

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Monday, March 4, 1996 1:30 p.m.
Date: 96/03/04
 [The Speaker in the Chair]

head: Prayers

THE SPEAKER: Let us pray.

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

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

Amen.

Please be seated.

head: Presenting Petitions

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

MR. HENRY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would beg your leave to table a petition urging "the government of Alberta to mandate and fully fund the provision of kindergarten programs" to the maximum of 400 instruction hours per year. Some of these are in the traditional format of petitions and some are in the format that I presented earlier, where the five-year-old child had coloured or decorated the petition and the parent had signed the petition.

Thank you very much.

head: Reading and Receiving Petitions

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

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission I would request that the petition which I tabled in the Assembly last week regarding health information databases and smart cards now be read and received.

THE CLERK:

We, the undersigned residents of Alberta, petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government to refuse to implement the proposed health care database on the grounds that the security of the personal information contained in this data may be at risk, and this peril outweighs any benefit from the centralization of the information.

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

MR. DICKSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm asking that the petition I had introduced the other day dealing with the impact of closing the Alberta Place office of Family and Social Services now be read and received, please.

THE CLERK:

We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to urge the Government to ensure that the Alberta Place District Office of Family and Social Services will not be closed as an SFI office until alternate service delivery points are established and accessible to all residents of downtown Calgary.

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

DR. NICOL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to request that

the petition that I submitted on Thursday, the 29th of February, now be read and received, please.

THE CLERK:

We, the undersigned residents of Alberta, petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government to prohibit regional health authorities from moving elderly people against their will to long term care facilities in communities far from their families, churches and other community supports, thereby greatly lessening their quality of life.

head: Notices of Motions

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

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give oral notice now that I intend to rise again at the appropriate time pursuant to Standing Order 40 to seek unanimous consent of the Assembly to proceed with the following motion:

Be it resolved that this Assembly recognize and congratulate Albertan artists Paul Gross and Tantoo Cardinal for winning top honours at the 10th annual [Canadian] Gemini Awards celebration yesterday.

Thank you, sir.

head: Tabling Returns and Reports

THE SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to table a letter that has been sent to the Pandas Volleyball Club at the University of Alberta. The letter is to congratulate the Pandas for winning the Canadian University Women's Volleyball Championship for the second year in a row. I would like to commend this club for their hard work and dedication; that hard work and dedication continues to pay off. I would like to offer special congratulations to coach Laurie Eisler and Shandra Doran, who was selected as most valuable player.

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

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased this afternoon to table copies of my letter to the Government House Leader dated this date. This correspondence registers my concern that less than 72 hours after he'd promised his new budget process would mean more debate, he closed debate early and denied the 38,000 Calgarians of Calgary-Buffalo a voice with respect to the estimates on Municipal Affairs. Such duplicity should be noted.

Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray.

MR. GERMAIN: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I am tabling today four copies of a letter from the Ethics Commissioner of the province of Alberta dated February 28, 1996, wherein he confirms by way of background in relation to the missing documents from the Premier's China trip that he now has a reasonable apprehension of bias and will not be able to deal further with the inquiry on that matter.

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

MRS. FORSYTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As chair of the Council on Professions and Occupations I am pleased to table

today with the Assembly six copies of the following annual reports: the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta, 1995; the Certified General Accountants' Association of Alberta, 1995; the Society of Management Accountants of Alberta, 1994-95; the Alberta Dental Assistants Association, 1995; the Alberta Registered Professional Foresters Association, '94-95; the Psychologists Association of Alberta, 1994-95; the Alberta Association of Registered Occupational Therapists, '95-96; and the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, 1995.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DINNING: I am filing in the Assembly documents that have been made public but to make them official in the Assembly. First of all, a report pursuant to section 43(4) of the Legislative Assembly Act and section 16(1) of the Conflicts of Interest Act; the second and third quarter reports dated November 30, 1995, and January 30, 1996; the Alberta heritage savings trust fund's second quarter investment report, November 1995; the updated offering circular for the government of Alberta's Euro medium-term note program filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission in December of '95; and the updated form 18K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission in December of '95.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'm please to table six copies of the three-year business plan of the Alberta Boilers Safety Association and six copies of the annual report for fiscal year ended October 31, 1995.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and to the Assembly 18 physicians from across Alberta. I would ask Dr. Gokiart, president of the Alberta Medical Association to stand - he's in your gallery - also president-elect Dr. Kabir Jivraj. They and 18 of their colleagues from all across the province are the MD/MLA contacts for the association, and they're in Edmonton today attending a workshop. Also we have Ron Kustra and Leah Lechelt from the AMA Edmonton office. Our guests are in both your gallery and the members' gallery. I would ask the remainder of the group to rise and for the Legislative Assembly to give them a very warm welcome.

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

MR. CHADI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to introduce 62 visitors, students from the St. Charles school in my constituency. They are accompanied here today by two teachers: Mrs. Denise Zubko and Mrs. Paula D'Amour. They are in the public gallery. I would ask that they all rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

1:40

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

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly two guests from Stuttgart, Germany. They are Gangolf and Thomas Zeller. They are accompanied by their Canadian host Ralph Hankel. They're in the public gallery. I'd ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce through you to the Legislature an invasion of 46 students from the Redwater school. They're accompanied by their teachers Mr. Hrynychuk, Mrs. Grainger, and Mr. Schick, and parents Mr. Conway, Mrs. Kuefler, Mrs. Kuzik, Mrs. Maskell, Mrs. Superkoski, and Mrs. Welsh. Once a year they are brought here and told that if they do not pay attention to the teacher and if they don't work hard and study, they might grow up and be MLAs. I would ask them to stand up and receive the welcome of the House.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for West Yellowhead.

MR. VAN BINSBERGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a rare privilege for me to be able to introduce a guest from Hinton. The lady in question is Sue Leighton, who has been a teacher at the high school for many years and with whom I've been privileged to teach for many years. I would like her to stand up, and also I would like her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leighton from Edmonton, to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

Thank you.

