

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Thursday, March 7, 1996 1:30 p.m.
Date: 96/03/07
 [The Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

THE SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, keep us mindful of the special and unique opportunity we have to work for our constituents and our province, and in that work give us strength and wisdom.

Amen.

Please be seated.

head: **Introduction of Visitors**

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce to you today His Excellency Veijo Sampo-vaara, ambassador of the Republic of Finland. Ambassador Sampovaara is accompanied today by Mr. Christian Graefe, Finland's honorary consul in Edmonton. Ambassador Sampovaara was appointed ambassador to Canada in December 1995, and this is his first official visit to our province and his first official visit to the west. Alberta shares many common interests with Finland, especially in the areas of forestry and cold climate technology and, of course, hockey. Another similarity is that the companies in both Finland and Alberta are active in the Russian market. Exports to Finland consist of wheat, orthopedic appliances, mustard and canola seeds, and oil and gas equipment. I would ask that the ambassador and the consul rise in your gallery and receive the recognition and warm welcome of the Assembly.

Senator Nick Taylor

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members, I have the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that I have received a communication notifying me that a vacancy has occurred in the representation; namely, Mr. Nick Taylor, member for the constituency of Redwater, who resigned today, March 7, 1996. A warrant to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of a writ will be addressed to fill the vacancy. Effective immediately Mr. Taylor has been summoned to the Senate of Canada.

Mr. Taylor served as leader of the Alberta Liberal Party from 1974 to 1988. He was first elected to the Alberta Legislature in 1986 and was re-elected in the 1989 and 1993 general elections. During his term of service he represented the constituencies of Westlock-Sturgeon and Redwater. This afternoon the Hon. Nick Taylor, Senator, is seated in the Speaker's gallery, and I would ask him to rise and receive the congratulations of the Assembly. [applause]

I would now like to ask for the unanimous consent of the House for one member on each side of the House to speak on this occasion. Is there such consent?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in 1979 in the province of Alberta there was a general election, and in that election some 75 members of the government were elected, and four members were elected to the opposition. So the government held 75 out of 79 seats.

In the early fall of 1979 one of the true icons, individuals who served in this Assembly, the hon. Dr. Hugh M. Horner, left provincial politics and left vacant a riding seat in the province of Alberta: Barrhead. If my memory serves me correctly, about the same day that Dr. Horner made his announcement that he would be leaving, the then leader of the Liberal Party in the province of Alberta, who did not have a seat in the Alberta Legislative Assembly, Mr. Nick Taylor, announced that he was going to be seeking election in that by-election. Several days went by, Mr. Speaker, and I decided that I would also like to seek election in that by-election. Shortly thereafter, the Premier of the day announced that the by-election would be held, and so began my first series of experiences with the individual known as Nick Taylor in the province of Alberta.

During a 28-day by-election campaign Mr. Nick Taylor, who was the leader of the Liberal Party, received incredible amounts of publicity, and he referred to this particular individual, you know, along the line: well, the Tories could run a bale of hay out there in Barrhead and probably do pretty good. For 28 days I had to deal with this, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time this new, all-powerful, omnipotent government that had now 74 seats out of 79 had a session. So the by-election was going on in Barrhead when there was a session of the Legislature, and they continued to do some really outstanding things. That was the time, if all members can remember, that a committee was appointed outside the Legislature to look at salaries for MLAs, and they recommended that salaries for MLAs should go up 50 percent. So the highlight of my day as a Conservative candidate was getting a report about 5 o'clock in the afternoon telling me: "Watch the news at 6 o'clock, and don't die of a heart attack. Know full well that at 8 o'clock you'll probably be in a forum with the leader of the Liberal Party. How are you going to deal with these issues?" My day would go down after 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

On the issue of the 50 percent wage increase, Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded of a story that I'll never, ever forget, because one of the things that I want to compliment the hon. member on is his incredible wit. Here we were in a jam-packed environment in the town of Barrhead, and I was really taking it on the head as to why I could stand up and support a 50 percent wage increase for MLAs. My only defence was that it was a Liberal judge who was the chairman of the committee. So my hon. adversary in this case gets up and says, "Well, if I were getting a 50 percent wage increase, I'd consider that pretty liberal too." Eruptions of laughter in the room, and I'm just going farther and farther downhill.

At the first forum we had, the forum is over, two and a half hours are done, and about 10 people come up to me. Ten people I've never seen before come up to me and get me in the corner and say: "Ken, what a great job you did; tremendous work. That was just great. We've got to know more about what you stand for, that policy you stand for." Twenty minutes later I escape this throng, look out of the corner of my eye. Guess who's standing at the door with a big smile on his face, shaking hands with everybody as they walk out of the room at the conclusion of the forum? It was one Nick Taylor. [laughter] I learned a great deal.

