

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Tuesday, November 8, 1994**

1:30 p.m.

Date: 94/11/08

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Dear God, author of all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, we ask Thy guidance in order that truth and justice may prevail in all our judgments.

Amen.

head: **Presenting Petitions**

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission I'd like to present a petition which reads as follows:

We, the undersigned residents of Alberta, petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government to hold a plebiscite under the Local Authorities Election Act in Accordance with Section 3 of the Alberta Hospitals Act, which provides for such a plebiscite . . . when the amalgamation of [hospital] boards, construction of new facilities, the disestablishment of existing facilities

will be changed. This has been signed by 338 residents from throughout the province of Alberta, and it's the first of many petitions of its type to be received.

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

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave today to introduce a petition signed by 463 residents of Sherwood Park, Edmonton, and surrounding area urging the Legislative Assembly to urge the government

to maintain the Grey Nuns hospital in Mill Woods as a full-service, active hospital and continue to serve the south-east end of Edmonton and surrounding area.

head: **Reading and Receiving Petitions**

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request that the petition I presented concerning the Sturgeon hospital be read and received.

CLERK:

We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government to reconsider the inclusion of the Sturgeon General Hospital within the Edmonton Region and to allow the Sturgeon General Hospital to serve its customers from the City of St. Albert, the MD of Sturgeon, the Town of Morinville, the Village of Legal, the Alexander Reserve, the Counties of Athabasca, Barrhead, Lac St. Anne, Parkland and Westlock.

MR. ZARIWNY: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that the petition I tabled on June 1 on funding cuts in education be now read and received.

CLERK:

We the undersigned petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta to specifically plan their funding cuts to preserve education at the classroom level; and co-operatively consult

with all stakeholders in education, determining cost savings in all administrative levels.

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

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask that the petition I presented in this Legislature on May 19 regarding the government's waste of taxpayers' dollars in appealing the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench on the Individual's Rights Protection Act now be read and received.

CLERK:

We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government of Alberta to amend the Individual's Rights Protection Act (IRPA) to include "sexual orientation," thereby reflecting the Vriend decision and bringing the IRPA in line with Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(2)(a) I give notice that tomorrow we will move that written questions stand and retain their places on the Order Paper except for Written Question 235.

I also wish to give notice that we'll be moving that motions for returns stand and retain their places on the Order Paper with the exception of motions for returns 222, 223, 244, 245, 247, and 249.

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

MS LEBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to give notice that pursuant to Standing Order 30 I intend to request leave to adjourn the ordinary business of this Assembly today to discuss the urgent matter regarding the decision of the government to put the fundamental changes contemplated in Bill 41, the Government Organization Act, through by way of closure.

Thank you.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give oral notice of the following government motion:

Be it resolved that

- (1) A select special information and privacy commissioner search committee of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta be appointed consisting of the following members: Mr. Hierath, chairman, Mr. Sohal, Mr. Brassard, Mr. Bruseker, Mr. Dickson, Mr. Doerksen, Mr. Friedel, Mrs. Fritz, Dr. Massey for the purpose of considering applications for the position of information and privacy commissioner and to recommend to the Assembly the applicant that it considers most suitable for appointment to that position.
- (2) The chairman and members of the committee shall be paid in accordance with the schedule of category A committees provided in the Members' Services Committee Allowances Order 4/93.
- (3) Reasonable disbursements by the committee for advertising, staff assistance, equipment and supplies, rent, travel, and other expenditures necessary for the effective conduct of its responsibilities shall be paid subject to the approval of the chairman.
- (4) In carrying out its responsibilities, the committee may with the concurrence of the head of the department utilize the services of members of the public service employed in that department or of the staff employed by the Assembly.
- (5) The committee may without leave of the Assembly sit during a period when the Assembly is adjourned.
- (6) When its work has been completed, the committee shall report to the Assembly if it is then sitting. During a period when the

Assembly is adjourned, the committee may release its report by depositing a copy with the Clerk and forwarding a copy to each member of the Assembly.

head: **Introduction of Bills**

**Bill 59**

**Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 1994 (No. 2)**

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce a Bill being the Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 1994 (No. 2).

[Leave granted; Bill 59 read a first time]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the minister responsible for Economic Development and Tourism I'm pleased to table with the Assembly today the following annual reports: pursuant to section 22 of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research Act, the 1993-94 annual report of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research; pursuant to section 15 of the Alberta Opportunity Fund Act, the 1993-94 annual report and audited balance sheet of the Alberta Opportunity Company; pursuant to section 52 of the Legislative Assembly Act, the 1993-94 annual report of Alberta Economic Development and Tourism; pursuant to section 14 of the Motion Picture Development Act, the 1993-94 annual report of the Motion Picture Development Corporation; pursuant to section 7 of the Tourism Education Council Act, the 1993-94 annual report of the Alberta Tourism Education Council.

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

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you. I'm pleased to table the annual report for the year ended March 31, 1994, for the Alberta Research Council. It outlines some of the activities of the council, and I encourage all the members to get a copy and look at it.

Thank you.

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

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table with the Assembly four copies of an analysis of Bill 57 that was circulated this morning and yesterday at the Alberta School Boards Association convention. It indicates that with Bill 57 the government could, if it chose, privatize the entire education system in Alberta.

MR. DINNING: If that's what people wanted, wouldn't that be a good idea? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The former Minister of Education just cannot let go.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to table four copies of a document prepared by the Alberta Liberal caucus called This Could Happen. It indicates the impact that Bill 57, cinquante-sept, could have on rural Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development.

MR. ADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the annual report of the Athabasca University Foundation for the year 1994 and four copies of the annual report of the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board, 1993-94.

1:40

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

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table four copies of a resolution passed by the Glamorgan Community ECS that says:

We, the Glamorgan Early Childhood Services Centre, urge the Legislature of the Province of Alberta to amend the Alberta School Act to mandate the right of access to fully funded kindergarten programming to a minimum of 400 hours per child per school year.

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

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Young Offenders Act task force I am pleased to table two reports with four copies of each. The first report is a report by the task force on federal recommendations to the Young Offenders Act. The second report is the task force provincial review recommendations on the administration of justice with respect to youth crime.

The Young Offenders Act and the youth justice system cannot in isolation solve the problem of youth crime, nor can government departments be expected to achieve solutions in isolation from each other without community involvement. A combined effort is required. The protection of society and offender accountability are a top priority.

Thank you.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a resolution passed by the Banff Elementary School Council.

We, the Banff Elementary School Council, believe that all students of Alberta are entitled to a quality education. We feel the fragmenting of the E.C.S. program does not fulfill this obligation and we urge you to support the amending of the Alberta School Act to mandate the right of access to a fully funded kindergarten program to a minimum of 400 hours per child per school year.

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

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission I'd like to table a resolution from the Glen Avon Parent Council in St. Paul urging the Legislature

to mandate the right of access to fully funded kindergarten programming to a minimum of 400 hours per child per school year.

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

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table four copies of a resolution passed by the St. Luke Local Advisory Committee. The resolution reads as follows:

We the St. Luke L.A.C. urge the Legislature of the province of Alberta to amend the Alberta School Act to mandate the right of access to fully funded kindergarten programming to a minimum of 400 hours per child per school year.

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table four photocopies of an item presented to me by some members of my riding. The four copies are photocopies of an item in recognition of the 15 years of service as of November 18 by the Member for Barrhead-Westlock. The item is a red tie brought from Las Vegas with the Three Stooges on it. [applause]

head: **Introduction of Guests**

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly eight students from the Jewish Akiva Academy school, who are accompanied by Miss Maija McLeod and Mr. Norman Rodgers. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask them to rise to receive the warm welcome from this Legislative Assembly.

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

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to the Members of the Legislative Assembly 47 students from Lynnwood school in my riding. They are accompanied by teachers Mary Cooper and Len Chorney, by parents Cathy Jensen and Lapcong Nhieu, and by the driver, Fay Giroux. I'd ask that they rise in the gallery and receive the welcome of the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

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

MR. HIERATH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and to members of this Assembly two of my constituents that are here in Edmonton attending the Alberta School Boards Association convention. They're sitting in the members' gallery, and I would ask Doreen Lloyd and Marlene McCann to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

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

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two introductions to do. First, I'd like to introduce to you and through you 47 bright, energetic students from Overlanders school, which is located in my constituency. They are accompanied by teachers Mrs. Marples and Miss Paterson. They're seated in the visitors' gallery, and I'd like to ask them to please rise at this time and receive the very warm welcome of this House.

Also, it is indeed my pleasure to rise and introduce 10 members of the SALT committee. It is a seniors' issues concern group. They are seated in the members' gallery, and they are Phylis Matousek, John DeGroot, Marguerite Meneely, Walter Derksen, Verna Milligan, Lynn Arling, Irene Payne, Grace Diederichs, Des and Helen Achilles. I'd like them to stand at this time and receive the very warm welcome of this House.

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

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Legislature Dr. Rick Tamaschke and his wife, Jan. Dr. Tamaschke is a professor at the Queensland School of Business, and he's currently visiting the University of Alberta. He and his wife are seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Legislature.

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

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure that I introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a constituent of mine, Wayne Renke. Wayne is an assistant professor of the Faculty of Law at the University of Alberta. I'd ask Wayne please to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted to be able to introduce to you and to the members of this House six trustees from the Jasper school district. They're still hopeful that their school district will be allowed to survive on its own. They're in the public gallery. I'd like them to stand up, please, and receive the warm welcome of this House.

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

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased and honoured today to introduce to you and to Members of the Legislative Assembly six constituents from Little Bow, in the sunny and warmer climes of southern Alberta. Four of the guests are here along with our colleague from Taber-Warner's guests to attend the Alberta School Boards Association convention. At this time I'd like to ask Mr. Darryl McDonald, county councillor and school trustee from the county of Vulcan; Mrs. Barbara Brown, school trustee from the county of Vulcan; Mrs. Linda Whiteside, school trustee from the county of Vulcan; and Mrs. Christine Nyberg, school trustee from the county of Vulcan along with spouses Richard Brown and Mr. Donald Auch to please rise and accept a warm welcome.

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission I'd like to introduce two individuals to the Assembly. The first is Mr. Kim Cassady, who is a resident of Edmonton-Glenora constituency and also very ably manages my constituency office and deals with the myriad of problems that voters in my constituency bring to my attention and his. I would ask him to please rise and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

A second individual, Mr. Speaker, is Ms Barb Dickson. Ms Dickson is giving life to the Premier's call on volunteers to come to the assistance when government programs no longer can carry the ball. Barb has volunteered to help the Liberal caucus in their research and augment a rather meagre research budget. I would ask Barb Dickson to please rise and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly three trustees from the county of Parkland. I'd ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

*head:*

### Oral Question Period

*1:50*

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

#### Confidentiality of Social Services Records

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table four copies that show four different precedents for ministerial resignations as a result of the release of confidential information. In two cases in Ontario ministers resigned when it became clear that they had violated privacy legislation. In two further cases, additional cases in Nova Scotia not only did the ministers resign, but in fact charges were laid against the ministers in question. My first question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. Other ministers who've committed similar breaches of privacy have had the decency to resign and do the honourable thing. My question to the minister is: will he now resign his portfolio?

MR. CARDINAL: No, Mr. Speaker. The issue that we're dealing with the Ethics Commissioner made a decision on yesterday. I know that the issue has carried on a long time. The issue in relation to the information released to the opposition member was addressed also in the Ethics Commissioner's report, indicating that opposition members and government members should work together in order to resolve issues that are out there specifically with children. If ministers are not allowed to work with other elected members in Alberta to be able to resolve or try and resolve issues of this nature, it's almost impossible for me to carry on my duties as a minister.

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Speaker, the problem with the investigation by the Ethics Commissioner is that he did not have the jurisdiction under the Child Welfare Act. So my supplementary question is to the Minister of Justice. Mr. Minister, I've just provided you with a copy of the further evidence. My question to the Minister of Justice: will the minister investigate this incident under section 91 of the Child Welfare Act and lay charges, as has occurred in Nova Scotia?

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, the information that the hon. member provided to me today was actually in their news release yesterday. My staff have been reviewing the information that he's provided me with. They are reviewing the Child Welfare Act, and if there is anything valid about proceeding any further, we will so notify the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplemental is to today's Acting Premier. This is a serious matter, and it requires the Premier's attention. Will the Premier ask for the resignation of this minister, since he won't offer it, and clear this up once and for all?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, we said yesterday that this is political point-scoring of the highest order. It's irresponsible on the part of the Official Opposition. I would merely point to their chief electoral officer of their so-called leadership battle, which has pointed at substantial breaches in the activities of this leadership. I want to know whether that same kind of investigation is going to occur by the new, self-proclaimed, righteous leader of the Liberal Party on the other side.

### Funding for Local Authorities

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, based on a May 1994 Informetrica study – and I'd like to table that at this time – it is very clear that this government has off-loaded \$216 million worth of its deficit on municipal governments in this province. Somehow the Treasurer forgets that there is only one taxpayer in Alberta and that the local governments, both municipal and school, have always balanced their budgets. My question is to the Treasurer. How can this government penalize local authorities by dumping \$216 million of provincial programs onto local authorities when it has always been the province and not local governments that have had the deficits in this province?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all the hon. member might recall the billion dollar grant to municipalities in 1979 to clear off their debts. So now what the hon. member is suggesting is that government getting its fiscal house in order and doing the right, responsible thing is somehow irresponsible. What I would say to the hon. members across the way is that their tax-and-spend approach to government, to big-government thinking is something that Albertans rejected on June 15 and they'll reject even if they do get a new leader.

MR. MITCHELL: Tax-and-spend government from the Treasurer who voted for eight consecutive deficit budgets, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. MITCHELL: Why would this government go on to penalize school boards with its \$1.3 billion property tax grab when it's always been the province and not the school boards that have had the deficits?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, what the member across the way is arguing against is equity in funding for children's education in this province. This government stands foursquare for kids in this province, for their education, recognizing that a child is a child no matter where he lives and that he or she has a right to a quality education, and this government's policies will deliver on that. The Liberal Party position is to be against equity and allow the rich to stay rich and the poor – the attitude of the members across the way is the poor deserve to be poor. A typical approach from across the way.

MR. MITCHELL: What kind of leadership, Mr. Speaker, does this Treasurer provide fiscally responsible local authorities when he off-loads his deficit onto them, when he takes their tax base, and then turns around and jets off to New York and buys New York businesspeople \$1,300 worth of breakfast, as if they can't afford their own darn breakfast?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, what kind of a so-called Liberal leader would waste the time and go to the expense of putting the Court of Queen's Bench through the agony and through the waste of time and the waste of money in trying to deal with his problems that the Liberal leadership contenders can't deal with by themselves? Here we've got the Liberal Party in court yesterday and today asking them to clean up the shenanigans of the Liberal leadership contenders because there have been substantial breaches in the activities of those party contenders.

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

### Health Care Premiums

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's now clear to all Albertans that it's not the Minister of Health who's running the Department of Health, but the Treasurer is. The latest version of the Department of Health's business plan, of which I'll now table four copies, calls for a tax grab of nearly \$230 million. This results from a 49.4 percent premium increase. This is a tax, and it's a regressive tax at that. To the Minister of Health: why after bragging that the government's deficit cutting was \$300 million ahead of schedule is the Minister of Health proposing to pick the pockets of Albertans to the tune of nearly \$230 million for increased health care premiums?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, there is no decision made on increased premiums in 1997-98. It doesn't really matter how many leaked documents the member wants to release. The decisions on what will be in those documents will be made by this government, and they will be put in the form of a plan which will be filed or tabled or presented in this Legislature at an appropriate time. There is no decision made on 1997-98 premiums in health care, and to suggest otherwise is just absolutely incorrect.

2:00

MR. SAPERS: Mr. Speaker, it's a business plan with an Executive Council office stamp on it. Could the minister explain why in this Executive Council document, then, as part of a no new taxes government, 25 percent of the so-called cuts in health spending are really new taxes collected in the guise of health care premiums?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the document that is before this Assembly and that has been presented to the public of Alberta is the three-year business plan for health. That document, if the member would care to read page 10, does lay out a plan for health care premiums. Again, whether the document is stamped or not, until a document is presented in this Legislature, before the Legislature as fact, it is fiction.

MR. SAPERS: Mr. Speaker, when will the Minister of Health stop these rolling business plans from rolling all over the people of Alberta and just tell Albertans how much money they're going to have to take out of their pockets to spend on health care premiums, private insurance premiums, user fees?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the minister will be pleased to do that at the appropriate time in this Legislature. It has been presented, and this is the official document. Next spring there will be a document tabled which will have the actual, factual information that's presented by this minister and this government. There can be any number of documents around, but until they are presented in this Legislature, they are not valid.