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

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a native northern Albertan who works tirelessly in our northern communities to improve the lifestyle of people living there. I'd like to get John Jacobs, seated in the members' gallery, to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to introduce to you and through you two individuals who are here today to view government at work firsthand: Michala Elliott and Tom Forsyth. I would have you duly note that Mr. Forsyth is the hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek's eldest son. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the House.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am fortunate to have two introductions today. The first group of people are from NET, which is the National Evangelization Teams. There are 11 people: Matt Hoven, Deana Smith, Lee Pion, Curtis Hilton, Sandra Borges, Carly Grant, Laura Day, Shawn Jones, Patrick Brophy, Sharlin Whitford, and a cousin of mine from Leduc, Krista Ganton. They are people that work for the Catholic youth ministry. They travel across Canada and give retreats for young people. They're here today, and I'd ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

My second introduction, Mr. Speaker, is Ron Williams. He is the past mayor of Heisler, past teacher and principal. He's very involved with tourism in his area. He's the president of the Battle River Tourist Association, chairman of the Heartland tourism destination, president of East Parkland Community Futures, and our candidate in Wainwright. I'd ask him to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Dunvegan.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly the Farmers' Advocate, Wallace Daley. I am pleased to welcome him here this afternoon, and I would ask him to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I couldn't help but notice in your gallery today a former colleague of ours, the former MLA for Edmonton-Kingsway, Mr. Alex McEachern. You know, we all remember Alex's speeches in this House. They never changed. They were all the same. Regardless of the topic that was being discussed, they were always the same. But, you know, it's as though he's always here anyway because the Liberals sitting across the way have taken up that good NDP cause. So I'd ask Alex McEachern to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

MR. DUNFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister recognized a number of physicians, but as a test of my new glasses and also to prove to their families and to their office staff that they really are here, I would like to introduce a couple of physicians from Lethbridge. I see Dr. Bill Shields and Dr. Tony Winder. If they would rise, I'd like them to receive the warm greetings of the House.

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

MRS. ABDURAHMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the House a physician from the city of Fort Saskatchewan that does an incredible service at Alberta Hospital Edmonton. I'd ask Dr. Asaad Brahim to be recognized in the House. Please stand, Dr. Brahim.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. THURBER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to introduce here today to you and through you to this Legislative Assembly a long-time participant in the health care system in this province and an old, old friend of mine, a childhood friend of mine, and her husband. They're sitting in the members' gallery, and I'd like Ann and Dennis Burrell to stand and receive the warm welcome of this House.

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

MR. COUTTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you a doctor from my hometown of Fort Macleod, Dr. Ian Bennett, who is attending the Assembly today.

head: **Oral Question Period**

Deputy Minister of Health

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, while Albertans wait to find out exactly what they can believe about the Deputy Minister of Health, many questions have been raised about how Jane Fulton

got the job. To the Premier: who in the Premier's office specifically recruited Jane Fulton or directed that she be recruited?

MR. KLEIN: Nobody in my office directed that she be recruited, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MITCHELL: Was Jane Fulton the choice recommended by Ernst & Young, the firm paid to find a new deputy minister? If not, who overruled them and forced the hiring of Jane Fulton?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Health was most directly involved with the recruitment of Dr. Fulton, and I will have her respond.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member should understand the recruitment process. I'll very briefly describe it. There is a firm that did do a search across Canada and received all of the applications, of which I might say there were many. That group also short-listed those and did make recommendations to the minister in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I had mentioned last week that we have asked the Public Service Commissioner to review the allegations around the qualifications of the deputy minister, and I will say again: allegations. I have also said that all of the issues surrounding that will be reviewed by the Public Service Commissioner. I believe it is in the best interests of everyone involved in this to allow that review to conclude, and in fairness I would ask the hon. members to do that.

MR. MITCHELL: A yeoman's effort from a minister who said she wasn't involved . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order.

MR. MITCHELL: To the Premier: how could Jane Fulton sign a three-year exclusive service contract with the government of Alberta when she was still under contract with the University of Ottawa to return after her one-year sabbatical?

1:50

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm simply not familiar with that allegation, but again I will defer to the hon. minister.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, again the deputy minister worked out the terms of her sabbatical or employment with the University of Ottawa to their satisfaction and to ours.

MR. MITCHELL: She answers questions about things she wasn't involved in. You wish she'd answer questions about things . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order.

Provincial Tax Regime

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, this government has introduced so far 480 new or increased user fees, licence fees, and premiums.

MRS. HEWES: Four hundred and eighty?

MR. MITCHELL: Four hundred and eighty. These add up to \$270 million in extra revenues each year to this government. This total does not include the \$600 million health care premium tax

levied on Albertans every year. Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier continue to claim that his government has not increased taxes when the cost of new and increased user fees, licence fees, and premiums amounts to \$270 million and to almost \$1 billion when you add in the Alberta health care premium tax?

MR. KLEIN: Fees were adjusted, Mr. Speaker, to reflect the cost of providing the services, but insofar as personal income tax, corporate income tax – no sales tax, sir – there has been no increase in those taxes. I'm proud to say that Alberta still is, will always be, will always remain the lowest taxed province in the country.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier claim his government has not increased taxes when by underfunding regional health authorities, he has forced them to levy a wide range of user fees – such as home care fees, drug costs, and fees for the terminally ill – to balance their budgets?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, as far as I know, there have always been home care fees, but relative to the specifics, I'll have the hon. minister respond.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite knows full well that there are no fees in home care for nursing or medical care, and he does know that this government provides a service to its frail and elderly and people who need assistance. We subsidize homemaking; that is, things like shoveling walks, getting groceries, vacuuming, and other things that allow the people in our province to live in dignity and independence in their homes. I would also say that I believe the hon. member should know that there is a \$300 cap on that. He should also know that if a person cannot afford that fee, the fee is waived. He should also know that the \$5, when it is collected, stays in that region to enlarge the service.

Again, Mr. Speaker, there are no fees for home care. There are homemaking fees.

MR. MITCHELL: It's a new low, Mr. Speaker, a \$300 cap on no fees.

How can the Premier claim that his government has not increased taxes when many rural parents have to spend as much as \$450 per child to bus their children to school because Alberta has the lowest per capita funding for education in the entire country? Lower than Newfoundland, lower than New Brunswick, lower than Saskatchewan: quite a legacy. Quite a legacy.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the amount that we spend on education is enough to produce some of the highest standards in education anywhere in Canada.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, if I might be able to supplement the hon. Premier's response. If the hon. member across the way can indicate to me and to the government where in this province in a rural area \$450 in terms of a fee has to be provided in order for students to get to a school for their basic program in their resident area, I would invite them to do so.

Orthopedic Surgery

MR. SAPERS: Mr. Speaker, on January 30 the government announced that it had made a serious mistake by cutting too much out of the budget for orthopedic surgery and promised to spend

almost another \$5 million to shorten the waiting lists for that surgery. Now, in Edmonton there are nearly 1,100 people on those lists waiting for surgery, yet the money to be spent will only be enough to relieve the suffering of about 400. Will the Minister of Health please explain why the government decided that only about one-third of the people waiting for surgery deserve to have their wait shortened?