Anyway, the election came in '79. All those other events are a bit of history, but after that 1979 election, although I was fortunate to win, the very determined leader of the Liberal Party decided he still wanted to come back to this particular constituency. So we had to endure one another for another three years,

but during that time, Mr. Speaker, there was a great deal of respect developed. That respect that goes back to 1979 is one that is maintained in the year 1996 as well.

I personally want to thank Mr. Taylor for the determination that he's given to his cause in the province of Alberta for a great part of his life. While there were some very high days in his leadership role as the leader of the Liberal Party and as a member of the Alberta Legislative Assembly, there were also some dark days, but because he was determined, he endured and he maintained the composure that he's always had, Mr. Speaker. I know full well that that has allowed him to become very, very successful in life. He's persevered in light of incredible odds. There were jokes in the past, and this is no disrespect to anybody: "You know the Liberal Party is going to hold a convention in Alberta. Well, what phone booth will they use for all their delegates?" He had to endure that. He listened to that. He worked with it, and he kept with it, and he persevered.

One of the great lessons to me was that Nick Taylor displayed a compassion for the little guy, the little person. Mr. Speaker, I observed that. I watched that, and I learned from it as well.

1:40

His humour and his wit are second to none in the province of Alberta. There are few individuals who can match him line for line on any given day, Mr. Speaker. Some of it is pretty cutting, but most of it is humorous, and in the end, despite the fact that there are some cuts, it is always I guess the humour that comes out, and you say: "Okay. You won that one; let's go on to the next one."

There have been a lot of outstanding individuals who have served in this Assembly. There are outstanding individuals who serve in this Assembly today, Mr. Speaker. Some have been outstanding leaders. Some have been outstanding diplomats. Some have been outstanding statesmen. Some have been outstanding parliamentarians. Few, though, can fit the category of a character, to be a character. Nick Taylor is one of those, and this Assembly will become very, very much more vacant as of today with the lack of his presence in it.

I also would like to say several words in support of another person very close to Mr. Taylor. The first time that I ever met him, I also met his very gracious and stately wife, Mrs. Taylor. She was always gracious, Mr. Speaker, always very supportive of him, a really nice person, a first-class lady. I said to him before and I've said it publicly that if anybody in his family deserves an award, it's Mrs. Taylor, not Mr. Taylor.

Why anyone would want to become a Senator is unknown to me, but if the Fathers of Canadian Confederation a century and a quarter ago said that what they wanted to have in Canada was a group of people who would provide a sober second thought, I want to make it publicly known today: I have yet to see Mr. Taylor in any situation other than the fact that he was sober, and in every situation he always had a second thought. So I think that in that respect he surely fully fits the bill. [laughter]

Perhaps it's a bit ironic that on this day in 1996, the Hon. Senator Nick Taylor will assume a new position in Ottawa. It wasn't very many years ago that Nick Taylor campaigned throughout the province of Alberta saying that he was the father of the triple E, an elected Senate in the province of Alberta. So perhaps, Mr. Speaker, six months hence when there must be a by-election in the province of Alberta, we might also have the opportunity to have Mr. Taylor go to the polls one more time in the province of Alberta to truly conform and bring full circle all lessons in his own political history.

I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying to him: congratulations, best wishes, good health, peace. I want to say that to you, Nick, as my friend, and I know I can say it on behalf of all of the people in this Assembly who are your friends as well. Continued best wishes.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate greatly that the members of this Legislative Assembly would allow us to depart from tradition to recognize somebody who has been as significant and important to so many of us in this Assembly and across this province as the new Senator, Nick Taylor. If ever it was appropriate to depart from tradition, would it not be most appropriate to depart from tradition for none other than Nick Taylor? If anybody hasn't recognized tradition, has been irreverent about traditions, it is Nick Taylor, and it is part of what we all appreciate, respect, admire, and love about Nick Taylor so much.

My colleague from Barrhead-Westlock has been very, very gracious in what he has said, and there are few who could say it better, having embraced Mr. Taylor the way that the Member for Barrhead-Westlock has, having joined him in many battles over the years. I laughed moments ago about some of the memories that the Member for Barrhead-Westlock has conjured up for all of us, and laughing is something I will always hold in my memories of Nick Taylor. But today it's not just laughter that I remember. It's with some sadness that I will see Nick Taylor's chair empty, that I will be able to use his name, Nick Taylor, in this House. It's with a great deal of sadness in fact and, I know, regret that we see him leave after having made such a tremendous contribution to this Legislative Assembly. I know few people on either side of this House who are more worthy to represent the people of this province.