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

### Job Creation

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The number one issue in Lethbridge-West continues to be jobs. I'd like to ask the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development in his capacity as the minister responsible for labour force development about the labour force statistics for the month of October, which I think should now be available. What is the job situation now as compared to a year ago?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a question that's important to all Albertans. Certainly jobs are what make our economy move. I'm happy to report that currently there are 1,308,000 Albertans employed in this province, and this time last year there were considerably less, about 1,268,000. That's an increase of 40,000 jobs in this province over this time last year.

Incidentally, given our population, we have an employment/population ratio of 67 percent. By that I mean the ratio of people employed against our population, and that's the highest in the country. I think that's something to be proud of, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that we hear very little if anything about jobs from Edmonton MLAs and with the restructuring and reductions in our public service departments and agencies, how is the city of Edmonton doing in the employment statistics?

MR. ADY: Well, Mr. Speaker, Edmonton is doing reasonably well. Unemployment continues to drop in all the economic regions of Alberta. The lowest rate was recorded in the Banff-Jasper-Athabasca region, which had a rate of 3 percent in October. In Edmonton the labour force is actually larger now than it was this time last year, and the unemployment rate is also down. Last year it was 11 percent; this year, 9 and a half percent in the unadjusted rate. I can also say that there's an increase of 12,100 people employed in Edmonton this year over last year.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If government spending is down but employment is up, where are all these jobs being created?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to report that almost all of the increase in employment is coming from the private sector. Wholesale and retail trade had an employment increase of 7,700. This was followed by a gain of 4,700 in business services and a gain of 4,300 in finance and insurance. So I think we can conclude that if you provide the right climate for the private sector to prosper, which includes a skilled work force and a labour force and confidence in the free market and less government, that the jobs will come, and we're actually seeing it happen here in Alberta.

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

### Seniors' Extended Health Benefits

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Community Development said that the extended health benefits program is very important to seniors. Today seniors learn they may take yet another hit from this government as the extended health benefit program is to be cut by two-thirds under Health's leaked three-year business plan. To the minister responsible for seniors: will you confirm to seniors that their extended health benefits will be cut by 66 percent?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, at the outset of consultations which took place earlier this year, it was made clear that there would be

full consultation on the very important subject of extended health benefits. As the member may recall, there was an original plan to roll extended health benefits into the Alberta seniors' benefit program. We listened to seniors. Seniors told us that the extended health benefits were important as a program by themselves and to reverse that decision. We accepted that recommendation.

However, we did note that seniors said that there could be changes that could be made to the extended health benefits program, that could be made in consultation with seniors in order to change the nature of how that program worked. That was all within a fiscal reality that we have to deal with. Accordingly, the Minister of Health has undertaken those lengthy discussions and consultations with seniors to come up with a way of dealing with extended health benefits in a way that we can afford.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we didn't get our answer.

Mr. Speaker, January 1 is only seven weeks away. When will this minister announce his final decision on the seniors' extended health benefit?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. minister responsible for seniors has indicated, the decision was made to turn the extended health benefits program back to the Minister of Health, so I'll be pleased to answer the hon. member's question.

Mr. Speaker, there was a commitment made to seniors to review and revise the extended health benefits program, because the three-year business plan that is official, that has been put before the Legislature does suggest that effective January 1 extended health benefits would be rolled into the Alberta seniors' benefit. We made a commitment to consult with seniors to redesign the extended health benefits program to ensure that it best met Alberta seniors' needs. We have had extensive consultation with seniors' groups. I made a commitment to seniors to bring back a revised plan by January 1, 1995, and I will do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. YANKOWSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplemental is to the minister responsible for seniors. Based on the new business plan, should seniors also be planning for health care premium increases in the new year?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the point's been made that there is absolutely no validity to any plan but this plan. There has been no decision made on any changes in a fourth year plan. Until that is a fact, I do not think that we should be dealing with fear and speculation on what might be. The hon. members opposite know full well that between now and in fact the time of this document and a budget document, there may be many more documents and, indeed, probably have been, but the important thing is that these documents have not been accepted by this minister or by this government.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Wainwright.

## 2:10 Wheat Exports to U.S.

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development concerning

the export of wheat. In August of this year the federal government agreed to a one-year cap on Canadian wheat exports to the United States over the objections, I might add, of the Alberta wheat producers and this government. It was agreed that the export situation would be studied and that a panel would be established to review the situation and attempt to formulate a permanent solution. Can the minister advise as to what the wheat export situation has been since this cap was agreed to?

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

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I'd be pleased to advise the House as to the status of our exports into the United States. As a matter of fact, we're slightly behind last year in that we're about 50,000 tonnes behind as far as hard red spring is concerned and a like amount behind as far as durum wheat shipments into the United States from last year to the 23rd of October of this year.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. FISCHER: Thank you. Is there any information available as to whether or not this cap is affecting what type as well as what quantity is being exported to the States?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Unfortunately, when the caps were established, a criteria was not established along with the caps to define what type of wheat will be exported or the value, the grades, the type of material that'll be exported. There are some difficulties now that are coming about as a result of that, because various companies are wanting to export material that has different quality value, that has different material value, and consequently, because that was not firmly put into place, there is some debate that's going on at the present time.

Further to that, the Ontario wheat that is exported to the United States was not originally excluded from the cap as the negotiations had taken place. When the agreement was finally put down in writing, the Ontario wheat was included in the cap to the detriment of our western producers.

MR. FISCHER: Has there been any word about the activities of the blue-ribbon panel and their attempts to arrive at an agreeable permanent solution to this situation?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: The blue-ribbon panel that was put together to study the overall process unfortunately hasn't met to date. As a matter of fact, the first meeting is scheduled for the 22nd of November of this year. Then they will be developing a work plan and developing the strategies that will be coming together to work towards a final resolve of this whole process. That will leave us with seven months actually. We're only left with seven months of this year's committee to develop a strategy and a process for the long range.

This is something of great importance to our agricultural producers, because indeed this is a potential market to which accessibility has been denied. At the same time, we're allowing enormous amounts of American product, things like corn, to come into Alberta without any limitations whatsoever. I think it's important that Americans recognize that trade is a two-way street.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Speech.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: We're allowing the Americans to bring their products into Canada without any imposition whatsoever. Though the hon. Member for Redwater may say that this is a speech, this is important information for our agricultural community.

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

### Municipal Taxation

MR. WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Municipal Government Act, which has yet to be proclaimed, instructs the municipalities on behalf of the Klein government to collect school taxes on some community leagues and some public service organizations, yet the minister has publicly stated, and I quote: community centres, public rinks, the zoo, public sports complexes, public art centres will be exempt. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs: which is it? Are they exempt or are they not?

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, if they're municipally owned or they are directed by the municipality in the public interest, for the public good, they are exempt. He listed off a whole group there, and they are exempt, and the regulations will be coming forward.

MR. WHITE: Is the minister telling this House that it has taken six months to come up with regulations that contradict the Act?

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, there were seven years of consultation with the municipalities, and they were fully aware and asked that we take six months to consult with them and come forward with these regulations. So if he's saying – and he was a member of the AUMA – to forget that function of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and the counties and MDs, to throw them out, then perhaps I'll take it up with the new president, Pat Mackenzie.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, the final supplemental here. I'll try to be a little more factual than the minister's answers.

To the minister: how are these municipalities, who begin their tax year on January 1, to plan on who to tax and who not to tax when they don't have any idea what the regulations say?

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, the AUMA and all the vested interest groups have had a window to all of the regulations. They're being drafted and sent out immediately so that they'll have them out well before January 1 and proclamation.

Let me just add one more thing. There was an article in one of the papers that insinuated that community leagues were going to be taxed, and it was the end of them. That's absolutely unequivocally false. It also insinuated that anybody or any organization that had a liquor licence for any function would also not be exempt. That is false. The liquor licence issue has to do with the permanent class A licence where a portion of the building is open for access to the public for liquor purposes. It doesn't mean a community league that gets a licence today for a wedding, a licence tomorrow for a bingo, or a licence for this. That is totally and unequivocally, as I said, a false misrepresentation of the regulations, and community leagues that were exempt before are exempt today.

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

### Pork Industry

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are fantastic opportunities at present for growth in Alberta's agricultural industry. We see this everywhere, whether it's specialty crops, grain, feed grains, or livestock. I'm particularly familiar with it in the livestock business when we see the expansion of these two major plans. My question is to the minister of agriculture. What additional opportunities have been identified and are being pursued by this minister?

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

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's something of great importance to the agricultural industry, because it is our intention to keep diversifying. Certainly our agricultural producers are very interested in the opportunities that are out there. So I think that's a very timely question. There are many opportunities that have been identified, and one of those is the pork industry. Together with that, there is a large symposium going on in Edmonton today, as a matter of fact, with the pork industry, which includes the financiers, includes the processors, includes the producers, and includes the government, to dispense good information that allows the industry to make the important decisions that will fulfill the market opportunities that are there today.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Relative to the pork industry, Mr. Speaker, do we currently have the ability in Alberta to take advantage of the emerging market opportunities with our controlled marketing system of single-desk selling?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: We have problems in Alberta at the present time because we don't have a sufficient supply. When we were in Poland, as a matter of fact, we were able to identify a potential purchase of 5,000 tonnes of pork. When we called back to Canada, to Alberta, we were told that there just wasn't the supply available. So certainly we have to increase our production. Further to that, in 1989 Japan was 75 percent self-sufficient as far as pork production was concerned. Today Japan is only 68 percent self-sufficient, and by the year 2000 they're going to be 57 percent self-sufficient. These are going to be opportunities that someone is going to be able to fulfill. With this potential opportunity, it's important that our industry be a part of the players that are going to fill that void.

### 2:20

DR. L. TAYLOR: While it is important that our industry be part of that, would the minister assure this House that the government is not considering any direct loans or loan guarantees to pork producers or processors to expand their existing programs?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: This government is going to work very closely with the pork industry to help them expand, but we are out of the business of being in business. We're making that very clear to the entire industry, but we're going to work with the pork producers in trying to find market opportunities, in researching process. We feel that the Alberta advantage is going to be of great assistance to the pork producers, with our low taxes, with our low energy costs, with our availability of land, with the tremendous opportunities that we have in agriculture. We think

that opportunities for the pork industry are amongst the best in all of the world right here in Alberta.

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

### Kindergarten Programs

MR. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Education is telling parents who can't afford ECS fees to talk to the boards and get some sort of waiver or other arrangement. In Calgary public 30 percent of the children in ECS are receiving waivers of their fees because parents can't afford the fees. This is costing the public board in Calgary almost a million dollars. Unfortunately, they can't continue this into the next school year. My question to the minister is: with your new funding framework for education will there be a category for fee waivers for ECS?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, in the funding framework that's been proposed by the implementation team, chaired by the Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti, there is a proposal which I think is a sound one, and that is that there will be basic funding provided for the offering of 200 hours of early childhood services, early childhood education. If a school board wishes in terms of consultation with its local community to provide additional hours, there will be flexibility, and that's one of the themes actually of our funding framework paper. There'll be the flexibility for them to offer more hours of instruction.

MR. HENRY: Mr. Speaker, I take that as a commitment of support for my Bill 227, which will allow school boards to offer a full 400-hour program using public money.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know why the minister told his own MLA advisory committee not even to think about recommending full funding for ECS programs in this province?

MR. JONSON: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. member across the way has read Bill 227, and that is not quite parallel to what I'm saying. I'm saying in the discussion paper I was referring to that we provide adequate funding for the offering of 200 hours of ECS, which is adequate to prepare students for entry into grade 1, and that if school boards wish to add to that amount in terms of their offerings in terms of child development and so forth, they're able to do so, but that will be part of their budgeting process and one of those things that they have to take responsibility for.

MR. HENRY: Well, I appreciate the information, but that's not the question I asked.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister to be specific and to tell us what mechanisms he's put into place to monitor the performance in grade 1 of those children who have 200 hours and those children who have 400 hours of kindergarten.

MR. JONSON: Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the hon. member across the way from Edmonton-Centre is now acknowledging that the research, the various studies that have been done over the years – and I could quote a number of them to him; I'm quite prepared to do that – have been inconclusive about the number of hours that are required to prepare students for entry into grade 1.

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

### Emergency Telephone Service

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table four copies of a resolution passed at the last PC convention which demonstrates that a provincially co-ordinated 911 service would not only save lives but also save \$19 million per year. This resolution is supported by a report that this government partially funded. Ironically the minister responsible for Alberta public safety services killed this proposal before it even got off the ground. My question is to the minister responsible for public safety. How can the minister justify personally killing this proposal that would have saved not only lives but 19 million in taxpayer dollars?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is so far off base it's not even funny. If she took the March 22 news release that I issued in regard to this, she'd know that's not true.

AN HON. MEMBER: We've got the report, Peter.

MR. TRYNCHY: Well, read it.

MRS. SOETAERT: I have a letter here dated June 23, Mr. Minister.

My second supplemental: when will the minister realize that public safety hinges on a comprehensive, provincewide 911 system, not the patchwork, inefficient system that we currently have?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I met with both the urban municipalities and the AAMD and C, and we took their recommendations. I have the news release that was presented on March 22 in regard to 911 service in Alberta, and they both agreed that they should work with AGT to provide that service to Albertans. This minister didn't kill anything. I support 911, but I certainly won't go against the wishes of the elected people of Alberta. I know that's the desire of the Liberals, but it sure is not the desire of this government or this minister.

MRS. SOETAERT: You should listen to the people in rural Alberta, Mr. Minister. They need 911.

How can the minister justify to the people of Alberta that he refused to implement 911, which would save lives and money? It's your responsibility.

MR. TRYNCHY: It's amazing, Mr. Speaker. I just mentioned that I met with the AAMD and C, rural elected people, and I followed their suggestions. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. minister wishes to complete his answer.

MR. TRYNCHY: Well, I would sure like to. I heard something about a kingdom.

Mr. Speaker, there are many ministers in this government that work the way I do in responding to local concerns from local elected people. That's what this government is all about. When the rural people of Alberta, through their councils, their elected MDs, counties, IDs, and special areas get together and request my assistance further than they have today, I will take it forward and work with them to make sure we have a system, but until they do, I will not overrule the people of Alberta that put us here.



### 2:30 Human Rights Commission

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Mr. Speaker, two years ago the Alberta Human Rights Commission handled 26,500 inquiries, and last year that figure jumped to 32,500, yet while complaints are increasing, government action seems to be decreasing. Inadequate funding, unfilled board positions, and insufficient staff have led to a dramatic backlog of 220 cases. These are clear indications that the commission's valuable work is being halted. To the minister responsible for the Alberta Human Rights Commission: why is the minister ignoring the recommendations of his own review panel and doing nothing about this huge two-year backlog?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue, because the backlog of cases being dealt with by the Human Rights Commission is a matter of serious concern. Both the Premier and myself have stated that we're very clearly committed to protecting human rights in this province. We are in a time of fiscal restraint, and there is in fact a backlog of approximately not 220 cases, as the member suggests, but about 280 cases. The priority of the commission at this time is to deal with that backlog.

Now, to deal with that backlog, there are a couple of things that have been done. First of all, in the month of September I appointed a new chief commissioner, who has a great deal of experience in dealing with dispute resolution. In his experience over the last six years he handled over 1,000 appeals dealing with matters before the Workers' Compensation appeal board and did in fact clear up the backlog that they experienced over at that commission and is now dealing with the backlog at this commission.

Furthermore, I've assigned five members of my staff, seconded from within the department, within existing budgets, to the Human Rights Commission for a period of about 18 months or longer, if it takes longer, to deal with the issue of the backlog until it's cleared up. All of the staff that have been selected have been selected by reason of the good work they've done within the department, and they're presently being trained in dealing with the mediation process in the Human Rights Commission disputes.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Is it the minister's plan to further dilute the Human Rights Commission by amalgamating it with any other bodies?

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are many suggestions out there that the proposals being made by the Community Development three-year business plan are to merge a number of different agencies. In fact, we believe that by merging a number of agencies, we can make a great deal of savings in the administration of these agencies. The agencies which are proposed to merger would include the Human Rights Commission, the Multiculturalism Commission, and the Advisory Council on Women's Issues. Really, at the end of the day, philosophically, all three of those agencies deal with the fair treatment of all Albertans in the province of Alberta, and that's what this government is interested in protecting.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Mr. Minister, what are you specifically going to do to help the 134 people who were discriminated against last year because of physical disabilities, the 110 people who were discriminated against because of their race or ancestry, and the 92 Alberta women who faced discrimination simply because they were pregnant? What changes will you make?

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, we're concerned with discrimination in all cases, regardless of what the basis of that discrimination is. Accordingly, one of the things that we think will help streamline the process is to introduce a greater role for early mediation in many of these disputes, whether they arise in situations of employer/employee relations or between landlords and tenants and such. But regardless of what the basis of the discrimination is, it's wrong, and that's what we're seeking to address.