MRS. McCLELLAN: In the preamble I would like the hon. member to produce the documentation that made the claim that he did, that we said we had reduced it too far. Mr. Speaker, what really did happen was this: the Minister of Health met with the regional health authorities and said to them that we are concerned as a government about the growing waiting lists. What the regional health authorities were able to inform me was that in fact they were not doing less surgeries; they were doing more. But the demand is growing. Why is the demand growing? Well, thanks to some of the good people who are in our galleries today and the advances in medical technology and treatment, we are able to provide that service to older people, to people who at one time would not have medically or physically been able to accept that treatment.

In discussions with the orthopedic surgeons in this province and the two regional health authorities who provide the major amount of that, those were the dollars that were recommended that would bring those waiting lists to an acceptable level. We are working very hard with the Alberta Medical Association, Mr. Speaker, to develop clinical practice guidelines in this province that will set out the terms of treatment that both the physicians and the patients will understand. I would invite the hon. member to get a little bit more knowledgeable about some of those processes.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It must be press releases as well as résumés . . . [interjections]

THE SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. Do you have a supplemental question, hon. member?

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the minister would like to explain exactly how it is that she decided that \$2.2 million was exactly the right amount of money to meet the needs in Edmonton when that will still leave hundreds and hundreds of people on the waiting lists.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Again, in consultation with the two regional health authorities it was felt that it would be advisable to divide the dollars evenly. However, Mr. Speaker, I do have a commitment from the regions that they will work – because orthopedic surgery is not only provided in Edmonton and Calgary; it is provided in other centres in the province. What we are asking the orthopedic surgeons and that sector of the AMA to do is to work with us to ensure that the waiting lists are comparable around the province and that we are utilizing the expertise of the orthopedic surgeons that we have in this province. They do not all have to be provided in Edmonton and Calgary. We have a very good management system of cardiac surgery in this province, and the orthopedic surgeons believe that we can manage that service better. I'm frankly looking forward to working with them to ensure that all of those waiting lists can come down.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

2:00

MR. SAPERS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Well, given that most remarkable answer, how can the minister justify that \$1 million of the funding, which she claims is being used for new surgery, is really being used by the Capital health authority to pay off its current budget deficit?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, that statement, allegation I think, is quite a serious one. I believe the hon. member should provide the information in this House or outside of it or to the regional health authority or to me that he has to show that, because those dollars are earmarked for that reason. They are earmarked to bring down those waiting lists. The physician fees are not included in those dollars. [interjections] If the hon. members would listen, they might have a better understanding of what's happening. What those dollars are for is for increased nursing, for increased surgery spaces, and for increased rehabilitation. Part of those dollars are not for physician fees. That is part of our AMA agreement. All of those dollars are going to go to enhance the number of orthopedic surgeries that we can perform in this province.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler.

Ethylene Plant Expansion

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday we saw the Alberta advantage at work when Nova Corporation and Union Carbide announced jointly that they will build as phase 1, at a cost of approximately \$825 million Canadian, a 2 billion-pounds-per-year ethylene plant at Nova's petrochemicals complex located in my constituency at Joffre, Alberta. This is only the beginning, as future phases are being planned. This is indeed good news for my constituency, good news for Alberta. Known as E3, this proposed plant will create 130 new jobs, utilize a number of Alberta-based companies to act as on-site contractors, employ up to 900-plus tradespeople during peak construction periods, not to mention, Mr. Premier, the economic benefit from supplies and services required and . . . [interjections] It's unfortunate that the members opposite do not want . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. [interjections] Order please. Hon. member, preambles are supposed to be concise. Could we have the question, please?

MRS. GORDON: This is such a good news story, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, what further beneficial developments will accrue provincewide if not nationally from this important announcement?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll try and make my . . .

MR. N. TAYLOR: Read your answer.

MR. KLEIN: I'll try and make my answer just a little bit shorter, Nick.

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member pointed out, this plant not only involves an 800 million dollar plus ethylene plant at Joffre; it will result in two polyethylene plants and one other derivative plant initially. In terms of the opportunities for value added, I would think that the opportunities are indeed outstanding, and this is good, good news for Albertans. It's the kind of news the Liberals don't like to hear.

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Premier, were other sites considered by Nova and Union Carbide? If so, why did they choose to expand at the Joffre site?

MR. KLEIN: I think that there has always been a notion that Nova, as an Alberta company, would eventually expand, but the entry of Union Carbide accelerated that expansion, Mr. Speaker. Union Carbide's decision to come to Alberta was predicated on a number of things. One, of course, was the supply of feedstock. Another factor was low taxes – low taxes – amongst the lowest of any jurisdiction in North America. Low taxes.

Another consideration, Mr. Speaker, was a good, positive business environment and highly educated, skilled workers. Highly educated, skilled workers. Another consideration – and I think this is what makes me so proud as an Albertan. When I met with Union Carbide in New York, I told the company's official Dr. Joyce that there were no handouts, there were no incentives, there were no loans, loan guarantees, and so on. I said: all we can offer you is that good business environment, low taxes, a highly trained work force. He said: you know, I'm really, really glad to hear that because other jurisdictions – and he didn't name them – have offered incentives as long as my arm. He said: that's not what we want; we want a good business environment.

MRS. GORDON: Mr. Premier, how will the eventual phaseout of the education portion of the M and E tax impact this venture, and as well, what are the implications of this removal on the local jurisdiction, namely Lacombe county?

MR. KLEIN: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the increased economic activity should more than compensate for the loss of that tax. The M and E tax is not a tax for big business as alleged by the Liberal opposition. This is a tax that applies to, well, small machine shops and bakeries and basically companies that have in their facilities anything that moves.

It is and has been perceived that that tax is an economic inhibitor. It was, again, one other factor that prompted Union Carbide to come here, that at least we would fulfill our commitment to phase out that tax, 20 percent this year, 20 percent next year, and the remaining 60 percent only if something in the neighbourhood of \$11 billion worth of new economic activity occurs.

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

Ryckman Financial Corporation

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The saga of Ryckman Financial Corporation continues. Presently Alberta Treasury, through a loan guarantee, Alberta Treasury Branches, and the Alberta securities and exchange commission are all owed money by Ryckman Financial and all report to the Treasurer, the minister directly responsible. He is the cabinet minister. The Treasury Branches themselves may be owed as much as 8 and a half million dollars. My three questions are to the Provincial Treasurer. Can the Treasurer confirm that Coopers & Lybrand have been appointed as receiver of Ryckman Financial and that losses to ATB may reach as much as 8 and a half million dollars?

MR. DINNING: No, Mr. Speaker.

DR. PERCY: He doesn't know, I guess.

Can the Treasurer tell the Assembly what steps he has taken to

ensure that the Alberta Treasury Branches no longer make million dollar loans by telephone, without collateral, and with no paper work for three weeks? Has he changed the system? Has he done his job?