Nick Taylor was born in 1927 in Bow Island. He has lived and breathed Alberta all of his life. It was a crowning achievement for him to have been elected to this Legislative Assembly after the years of fighting and struggling to do that, fighting based upon his fundamental beliefs, his fundamental, unwavering principles that have always distinguished him as one of the leading if not the leading Liberal for generations in this province.

He has spent his adult life dedicated to three things: dedicated to Alberta's energy industry, dedicated to Alberta politics, and of course dedicated to his family. Peg has been noticed and recognized already, and it is true that Peg deserves all of that recognition. Not enough can be said about the contributions that she has made in supporting Nick Taylor in the way that she has, in giving him some guidance and in giving him the time to do what he has done for the people of this province. My hat and our hats are off to Peg Taylor.

In all three areas – business, politics, and family – Nick has been a leader, an outstanding success, and a model for all Albertans. He has been in this Legislature for 10 years, and the happiest times of my life in this Legislature were those when he sat beside me in the Legislature and I got to hear all of the statements that he made that many of you missed because his voice, as piercing as it is, doesn't always reach that microphone or this microphone or somebody else's microphone. I will say, Mr. Speaker, that there were times during that period of time that Nick Taylor would have been named in this House more than I have done today if you had heard what he had to say.

Nick Taylor has been a Liberal all his life, and he personifies the true Liberal values of compassion and sharing. He is the type of man who views politics not as an opportunity for personal

advancement. He views politics as it should be: as a very high and important form of public service, as a way of returning something to this province, which he so categorically and so deeply loves.

The members of this side of the Legislative Assembly will greatly miss Nick's sharp analysis, his patience, his intelligence, and of course his wit. I would think that members of that side of the Assembly, most of whom have been stung repeatedly, will also find that they will miss his wit and his intelligence in this Chamber. Albertans from every corner of this province and from every walk of life and from every political stripe have been served so well by Nick Taylor, Member of the Legislative Assembly. They will now continue to be served so well by Senator Nick Taylor.

I want to salute you, Nick. We're all going to miss you. [applause]

head: **Presenting Petitions**

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

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present a petition signed by 27 seniors in Calgary-Buffalo who urge the Government to ensure that seniors can live with dignity and independence by means of a strong health care system which includes necessary home care.

head: **Introduction of Bills**
1:50

Bill 11
Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1996

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 11, the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1996. This being a money Bill, His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

[Leave granted; Bill 11 read a first time]

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I have three tablings today. First, Alberta Health: A Three-Year Business Plan and Supplement, 1996-97 to 1998-99. A copy of that will be distributed to each member.

Additionally, I'm filing with the Assembly the three-year business plans for 1996-1999 for the regional health authorities, with the exception of region 5. This plan is having some further work done to it, and it will be tabled as soon as it is finalized.

During question period on Tuesday March 5, while responding to a statement made by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora regarding the Capital health authority and orthopedic surgery waiting lists, I indicated that I would ask the authority for a breakdown showing that the \$2.2 million allocated to them to reduce the waiting list had been used entirely for that purpose. Mr. Speaker, I am tabling that letter now as well.

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

MR. SAPERS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. With your permission today I'd like to table a letter from Professor Gerald McCaughey, who is the president of the Association of Professors Emeriti from the University of Alberta, in which the professor is most concerned about the controversy surrounding academic credentials

and is offering his service and that of his association to help the government understand and establish the proper way of vetting academic credentials in the hiring of senior public servants.

head: **Introduction of Guests**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Highwood.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly two gentlemen sitting in your gallery. Mr. Blake McDougall is this Assembly's former assistant deputy minister and Legislature Librarian. Mr. McDougall is accompanied by Mr. Bob Bell, former head of children's services of the Edmonton Public Library. I'd ask both gentlemen to rise and receive the very warm welcome of the Legislative Assembly.

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

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker . . .

THE SPEAKER: Oh, sorry. The hon. Member for Highwood.

MR. TANNAS: Like the former Member for Redwater I'd like an extra word.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly Mr. Art Bloomfield, who is seated in the members' gallery. Mr. Bloomfield is visiting Alberta from Manitoba, and he's a close associate of the Deputy Speaker of Manitoba, Mr. Marcel Laurendeau. I'd ask Mr. Bloomfield to rise and receive the warm traditional welcome of the Legislative Assembly.