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

### Police Services

MR. ZARIWNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The former Minister of Justice commissioned a report on the creation of a provincial police force. This report, known as the Hahn report, suggested that over \$9 million can be saved if policing is taken from the RCMP and given to a new provincial force. We know that several key areas like postgraduate training, training facilities for dogs, and special surveillance were neglected in the study. My first question is to the Minister of Justice. Can the minister explain to this Assembly the major recommendations of the report?

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hahn did prepare a report for my predecessor the then Minister of Justice. The minister then requested additional information on the efficiencies of the RCMP and the policing contract that we have with the RCMP currently, whether there are additional efficiencies that could be achieved if we had a provincial or a regionally based police force and a number of other issues to get a full and thorough picture of where we could improve the delivery of police services in the province of Alberta. That investigation is ongoing, and I expect to have a full report by the end of this year.

MR. ZARIWNY: Given that the RCMP in fact were asked for their comments, as the minister has indicated, will the minister commit to tabling in this Assembly their comments as well as the Hahn report?

MR. EVANS: Well, of course, Mr. Speaker. That's a very important issue for Albertans. We want to be very clear with Albertans as to policing and the enforcement of justice in the province of Alberta. I certainly intend to make all of those kinds of reports available to the public.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplemental?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

### Science and Research Authority

MS CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through the efforts of the former Deputy Premier the Premier has seen fit to dedicate a full ministry to science and research in Alberta. Despite the addition to cabinet there remain some grave concerns about the direction that scientific research in Alberta may be headed and who will be making the important decisions. To the minister of research and science: will the minister confirm that the new science authority under her control will not dictate to universities how they will have to spend their research dollars?

MRS. MIROSH: Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a good question, because we're working very closely with universities. This authority is not dictating anything. As a matter of fact, the

universities have come to us to work with us with regards to how we're going to develop research and how research will become a part of our economic drive.

MS CARLSON: Then perhaps you should share that information with the universities.

Since the minister has taken over authority for the Alberta Research Council, can the minister explain what the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat will be doing as chairman of this council to earn his additional \$11,000?

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, obviously that member is ill informed. The Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat is working very closely with me and with Dr. Church, who chairs the authority. I think the member, since she does live in Edmonton, should go to the University of Alberta and talk to Dr. Martha Piper and other professors there. We're working very closely together to develop a plan so that Alberta will be the research centre of Canada.

MS CARLSON: You can't justify duplication of services here. As the minister will you remove the redundant role of chairman of this council and save taxpayers' dollars?

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I think the member is very jealous because she can't be part of this team. As a matter of fact, the chair of the Alberta Research Council and I work together in developing research so that it can become part of the development into technology and into the economic sector, and the Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat is a very important part of this team.

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

#### 2:40 **Gaming Commission**

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently we have seen continued escalation of gambling throughout the province, the latest being the introduction of offtrack betting in the city of Calgary. To the minister responsible for lotteries: can the minister explain how the successful candidate was chosen to run the first offtrack facility in Calgary?

DR. WEST: Just as all the previous offtrack betting was chosen.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, is the minister saying that it's just a coincidence that that person selected is a member of the riding association of the Premier?

DR. WEST: Absolutely.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, is the minister prepared to table in this House a list of all other applicants that were considered and what their qualifications were?

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, there's an ongoing application process with the Gaming Commission and other organizations around gambling. I have to say that I've only been with this part of the portfolio for a short time, but I went over and I checked the gaming control board and the people that work over in the Brownlee Building, and I was totally impressed with their dedication and the calibre of individuals, most of them with 25, 35 years in law enforcement. They scrutinize all of the applications and all of the people involved in this to the nth degree. Any judgment of the process is a judgment of these individuals, and as

I said, many of them have long careers in the RCMP and other police forces in this province.

head: **Members' Statements**

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

#### **Grey Nuns Hospital**

MS CARLSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seven of my constituents who are grade 10 students from J. Percy Page high school recently wrote to me with their concerns about changing the Grey Nuns hospital to a community health centre. The following excerpts are direct quotes from their letters:

I feel that it is my duty as a young citizen to express my views on public concerns. I understand that cutting back on the hospital would help in getting rid of the debt, but there are other ways to raise money.

I have developed great concerns about our health care system. Will the Royal Alexandra Hospital be able to handle a large portion of the Grey Nuns emergencies this year if the Grey Nuns is changed into a Community Health Centre?

We've heard that there is not enough staff in the Hospital. We've heard from doctors who spend sleepless weekends trying to fit too many patients into too few beds; from patients who could not bear the ghastly filth in their rooms.

Many professional doctors have stated that the best help for a recovering patient is having their family with them. This becomes more difficult when such a long distance must be travelled.

This happened to the family of my friend. Their grandfather was ill and was staying at the U of A Hospital. He died in his hospital bed, alone, no family with him. The Hospital found a journal in his belongings. The journal read: "I miss the warmth I feel when my family is around. I wish they could be with me more often." The day he passed away his last entry read, "I need my family with me now. I know these are my last days. I wish they were here, I really wish I could tell them I love them."

The people of Mill Woods need our Hospital, not just for jobs, but for our health.

If saving money is more important than saving lives then I assure you that politicians supporting this will have a hard time getting re-elected.

Mr. Speaker, these students join more than 60,000 people who have signed a petition, more than 15,000 people who have rallied and marched twice, and the hundreds of people who have written letters urging the government to maintain the Grey Nuns as an active care hospital. We all need to know how it can be that money has priority over lives and that this government doesn't listen.

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

#### **Crowsnest Learning Centre**

MR. COUTTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Crowsnest Learning Centre located in Blairmore within the municipality of the Crowsnest Pass is an example of economic and educational initiative shown by my constituents. The society which operates the centre has taken a former hospital and transformed it into a residential facility offering educational and cultural experiences to local and international students.

Of particular interest at this time is the development of the Crowsnest Pass international school, a project of the Crowsnest Learning Centre Society. Due to their efforts along with the facility director, Mr. Phil Cann, and his staff and seed funding from the BIAC program, there is significant interest being shown

by Japanese educational institutions and corporations in the opportunities available at the centre. A delegation of officials led by Mr. Tanaka from the town of Hakushu, Japan, will visit the Crowsnest Pass from November 7 to 10, 1994. Local support by Mayor Frank Caprone and municipal council plus the local economic development committee under the direction of Mr. Cliff Reiling and the local chamber of commerce are welcoming this delegation this very afternoon. If successful, the resulting relationship could lead to the Crowsnest Pass becoming a designation for groups of schoolchildren who would learn about our culture, language, and environment.

Also under investigation is the possibility of the Crowsnest Learning Centre providing one or two years of university-level education in the field of engineering to the students from the Nippon Institute of Technology. The Crowsnest Pass is already a location of choice for the Japanese as the centre offers a life experience program. Since the program's inception in May of 1994, over 35 individuals directly from Japan have participated while in residence at the centre. I am pleased to report to this House the vision shown by my constituents and the opportunity that may be ours to teach and to learn from our international guests.

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

### Judicial System

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many Canadians are living in fear, especially children, women, seniors, and the handicapped, because they have been abandoned by our courts. It is scary for these people when we hear the Supreme Court say that it is excusable to rape a senior invalid woman in a wheelchair as long as you're drunk. Here in Alberta it is also excusable to beat your wife to a pulp as long as you're stoned out of your mind. Now you can also delay a breathalyzer test for hours while you wait for your lawyer as you sober up. It gets even scarier when you read in the press that a judge was quoted as saying that a man can only be walking home; he sees a set of hips and he helps himself. Another one was quoted as saying that many women would want to be raped at least once in their lifetime.

We have a big problem. Politicians are scrambling to make new laws to plug the loopholes. But the problem is not our laws. The problem is our courts and our judges. They make rulings that are contrary to the intent of the law. If some judges want to become lawmakers, maybe they should resign and run for office. This will only get worse until we change the process and the procedure by which we appoint people to the bench. We have to appoint respectable members of society who have a genuine concern for justice, who are prepared to protect the victim and the innocent and those who can least protect themselves, who are prepared to uphold our society's values.

Mr. Speaker, the judicial system is the only institution in the country that has a life of its own and directs its own destiny without being accountable to anyone. I, like many Canadians, am fed up to see some judges believe that they are little gods by themselves and answerable only to themselves. This has to change. Judges have to become accountable to society. Because we also have many respectable and good judges, I will close with the old saying: if the hat fits, you wear it; if it doesn't, you're okay.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Hon. members, before proceeding with the remaining points of order from yesterday and the

application under Standing Order 30, would there be unanimous consent to revert to Introduction of Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

**head: Introduction of Guests**  
**2:50 (reversion)**

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and to members of the House two trustees with the county of Parkland board of education who reside in and represent the town of Stony Plain. They're here on a working mission as part of their attendance at the ASBA conference. They are in the members' gallery, and I'd ask Marie Anstey and Diane Keller to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. SOETAERT: Not to be outdone, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask to introduce Sharon Munroe,\* the trustee from Spruce Grove.

**Point of Order**  
**Legislative Secretaries**

MR. SPEAKER: Arising from the Chair's ruling yesterday concerning answers in question period by nonministers, the Member for Redwater asked for clarification of this ruling. That member's concern relates to whether legislative secretaries can ask questions during question period.

To reiterate the Chair's earlier rulings: legislative secretaries are not members of Executive Council and like chairmen of standing policy committees can only answer within a very narrow scope. As they do not answer for the government, as do cabinet ministers, then legislative secretaries are able to ask questions during question period, as are all private members.

**Point of Order**  
**Sub Judice Rule**

MR. SPEAKER: Also yesterday, November 7, 1994, the Member for Redwater raised a point of order concerning the rule against asking questions about matters that are sub judice or, in English, before the court. The point of order arose from a question by the Member for St. Albert to the Minister of Municipal Affairs concerning certain actions brought against the government relating to wine stores.

The rule against asking questions on matters that are sub judice is found in Standing Order 23(g). Without reading the entire sub-rule, the essence is that it is not in order for a member to refer "to any matter that is pending in a court or before a judge for judicial determination." There is an additional requirement in order for the reference to be out of order: "where any person may be prejudiced in such matter by the reference."

The point of order raised yesterday relates to the application of the rule in civil matters, where there can be a lengthy passage of time between the commencement of an action and the trial, as indicated by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry yesterday.

In its report to the House the Select Special Committee on Parliamentary Reform recommended that the rule be changed with respect to civil matters so that it would be out of order to refer to any matter pending in a court or before a judge for judicial determination

\*This spelling could not be verified at the time of publication.

(ii) of a civil nature, that has been set down for trial or Notice of Motion filed, as in an injunction proceeding, until judgment or from the date of filing Notice of Appeal until judgment by an Appellate Court.

The report of the committee was concurred in by the Assembly on November 8, 1993.

The Chair is in a difficult position. The existing Standing Order is different from the rule that the committee has recommended to be followed. As the Chair understands the committee's recommendations, questions on a civil matter would not be out of order until the matter was set down for trial. If the committee's recommendations had formed amendments to Standing Orders, then there would be no dispute. The issue arises as to whether the Chair as the Assembly's servant should follow the committee's recommendations or the Standing Orders. It is the Chair's view that it cannot depart from the rules that members have sanctioned and adopted unless there is the clearest expression possible that those rules should not apply.

Therefore, it is the Chair's view that until such time as the committee's recommendations are transformed into amendments to the Standing Orders, then the Chair is obliged to continue to enforce the ruling against sub judice as it exists at present. Accordingly, the Member for St. Albert's question about the litigation was out of order. The Chair understands that a meeting of the committee is scheduled for November 30. The Chair hopes that the committee can make progress on its agenda and looks forward to the implementation of its recommendations to date.

The Chair would also point out that the question asked by the hon. Member for St. Albert which raised the issue was clearly in reference to Bill 51, which was before the Committee of the Whole at the time. That means that the Assembly has accepted the principle of the Bill at second reading. It also means that questions on the Bill are anticipatory. The section of the Bill which is of concern to the hon. Member for St. Albert could have been debated in committee. That would have been more effective.

Second, the matter was apparently before the courts. When a question alleges, as this one does, that government is using some form of coercion in a court proceeding, there is a very real possibility that someone's case will be prejudiced, hence the need for the sub judice application.

#### **Point of Order Imputing Motives**

MR. SPEAKER: One final point of order was raised by the hon. members for Edmonton-Mill Woods and Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert. Yesterday, November 7, 1994, in reply to a question from Edmonton-Mill Woods on the issue of academic tenure, the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development said: "I think that the hon. member is overreacting through some interest that he may have in this. I'm not sure." That appears at page 2850 of *Hansard*. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods and the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert raised points of order to the effect that the minister was saying that the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods was improperly motivated in raising the matter.

Having reviewed *Hansard*, the Chair is of the opinion that what the minister in effect said was that the member was reacting strongly because the matter meant so much to him, because he had a significant concern about the matter having held an academic position. We are all pretty sensitive about words like "self-interest" and "conflict of interest." However, the Chair did not take the minister's response to in any way imply that the hon.

member was in conflict of interest or was wrongly or badly motivated.

Again, having reviewed the record, the Chair is satisfied that no allegation of impropriety was made. If the Chair is wrong, and the minister was alleging unworthy motives on the part of the member, the Chair would expect the minister to make amends for that now.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, let me clarify that. I have the greatest respect for my critic across the way, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, and it certainly was not my intention to impute motives to the member.

#### **head: Request for Emergency Debate**

##### **Closure**

MS LEIBOVICI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak to the urgency of the matter before us. The matter is urgent for the government will tonight for the third time in as many working days invoke closure. In some jurisdictions closure is known as the guillotine procedure and is used with infrequency. Closure has the effect of limiting the rights of effective representation by stifling full and reasoned debate and so is generally used with discretion. Used without discretion, closure can become an abuse by a government, an attempt to push through legislation without adequate time for review.

In Alberta this government has used closure 16 times over a period of 15 months. Last week the government put the opposition on notice that they would continue this trend by invoking closure at all three stages of Bill 41. This, Mr. Speaker, is a highly unusual procedure which indicates this government's unwillingness to engage in meaningful debate. This matter is urgent because, as I indicated earlier, tonight this parliamentary procedure may once again be abused and closure evoked on third reading after perhaps only one or two hours of debate on Bill 41. As the closure motion itself is nondebatable, this afternoon is the only opportunity we will have to have a full and informed debate on the excessive use of closure by this government. I urge all members to support this motion.

Thank you.

3:00

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is required to rule on whether or not the request for leave is in order. Regretfully, the Chair's ruling is that the request is not in order for three basic reasons. This is in essence a debate on closure, which the hon. member herself has pointed out is not debatable under the Standing Orders of this Assembly, and if the Standing Orders say that it's not debatable, it is not debatable. The Chair doesn't feel that Standing Order 30 should be used as a method of getting around an existing prohibition in the Standing Orders.

Secondly, this may be an attempt to continue a debate on a point already decided when the Bill received second reading approval of the Assembly, and that would be infringing on Standing Order 23(f).

Thirdly, if the foregoing wasn't enough, the notice is really in anticipation of a debate of Bill 41, which by all indications is to be debated today, even by the advice of the hon. member in her remarks. Standing Order 23(e) would clearly say that this debate would be a more effective use of the time of the Assembly. Therefore, the Chair is required to rule that this application is not in order at this time.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Public Bills and Orders Other than  
Government Bills and Orders**  
head: **Third Reading**

**Bill 217  
Motor Vehicles Statutes Amendment Act, 1994**

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

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to move third reading of Bill 217. As you know, the Bill will ensure a greater degree of safety on our highways by tracking wrecked vehicles and also by ensuring that first-time registered vehicles in the province are safe. I would also like to point out that it does not in any way inhibit the ability of individuals or dealers or auction marts from performing legitimate business. In fact, it helps them by ensuring that they will not be unknowingly moving vehicles that are unsafe to be on the highway, and as a matter of fact, this Bill would support their activities very strongly.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank my colleagues on both sides of the House for their support of this Bill during second reading and in committee.

Thank you.

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take the opportunity to speak very briefly on the principle of the Bill. I didn't have the opportunity to do so during second reading and during committee stage. I first of all want to commend the member for bringing the Bill forward. He has recognized that there is a problem out there. That problem has been recognized previously, but up to now government has not successfully dealt with it. I think those of us that were here in the previous term will recall that the former minister responsible for consumer affairs brought forward a Bill, a proposal, in an attempt to deal somewhat with the problem of unfit cars on the highways within the province of Alberta. Because of the reaction – and I believe it was an overreaction – the Bill was killed, the proposal was killed, the white paper, whatever, was killed, and it was just buried.

More and more over recent years, Mr. Speaker, Alberta has become a graveyard for cars that simply would not be acceptable on the roads in other provinces like Ontario. This particular Bill will now give the government the basis to put into place proper regulations to ensure that those cars on the road are cars that are safe, cars that are fit to be on the road, and not cars that are going to contribute a danger to innocent Albertans.