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows, I sat down with the acting superintendent of Treasury Branches when he took on the job, and I asked him to carry out a study with a local consulting firm to look at the lending practices of Treasury Branches. That is a task that has been completed. The member also knows that one of the first tasks of the board of directors of Treasury Branches, which we hope to announce in the next few weeks, will be to review the existing loan and treasury practices within the Treasury Branches. That will be one of their primary responsibilities, to ensure that those lending and financial practices are in place such that they protect not only the depositors but also the taxpayers of Treasury Branches. So, yes, I believe that those concerns that the hon. member has shared with me in the Assembly are in fact being addressed as they properly should be.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

DR. PERCY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How can the Treasurer reconcile his hands-off, see no evil, hear no evil, feel no evil approach to the Alberta Treasury Branches with the very simple notion of parliamentary responsibility? You are directly responsible for the Alberta Treasury Branches, and Albertans insure those deposits for \$9 billion. You're leaving the finances of this province in the hands of unelected officials.

2:10

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member naturally wants to have it both ways. He would want me to speak about a specific client of the Treasury Branches here on the Assembly floor. He's inviting me to do that now. But were I to fall into the hon. member's trap, he would be up on his feet almost immediately saying: the Treasurer has violated a confidence between a client of the Treasury Branches and the Treasury Branches. So even on the private advice of members all around the Assembly – they've said: "Dinning, don't fall into that trap set by that hon. member. It's a lethal, lethal trap. Do not fall into that trap and talk about a specific client of the Treasury Branches, because you would be violating a confidence and you wouldn't know where to draw the line, at one or two or three or even a Member of the Legislative Assembly who might have deposits at Treasury Branches. You wouldn't want to talk about that specific MLA because it would be a violation of that confidence."

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

Fish Disease Control

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the hon. Minister of Environmental Protection. There are reports that Alberta's rainbow trout population may be at risk from a virus known as whirling disease. Because of the fact that we import our hatchery trout from Montana, where the virus was detected in 1994, can the Minister of Environmental Protection advise the House if there have been any findings of this virus in Alberta trout?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The virus has not been found in Alberta to this point. It has been identified in 19 states in the U.S., and certainly we are very concerned about it. The life cycle of this virus is one that makes it very difficult to contain the spread of the problem. It involves spores. Now, these spores can be spread even by a bird that has consumed a fish that is infected or any other prey that has eaten a fish that is infected. It's difficult to identify in a fishery at this point unless the fish is stricken with the disease or with the parasite. Then we can easily identify it, but it's difficult in a fish that is still healthy.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Based on this concern, has the minister looked into any alternative suppliers of hatchery trout for this year's stocking program, or are we going to be able to furnish our own stocks here in Alberta?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. LUND: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. There was a statement made in the hon. member's preamble to his first question. It was not accurate. The preamble statement was that in fact we import fish for our own use. The provincially operated and owned hatcheries do not import any live fish. We hatch eggs, and that's where we get our stocks. So our program will not be affected by this as far as the fish from our hatchery.

There are private operators that do in fact import live fish and have been importing from areas in Montana. Our regulations require that they can only import from hatcheries that have been certified clean, but the problem is that we may miss and in fact there may be an infection and fish exported prior to the knowledge that there is an infection in the hatchery.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister: what types of screening processes are in place to ensure that we protect our natural habitat from the introduction of diseased imports?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. LUND: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. As I stated earlier, the problem with it spreading in the wild is a real one, and we're really concerned. There's not a lot we can do about that, but we are setting up an education campaign. For example, we are suggesting that anyone that has fished in waters in other parts of the country, particularly in areas where we feel there may be an infestation, should be sure that they clean all their equipment. If they have any water that they've picked up from the watercourse they were fishing in, they should make sure that that has been drained, make sure that there's no mud left on any vehicle, because in fact part of the life cycle – it can spread through mud. Just because it's dry doesn't stop it. As a matter of fact the virus has been known to live up to 30 years in dried mud. So we are doing a number of things there. We're suggesting to any private operator that is buying live fish that they stop the practice and in fact buy eggs, because eggs can be treated so that they would not carry the virus.

Multi-Corp Inc.

MR. GERMAIN: Mr. Speaker, when the Ethics Commissioner has an apprehension of bias, as he does in relation to the 20 missing pages from the Premier's China trip, the government has two choices. They can release the documents, or they can appoint a Queen's Bench judge to adjudicate. Now, on February 27, 1996, the Premier, defiant to the end, said, and I quote from *Hansard*, "We have no intention of taking this [thing] to court." In light of that, I ask the Premier: Mr. Premier, will you tell me now, please, when we can have those documents?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, one thing didn't exactly lead to the other. You know, he goes from the courts to the documents, and yes, he is correct: to the courts. There is a big difference between having a judge make an adjudication as an arbiter and sending something to the courts.

The documents were denied, as I understand it, by FIGA for good reason. Now they have asked for a review of this particular matter, and of course they are entitled to do that under the Act. I guess I would have to repeat to the hon. member the reasons – do you want to hear them again? – why they were rejected. The three sections were clearly indicated to your researcher, Mr. Bosch, as I understand it. I am informed that the reasons for rejection were under section 15(1), "Disclosure harmful to business interests of a third party" – there were about 24 businesses represented on that trip, as I understand it – section 20(1)(a) and 20(1)(b), "Disclosure harmful to intergovernmental relations" – and there were many, many conversations and communications that went between the province and the federal government and other provinces – and 23(1)(b), "Advice from officials." Those were the reasons cited, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you. Then, Mr. Premier, who will you be appointing to adjudicate this matter, and when will that appointment take place?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, under whose jurisdiction freedom of information lies, has had further conversation, as I understand it, with the Ethics Commissioner and the freedom of information commissioner, and perhaps he would like to supplement.

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

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we did receive official notification from the freedom of information commissioner saying that he believed that there was a conflict and that we should have an adjudicator. Then the process has to unfold according to the sections in the Act from 71(1) to 76, allowing the process to unfold. In that process we have to have an official written letter from the people who requested that to the minister before it is acted on.

Now, just before we came into the House, about two minutes before, I did get a letter from Kevin Bosch, and it asked that we please advise when an adjudicator will be appointed. I guess that we need to have an official letter asking us to appoint one. Mr. Speaker, if I could just read section 74(1), it says: "To ask for a review under this Division, a written request must be delivered to the Minister." We look forward to that request.

2:20

MR. GERMAIN: You know, Mr. Speaker, what about this novel idea: instead of wasting all that money in the court adjudication . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question. Question.

