, and there was a young man standing at the door, and he gives me this story about a lost cat. I was very sympathetic listening to him tell me about his lost cat. In the meantime, his buddy's out back hot-wiring my truck. I had to go out that particular evening, so I went out in the back after a while and the truck's gone. My truck is gone. Nothing fancy: it was an old truck, a little rusty, but it

was my transportation. I got it back about three days later and talked to the police and said, "What happened?" He said, "Well, there were some 15- and 16-year-old kids who were breaking into the homes and stealing the microwaves. They had a garage full of microwaves. Mom and Dad are away on holidays in Hawaii, and Mom and Dad are coming back. Got to move the microwaves. Logical answer: steal a truck. I was the lucky guy.

The end result and the point of the story is that I was more inconvenienced by having the truck stolen than the 15- and 16-year-old kids eventually were as a result of their punishment for stealing the truck. Something is wrong with the system when 15- and 16-year-old kids can go out and take a joyride. Fortunately, they didn't damage the truck, other than a hundred miles on it – back in the old days it was still miles – and it was down about a quarter of a tank of gas. Mr. Speaker, the message we sent to those young people is that there's really nothing wrong with stealing somebody's truck or car or whatever, and they ended up getting away scot free.

Mr. Speaker, we need to look at increasing consequences for the kids. I think we need to go right back to the schools, and in the schools we need to institute right in both public and separate schools the concept of responsibility, of accountability. If you do something that steps outside the bounds, then the consequences should be immediate and they should be clear and they should be very definite.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion before the House today. I'm pleased that the Government House Leader has brought it before the House. I think it's an issue that impacts on all of us, and I will support it when it comes to the vote shortly.

Thank you.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion put forward by the hon. Government House Leader, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no. The motion carries unanimously. Call in the members.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:26 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Abdurahman	Gordon	Nicol
Ady	Haley	Paszkowski
Amery	Hanson	Pham
Beniuk	Havelock	Renner
Black	Herard	Sekulic
Brassard	Hewes	Severtson
Bruseker	Hierath	Smith
Burgener	Hlady	Sohal
Calahasen	Jacques	Tannas
Cardinal	Jonson	Taylor, L.
Clegg	Laing	Thurber
Coutts	Langevin	Trynchy
Day	Leibovici	Vasseur
Dunford	Magnus	West
Evans	Mar	Wickman

Fischer	McClellan	Woloshyn
Forsyth	McFarland	Yankowsky
Friedel	Mirosh	Zwozdesky
Germain	Mitchell	

Against the motion:  
Collingwood

Totals:                    For - 56                    Against - 1

[Motion carried]

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:40 p.m.]