On that note, I'll conclude, and again thank you.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion carried; Bill 217 read a third time]

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

**Bill 218  
Water Resources Amendment Act, 1994**

[Adjourned debate November 2: Dr. Oberg]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you. I was hoping that the hon. Member for Bow Valley would be here because we were both raised in the same area and he had talked about water from an entirely different approach than I had, Mr. Speaker. He'd talked about how important it was to irrigation and how important it is for life down there, and he was correct on that. Then he reached amazing conclusions. It was so important that it didn't need to have any controls, which is a huge intellectual leap even for an Ayn Rand booster or anyone else like that. I know that down where I come from, Mr. Speaker, it's just a little bit drier than where you were raised. I can recall that when I was quite young, we had a family dog reaching about 12 years of age and getting ready to go to the great beyond. My father took half a day off just to load it in the truck to take it all the way to Taber, about 40 miles away, so it could see a tree before it died. We realized then how short we are of water. To hear somebody say that something as important as that shouldn't be controlled is amazing indeed.

We're talking about potable water or, as the people up north always call it, 'pot-able' water. It varies on whether you read *Webster* or *Oxford*. *Oxford* is 'poatable;' Webster is 'pot-able.' As a geologist I spent a great deal of my time in north Africa and the Middle East looking for water. Unfortunately, over here I've looked for oil and I usually ended up with water, saltwater, a lot of saline water. Potable water is indeed probably the only limit to growth that Alberta might have. We talk about the huge increase in Alberta in meat packing and secondary processing after growing, and there no doubt is. As transportation gets cheaper to reach different spots of the world, you can manufacture and process farther and farther away from the consuming markets.

If you ever get a chance some day to look at a globe – let's say that every dot is 10,000 people – you'll notice that there are only a few areas in the world where the real big consumer markets are. They're in Pennsylvania, the eastern States area; Europe, from the Rhine up into England; and in Asia, from Japan down into Hong Kong and the upper Philippines. Those are the areas that are going to be the big consumers in the future. As a matter of fact, the minister of agriculture touched on it today when he talked about hog production being increased here.

All these things require water. It's absolutely heartbreaking, though I am an oil man, to see that nearly 40 percent of the water that we put down oil wells to try to chase the oil out is potable. You wonder what we're thinking of, because no self-respecting Arab or producer from the huge producing countries of the Middle East or north Africa would even think of putting water down to get out oil; in other words, melting down your gold to get copper. It's absolutely ridiculous, yet we do it here.

There's a good reason. As an oil engineer I can tell you why. Freshwater is already on the surface and with the hydrostatic head it has, it doesn't have to be pumped or pressured too much to push down into the ground. Most oil fields have aquifer water underneath them, so as the oil is pulled out, that gradually moves up. But if you pull the oil or the gas fast, the water doesn't move fast enough. So one of the ways is to repressure the reservoir by putting water down. Well, naturally the most logical water to put down into an oil field or a gas field is the water that is beneath the oil field, but that's down there about a mile in depth. You would have to drill a hole and pump it up somewhere else and then push it down. So, of course, it's much easier to take lakes and streams on the surface and put it down wells in order to pressurize the reservoirs.

**3:10**

The reason it is done is that the government's royalty laws – it's not those mean old oil companies or those mean old capitalists

coming in here. In this case, we're falling on our sword because our royalty regulations read that if you spend extra money and time to get water to repressure a reservoir, it comes off the cost of production and therefore you pay less royalty. So we in our wisdom many years ago decided we wanted the oil and gas so bad to build schools and roads and so on, legitimate reasons, that we would make it easy for people to use freshwater to get the oil out. That is one of the main reasons that the hon. Member for Bonnyville – and he's in an area where there's going to be increasing uses of water – is probably sponsoring this Bill. Now, of course, last year or so the Lord blessed us with some pretty good rainfall, so all these surface areas are acquiring a fair amount of water, and people are saying that it doesn't matter.

That's the thing that I have neglected to touch on. I just realized that I may have been thinking too fast on this for my own good. The water that you use to go down and chase out the oil becomes nonpotable once it is mixed with the saline salts in the oil down below and is very expensive to get out. It can be recycled to go back down, yes, but remember that you've got to put more into the formation because you've taken away a barrel of fluids and sold it as hydrocarbon. You have to not only separate the water that you use to chase up the oil, but you have to put another barrel down to make up for the fluids that you chased out. So you're continually, what we call, consumptively using water.

Now, that's entirely different from water that is sometimes used for cooling in electrical generation and gas plants. Because it's not a consumptive use, you can use the water over and over. But water that's used to chase out oil and gas cannot be used again. It becomes nonpotable and is usually disposed of in a well a few miles away, back into the huge Pacific and Atlantic oceans. We have fantastic amounts of saline waters at depth. Maybe some day in the years ahead – who knows? – some genius may find that it's even more valuable to us than oil and gas, but that's another day and another dollar. The fact is that we are not discovering more potable water. If the potable water we have on the surface or in the aquifers under the ground is brought up, it irrigates. It flows across the land, picks up saline salts, goes into the rivers and down to the Hudson Bay or the Arctic, or if you drive them down into the oil fields, they become contaminated with subsurface water. So it is not a complete cycle, and we should be working towards a complete cycle.

We also use freshwater quite often to save ourselves money on tertiary treatment for sewage. In fact, Edmonton sits astride the North Saskatchewan River, as Calgary does the Bow River, making it impossible to eat the fish for some numbers of miles downstream because they're not cleaning up their own sewage. This again is what preservation of water points to. We should be doing more on that. The city of London, for instance, Mr. Speaker, is on the Thames River. You're now able to catch fish that you can eat farther upstream from the mouth than in known history; in other words, even back at the time of Alfred the Great it was polluted worse than it is today. They are working in the line of recycling their sewage; in other words, zero effluent or zero impact. So what we need is a very, very strong water policy that potable water can only be used for drinking, and even then, after it has gone through our system, we try to pick it up and recycle it.

One of the things that bothers me most, coming from southern Alberta – and I'll go back to my little dog story, having to travel 40 miles to see a tree – is also the dangerous possibility that in the south, which we are developing so fast now with industry, where we have 80 percent of our population, we will have 80 percent of our industry and that has only 20 percent of our potable water. What this sort of free enterprise, devil take the hindmost, God is in his heavens, all's right with the world attitude, that I heard

from a few members over there, means is that we are painting ourselves into a corner of having to do gigantic water diversions from the north. Maybe they don't care. Maybe it doesn't matter. But I think that when you start playing with the environment and start diverting streams – because 80 percent of our potable water, Mr. Speaker, in this province flows into Athabasca and Peace River drainages. They are not in the Saskatchewan drainages. Yet 80 percent of the development and it would appear nearly 90 percent of our industry is there.

Now, if we go into agricultural processing – because it is close to the U.S., it is going to look down there, and nobody but nobody is looking at the limits of water. The system we use now is the law of capture or the old saying of who gets the water first gets it. No one is thinking down the line, and we're in a dangerous position of painting ourselves into a corner where the only water that we'll be able to get is pipelining it in from the Peace River country, pipelining it in from the Athabasca drainage area, and that has to concern me.

I'd think that this government might be looking at some sort of system that would try to push the industry up into the Athabasca and Peace River areas a little more rather than letting free enterprise decide where it'll go, because you'll run into the European problem where they found all the industry located in Paris and on the Rhine and in the Midlands, and then they had to bring in regulations to push it into Wales on the isle of Great Britain, into Bavaria in the German area, and into the south of France, the Pyrenees in the French area.

In other words, why wait until we run out of water in the south? Then you're either faced with gigantic relocation programs and incentives to try to get them to where the other water drainages are or pipeline the water or divert the water, whatever you want to call it, through a system of diversions. Any engineer can tell you that you can come all the way from Yukon to Los Angeles if you want to just divert headwaters. Why get ourselves into that box? This is one of the things that bothers me.

I see that the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat comes from the same area as me. We just criticized him earlier today for picking up money for being in science and research and wondering what he had to do. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this would be a lovely thing for him to tackle, a good free enterprise, profit-oriented system of utilizing our potable water to the best abilities in Alberta rather than, as we're doing now, letting the oil industry get away with putting it down holes and, secondly, letting new industry get away with coming in and locating where it is cheaper to ship to the U.S. with the idea that as long as they're first, who cares about who's second, who cares about who's third? I think the economics could be looked at, and I think – it's not socialism – there's a good free enterprise way, as Europe found, to relocate and put industries where the water is rather than letting them concentrate where they are now, because in the long run the cost to society, the cost to people, is terrific.

Every industry hopes that they'll be the first one that can get in there and make their money for 20 years. Then when the plant has to be depreciated and go back to zero, get on and let somebody else worry about it. But somebody has to worry about it. This government has to worry about it. That's why I recommend supporting so strongly the Bill introduced by the Member for Bonnyville. It should kick-start within this government studies by people on just what we're going to do for water in the future, because if there is a limit to growth in Alberta, if there is a limit to wealth, it is not our oil and gas, it is not our people, it is not our education, and it's not even our politicians. They're bad enough; they're a big enough anchor. It's the limit to potable freshwater.

Thanks.

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

3:20

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to follow my namesake over there. Water is very important to southern Alberta. If you go past a line from Bassano north and come south of that line, you live in a very different environment than you do north of that line, an environment in which water is precious, an environment in which water is in short supply. You only have to arrive in the Cypress area in the summer, August, and you'll see that the grass is mostly brown. There's not an adequate supply of rainfall, so we depend on water.

Mr. Speaker, the government already has a major review of the Water Resources Act under way. The members opposite don't seem to recognize this. I'm not sure if they don't pay attention or don't attend the meetings, but that Act review is already under way. In fact, on November 16, I believe, the meeting will be held in Medicine Hat, and they're having these meetings right across the province to talk about water and the way we utilize water within the province. So this Act is premature.

AN HON. MEMBER: What?

DR. L. TAYLOR: The Act is premature. Maybe six months from now we might want to look at it again or a year from now, but let's wait until we have the public consultation. Let's wait to see what the public is telling us, and this is typically the Conservative way. We bring something out, we consult with Albertans, and we listen to Albertans. It's antithetical to what the Liberals want to do, which is government from the top down.

The discussions on the existing Act and the public meetings that are going on are based on a discussion paper called *Water Management in Alberta: Challenges for the Future*, and this is exactly what the member opposite was discussing. He was discussing and asking for consideration of what the future needs for water are. I'm sure the member can read, but he must not have read or even looked at the title of this. I remind him once again: *Challenges for the Future*. That is the starting process for this whole discussion and public meeting process that is happening. In fact, the paper says that the Water Resources Act was primarily designed to license the consumptive uses of water and is not effective at recognizing that certain flow quantities are necessary to maintain the overall health of rivers. Once again, the member opposite pointed to that very fact. I encourage him to read the document. I encourage him to be part of the process.

Another part of the discussion paper touches on the South Saskatchewan River basin water management policy. This policy outlines some perceived limits to irrigation expansion in southern Alberta. Once again that is what the member was arguing for. Read the submissions. Be part of the process.

I must say that Bill 218, the proposed Bill, is silent on issues that pertain to irrigation farming, and for that reason, the Bill is incomplete. From irrigation in southern Alberta, Mr. Speaker, we produce 20 percent of the agricultural production of this province, and that 20 percent of the agricultural production comes from only 4 and a half to 5 percent of the land. That is the power of irrigation. Southern Alberta cannot survive without irrigation. In fact, we need more irrigation. I personally would like to see a dam built at Empress and back the South Saskatchewan up so that we can have more irrigation and open a vast area for irrigation within Alberta. We can already produce 20 percent of our products from only 4 and a half percent of the land, and this is one reason I simply can't support Bill 218. It's a northerner's perspective on southern Alberta, and quite frankly, we need an

understanding of what's happening in southern Alberta. We need an understanding of what's happening in our irrigation districts. Bill 218 does not address that issue.

The Bill, as well, calls for the creation of a newly formed water conservation technical advisory committee. I wonder what the acronym would mean. Perhaps the opposition has not noticed that we're in the process of making government smaller, not larger. We're in the process of getting government out of the faces of people, and if there's anything that I've heard since I've been elected, it's let's reduce the size of government. [interjections] Bill 57, exactly. Bill 41. Reduce the size of government. This Act is more or less the typical Liberal way of doing government. It's to increase the size of government. Increase the number of bureaucrats. Increase the cost to the taxpayers. That is in fundamental opposition to the way we as a government are doing business. We're in the business of decreasing the size of government, decreasing the number of bureaucrats, and decreasing the number of committees. That's the position of this government and will continue to be the position of this government.

The Bill ignores a number of issues that the public thought were of great importance in the consultative process, which once again indicates to me that the member opposite has paid no attention to the process of consultation. We listen and we change and we care. I'm wondering: does the Member for Bonnyville disagree with the consultative process? Does he have his own agenda? Does he want to starve southeastern Alberta out of the irrigation business? Has the member even been involved in the process? I would challenge him to respond to some of those questions. [interjections] I notice the members opposite are calling for a point of order. I'm certainly willing to address a point of order.

I move from agriculture to the oil business. The Bill calls for a permanent freeze on the issuing of licences to petroleum companies who need to use potable – and I say 'pot-able' as opposed to 'poatable' – water for oil field injection after drilling. This is simply not an acceptable method, and it's not feasible as well. [interjection] Well, I can't say that. Then I would have a point of order. As well, current licence holders for oil field injection will only be able to renew those permits for one year up to four times. In other words, this Bill would phase out all licences for potable water for oil field injection.

I would ask the members opposite and the member that spoke previously on this matter: does he not recognize what the major generator of wealth is in Alberta today? Does he not recognize who's paying a large percentage of bills in Alberta today? Does he not recognize who's paying for the education, the roads, the health care, a large percentage that is maintaining our standard of living in Alberta that is so much higher than any other standard in the rest of the country? He should, Mr. Speaker, be cognizant of that fact. He was in the oil industry for many years, and I'm disappointed that a member of his age and experience would call for these foolish measures. So we simply can't support the Bill for that matter as well.

Bill 218's potential does serious harm to the petroleum industry. It does not address the needs of the agricultural sector. Mr. Speaker, we have a recipe for disaster, a disaster administered by the Liberals.

Now, there are two staples of the Alberta economy – agriculture and energy – and this Bill completely and totally ignores the needs of both. So, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all members of this House, including members on the opposite side, to give this Bill a sober second thought and not just vote because it happens to be a Liberal Bill and you want to leap to your feet and support this. Think of this Bill. Many of you have oil development in your area. No, most of you are urban members. You

don't. Perhaps you can understand the benefits of the oil industry to Alberta, and I know that it is more difficult for you urban members on the opposite side to understand the benefits of agriculture to Alberta, but it is of great benefit. It does generate many jobs and a great deal of income for Albertans. So I encourage all of you on the opposite side to reject this Bill. Vote with your minds, not your hearts as you tend to vote, and think about this Bill. Think of the consequences that you will have . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair sincerely regrets to have to interrupt the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat but would point out that the time allowed for consideration of this item at this time has expired and we're required to move on to the next.

Before the next item of business is called, the Chair is wondering whether there might be unanimous consent in the Assembly for the introduction of guests.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

**head: Introduction of Guests**  
**3:30 (reversion)**

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. members. The Chair is pleased to introduce to the Assembly several school board trustees from school divisions in the constituency of Drumheller who are attending the Alberta School Boards Association annual convention in Edmonton. It's my understanding that the school divisions of Three Hills, the county of Wheatland, and Drumheller have proposed amalgamation into one region under the name of the Golden Hills school division. From the county of Wheatland are Mr. Ron Hansen, chairman, with Superintendent Garry McKinnon, trustees Shirley Reinhardt, Linda Storkson, Burt Adrian, who is the secretary-treasurer. Representing Drumheller are trustees Karen Harries, Heather McLean, and Secretary-Treasurer Linda Peters. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

**head: Motions Other than Government Motions**  
**Motor Vehicle Rear Mud Flaps**

518. Moved by Mr. Tannas:  
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to amend the Highway Traffic Act to require mandatory rear mud flaps on all motor vehicles that travel on public roads.

[Debate adjourned November 1]

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I would call for the question on Motion 518.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion lost]

**Charitable Donation Tax Credit Incentives**

519. Moved by Mr. Doerksen:  
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to improve the fund-raising climate for

charitable organizations in Alberta by providing tax credit incentives for donations.

MR. DOERKSEN: Mr. Speaker, Motion 519 will simply prove to be one of the best motions to ever be introduced into this House. This government has placed a great emphasis on the need for greater community action and involvement. At a time when we are redefining government's role in the day-to-day lives of Albertans, we are indirectly asking nonprofit and community-based organizations to take on greater responsibilities within their communities. I encourage and am a strong advocate of government getting out of the day-to-day lives of Albertans and having the community take on a greater role. Each and every Albertan as members of a local community has a moral obligation to participate and actively assist others who are less fortunate or are in need.