MR. GERMAIN: It's a question. Instead of wasting all that money in another Queen's Bench adjudication, why don't you just come clean and give us the documents?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I have no problems personally, but the hon. member doesn't understand that when he talks about expense, he has no imagination, no appreciation of expense. First of all, you would have to write to every company involved. You would have to get permission from every company involved on that mission. You would have to write to all the people with whom conversations or correspondence took place within other governments and get their approval. There would be a complete violation of the conflict of interest laws in that we would be required to do what the law says we can't do, and that is to table in the Legislature advice from officials.

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

Family and Community Support Services

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. I understand that the administration of the funding for FCSS, the family and community support services program, is now being transferred from Municipal Affairs back to the Minister of Family and Social Services, the way it was prior to 1994. I'd like to ask the minister: why are we transferring this responsibility for FCSS one more time?

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

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess one of the main reasons why we are transferring it back to Family and Social Services is that we do listen to Albertans. The municipal districts and counties and also the Alberta urban municipalities both passed recent resolutions asking our government to transfer the program back to Family and Social Services from Municipal Affairs. These agencies of course have paid 20 percent of the dollars and also provide some administrative processes at a local level. In addition to that, we found that out of the \$32 million budget in the department \$25.7 million of it remained conditional on use specifically for FCSS programs. Therefore, there was a strong indication that the program would fit better under this department.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the minister: when will the change take place?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, because the program was administered under Family and Social Services for over 30 years, the processes that were in place to administer the program were still in place in my department. Therefore the change will happen immediately. In fact, on April 1, 1996, I will begin administering the program again.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MR. LANGEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: will the change in the administration of the program lead to other changes such as conditions being placed on the program?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, initially the program was transferred, making it unconditional, but at the request of the municipalities the option was there for municipalities either to remain conditional and provide FCSS programs as they were originally or go unconditional and use dollars in other areas. Being that we found that out of the 32 point some billion dollar budget \$25.7 million of it was used conditional, we will continue with that. During the calendar year of 1996 we will not make any changes, but in the next two or three months we will be consulting with the stakeholders to try and see how the program may be adjusted in the future to make it more efficient.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Redwater.

Sunpine Forest Products Ltd.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Information supplied under the freedom of information legislation shows that the Alberta government's fisheries and wildlife staff identified serious concerns about a major new logging road proposed by Sunpine in the Rocky Mountain area. Due to the lack of a clear provincial process the company is now facing further delays while the federal government seeks the public input that we should have been seeking in the first place. Now, to the Minister of Environmental Protection: how does the minister explain that when I questioned him last May, he flatly refused to do an environmental impact assessment when he already had reports from his own staff saying that we should have one?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environmental Protection.

MR. LUND: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member once again is clearly demonstrating that he does not understand how the process works, and if I were going to look at every road that is constructed on Crown land every year, I wouldn't even be able to do that without even looking at the other things that the ministry is responsible for.

The process is very simple, Mr. Speaker. When a company wants to build a road on Crown land, they make an application for that reason. Then there is broad input from internal members of the department. Fisheries, of course, particularly in the green area, is a major contributor to the decision.

In the initial letters that he refers to, the biologists were clearly outlining that they did have some concerns, and they needed to see how those were going to be mitigated. If he would follow the process on up through to the decision-making, he would find that that's exactly what happened.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, that's the whole point. He didn't follow the process. In fact, he threw a real dirt-kicking fit when a little old lady in Red Deer asked him why he didn't follow the thing.

Would the minister just take a minute now and explain to the House why he ignored the advice from his fish and wildlife officers, who requested a public hearing?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that the hon. member

would go on and on in a preamble like that, making false statements. First of all, I would ask the hon. member: was he there when there was this allegation of shouting at a senior? Most ridiculous. First of all, the press wasn't even there. They heard it from somebody else, and it's just not true. I was in discussion with an elderly lady, and I was fearful that she did not hear what I was saying, so I did speak up. I did speak up to make sure she heard. That's that first false allegation.

The second is, Mr. Speaker, if he would follow through the process, he would find that in fact the people that are charged to make the decision did follow the process. There was correspondence going back and forth. As far as calling an EIA, no, I will not call an EIA on a road where the department clearly has indicated that they can mitigate the problems.

MR. HENRY: Forest Grump rides again.

MR. N. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I won't elaborate on the Forest Grump issue. It's rather obvious.

What I want to get across here is that because he did not hold a hearing, the federal government now has held up the process, and we have a company – the Premier talks about what a wonderful advantage this province has had – that cannot go ahead with logging. Why did he not hold that hearing?

2:30

MR. LUND: Well, Mr. Speaker, once again the preamble is full of erroneous statements, and just to show that I do not shout at seniors, I will not raise my voice to the hon. member.

The fact is that there was a public hearing. The public advisory committee of Sunpine is made up of trappers, of users of the area, and incidentally there was only one person in that whole group of 15 who sit on the advisory committee – there was one person – who objected to the main road. At the public hearing there were a number of inquiries. Yes, there was the odd individual who was opposed to it, but the general feeling was that if you lay out and weigh the economic benefits, when you lay out and look at the alternative, which is a road through the area and the socio-economic effects of doing something with that road, the decision was made that the environmental problems could be mitigated. Yes, we're going to have to restrict that road to public traffic.

There's another really interesting thing in this whole discussion. [interjection] I know you don't like the answer, but that's the way it is.

There's another very interesting thing. The very people who were opposed at one time to using the North Fork Road are now suddenly saying, "Well, that's the road we should have been using." They were going to have all kinds of horror stories about using the road originally when the plant site was at another location.

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

Labour Market Programs

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An effective and productive labour market continues to be a priority in Calgary and indeed all of Alberta. Successful employment strategies require continuous dialogue with all levels of government and the private sector. My questions today are to the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development. I understand the minister had the opportunity to meet with federal and provincial labour market ministers in Toronto in the past week. Would the minister

please share with us which parts of the discussion were specific to the province of Alberta?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, as Alberta is this year's lead province in the forum of labour market ministers, I had the opportunity to co-chair a day's meeting with my federal colleague the Hon. Douglas Young last Thursday in Toronto. Although we didn't learn a lot of additional federal initiatives, I feel that the meeting set a positive tone for some future negotiations. The federal minister put forward his government's priorities such as reforms to unemployment insurance which will tighten income benefits and provide more money for programs that increase employability for people in Canada. He also expressed a commitment to co-operating with individual provinces in designing new labour force development arrangements, and I expressed Alberta's interest in pursuing those kinds of initiatives.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: during the discussions of the proposed federal reforms, what did you put forward as Alberta's position?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, Alberta does support in principle the major reform directions for employment insurance contained in the current draft legislation. There are some proposals which move the program more towards a true insurance program – and we've long been supportive of that – such as the special provisions for seasonal workers. We also support the direction towards more active programming for eligible employment insurance recipients. We in Alberta already provide a number of programs and services which increase the employability of Albertans who are in need of training.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Finally, to the minister: will Alberta seek new federal/provincial labour force development arrangements?

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, Alberta has had the long-standing view that there is too much duplication and overlap between federal and provincial government in the area of labour market. This dual system confuses the clients and wastes scarce dollars that we all are concerned about. I impressed on the federal minister Alberta's view that this would best be solved by giving the province responsibility for labour market force development along with the federal funding that they presently spend on it. I also indicated to the federal minister that we are prepared to manage all labour force development services in Alberta. This would include contracting with the federal government for the design and delivery of active labour market programs for employment insurance benefits and being a delivery agent for employment insurance income support in Alberta.

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

Sexual Abuse of Children

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every day and every night in our province hundreds of children are abused sexually, and the numbers are growing. The latest study by Dr. Sue

McIntyre reports that close to 200 children are abused regularly for money in the Calgary area. Despite the level and horror of abuse experienced by these children, the provincial government chooses to point fingers at Ottawa rather than look at solutions in their own Child Welfare Act, the very legislation that was supposedly designed to protect children. My questions are to the Minister of Family and Social Services. Are we to assume from the minister's earlier response that this government can do nothing when a 14-year-old child coerced by her 19-year-old pimp is thrown on the streets to again be victimized sexually?

MR. CARDINAL: Part of the restructuring of the department of course is to deal with the most sensitive and high-needs areas in our society, Mr. Speaker, and one is children's services. Again, it's very unfortunate that so many children have to be caught in the situation. It's not something to be proud of, and it's a complicated process.

MRS. SOETAERT: What are you doing about it?

MR. CARDINAL: The member here mentions: what are you doing about it? I've been waiting two and a half years for their input, Mr. Speaker. I'm still waiting. So if you have any quick answers, please give them to me. It's a complicated issue; it's a very sensitive issue. I don't believe there is a quick answer for it. I don't believe one jurisdiction in Canada alone, one jurisdiction like Alberta can resolve the problem. We will continue to provide more dollars for children's services, continue to provide home support services, continue to provide preventative programs. In fact, our human resources and our financial resources have increased drastically in that particular area. In addition to that, we're moving the administration and operation of programs to the community, where they should be.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's quite simple. When will the minister find some spine and stop waiting for Ottawa and add prostitution to the Child Welfare Act so that kids will be protected and entitled to intervention services in Alberta?

MR. CARDINAL: I'm not blaming Ottawa. I'm not blaming any other jurisdictions in Canada, Mr. Speaker. It's a very, very complicated issue. One jurisdiction in Canada alone is not going to resolve a Canadian problem. That's all I've said.

In fact, in Alberta we have the best programs for children's services at this time. We have the most human resources. We have the most dollars spent in children's services, and we are moving with major reforms to allow the communities now to help us in resolving these problems. I believe the program will be very successful.

The opposition is easy to criticize, Mr. Speaker. They just released their report. There's nothing in it. There's nothing in their report.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MS HANSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another suggestion for the minister. What are you going to do today to expand the availability of qualified counsellors and programs for sexually abused children, since the McIntyre study states that 75 percent of child prostitutes were previously sexually abused?

2:40

MR. CARDINAL: Again, it's a very, very unfortunate issue. It's something we are not proud of, and I don't believe any Canadian is proud of the situation. We are continuing to review our legislation and make changes as required, and I can assure you that we will continue doing that, Mr. Speaker.

In relation to human resources provided to children's services, Mr. Speaker, we've reduced the welfare caseload by 50 percent, and we haven't reduced the number of staff in my department accordingly. We still have over 5,200 staff working in our department. We are now moving to the community to assist us in delivering the programs.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I stress: I wish the opposition would come up . . . [interjections] If they have quick answers, I wish they would come up with answers to assist us in improving our programs. [interjections]

THE SPEAKER: Order. The time for question period has expired. [interjections] Order, hon. members. [interjections] Order. Enough of the finger-pointing, hon. members. [interjections] Order. [interjections] Hon. members, please.

The Chair has received an indication of three points of order that hon. members wished to raise. The first was by the hon. Member for Fort McMurray, the second was by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora, and the third was by the hon. Government House Leader.

The hon. Member for Fort McMurray.

Point of Order Imputing Motives

MR. GERMAIN: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, my precedent or authority for this point of order flows from the Speaker's memo to the Legislative Assembly on the introduction of the rules of procedure for the opening of the session, in which you comment with some detail on the way in which visitors are to be introduced in this Legislative Assembly. In addition, the comments of the Provincial Treasurer earlier may impute motives and the like under 23(h), (i), and (j).

Now, the background here, Mr. Speaker – and, frankly, even if there wasn't a precedent for the point of order, a previous Member of this Legislative Assembly was introduced in this Assembly today in an insulting, demeaning, and offensive manner. [interjections] My colleagues also bring to my attention that the visitor as a previous member was seated in your own Speaker's gallery. This previous Member of the Legislative Assembly was referred to as being repetitive in his speeches, was referred to as perhaps being boring in his comments. In addition, the Provincial Treasurer was not satisfied with that level of insult; he also implied that the members presently sitting in this Legislature are also boring and repetitive in their speeches. [interjections] Keep it up. Keep it up.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker . . .

DR. L. TAYLOR: There is no point of order.

MR. GERMAIN: There is a point of order here, and the Speaker will rule, if you don't mind.

We do know, Mr. Speaker, that the only vestige of the ND Party sitting in elected office in this Assembly is the hon. Member for Stony Plain over there. Some of the members of the House have found some levity in this point of order, but if one never knows how he's going to be introduced or how they're going to

be introduced or how the gallery is going to react or how the Legislature is going to react to the introduction of visitors, it makes the introduction of visitors very much a part of the political process. You, yourself, have urged that introducing somebody by identifying their station in life is not politicizing the introduction. It's simply introducing them by their station in life. [interjections] Keep it up, yes.

You have indicated that introductions are supposed to be politically neutral and short or we'll lose the privilege. I'm worried about that, and I raise that point of order.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, the only piece of levity associated with that point of order was the manner in which the introduction obviously took place between two friends here in this Assembly. You have ruled many times related to language which is ruled unparliamentary that it's the context in which it is given, and clearly, in reference to a former member of this House being introduced in a good-natured spirit of levity and by the smiles and the waves coming from that former member, it was obvious to everyone in this House the good nature of that particular introduction.