Government cannot and should not be expected to be involved in every aspect of Albertans' lives. Instead, individuals should take on a greater role in helping others. Motion 519 is about creating an environment in which Albertans can take on that greater role. While many choose to support community and nonprofit organizations through voluntary activity, many do not have the time to volunteer and their only option is to donate dollars or goods and services. This motion is about providing individuals with the incentive to give and about enhancing the means of nonprofit organizations, community associations, and other charitable groups to take on greater responsibilities within their respective communities.

When I had this motion drafted some months ago, it received very positive response from organizations and individuals within the Red Deer-South constituency. The Red Deer chapter of the Schizophrenia Society of Alberta, the Red Deer Food Bank Society, the Red Deer branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society, the Red Deer and district branch of the Canadian Diabetes Association, and the district United Way board of directors contacted me with their support. They recognize the tremendous benefit that increased incentives for charitable contributions would bring.

Currently the federal government provides tax credits for charitable donations in the order of 17 percent on the first \$250 and 29 percent on any amount over \$250 to a maximum of 20 percent of net income. While Alberta does not provide direct tax credits for charitable donations, Alberta indirectly provides credits because provincial income tax is based on basic federal income tax. If you complete the calculations for an individual in Alberta who has a taxable income of \$29,000 to \$59,000 and who contributes \$250 a year, the forgone tax revenue by the province amounts to \$5, or .2 percent. Consider a more generous individual, one who, say, donates \$4,000 per year. The forgone tax revenue in Alberta amounts to \$134, or 3.3 percent.

There is a concern by many individuals and charitable organizations that political contributions receive greater tax credit advantages than charitable donations. Political contributions at the federal level receive tax credits in the order of 75 percent on the first \$100, 50 percent on the next \$450, and 33 and a third percent on the amount over \$550 to a maximum tax credit of \$500.

In Alberta political contributions receive a tax credit in the order of 75 percent up to \$150, 50 percent on the next \$675, and 33 and a third percent on any amount above \$825 to a maximum tax credit of \$750. On a dollar-per-dollar basis political contributions . . .

MR. DINNING: Shame.



MR. DOERKSEN: And the Treasurer is agreeing with my statement as I'm speaking.

. . . receive substantially more favourable treatment from governments than charitable donations. Under the present system if my charitable donations for the year were \$250, my income tax would be reduced by \$16. If I were to make that same donation and receive the tax credit provided for political contributions in Alberta, my income tax payable would be reduced by \$143. The government should use its control over the taxation system to provide an incentive to donate in Alberta. The inequity is real and must be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to explain for the benefit of all members of this House the potential impact that incentives for charitable donations can make in our communities. By increasing incentives for donations, lost tax revenue has a leveraging effect whereby every dollar lost through tax credits has the potential to generate \$3 to \$5, depending on the formula for charities in this province.

The impact that charitable donations have on Albertans' day-to-day lives is enormous. We are well aware of the value that organizations such as the United Way, the Red Cross, our local community league, pregnancy care centres, and many others too numerous to mention have on our lives. By enhancing the environment for charitable donations, we are empowering these organizations to take on a greater role in society. By encouraging individuals to contribute to such organizations, these organizations will be led to provide more services at the local level rather than at a distance by a slower and less responsive government.

Individual donors will be given the choice to direct their dollars to the organizations that they support rather than relying on the government to distribute it for them. As is the case with business, the government should not be picking the winners and losers among charitable and nonprofit organizations in Alberta. Albertans should be making those choices for themselves.

Furthermore, by empowering the individual with choice, a degree of accountability is imposed on the charitable organizations seeking those dollars. Organizations will be required to open up their programs to public scrutiny and prove that donations to their organization will be spent in an appropriate manner and in a way that will provide maximum benefit to the community.

The argument against providing tax credit incentives is simple. To create additional tax credits to those already in place would erode Alberta's tax base. At a time when this government is reducing its spending and restructuring programs and services, can we afford to reduce spending to make up lost revenue? The answer is clear: we can't afford not to.

This government presently commits \$125 million a year through the lottery fund, picking winners and losers amongst the province's many charitable and nonprofit organizations. While this is not tax revenue, it is still government collecting and redistributing dollars from Albertans. Why not let Albertans, empowered by their own ability, choose through their own donations, through a new system of tax credit incentives for charitable donations. For example, there are approximately 1.8 million tax returns filed in Alberta. If Alberta were to put in place a tax credit, apply it in the same manner as the political contributions tax credit, at a rate of 25 percent up to \$250, and each individual who filed a return donated \$250, we would raise \$450 million for those organizations. The Alberta government would forfeit \$112 million in tax revenue. This \$112 million in lost revenue could be easily covered from lottery funds, and it would have no impact on our plan to balance the budget, Mr. Treasurer. While forgoing \$112 million, charitable organizations benefit to the tune of \$450 million. That's leverage.

3:40

Mr. Speaker, income tax credits for donations are not the only means available to enhance the fund-raising climate for charitable organizations. In discussing this motion with individuals, I was introduced to two unique mechanisms with great potential for charitable organizations. Research mutual funds offer unique opportunities for individual Albertans to play a key role in research and development in terms of helping others and their environment. The government could make tax credits available to individuals who invest in mutual funds set up to fund research, for instance the Alberta Lung Association. The investor could be given a credit for a portion of the original investment and further credits if the fund earned a financial return. Such a mechanism empowers the individual through choice and can translate into less reliance on funding from government. The individual wins through the opportunity to give, charitable organizations who fund research of various types win through increased funding, and the government wins by reducing spending or redirecting dollars to other programs.

Another mechanism with great potential to enhance charitable donations from Alberta business is debt swaps. Tax credits could be made available to companies who give outstanding accounts receivable to charitable organizations for collection. The charitable organization, then, makes arrangements to collect on the account either through payment or by receiving goods and services from the company or individual in default. Debt swaps are a complicated transaction, but the idea has merit.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is a positive message. I believe Albertans would welcome such incentives and respond accordingly. I urge the Provincial Treasurer to consider implementing such incentives as he prepares his next budget, and I know that he will give it the consideration that it deserves.

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

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to make a few brief comments with regard to Motion 519 as advanced by the member opposite from Red Deer-South. I congratulate him on bringing forward something as important as this, that stands to benefit so many very hardworking organizations and the volunteers who are dedicated to their various causes. There isn't a person in this House that would not agree with the items brought forward in support of this motion by the Member for Red Deer-South. The members on this side of the House are very pleased that he has brought it in.

The one area that I want to comment on briefly, however, is: what's really propelled the need for this motion to have been crafted in the first place? I suspect that it's a combination of things, but at the head of the list surely must be some of the activities that the government has undertaken lately that would cause these charitable organizations to seek further incentives from the government through such a motion. It seems that the downloading effect is seeing its way all the way down to some of these hardworking volunteer groups in a very serious way.

We already know, Mr. Speaker, that there's an extremely competitive environment out there for these so-called donor dollars. We see it in every aspect of our society today. I never thought I would see the day when we would have so many hospitals and hospital boards clamouring for licences to run house raffles or schools asking to run raffles for dream homes and increased activity in selling chocolates. It seems that everywhere you turn now these organizations, that are very fundamental, the underpinnings of our society, are scrambling for dollars as a result of poorly planned cuts by the government opposite.

Nonetheless, in spite of that, these volunteers who serve such noble causes as the Red Cross, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Kidney Foundation, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, the Cancer Foundation, and so on need this kind of incentive sometimes to carry on. These volunteers, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, spend hours and hours every day, every week, every month trying to balance their books, trying to raise the funds necessary for the important work done by these organizations I've just mentioned.

Not long ago, Mr. Speaker, we were also involved in projects funded out of Alberta that benefited very unfortunate children in Ukraine through the Alberta Ukrainian Commemorative Society. We have seen that kind of helping hand go out as a result of these types of incentives.

We're in full support of this motion on this side. I hope that as the government goes about deciding whether it's going to vote for or against the Member for Red Deer-South, they will keep in mind that there is a shrinking donor dollar out there, that there is a tremendous competition for this dollar. Everything and anything that we can do to increase the revenue flow for these types of charitable not-for-profit organizations we should all stand in support of.

The tax credits that the Member for Red Deer-South referred to I don't think need to be recounted here. However, I would propose, with the member's concurrence, that he and all members here consider a friendly amendment, Mr. Speaker, to Motion 519. The simple fact here is that there already exist tax incentives in the province of Alberta. The friendly amendment would simply be to add the word "further" after the word "providing" so that we would be able to provide further tax incentives. The thrust of the amendment does not in any way, shape, or form take away from the impact of the member's original motion, and I'm hopeful that he will be receptive to this warm and friendly amendment, which I am now going to circulate.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I want to just reiterate one point here from the standpoint of what charities already do, and that is that they rely heavily on things such as bingo and raffles to raise the funds necessary to carry on. We have seen recently the introduction by the government of the VLTs, the video lottery terminals. There is significant outcry right now from the public involved in some of these benevolent organizations suggesting that the rushed attempt by the government to implement these VLTs has had a devastating effect on the fund-raising efforts of these benevolent organizations in many cases. As such, I would ask that the government please review its policy on VLTs, including what it is that the government intends to do with those profits.

The Member for Red Deer-South has said that a portion of lottery moneys could in fact be moved and made available to some of these charities. The VLTs seem to be generating a lot of excitement in the province and a lot of revenues, and I would hope that the government in its wisdom would consider some proper and different applications for those lottery dollars such that the many, many benevolent organizations, many of whom I have not listed here, Mr. Speaker, would have a chance to participate in those revenues and benefit from Alberta's own dollars.

With that, I would take my leave now and ask for consideration of the amendment as presented.

[Two members rose]

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

MR. HLADY: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad that you'll follow good protocol and stay with an order that has been set. Thank you again.

I very much, Mr. Speaker, intend to support the intent of this motion. At face value Motion 519 is about enhancing the fund-raising climate for charitable organizations in Alberta. If you look a little bit deeper, this motion is also about empowering the individual to make a choice about living up to one's moral obligation to help others. It is unfortunate that we need to put incentives in place to encourage people to donate to charitable causes within their communities. We have many communities that I believe most of the people inside this room belong to. We all have our church, our sport organizations, and other things that we find, and those are overlapping communities that we do try to support to the best of our abilities.

3:50

Because government at all levels taxes so much, individuals are forced to place their dollars where the return on investment is the greatest. We would all be mistaken if we thought that by sweetening the pot, increased tax credit incentives alone would result in millions of dollars of new cash being pumped into the charitable community. Incentives alone are not the answer. Individuals need to recognize and accept a greater responsibility for the well-being of themselves and others within their community.

At present there is a tendency to rely on government to be the grand arbiter of where taxpayer and lottery dollars are directed to assist charitable and nonprofit organizations around this province. Albertans are cut out of the loop as far as the decision-making process is concerned. Government bureaucracy massages the funds, consuming valuable dollars through the cost of administration, and makes the final decision of who the winners and losers are among the numerous nonprofit and charitable organizations in Alberta today. As a society we have allowed government to grow well beyond what should be considered a reasonable size. To some people government appears as a vast reservoir of power or money, and they lay grand plans for what that power and money can be used for. That's not necessarily true, Mr. Speaker, but what happens is that that is the perception out there right now. If we give the power back to the people and allow them to put the money where they feel it's best used in a direct way, I think we will see a more effective use of money.

Mr. Speaker, I like to think of myself as one of many, perhaps one of a majority of Albertans who reject this bad view of government, possibly. Our wants are not so humble that we prefer the promise of provided abundance to the opportunity for choice and personal responsibility. We prefer a government that remains neutral and takes no sides and allows each individual to pursue their own course. We believe that through our own action we can invoke change and enlightenment.

Government should not be making decisions as far as funding to charitable and nonprofit organizations are concerned. Instead they should facilitate an environment in which the individual is empowered to make their own choice. There is also an element of efficiency involved. Dollars raised through lotteries and taxation are filtered through many layers of bureaucracy, and that bureaucracy costs money to operate. Valuable dollars are consumed in gathering and redirecting the moneys. Those departments and agencies consume more dollars through the process of redistribution. By the time the moneys are received by the various charities or nonprofit organizations, we have lost a good percentage of every dollar going to the charitable organizations.

Motion 519 has the potential to solve these problems or at least help us in becoming more efficient with our dollars. Individuals are empowered through a system of incentives to take on a greater and more direct role in providing assistance to charitable organizations. The individual makes the choice of where their dollars go.

Government no longer picks the winners and losers, and valuable dollars are not wasted in administrative costs. Charitable and nonprofit organizations receive more dollars to deliver to programs and services that benefit the community. The process is more transparent, and more accountability is established between the individual and the organization that they support. Government no longer acts as the middleman. Lottery and tax dollars can be redirected away from these charitable organizations and used to fund core programs, possibly, if we find that there is the ability to have those excess funds.

The Member for Red Deer-South brought forward a very good point with regards to the leveraging effect that tax credits could have on charitable and nonprofit organizations in Alberta. Under his example a 25 percent tax credit up to \$250 would cost the government approximately a maximum of \$112 million. For every dollar lost in revenue, \$4 would be generated for charitable and nonprofit groups in Alberta, a leveraging effect of 4 to 1, bringing in the area of \$450 million of revenues for nonprofit and charitable organizations. This system has a cost to government. It also has a cost to the individual. The key is that the individual receives an incentive in the form of a tax credit and the satisfaction of fulfilling their moral obligation to assist others within their community.

I noted with interest the example that my colleague from Red Deer-South provided in regards to the tax credits currently in place for charitable donations and political contributions. On a donation of \$250 Albertans receive a reduction in their taxes of \$16, whereas that same contribution to a political party results in a tax reduction of \$143.75. Sixteen dollars versus \$143.75 is very shocking. This alone should provide enough incentive for members in this Assembly to support this motion.

In concluding my remarks, Motion 519 is about the more effective and efficient use of dollars directed towards charitable and nonprofit groups in Alberta. It is based on the principles of individual choice and of government getting out of the day-to-day lives of Albertans.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [interjection] No, you're still not one of us.

Mr. Speaker, Motion 519 is a reasonable motion. When I heard the member who sponsored the motion begin speaking on it, he talked about community action and involvement. He talked about the nonprofit sector or the community-based organizations taking on a greater role. Of course, we know that particularly in the human services this country and this province have a tremendous history of a mixed economy of service provision and program support in a whole array of services, whether they be in schools, in communities, in sports and athletic settings, in correctional settings, in a whole variety of pursuits.

Certainly enhancing the tax credit for charitable donations and impacting on that environment, where people are constantly being torn between a variety of competing appeals for who they can give their precious few charitable dollars to, makes some sense, but I would hope that the motion would indeed go further. The last member was talking about the deeper meaning and significance of this motion, and I agree that this motion does speak to some underlying issues. Those issues have to do with the kind of relationship that a government wants to have with its citizenry and the kind of relationship that the citizens want to have not just with government but with nongovernment organizations as well.

It's been said, Mr. Speaker, that there is an essential grace on the part of government in the support of charitable enterprise, that in fact one of the things that government can do and only government can do is extend a hand to charitable organizations and the nonprofit sector and encourage and nurture that sector so that it can in fact be a balance to the awesome might that government has so that government in fact can provide support in a secure environment for charitable organizations to flourish and to do the work that they can do so well.

Mr. Speaker, there can be no argument about the importance of voluntarism, about the importance of charity in our society. There are many, many significant examples that can come to mind quickly, whether it be the Calgary Olympics or whether it be the people of Edmonton rallying around the tornado victims of a few years back. We've seen tremendous relief and aid and enhancement brought to our society as a result of charitable enterprise and volunteer effort.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many ways that the government can exercise that essential grace, and I would hope that this motion causes the government to think about some of those other ways. For example, there are many charitable and not-for-profit organizations that reside within facilities operated or owned by public works. These organizations typically are only asked to pay a nominal rent, sometimes rent as low as a dollar a year. As nice as that is, all of those organizations are under threat of eviction. Most of their leases speak to 30 days or 90 days at the most, unilateral eviction on the part of public works saying to the tenant: sorry; you're out. Most of these organizations scramble every day for their operating funds, and this lack of certainty just adds to the rather shaky nature of their operations.

I would hope that the government could see their way clear not just to enhancing the tax environment, but perhaps they could enhance the overall environment for these organizations and extend to them the courtesy of leases that will bind both parties to tenancy for a period of time, would guarantee some certainty, and would not constantly put these organizations at risk of not only being thrown out on the street, as if that weren't bad enough, but in fact being shut down, because without a place to operate, without an office, without a place to receive clients or carry on business, these organizations simply couldn't exist.