As I rise in a moment or two on my point of order, the Member for Fort McMurray will be wondering about his own words when he talks about pejorative language. If he's living in a glass house, he shouldn't throw his little pebbles around.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Fort McMurray has made reference to the memorandum circulated by the Chair at the beginning of the session for the guidance of all members. The Chair wants to remind all hon. members that that memorandum is still in effect, but the Chair really has to say that its impression of the proceedings earlier was this was completely a matter of levity. There was nothing serious contained in the remarks of the hon. Provincial Treasurer at that time.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora.

Point of Order Allegations against Members

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Earlier in question period the Minister of Health in response to a question from myself used a very tiring and tiresome old refrain about if members in this House only would listen or if members in this House only knew more about the situation. Truly, this is getting very, very, very tiring, and I truly wish the Minister of Health would get herself a new writer, because we're all getting very bored with that as a partial response. Mr. Speaker, my point of order is under 23(h), about making allegations. The allegation specifically was that this hon. member didn't listen.

Now, at a public board meeting of the Capital health authority, in response to a particular question about orthopedic surgery Mr. Don Philippon, whom I believe the minister might have some passing knowledge of, made the following observations. He said that out of the last fiscal budget, \$317,000 had been set aside, that that money would be used to perform 100 additional cases of orthopedic surgery. As a result of the government's announcement of January 30, another 400 cases of orthopedic surgery would now be done. That's \$2.2 million being spent on 400 cases. Mr. Speaker . . .

2:50

THE SPEAKER: Hon. member, please. You're going well beyond the parameters of this point of order. We're not going to have a full-blown debate on the funding of orthopedic surgery over this.

MR. SAPERS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry that I had to give all that background and context, but it does make the point of order understandable for all members and will assist in your ruling.

The point is that the minister said that members on this side didn't listen. I was at the Capital health authority meeting and heard that explanation that the question was based on. The hon. Minister of Health was not. Perhaps she should listen and find out what's going on in her own department. Then she wouldn't be subject to these points of order.

THE SPEAKER: Order please. Hon. member, the Chair regrets to say that this is not a point of order; it's just a ventilation of a disagreement between the hon. member and the Minister of Health.

The hon. Government House Leader.

Point of Order

Abusive Language

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, as we saw all last week, the strategy here is very clear: they are determined to keep us from spending time in estimates. It really is aggravating that we can't get to the estimates.

Mr. Speaker, clearly here, 23(h), (i), and (j), in terms of pejorative language. The Member for Fort McMurray, in referring to items that were released by the Ethics Commissioner and a certain list and certain things that were not released, then responded to the person he originally asked the question by shouting the phrase, "Come clean," and suggesting distinctly that there was something underhanded going on. The member who was just up moments ago in shock, horror, and dismay about how somebody was introduced in a very lighthearted fashion I would hope, even before you could rise, would leap to his feet and apologize for pejorative language, for disruptive language, and for insulting language. [interjections]

THE SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order. The Chair will again remind hon. members that in order to make proper progress in this place, the noise level should be lower than it has been, and this level has been increased by the use of provocative language. The Chair would urge all hon. members to try to be more businesslike in the conduct of the public's business, because what's been happening doesn't really lead to a serious discussion of the issues of government in this province, in the Chair's opinion. But the Chair is not prepared to rule the language complained about to be unparliamentary.

head: Motions under Standing Order 40

Gemini Award Winners

THE SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. [interjection] Oh, sorry; the Chair has overlooked the fact that there is an application to be made to the House under Standing Order 40 by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll rise just briefly to speak to the point of urgency regarding this motion to recognize Albertan artists Paul Gross and Tantoo Cardinal for their achievements over the weekend.

Mr. Speaker, when native Albertans achieve such incredible heights that cause all of Canada to stand and salute them for achieving these penultimate heights in their field of endeavour and especially in such a highly competitive industry as film and

television arts, so too should we be swift as an Assembly and as a province to recognize them at our first opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, that opportunity is now because these awards were only handed down yesterday, and I would beg the Assembly's indulgence to give unanimous consent for us to properly recognize these two outstanding Albertan artists.

Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member has asked for the unanimous consent of the Assembly to propose a motion under Standing Order 40. All those in favour of this request, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

Mr. Zwozdesky moved:

Be it resolved that this Assembly recognize and congratulate Albertan artists Paul Gross and Tantoo Cardinal for winning top honours at the 10th annual Gemini Awards celebration yesterday.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, all members of the Assembly. Last night in Toronto the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television presented its 10th annual Gemini Awards program, selecting artistic, technical, and otherwise creative excellence in the film and television industry. Among the group of deserving recipients were two native Albertan artists who through their superior talents and efforts brought outstanding accolades not only unto themselves for their trades but also to our province and to our entire film and television industry in Alberta.

The first artist I'd like to salute is Tantoo Cardinal, who was awarded the Gemini last night for best performance by an actress in a guest role in a dramatic series. The series I'm referring to of course is *North of 60*, which is filmed just outside Calgary in and around the Bragg Creek area under the very talented production hand of Tom Dent-Cox, his partners, and the rest of his team. By winning this award, Tantoo Cardinal has focused the eyes of all onto this beautiful area of Alberta and onto a very serious series that depicts a very real part of Alberta's native heritage each week. Tantoo herself is of course a Métis actress born in Fort McMurray and raised in Anzac, Alberta. [some applause] I acknowledge the applause of the hon. Member for Fort McMurray along with all others here.

Tantoo's Cree grandmother raised her with a great awareness of her Indian roots and all the values encompassed therein. To quote the actress herself, she said: with acting I have found a way to do my part to tell my people's story. This young woman, who grew up under the guidance of her grandmother, went on to achieve enormous heights in fulfilling that particular storytelling ideal that she set for herself years ago. She attended high school with the support of the Mennonite community in Edmonton, and after graduating from high school, she became very active in native organizations, including the United Native Youth, which is a group dedicated to raising awareness of native issues as well as dedicated toward political organizing, and it is a group of which she later became president. That is of course what part of the series *North of 60* attempts to do: portray some of the very positive aspects but at the same time present some of the very real and sometimes not so happy aspects that pervade our Indian culture here in the province.

This wonderful actress really began her acting career through the CBC in a documentary called *Father Lacombe*, and even though she had no real, formal theatrical training, the industry

was there to recognize quickly the incredible ability that she had and the impact that they felt she could have in portraying her message through this most powerful of all media, that being television. In her own words too, Mr. Speaker, she felt that because her ancestry is such an oral society, it was a great opportunity for her to use words and pictures and song and movement and storytelling to create a deeper and greater understanding among all peoples, especially those who are looking with microscopes sometimes at the native culture.

She went on to star and direct other movies, and in particular I want to highlight just a couple. In one of the critically acclaimed CBC movies *Loyalties*, which was co-produced and directed by our own Edmontonian Anne Wheeler of *Bye-Bye Blues* fame along with Edmonton composer George Blondheim, Cardinal played a major role, which landed her significance amongst her peers and led to many other roles thereafter. She won the best actress Elizabeth Sterling award in theatre for *All my Relations*, a play with an all-native cast. She went on also to win a special award called First Americans in the Arts Totem award for a special portrayal in a movie called *Windows*, and from there she went on to receive other accolades for best performances in movies such as *Where the Rivers Flow North* and also a best performance award from the American Indian Film Festival, the 1993 award, co-starring with Rip Torn in the movie *Where the Rivers Flow North*. She also did outstanding work on another movie: the first Rudy Martin award for a film that she starred in that portrayed native Americans in 1994.

The list of accolades for this woman, Mr. Speaker, goes on and on. Suffice it to say that as a result of not only her acting ability but her tremendous ability to communicate, she was successful and very influential in actually getting several directors and producers to change their scripts insofar as the content was concerned regarding projects that unfortunately had inaccuracies regarding North American native Indians. For her contributions thereto she of course won the eagle spirit award in 1990.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we can add our award, our award of thanks from the people of Alberta through their elected representatives in this House, by supporting this motion.

3:00

The other Albertan artist that we must recognize within this motion is Mr. Paul Gross, who appears weekly in millions of homes now through the magic of television as an RCMP officer dressed in the flaming red tunic for which he is now famous. Paul Gross is of course the leading star in the smash hit *Due South*, which features one of those by-the-book Mounties from our frozen north plying his trade teamed up with a Chicago cop. It's produced by a Canadian company called Alliance Communications out of Toronto, and what's significant about this film, that all members must know, is that this is the first Canadian series to crack the American prime-time market. That's a huge step forward for Canadian films.

It's also a very clever vehicle which, in spite of its comedylike presentation, allows aspects of Canadian culture to shine through in a very positive way. Mr. Speaker, it even brings special attention to a former Prime Minister of ours who happened to be a very close personal friend of my grandfather John Hryhor, and that is of course John Diefenbaker. That's the name of the dog who is man's best friend, and many would say that Diefenbaker in his time was also a friend of many in this great country.

This infamous star Paul Gross is a Calgary-born actor who earned his drama degree right here in Edmonton at the University of Alberta. But he's not only an actor; he's also an exceptional writer. His first writing that he did was *The Deer and the*

Antelope Play, which was performed right here not far from this hallowed hall, and for that writing he won the Clifford E. Lee national playwriting award and the Alberta cultural playwriting award in 1992. He became a playwright in residence at the Stratford Festival and has won numerous awards related thereto.

However, as we salute these two outstanding people, tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, the Local Heroes film and screen festival kicks off right here in Edmonton, and we'll have a chance to go and see and salute some of our other incredible talent which abounds so well in our province.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion let me just say that both of these Albertan artists are outstanding examples of the incredible success that is possible in the film and television industry, which comes about because of the very well-developed infrastructure that we have built over several decades in this province. Among three outstanding contributors to this success and to this industry are of course the Alberta Motion Picture Industries Association, which we commonly call AMPIA, as well as the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation, which we know as AMPDC, and of course the National Screen Institute, which is presenting the Local Heroes film and screen festival tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, let me just conclude on that very positive note and thank the people referred to in this motion, as well as all the others that have impacted on this industry, and seek the unanimous agreement of the House to endorse this motion with their full hearts.

Thank you, sir.

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

MR. HLADY: Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to at this time, I guess, congratulate Paul Gross and Tantoo Cardinal as well, but I'd also like to bring some issues forward here at this time re Standing Order 40. I think it's important that it's understood. I was fortunate enough to have a chance to meet Paul Gross this summer during the Calgary Stampede, in July of '95, and find out a little bit about this particular actor. I think he might find it possibly a little embarrassing to see that this was supposed to be a pressing and urgent matter, which is the purpose of Standing Order 40, and unfortunately I think we're seeing an abuse of that particular situation with Standing Order 40s being used by the opposition. I think it's a great thing that we can do it and say thanks to these particular people from Alberta, but at the same time I don't believe it should be done through a Standing Order 40. I will probably send a personal letter to Paul Gross and congratulate him, but I don't think it needs to be done through a Standing Order 40 position.

Thank you.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried, let the record show unanimously.

head: **Orders of the Day**
head: **Committee of Supply**

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

head: **Main Estimates 1996-97**

THE CHAIRMAN: Members of the committee, I remind you that pursuant to Standing Order 57 we'll divide into two subcommittees. Subcommittee A will meet here in the Chamber in five minutes, and subcommittee D will meet in room 512 in five minutes.

[The committee adjourned from 3:06 p.m. to 5:24 p.m.]

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll call the committee to order.

The hon. Member for Dunvegan.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Subcommittee D of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the department of science and research, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in this report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Mr. Chairman, I would look for at this point unanimous consent following discussion with the Opposition House Leader related to a member change on the designated supply subcommittee for Health, and that would be the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark to replace the . . .

THE CHAIRMAN: I wonder if we can finish the reports first, and then you could do that.

MR. DAY: Oh, sure. Let's do that. Yeah. Okay.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary-North Hill.

MR. MAGNUS: Mr. Chairman, subcommittee A of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the department of Executive Council and reports progress thereon and requests leave to sit again.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in this report?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Opposed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Carried. So ordered.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I was saying before I stopped saying it, the House would seek unanimous consent following a discussion between the House leaders to allow for a change in membership of the designated supply committee for Health. That would be the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark to replace the Member for Leduc.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in this request?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Opposed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Carried.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. DAY: Mr. Chairman, before I move that the committee rise and report, for your information it was brought to our attention in the subcommittee looking at science and research that there's a question about whether indeed we could have gone until 5:30. I hadn't actually given that consideration, and from the quick look that we've done at the Standing Orders, it appears as though we indeed in an afternoon sitting like this could actually continue on until 5:30. So I want to give that commitment to the Opposition House Leader, that we will look to do that. It would give an extra 10 or 15 minutes of good time. So we'll look to do that.

On that notice, I would move that the committee rise and report progress.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hon. Government House Leader, before we entertain that motion, do you not have another change that you'd circulated?

MR. DAY: I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. I'm advised at this point that that may not be happening, so that's why I did not move that motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: Oh. Okay.

MR. DAY: Thank you for the sensitivity.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have the hon. Government House Leader's motion, then, to rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Clegg in the Chair]

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of Executive Council and of the department of science and research.

I wish to table copies of a resolution agreed to in Committee of Supply on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: All those in favour of the report by the Member for Highwood, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Opposed, if any?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Carried.

[The Assembly adjourned at 5:29 p.m.]