4:00

Mr. Speaker, the Wild Rose Foundation is of tremendous help to the charitable, the nonprofit sector, and this organization has funded many, many worthwhile projects. I believe members on both sides of the House can be proud of the Wild Rose Foundation and of many of the initiatives of the Wild Rose Foundation, in particular their vitalized series of conferences which really speak to the heart of voluntarism.

Mr. Speaker, the Wild Rose Foundation itself could be much more active in building partnerships, in providing, again, an economic environment for the charitable sector and for the voluntary sector where they are not seen as being competitive, where they're not being pitted one against another, where one set of charitable good is being pitted against another set of charitable need. The Wild Rose Foundation could be seen as the glue that holds the voluntary sector together, instead of just simply being seen as a source of competitive revenue and that once every three years, if you're lucky enough, your application will somehow rise to the top, and then you'll get the blessing of the foundation.

Mr. Speaker, as the government moves along the path to privatization, as the government moves along the path of down-loading, many community organizations are finding themselves

burdened to the point that they can no longer carry on their traditional work. There are many organizations which were developed and which gave spirit to that essential grace, and that spirit is now being threatened because these organizations, which were trying to meet community needs based with community dollars, are now being forced by government to take on more and more of what has traditionally been the government's own role.

What's worse, Mr. Speaker, is that these organizations are being constrained in how the dollars flow. As the tax environment chokes off the ability of ordinary Albertans to give to charity to the extent that they would, the organizations that would normally be able to attain funds through charitable appeals now have to turn and depend somehow on the goodwill, if there is any, of government to extend to them some kind of contract dollars.

Now, these dollars often come to these charitable organizations in one of three ways. They can come in the form of discretionary grants, and I can tell you that that is the most coveted of all government funding from government to an organization but also the most rare. It's become the most rare in the name of accountability. Somehow, Mr. Speaker, these same community organizations which the government has held out to be models and the government has called on and the Premier himself has called on to take up the slack left by government cuts – all of a sudden the funding arrangements would suggest that the government doesn't trust these community organizations. By not giving them discretionary grants, they're being told that they're not accountable, and I think that's a shame.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

There's another form of funding that comes to these nongovernment organizations, and that's through something typically known as contribution agreements, where the organization or agency in question will have a project or an initiative or a service that's already under way, that's an ongoing service and is already meeting identified needs in the community, and then the government will somehow become involved as a partner. Now, that's good, Mr. Speaker, but the problem is that these contribution agreements are usually held out as a bit of a club. If you want us to contribute, the government will often say to an organization, then you have to change your objectives. You have to change how you do business. You have to change how you structure your services. If you want any of our money – it doesn't matter whether it's a majority of the money – if you want any tax dollars put into this initiative, then you're going to have to do it our way. Certainly we've seen the threats to arts organizations and to theatrical organizations, and I think that's a shame, because that erodes that essential grace.

Thirdly, there's the most restrictive of all government funding coming to nongovernment and to charitable organizations, and that's what's known as fee for service. That's when the government views the charitable sector not as voluntary effort, not as representing charity, not as community enterprise but in fact as just another service provider, just another vendor out there in a whole array of vendors doing the government's bidding based on the dollars that the government wants to put into it.

Now, these fee-for-service arrangements, these fee-for-service contracts have seen many good services indeed come to the people of Alberta, but they restrict and choke off the innovation that we often find in the voluntary sector, in the charitable sector. We see these fee-for-service contracts again, Mr. Speaker, taking away much of the initiative, much of what it is that community organizations are all about, because what you find after a while is that as your funding base erodes to the point where you're

dependent on these fee-for-service contracts, you have to chase that dollar, you have to chase that buck. You have to find out what it is that the government is doing as they roll out their rolling business plans. As a voluntary organization you have to adjust to that changing landscape all the time, and you have to constantly renegotiate your position with the government. That political economy that's been created by seeing the voluntary sector simply as another vendor changes the whole relationship and I say threatens that essential grace.

Mr. Speaker, the fee-for-service contracts as well are typically only on an annual basis. Sometimes they're on an annual basis to the tune of millions of dollars, and sometimes they're on an annual basis for decades, but the government still refuses to go into multiyear contracting to give any certainty, to say to the organization: "Yes, in fact you are a partner. You're a valuable partner, and we would like to be able to count on each other. We would like to be able to redirect funding to you in such a way that there is a stable environment, that we know we can count on you and we know that Albertans can count on you. Therefore, we're going to restructure the way that we think about you, and we're going to treat you as a true partner. We're going to invite you to the table as a true equal, not simply as a vendor to do our bidding when it suits us."

So Motion 519 – the hon. member who sponsored the motion stood up and with great fanfare said: this will be the most important or the best motion to come to the Assembly. You know, it is a darn good motion, and I hope that it does get support. I think the amendment certainly helps the motion become more clear, and the amendment certainly enhances the motion.

Beyond the words of the motion itself and beyond the amendment, Mr. Speaker, it is very important that if this government wants to rely on the private sector, the charitable sector, the voluntary sector the way that it says it does, and if they want that sector to thrive and they want that sector to be nourished, then I would certainly hope that all members, particularly the front bench government members, think about what it is that's happening in the voluntary sector and are sensitive to those funding issues and to the environment, that they do the right thing, that they sit down with the charitable sector and they find out what the constraints are, they find out what the barriers are and remove them, and they work in a co-operative way instead of just using those government tax dollars as a bit of a carrot or, even worse, as a bit of a club.

Thank you.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, in rising to make comment on Motion 519, put forward by my erstwhile, eminent colleague from Red Deer-South, I wanted to make some comments on this motion. Despite the overwhelmingly compelling arguments put forward by my colleague from Red Deer-South, despite my support for the work done by the hundreds if not thousands of volunteer-driven organizations in this province, and despite my admiration for the fine research that was done on this motion by Greg Moffatt, I feel compelled to speak in opposition to this motion.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work done by associations and volunteer-driven entities such as the Alberta Lung Association, the Alberta cancer society. I think of the Youth Emergency Shelter here in Edmonton. I could even think of my colleague in his association with the John Howard Society. I think of work done in the constituency of Calgary-Lougheed by William Roper Hull family and child services. I think of Rotary clubs and service clubs around the province, indeed around the world. They carry out absolutely essential and vital work in support of the community.

I would echo the comments from the Member for Edmonton-Glenora that this is not an area where you can simply throw money and that sort of salves your conscience and that money or contributions is a replacement for working with those organizations. I know my colleague the Minister of Family and Social Services and indeed all of his colleagues in the provincial government benches have gone through a great deal of anguish as we've made some tough decisions that touched the lives of virtually every single Albertan, especially those Albertans who are perhaps more vulnerable economically, socially, medically, emotionally, and every other way to the cycles, to the ups and downs of the economy, and to the ups and downs of government spending.

#### 4:10

I think we do have a responsibility to work with the likes of the United Way. I think of the campaign that's been ongoing in Calgary under the leadership of Mr. Joe Struck and the encouragement he has given us. He asked that we must stay the course but that there is an opportunity to sit down with the likes of the United Way and other organizations in Calgary and throughout the province and to think how we can work better with those organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I would refer my colleague from Red Deer-South and other members to some work done by a resident of Red Deer-South, if I'm not mistaken. He was the chairman of the Alberta Tax Reform Commission, and they presented a report to Albertans in February of 1994 following an extensive five-month study of the tax situation, the tax picture in the province of Alberta. Mr. Donald, as the chairman, and the rest of the commission answered the question: "Is there a role for tax incentives, or is it better to maintain a level playing field?" What the commission said was:

The commission does not support tax incentives . . . There's little difference between tax incentives and grants and other assistance to business.

Elsewhere they said, "Tax incentives are similar to grants and other assistance to business." On page 67 they went on to say with regard to tax incentives and grants and other assistance to business:

Both involve government interfering in the marketplace by picking certain industries to support, and both involve costs to taxpayers either through direct loans and grants or through lost revenues. Albertans want a level playing field. They want transparency and accountability in their tax system. They don't want certain . . . groups to have special advantages or privileges, and the Commission agrees.

Mr. Speaker, I must admit some surprise that the gunslingers from the new Deep Six, with their six-guns drawn on privilege and government spending, inefficiency and waste in government, especially in spending money when it doesn't need to be spent, that this new group would be so willing to switch course in midstream, do a midcourse U-turn, I might note, and confer greater privilege on those who choose to give to a charity with a charitable number registered with Revenue Canada. I hope that with the addition of the Member for Red Deer-South those currently in the Deep Six and the geography of the Deep Six will now not be called the U-turns.

I would to suggest to the hon. Member for Red Deer-South and to members of the Assembly that tax relief for charitable purposes is currently available, especially, as I said, for those organizations registered with Revenue Canada. Tax relief is provided through a federal nonrefundable tax credit of 17 percent for the first \$200 of donations and 29 percent of any additional donations up to 20 percent of the donor's net income. Unused donation credits can be carried forward and used in later years, Mr. Speaker. These nonrefundable tax credits also reduce Alberta income tax.

Therefore, I would put to the Assembly that Alberta and the government and indeed the taxpayers of Alberta already provide a tax credit for charitable donations.

Just for the interest of the Assembly, in 1992 charitable donations eligible for tax relief in Alberta totaled a little over \$366 million. What that generated was some \$98.5 million in federal tax credits and about \$45 million in Alberta provincial tax credits for Alberta tax filers.

Mr. Speaker, my concern with the motion is that it further enhances an already reasonable and respectable – some would even say rich – incentive to get people to do what they already know is the right thing to do. What we're doing, in effect, is further bribing taxpayers with their own money in asking them to do what the hon. member said. He was looking for greater community action and involvement, and God knows, Mr. Speaker, I'm fully in favour of just that line and just what the hon. member said in calling for greater community action and involvement. But I have to ask the question: when the community got together to build a barn at a barn-raising bee in High River or south of Red Deer or in Cypress or even in downtown Edmonton, did the people who came to the barn-raising bee ask for a tax credit? [interjections] I haven't finished, Smithers.

#### Point of Order

##### Questioning a Member

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford is rising on a point of order. Citation, please.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister entertain a question?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You just have to give a yes or no answer, hon. minister.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, Percy is always entertaining, so I certainly would.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, to the Treasurer: could he refresh the memories in the House here, for some of us who may have forgotten, as to what the difference is between the credits as far as political contributions and charitable contributions?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry that the hon. member wasn't here, because the Member for Red Deer-South so eloquently and so convincingly made an argument about political tax credits. Goodness knows, given that the Liberals collected more out of that tax credit last year than the Conservatives collected, I frankly would agree with the Member for Red Deer-South that there is far too rich, far too great a benefit conferred upon those who choose to contribute to political parties. I would certainly welcome the next motion by the hon. Member for Red Deer-South calling for its elimination. That is one that I would stand up and support.

#### Debate Continued

MR. DINNING: When the community got together to build that barn, did they ask for a tax credit, Mr. Speaker? When the tornado hit the city of Edmonton, I saw and watched and heard hundreds, if not thousands, of volunteers and volunteer agencies come together to support those people who were really badly in need. Did they ask? Did they come and say, "We're going to help if you give us a tax credit or enhance the existing tax credit"? The same with the floods in Italy today. Are Canadians,

are Albertans sending money over to help those people in Italy saying, "We're going to send our money if we get a tax credit"?

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask you: when Hillary, Kate, and Jackson Dinning went out on October 31 in their little Halloween outfits, one as Batman, one as a Power Ranger, one as a checkerboard, and they had a UNICEF box around their necks, did Kate or Jackson come home and say, "Dad, we're going to give this money to UNICEF but only, only if you give me a tax credit"? No, no, they didn't do that. They're not learning that kind of profligacy, lack of spirit, lack of community contribution. They're not learning that at home. They're learning that this is the right thing to do, that they don't need to be bribed. They don't need to be given a further incentive to do what is the right thing to do.

So I strongly respect and encourage the hon. member to support and push for greater contributions for volunteer-driven organizations. I am a strong supporter of that. I do not believe the taxpayers need to incur further expense in having people do what they know is the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker. As a result, I would quietly discourage members in the Assembly from supporting this motion.

4:20

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, in the couple of minutes that are left, I'd like to just make some comment. There are some points that have been overlooked. The Treasurer did respond somewhat to the question of the formula for campaign contributions and political parties and such.

Another question that has to remain that makes the whole environment so different today than it was, say, three or four years ago is the impact and the escalation of lotteries throughout Alberta, particularly in rural Alberta, the impact of those revenues being siphoned directly into government coffers and as to how much they impact on community groups that are trying to provide benefit to the community, as to how much more difficult it is for those groups that struggle as they attempt to raise dollars. I don't care if I were to ask the Member for Lac La Biche-St. Paul, the Member for Bonnyville, the Member for Edmonton-Glenora; I would say that time after time after time every member within this Legislative Assembly has heard from groups out there that are saying: "Hey, hold on there with those lottery revenues and with the escalation, the expansion of the VLT machines. Take a look for a second and see as to how that's impacting on the amounts of dollars that are available for people to give to the community groups." People have limited resources; they only have so many dollars in their pockets. Of course, when a lot of those dollars are going, in some cases, to feed an addiction, it makes it that much more difficult.

Mr. Speaker, it was not that long ago that some of the municipalities had a meeting with the Premier of this province – a meeting that our member was excluded from attending within that area, despite the fact that he had been invited – because they were concerned and they wanted to talk about this very subject: the impact of people giving within the community. Here a member from the government side has come forward with a good solution that is worthy of exploration, worthy of being looked at, not to be rejected, not to be mocked upon. The member is addressing a concern that obviously is being said, is being heard in Red Deer, just like it's being heard in other parts of the province. Possibly for some reason there's a little piece within Calgary where people aren't speaking out and people aren't saying that it is a problem.

Mr. Speaker, clearly, clearly government has a responsibility as they draw dollars from the community, as they draw dollars from the taxpayers, as they draw dollars from the various available sources where money can be had to look at the impact

of those dollars leaving the pockets of those Albertans, going directly into the pockets of government, and as to what impact that is having within the community and to community groups that are providing a great benefit to the community. If we look, \$357 million net in Alberta in terms of money going into government coffers. That money obviously is coming from someplace. It's that much less money that can be given out.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the clock ticking along, I'm going to conclude at this particular time in case there are any other comments that might want to be made here.

Thank you.

MR. DAY: Two quick points entering into the debate. First of all, I'm very clear to be supporting this very intelligent motion brought forward by the Member for Red Deer-South.

A quick point in addressing a concern. The Treasurer plaintively painted that pretty pioneer picture of the project of building the barn and the barn raising. He forgets that at that point in time there was not even any income tax. People were not being burdened with taxes. As a matter of fact, history shows that income tax was introduced in Canada in 1915. If you go back to the discussion in the House of Parliament then, there was no income tax at the time. When it was introduced to support the war effort, the suggestion was that income tax should be 1 percent of a person's income, and a Member of Parliament stood in that Assembly and said: "One percent? We can't allow this. There will be a day coming that governments will have the nerve to charge 3 percent of someone's income." They almost laughed him out of the Assembly. Well, now we're up around 50 percent and more. Those pioneers did not carry the burden of taxes that our people are carrying today. That's why this additional break is needed. The taxation argument doesn't stand.

I would suggest also, Mr. Speaker – a point that I do agree with the Treasurer on, and we've even had discussions on this – that on the political side, yes, it is an unfair advantage that people have right now in the political contribution process, and in fairness that should be looked at. There's no question.

On that particular note, hearing my friend from Red Deer-South calling for the question, I would now at this point call for the question on Motion 519.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion as amended carried]

head: **Government Bills and Orders**  
 head: **Third Reading**  
**Bill 41**  
**Government Organization Act**

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

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It indeed gives me great pleasure to move third reading of Bill 41, one that's been subject to long reasoned debate from one side, slightly unreasonable debate from the other side. So that is indeed representative of the events of the last 18 months.

Mr. Speaker, I actually would like to quote from a rather reputable political publication in Alberta. It's called *Alberta Political Scan*.

MR. DINNING: Spell that.

MR. SMITH: That's scan, Mr. Speaker, s-c-a-n.

The quote in here is:

the intent [of Bill 41] is to make its work more useful, not less democratic [when speaking of the Legislature]. "You try to cope with ways of making the time in there [the Legislature] more productive and the time regulating outside the Legislature more productive."

We clearly know that the system we have now is heavy, cumbersome, burdensome, overregulated, and it provides a disincentive for economic growth and for orderly management of our affairs. In a nutshell and clearly stated, Mr. Speaker, the reasons for the need for Bill 41: much of this is just to bring legislation that was started by, say, a Liberal administration of 1905 up to date, to 1994, and in fact to be consistent so this housekeeping doesn't have to be addressed in further legislative debate till well after the 21st century.

More importantly than just the Alberta political scene, Mr. Speaker, the world political scene seems to be moving in a direction consistent with Alberta. In fact, evidence clearly comes from publications as notable in its world reputation as *The Economist*, which talks about the move towards direct democracy, the Swiss model. Indeed, we've had a very good private member's Bill narrowly – narrowly – defeated that imported the worth of the citizen initiative, but so important is the need for governments actually to move their powers closer to the citizen in local and municipal governments. It's consistent with what has been done in the Municipal Government Act. It's consistent with the motion that we just finished discussing.

#### 4:30

Of course, the honourable opposition quoted the term "the awesome might" of government. Here we are as a government trying to draw down the awesome might of government, trying to move, in a carefully studied pilot project, powers closer to the citizens that directly interact with these issues, and we're being stymied by the opposition. It's quite surprising, but it's certainly so important, Mr. Speaker, that we do move the operations of government out of the committee rooms, out of the back rooms, and into areas of interplay and interactions and coalitions between businesspeople, between wage earners, between professionals and government so that the delegated regulatory organization in fact is clearly there, is accountable to the Legislature, and is also accountable to those members for whom it's designed to regulate. So it's a very important part of devolving government power to the people who make the decisions in this fair province; that is, the people of Alberta. As I said, it's consistent with the movement towards direct democracy, and if people don't get in touch with government, if people aren't involved with government, then in fact government will become less and less effective in the administration of the daily events of the province.

The Baker Street regulators, Mr. Speaker, over here on this side continue on, firstly, to reflect the status quo, which is clearly not an option. You know, Einstein once said that it was conventional thinking that gets you into this situation. It's certainly not going to be conventional thinking that's going to get you out of it.

Mr. Speaker, I ran – and I ran very hard – with the Premier to defend against patrician, to defend against elitist government and this whole attitude of: let us regulate your life; we know what's best for you. Well, I would contend, and through the DRO provision of this legislation, that in fact the citizens, the taxpayers, the voters of Alberta know what's best for themselves.

The interesting thing about Bill 41, Mr. Speaker, is that in fact it didn't occur overnight. It was a long time coming. For those who have carefully read, for the first time to ever be made public

in Canada, a three-year business plan of government called A Better Way, it says:

The strategy is to focus on a better way – a better way to get the most value for the taxpayer's dollars, a better way to provide high quality essential programs at a cost we can afford . . . The result is open and accountable government.

Mr. Speaker, this government is absolutely prepared to stand on its accomplishments over the period of time. We started with a benchmark; we came with a plan; we came with objectives; we came with outcomes; we came with performance measurements. That's what we deliver to the citizens of Alberta and ask them to measure on that progress, not on the rhetoric, not as I had to do last week with a passionate plea and carefully reasoned debate to the subamendment on the reasoned amendment on Bill 41. I waited all morning for the phones to ring. Not one call, although you know the passionate pleas of the opposition about the tearing down of democracy, the absolutely obscene reference to a piece of legislation in another country 60 years ago. And I hate to use traditionally used words in this House, but I was shocked and appalled; I was.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me continue forth and emphasize that Bill 41 did not come up in the dark of the night, did not appear suddenly but in fact was a manifestation of a very clearly public document that talks about the core businesses of government so critical to what this government must achieve for all Albertans, core businesses

1. Investing in people and ideas
2. Building a strong, sustainable and prosperous province
3. Providing essential services for the health and well-being of Albertans
4. Maintaining a quality system of roads and highways, telecommunications and utilities
5. Providing law, order and good government.

Those are the core businesses of this government, and we intend to focus our activities and our efforts on being able to meet the objectives we have put forth to the Alberta people. In fact, that's what Bill 41 does. It cleans up the past. It provides for an era where the people of Alberta can see a very select area go forward under test, carefully monitored, carefully evaluated, working with the Minister of Labour to see: does this work? Not does it work for government, Mr. Speaker, but does it work for the citizens of Alberta? Does it work for those involved in that specific area? The precedents are there: the Insurance Council. We've already moved in this area in an informal sense. We're in fact being able to put this in a perspective so that all Albertans can see the road map.

You know, Mr. Speaker, under "law, order and good government," Bill 41 does exactly that. It fills that troika of demand. It enacts

a reasonable and appropriate framework of laws and regulations, to protect the public and the public interest, and to provide essential government services in an efficient, open and accountable way.

Now, you can have growth, you can have prosperity if you have the underpinnings to a strong society, and in fact that's what we have in Alberta. All Bill 41 does is re-emphasize the importance of those underpinnings. It allows for, in a fairly readable manner, what this can do and puts up an ability to move further and closer to direct participation by the citizens of Alberta. It's entirely consistent with this government. In fact, even one of the private members from this government in his last motion emphasizes so importantly the need to have citizens involved and the need to be able to give citizens choice . . .

MR. DINNING: And to bribe them to do it.

MR. SMITH: Exactly, Mr. Speaker.

. . . to give them the opportunity to participate without a cumbersome bureaucracy created by the past. The past was then. We've got to move ahead, and we move ahead by giving people options, you know.

Mr. Speaker, on page 12 of *A Better Way*, I know – and I think that because I know one of the key architects of this document, I know. And had the Treasurer had this in his hands speaking to the last motion, he would have jumped up and he would have noted immediately on page 12, middle of the page, "To encourage innovation, productivity and positive results throughout government." In fact, the Treasurer would have grabbed that document and said to the Member for Red Deer-South – of which I am a native, I might add – that, "Look, you're doing this, and we're glad you're here." In fact, Bill 41 is the same thing. It's doing it, and we're glad it's here.

Now, I think we can talk about the specific definitions, Mr. Speaker, because it's very important that this House and all Albertans know the importance of this Bill from an umbrella standpoint but also from the fact that it takes a small pilot project and allows it – it's enabling; it's certainly not compelling. It gives the government options, but more importantly it gives the citizens of Alberta options. It doesn't have to go through the cumbersome regulative process that I have heard more and more and more and more from this side. Unfortunately, from this recent move, certainly not in demographic but in geographic terms, I have come closer to the beast, and it fears me greatly.

Let's just talk for a minute about the housekeeping sides of it. Most of the department Acts have common provisions: the creation of the department, departmental seals, the authority to appoint deputies and other staff, engaging of experts, appointment of advisory bodies, authority to delegate, authority to enter into agreements, authority to set fees, authority to give grants. These are common provisions. They're not new, Mr. Speaker. All we're doing is that in the interests of 1994 we're going to say them once. We're not going to say them 16 times; we're not going to say them 17 times; we're not going to say them 26 times. We're going to say them once. So then in fact most people – and I would indeed say all Albertans with the exception, perhaps, of some in this House – would be able to look at this in a plain language format and say, "Hey, that's great; it's there; it's clear; it's concise; I understand it," and move on.

The other thing is that it's consistent, and it makes for facility of legislative amendment. By having all the standard provisions in one Act, there would be no need to amend 15 or 20 others. What are things that we've talked about? Eighteen long months, Mr. Speaker, I've been in this House.

4:40

MR. SAPERS: Sixteen.

MR. SMITH: Sixteen short months – it seemed like 18; that's how long they were – I've been in this House, and we have talked about statute after statute, legislation after legislation, and they said, "What do we do?" Firstly, you put together a group on deregulation. We'd do that. We want to make Alberta better by making it a deregulated Alberta, and in fact we want to slim down. With the same fervour and hope that I would like to attach to my own physical stature, I would like to see these statutes pared down, and in fact we are doing that. We are doing that.

This Bill, which I have said so many times, was clearly evident of its evolution to anybody who would want to take the time, as anybody committed to a better Alberta would, and read *A Better Way*. It's there. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, as you move

along, in *A Better Way* on page 13 – certainly not an omen but an opportunity – towards the bottom of the page it says:

Delegated Regulatory Organizations funded by industry and reporting to the Minister of Labour [and]

[to] privatize certain services and responsibilities.

That's done under the category of "What will be done to meet the goals?" The Bill shows up, and yikes. Yikes, we get 16 or 17 of the opposition turning out in a night. We all know that in a fervently applied leadership contest that's a big turnout for House duty from the opposition, Mr. Speaker.

We have put forth the need to "streamline, improve productivity and efficiency, and reduce the overall costs of government." Mr. Speaker, you know that I'm a fan of Mr. Osborne and Mr. Gaebler in *Reinventing Government*, and in fact they say a number of things that we have adopted and that we've been able to do in this House. One, they say that government's job is to steer, not to row. Bill 41 gives us the steering capability, and it gives the citizens of Alberta the ability to row, to row their own boat in their own direction, to choose who gets on the oars, choose who wants to get in the boat. That's empowerment. It's very important. It's individual participation.

Now, the other thing, Mr. Speaker, and it's very important. Just before I go to that very important discussion, I'd like to just point out that I had the good fortune of attending a small college in Saskatchewan called Notre Dame. There was a gentleman there named Monsignor Athol Murray, and he was fond of saying to his students, "Gang, there are two kinds of people: those on the building crew and those on the wrecking crew." I think it's very clear what side this government's on as builders of a better Alberta. The other thing . . . [interjections]

#### Speaker's Ruling Decorum

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I'm sorry, hon. members. I was enjoying the discourse on, I believe, Bill 41 by the hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity, but I was not able to hear some of the remarks in the few moments that remain. I wonder if we could have order in the Assembly so that we might all benefit from Calgary-Varsity's final words.

#### Debate Continued

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to finish very quickly Monsignor's story, he said that the people who were on the wrecking crew would always deny it immediately. So there you go.

In fact, the important thing of this Bill is that we then get the opportunity for government to create the environment that allows the private sector, the individuals, the community associations to be able to do the things so necessary to build a better Alberta. That is why I support this Bill. It's been an epic. It's been developed over a long period of time by very competent Legislative Counsel, by great input from reasoned members. It's a direct devolution from *A Better Way*. It should not have gone into closure. In fact, it's only unreasonable debate that allowed that movement.

So in effect, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to move third reading of this Bill, and I think we will find that after time has passed, much of the hysteria will have been from those who in fact were . . .

MR. FISCHER: On the wrecking crew.

MR. SMITH: . . . on the wrecking crew. I couldn't have said it any better.



I look forward to more comments, Mr. Speaker, but I think it's so very clear that we have made as a priority in A Better Way that we change the way government does business. We streamline processes and get rid of unnecessary regulations. We move from direct service delivery to facilitating services delivered by other agencies. We shift from a regulatory role to a policy and facilitation role. We increase opportunities for private sector delivery. That is what Bill 41 is. It's about proactive legislation.

Thank you.

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to add a few comments on Bill 41 as we deal with third reading. As the last speaker, I too had the opportunity to attend school, although I didn't attend in Saskatchewan. I attended in northern Ontario a little school called Kivikoski district No. 24. Thirteen of us in the entire school, but we had a brilliant teacher, a remarkable teacher, and she had a saying too. She had an expression, and her expression was that every time you throw a bit of dirt, you lose a bunch of ground. So to the last speaker, just remember that. As he throws that dirt, he loses a bit of ground.

Mr. Speaker, when we deal with Bill 41, it doesn't matter what part of the province you get feedback from: people are concerned and people are speaking out. It doesn't matter if you listen to the open line shows. It doesn't matter if you go down the main street of a little rural town. It doesn't matter if you go to Superstore here in Edmonton. No matter where you go, people are stopping us, even in the city of Red Deer. People are stopping us as opposition as we go out there and fan ourselves through the province, doing our job, getting input. People are stopping us and saying, "What has gone wrong with government?" In Whitecourt people are saying: "What has gone wrong with government? What has caused them to take it upon themselves to introduce Bill 41 and Bill 57? Why do they no longer want to be part of a democratic system?" They're saying to us, "If they didn't want to be a part of a democratic system, why would they not simply resign?"

#### Point of Order

##### Questioning a Member

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, if the member wants to know if he can ask me a question, ask him to wait till I've finished speaking and see if I've got any time left; okay? Because I've got some important things to say.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is rising on a point of order, and should that be his point of order, then we'll already know the answer anyway.

MR. WICKMAN: Right on.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Meanwhile, we'll hear the point of order.

Hon. Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite always talks about the government and wanting an open government that's accountable. Would the open, accountable member entertain a question at this time?

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, let me finish my remarks and let me see how much time we have left, because we are restricted . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just yes or no.

MR. WICKMAN: No.

MR. DAY: Thank you.

MR. WICKMAN: To respond to the member, because we are restricted by limitation in terms of time, because of the importance of this Bill. We can't afford to waste any time with silliness. This Bill is too important.

The government has moved closure, stifling our debate, limiting us as it is, and then they want to turn around and use up our valuable time by asking us questions. Why would they want to ask us questions? We didn't prepare the Bill. That side prepared the Bill. The Government House Leader has to recognize that in a democracy there is government and there is opposition, and government has a role and opposition has a role. If he wants to ask all the questions, he should come and sit on this side of the House. It might do him some good.

4:50

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. member, I had asked for a yes or no answer, but in the meantime the hon. Member for Vegreville-Viking has risen on a point of order.

Would you care to share the citation?

MR. STELMACH: I was just wondering if I may seek some clarification, please.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under what terms?

MR. STELMACH: I heard the hon. member, opening his speech, saying that people were asking him questions and speaking to him.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That's a debating point I think, hon. member.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford is encouraged to continue the debate, but I don't think we need to prolong the discussion on 482.

#### Debate Continued

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, thank you for your guidance, your very valuable guidance.

People are speaking out, Mr. Speaker, and they are saying, "What has happened to this government in that they no longer have a respect for a democratic system that has been there for years, that has been somewhat accountable, that has allowed the public to view, through various means, changes that occur as to pieces of legislation that are in front of this Legislative Assembly?" People out there are asking: "Why now does the government side suddenly want to take this all away? Why do they want to take the role of the Legislative Assembly and move it behind closed doors where they are no longer accountable?" And people begin to wonder as to whether government has something to hide, as to whether government doesn't like their role, as to whether they want to relinquish their role. Possibly they want to relinquish it to - well, they don't want to relinquish it to the opposition; that's obvious. They want to relinquish it to their friends out there, to whomever this Bill gives them the authority to.

Mr. Speaker, in the six years that I've been here and the number of years previous to that that I watched the activities of

this House, it was not normal procedure for the government to stand up and move closure, closure. One thing about the first Conservative Premier of this particular era, of this particular reign of conservatism: I don't recall that Premier, that leader, abusing legislative powers by bouncing up on his feet on a continuous basis saying, "Closure, closure; I want to stifle debate." The Government House Leader has stood up and referred to the fact that seven of their members had gotten up at that particular point and spoken. Yes, they had spoken for a period of I think about 27 minutes, and then from there we see one member getting up and down, up and down.

Now we're going to come to an end fairly soon in terms of Bill 41. When closure is moved, when second reading is closed, when committee stage is closed, when there's indication that somewhere along the line – maybe not today, maybe not tonight, maybe not tomorrow; maybe it'll be next week, but that closure is going to come. That final hammer's going to come on Bill 41 because government wants to do it and they're going to do it. They're not going to respect what we've got to say in terms of this Bill. They're not going to respect what Albertans are going to say. In fact, if anything, I think it's going to entice them to move that much quicker and enhance their so-called plan, change their strategy somewhat, because clearly the people are speaking out. One would have to be a fool to sit back and not hear what the people are saying unless government members lock themselves in some room and they don't have any contact with the public whatsoever. No Bill in the last six years that I've been here has been questioned to the degree that this Bill is being questioned, and rightfully so people are questioning it.

People are also saying: is government intending to go ahead with Bill 57, which is a companion to Bill 41, or is government backing off? Or did government have some plan from day 1 that they were going to introduce a series of Bills like 41, 50, and 57 with the intent of only forcing closure on 41, getting that approved, getting Royal Assent, and then not passing 50 and 57, leaving them to die on the Table, thereby leaving the impression that, well, they listened to the people and they're not going to go ahead with Bill 50 and privatize the correctional system throughout Alberta or they're not going to go ahead with that dreaded Bill 57? Is it possible that what government members are doing is just following a planned agenda where the passage of 41 allows them to do what they want to do without having to deal with Bills 50 or 57? Does Bill 41, for example, provide enough mechanisms, enough ammunition, enough power for government to do exactly what Bill 50 would allow them to do? Maybe Bill 50 is now redundant. Maybe Bill 50 will simply die on the Order Paper and government will go ahead and experiment with one of the correctional institutions that are out there or start doing these feasibility studies. That's the expression that was used. They wanted to put the cart before the horse. They wanted to pass the Bill and do a feasibility study, rather than do the feasibility study and then pass the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at the Bill and we start looking at some of the aspects of it, when we talk in terms of the powers and the fears that we have and the fears that Albertans have, what does this Bill actually allow government to do? People's opinions will vary, and I guess a lot of it just depends how far government is prepared to go: in year 1 maybe not so far, in year 2 a bit further, and so on and so forth. Nevertheless, it's the umbrella of the Bill, the global aspects that it allows government to do, and it allows government to do a great, great deal. It allows government to go out there and hire consultants. It allows ministers to start new programs, new services. It allows government to hire experts on their own without any accountability to this particular Legislative Assembly. It allows land transactions to buy and sell

land. It allows the establishment of boards and committees and councils. Basically, it allows government, in my opinion, to do whatever they want to do, to do it by whatever means, to do it without participation, to do it without consultation, although reference is made to consultation. But what is consultation? Consultation is only as good as the people who are behind it are prepared to enact. This particular government has not shown a great deal of interest in consultation from the point of view of Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill clearly, in my opinion, allows government to start to break away from the whole democratic system, to start to reduce more and more the legislative significance of this particular Assembly. And more and more, people are going to question why government is doing that. They're going to say: "Well, if government has that little interest in the democratic process, in the legislative process that has been respected for decades and centuries throughout different parliamentary eras and systems and countries, we'll give them a little push. We'll help them along. If they don't want to be part of the process, we'll move them out of the process and we'll chuck them. If they don't want to be there, we'll chuck them and we'll put in place a group of people who want to form a government that will in fact go back to what government is all about, and that is recognizing the importance of having a group of people elected and accountable to those people that elected them, to allow them to carry out legislative actions, to allow them to introduce new programs, to balance budgets, to do things in an open, accountable fashion that people are accustomed to." There may be some very small corners of the province that government has been able to convince that privatizing everything, including government itself, virtually doing away with government is the way to go. There probably is a very small portion, a very small sector within Alberta that truly believes that no government is good government, and when I say no government, I mean absolutely no government.

#### 5:00

There's probably the odd member within that House, the minister responsible for Municipal Affairs, for example – I say this as a compliment to him because he is one who is committed to a philosophy, to a belief, one that I don't agree with. But if it was left up to him, he would probably privatize his own particular cabinet position. That's how far he would go. I don't think that government over there collectively, though, are prepared to go quite that far. They want to retain the benefits of being cabinet ministers, of being politicians, of being elected, of having those particular perks that go along with that, but at the same time they want to grab that power and they want to decide exactly how that power is going to be fed out. It's going to be fed out to those people that government members want to see it fed out to.

Mr. Speaker, my fear is that we're going to go down a road so far that it's going to be very, very difficult to undo. When the damage has been created, when Albertans reflect and they say: "What did we allow that government to get away with? Just how far did we allow them to go? Why didn't we go even further to stop them?" at that point the damage may be so great, even down in the Taber area, that Alberta as a democratic province within Canada simply cannot function as a true democracy. We'll be mocked by the other provinces as a province that's gone off on our own in a direction that is just totally unsuitable for the people that gave all of us here the privilege of sitting here and doing the job that they want us to do, not to find ways of trying to avoid doing that job in a democratic fashion.

Mr. Speaker, because of the short time that we have to debate this Bill because of the closure that has been moved by government . . .

MR. DAY: There's no closure at third reading.

MR. WICKMAN: Because there has been indication of closure given on all readings – I'll remind the Government House Leader – I'm going to conclude my remarks, because there are other members of this particular caucus that want to provide their valued input in the limited time that government is giving them.

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

DR. L. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address Bill 41 briefly so that there will be time for other members of my side and the other side to do it.

I think we've heard a lot of fear and a lot of fear mongering from the opposition. I think we have to be very clear about what this Bill does do. It allows any department to pursue the development of an alternative service delivery vehicle, and there's nothing the matter with that. That's what we're trying to do. We're trying to make the government more efficient. We're trying to make the services to the people of Alberta more efficient. So the Bill does do that.

The Bill allows for the deregulation of programs and administration of legislation while allowing for retaining control over regulation and levels of service within the government. So the program speed can be deregulated, programs can be put out to some outsourcing or privatized, but the regulations are still controlled from inside the government, and I think that's an important thing. Government still has the ability to control the regulations, in particular in the Department of Labour. If a contract is not working, they have a very short time frame within which they can cancel the contract.

The other kind of fear tactic I've heard is one of patronage, that we are going to appoint all the Conservatives in the world to these boards.

MR. BENIUK: Just in Alberta.

DR. L. TAYLOR: Well, just in Alberta.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's the shareholders, it's the users that will be appointing the majority of the board, and we must be very clear on that. If it's a boilermakers' group, it's the boilermakers' inspection group that will be appointing the majority of . . .

MR. SAPERS: You're on the wrong Bill. Check your notes.

DR. L. TAYLOR: I'm on Bill 41.

MR. SAPERS: Are you sure?

DR. L. TAYLOR: Yes, that's what we're talking about.

It will be the particular group within the Department of Labour, the users of that service that appoint the board, not the government, not patronage appointments. I think we need to be very clear on this.

The one concern I would like to raise, though, Mr. Speaker, is the power that it does leave in the hands of the minister. I think we need some assurances from the minister and some discussion of this as to how this is going to be handled within the context of the Bill. So with that concern raised, I'll conclude my comments.

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

MR. SEKULIC: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Calgary-Varsity once again has attempted to enlighten us as to the function of this Bill. Last week the Bill was liberating. This week it's enabling. Perhaps next week with closure it could become law, and that's a terrifying thought.

This Bill reminds me, Mr. Speaker, of a piece of art that was purchased by the National Gallery last year. I think many members will remember that one. I think it was called *Voice of Fire*. I think it was that red stripe. I don't know how many feet tall it was. Anyways, they paid well over a million dollars. In speaking to Bill 41, because this does pertain, this Bill reminds me of that piece of art because it appears that only the artist can really understand its meaning, and in this case I'd question whether even the artist understood the full impact or the purpose of this art, this meaning. I would suggest that there are no buyers in Alberta for this Bill at this time, but perhaps if he tries another gallery, he may find a buyer.

When I spoke on this Bill when it was first introduced, I referred to Gaebler and Osborne. Gaebler and Osborne, Mr. Speaker, were almost right when they said that business does some things better than government, and government does things better than business. I agree with that. In fact, I believe that business does many more things better than government, and government does far fewer things better than business.

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

However – I must emphasize the "however" – government does do some things better than business. It's the provision of some programs and services that they deliver much more efficiently and effectively and consistently than business would be capable of just because business would have a conflicting interest, a potentially conflicting motivation, whereas the golden rule of business is mostly in the bottom line, the profit maximization. Government must recognize and set a goal on addressing citizens . . .

MR. WOLOSHYN: Are you reading, Peter?

MR. SEKULIC: My own notes actually, handwritten, and I hope that the member from Vegreville will stand soon and also read his.

Mr. Speaker, government needs to set goals on addressing citizen needs, and in fact I would suggest a needs-minimization model, not needs avoidance or nonrecognition of existing needs. Unlike business, all citizens of our cities, of our provinces, and our country are consumers of government in one way or another. Therefore, it is vital that government retain its responsibility and its accountability to all of its citizens. This is where I see the problem or the flaw with Bill 41, because it promotes an ideology prior to asking the consumers or more appropriately the citizen about their expectation and their priorities for their government. We see this Bill as a movement of power from elected officials within this Assembly to boardrooms of corporate directors, none of which were elected on June 15, 1993. This government still hasn't figured how it should become accountable to its citizens, yet it's willing to pass on power, authority, and accountability to nonelected officials.

Liberating legislation is how some government members have referred to this Bill. This may in fact be one way of describing this legislation. It does liberate legislators from accountability and the very responsibility that their constituents sent them here to represent, to carry out on their behalf. It's bad enough, Mr. Speaker, that question period is question period, the period being punctuation. In other words, answers are few and far between.

**5:10**

Mr. Speaker, who will Albertans hold accountable as government abdicates an ever increasing portion of its responsibility? Parliamentary democracy may have its flaws, but it remains the very best system of governing that I'm aware of. Maybe this government has discovered something new. I'm afraid that what they've discovered is Alberta Inc. Far fewer citizens are part of the new Alberta Inc. Needs will be fewer not because government is resolving needs or problems of the constituents, their citizens, but rather because only a new and a lower number of needs will be recognized.

This Bill does not tell us what will be part of Alberta Inc. It simply states that government will now partner up with Alberta Inc., and cabinet, in particular individual ministers, can fragment their portfolios as they see fit. This Bill begs the question: what will government retain, and what will Alberta Inc. take over?

Mr. Speaker, this Bill, if passed, will distance the public from control and accountability, and I believe that hard-to-get information would become more so, if not impossible to get. For myself as a legislator I believe it will be more difficult to get information regarding how their tax dollars are being expended and why the level of services continues to decline as their taxes remain the same or increase over time.

If in fact information is, as many say, at least when we went out on the freedom of information task force, the currency of democracy, then I would dare to say, Mr. Speaker, that there will be less information circulating, less currency circulating, much less of it, and it will be much more concentrated and controlled at a far greater distance from public scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, those are some of my concerns. I just want to end on the note that government does some things better than business, and it must continue to do so on behalf of their constituents.

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

MR. COLLINGWOOD: I was sure one of theirs was going to speak. I was positive one of theirs was going to speak.

MR. SAPERS: Well, I know the Minister of Labour said that he was going to, but he left.

Mr. Speaker, thank you, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak again on Bill 41. Of course, we won't have an opportunity to raise all of the concerns about Bill 41, nor, of course, will we have an opportunity to debate them because we're not really seeing any debate, and we know that the government is going to force closure at this stage of the Bill as well. There are a couple of things that I would like to at least make sure are in *Hansard* so that constituents around the province of members on both sides will be able to review the record, that in fact there were some people standing in this Assembly fighting for democracy and fighting for good government.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Calgary-Varsity talks about rhetoric, and of course there is probably nobody better in this Assembly to talk about rhetoric than that rhetorical Member for Calgary-Varsity. He has elevated rhetoric to a science, and that's amazing. You know, when he was one of the Deep Six members, he was actually a reasonable guy, and you could count on that member contributing to debate, but he got that promotion. He's so close now to the front bench that you can just tell that he wants to be one of them so badly that what he's contributed to this debate hasn't been understanding, hasn't been clarity, hasn't been reasoned; it's been rhetoric.

Now, he has talked blandly about the Alberta advantage, about small government, about reinventing government, but he gives

absolutely no substance, no reassurance to Albertans that in fact what we're seeing is democracy being taken right out of the process, that we're seeing debate taken right out of the process, that we're seeing accountability being removed from the political process. He doesn't talk about what the fundamental role of government is. He just says: well, we're interested in good government. Now, Mr. Speaker, it's a challenge to me to understand how a Bill which guts the parliamentary process can somehow be equated to good government, and I hope the Member for Calgary-Varsity will come to his feet one more time during this debate and illuminate that point and make it understandable for me and in fact all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Calgary-Varsity talks about the DRO provisions, and he talks about smaller government and how when he campaigned, he campaigned hard on making government lean and mean and efficient. Well, he must have also campaigned hard on doing away with his job and the job of every member of this Assembly, because these DROs don't have anything to do with making government smaller.

Now, let's make this clear. What this does is shift control from the Legislature to something outside of the Legislature. This doesn't make government smaller. This simply takes the role of debate out of government. This creates a whole bunch of organizations which will never be held accountable in this Legislature. This creates . . . Oh, the Member for Calgary-Varsity is holding up one of his favourite props, the document A Better Way. I'll be getting to that in a minute, hon. member.

Let's just make sure that this point is crystal clear in all of our minds. Bill 41 doesn't move us toward smaller government. Bill 41 simply takes government out of the Legislature and into the boardroom and, even worse, Mr. Speaker, into the back room. Members on this side simply aren't going to allow that to happen.

Now, the hon. member waves his copy of A Better Way, the much vaunted three-year business plans. Well, we've seen those business plans. It says in the introduction to the business plan: this is concrete; this will assure all Albertans that we have a plan. Well, you know what it assures all Albertans? It assures all Albertans that there is in fact no plan. You read those business plans, and they say that there are performance measures. They say that there are accountability measures. They say that there are goals and objectives, but read it. I defy you. You know what one of the objectives is, Mr. Speaker? It's making sure that we do the bidding of the Premier. It's right there in the business plans.

The Minister of Health stood up earlier in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and said: oh, don't worry about the business plans; they're just rolling documents; we'll adjust them as we need to; we'll just keep on making changes. [interjections]

#### **Speaker's Ruling Decorum**

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. Could we have some order in the House. I'm very interested in what the hon. member has to say, and I think it's only right that all members of the House on both sides, I might add, give this member an opportunity to voice his opinion, whether right or wrong.

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate your restoring order.

#### **Debate Continued**

MR. SAPERS: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to check the Blues, because I may have misquoted, I may have misrepresented the words of the hon. Minister of Health, and I wouldn't ever do that

intentionally. My impression from our earlier discussion during question period was simply that the business plans will be amended, as well they should be, because what Albertans want is they want clarity, and they want certainty, and they want accountability. If the hon. Minister of Health will bring a business plan to this Assembly that'll guarantee that, it'll certainly get my vote of confidence.

These current business plans don't do that, and this Bill, Bill 41, even removes the possibility that that'll happen, because all of these things will be taken out of the realm of public debate. All of these things will then happen in a way that only those few members of cabinet will have a chance to really decide on. It'll all be moved to order in council, and we can't sit for that.

These three-year business plans are a shifting sea of sand, Mr. Speaker, and what we see happening is that the members are getting kind of shifty with how they're trying to make Bill 41 fit into it. Accountability and government by order in council are the antithesis of one another. You can't reconcile the two. You cannot say that we are moving this government . . .

MRS. FORSYTH: Point of order. [interjections]

MR. SAPERS: I thought the Member for Calgary-Fish Creek was rising on a point of order. [interjections]

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Hon. members, could we have order in the House, please.

MRS. FORSYTH: It's that guy over there.

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: I know, hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, but I did hear you a couple of times too. So everybody in the House, please, please could we have order.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was waiting to see whether or not that member had a point.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that every Albertan have a chance to understand the enormity of this Bill and what it is that this government has brought us to. Now, you can't gloss over the nasty bits of this Bill, as some members would do, by simply talking about the part of the Bill that would allow ministers and departments to have seals. This Bill isn't just about seals, although with the level of debate coming from members from the government side, it certainly does bring in an imagery of seals. It certainly isn't reasonable debate, and it certainly isn't debate that is enlightening or helpful in terms of every Albertan, every taxpayer understanding how accountability is being shifted out of the Legislature and into the back room.

5:20

Mr. Speaker, what we don't need in this Assembly is flippancy. We don't need sarcasm. What we need is members on both sides to read this Bill, to understand this Bill, and be in a position to explain this Bill to their constituents.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity says that he hasn't had one phone call to his constituency office about reasoned amendments to subamendments to other amendments, and you know what, Mr. Speaker? I haven't either. Do you know the kind of phone calls that I have had? I've had phone calls saying: "Please don't let them do this. Don't let them take democracy out of this province. Please don't let this government force Bill 41 down our throats. Please don't let this happen." There is a concern that has not been created by members on this side creating any panic

or any fear, but there is concern that has been created by the government bringing in this kind of frightening legislation.

#### Point of Order Questioning a Member

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Point of order, Calgary-Varsity.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Beauchesne* 482. Would the hon. member entertain a question during debate?

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora, would you care to take a question?

MR. SAPERS: No, Mr. Speaker, I won't. The government has put us in a position where we've got closure to deal with, and it just wouldn't be fair to waste time in that manner. If the member has a question, I would suggest that he see me in the lounge. I'd be happy to talk to him about it, and maybe he can stand in debate later.

#### Debate Continued

MR. SAPERS: Mr. Speaker, the role of the Legislature is to bring those elected and those who do the electing together. The role of the Legislature is in fact to provide good government. It's to reflect the wishes of the taxpayers, and it's to make sure that when those wishes are articulated, those who make the decisions are held accountable. Bill 41 will prevent that from happening. Bill 41 is a law that would so hamper the democratic process, would so diminish the role of every private member that I can't figure out for a minute why any private member would allow the front bench to do this to them let alone to their constituents.

It is very important that this Bill be widely understood for what it is and not simply fluffed off, as some members would, as administrative or housekeeping or liberating or enabling or any other kind of term that would make us think that this Bill is innocuous, because this Bill isn't. This is serious. This has serious implications. This will have lasting implications for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, if the government was serious about being open and being accountable and about listening to Albertans, listening to the very real concerns that Albertans are expressing, then what they would do is they would allow this Bill to die on the Order Paper, as it appears to be poised to allow Bill 57, that other companion to this bad public policy, to die on the Order Paper. I would hope that they would allow this one to meet that same fate.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, given the hour, I'd adjourn debate.

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora has moved that we adjourn debate. All in favour?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. ACTING SPEAKER: Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:25 p.m.]