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

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With your permission and on behalf of my colleague the MLA for Edmonton-Strathcona I would like to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly 50 students registered in political science 220 at the University of Alberta. They're in the gallery, and with your permission I'd ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly 142 visitors from G.H. Primeau school in the constituency of Redwater. They are here with their teachers: Mr. Gary Miller, Mrs. Jan Maslyk, Mrs. Cheryl Wojtkiw, Mr. Herman Weidle, Mrs. Chris Sowinski, Mrs. Sandee Blackburn, Mrs. Norma Erickson. They're here with their helpers: Mr. Carl Beaumont, Mr. Brian Romijan, Mrs. Darlene Cherniwchan, Mrs. Patmore, Mr. David Harrigan, Mrs. deBeaudrap, and Ruth Knight. They are all here to see the Legislature in action. They've picked a wonderfully appropriate day also to visit Senator Taylor. They're in both galleries. I'd ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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

MR. WICKMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to

introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly a resident of Edmonton-Strathcona, a longtime friend, a gentleman I had the honour of sitting with on the development appeal board. It's a privilege for him to be here along with the others this afternoon to hear the kind tribute to Senator Taylor. I would ask George Reith in the members' gallery to please stand and receive the warm welcome of the House.

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

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you some staff members of the Liberal caucus who are here this afternoon also to honour Alberta's newest Senator, Nick Taylor. If they'd please rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

Thanks.

head: **Ministerial Statements**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Community Development.

International Women's Day

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, thank you. Tomorrow, March 8, is International Women's Day. This will mark the 85th International Women's Day, and as the minister responsible for women's issues I'm proud to stand in this House and invite hon. members to join me in recognizing the importance of women in our society, in our economy, and in our future.

In 1911, Mr. Speaker, when International Women's Day was inaugurated, women did not have the vote. They were not even declared persons under the law. Thankfully, all of that has changed. A lot has changed as a result of work that was instigated right here in the province of Alberta. For example, it was Alberta's Famous Five who successfully campaigned to have women legally recognized as persons. Today every person in Alberta has the freedom to make choices about their education, about their careers, about what in life they want, and what kind of contribution they want to make to their community and their province. That kind of equality is what organizers of that first International Women's Day hoped to achieve. In 1911 it was just a dream; in 1996 it is reality.

On this International Women's Day we celebrate the advances that women have made in asserting and redefining their roles. Today women are a major force in Alberta's employment picture. Since 1994 full-time, part-time, and self-employment figures for women have all risen. A part of the reason that women are participating more in the labour market can be traced to education. Women recognize that education is the key to increasing their earning power and asserting their independence. As an example, in 1994-95 about 54 percent of full-time students in public colleges, technical institutes, and universities were women, many of them in nontraditional disciplines.

Mr. Speaker, the pursuit of equality continues. On International Women's Day and every day we must look at what remains to be done. The Alberta provincial government is doing its part. Economic Development and Tourism offers programs and services for women entrepreneurs. Advanced Education and Career Development offers employment and skills development programs for women, which they are taking advantage of. Women are also the primary users of several skills development and employment programs offered by Family and Social Services.

This government remains committed also to helping prevent

violence against women, so the 1996-97 budget for women's shelters remains the same as last year at about \$7.3 million. This is two and a half times more than the 1985 budget of \$2.6 million. The government has worked closely with the community to protect women from violence in initiatives like the domestic violence registry project, and the Department of Justice has amended the Maintenance Enforcement Act to help custodial parents, most of whom are women. Alberta Health has earmarked \$20 million for workforce readjustment. This initiative will assist many women since many health care professionals are women.

In addition, this government's commitment to consulting with Albertans includes consulting with Alberta's women by designating a minister responsible for women's issues. This government continues to recognize the impact of government policy and actions on Alberta's women. It is significant to see that the responsibility for this comes under the Department of Community Development. We cannot develop as a community if we ignore the needs of more than half our population. I would also like to encourage all Alberta communities to continue to be involved, to listen to women, and to find ways of addressing their concerns. I encourage Alberta's women to speak directly to government. The Treasurer is sending a questionnaire to every Alberta household asking how to reinvest extra revenue. This is a perfect opportunity for women to have their voices heard.

2:00

I also urge Albertans to take part in events happening throughout this province to mark International Women's Day. These events are taking place throughout the province: in Edmonton, in Calgary, in Red Deer, in Canmore, in Fort McMurray. I urge Albertans everywhere to attend these events. I urge Albertans to consider changes that still need to be made. I urge Albertans to think about what they can contribute.

The symbols of International Women's Day are bread and roses. Bread represents economic equality; roses represent women's continuing efforts for a better quality of life. It is up to all of us to give those symbols meaning.

Thank you.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important to remind and educate members of the Assembly on why International Women's Day came into being. On March 8, 1857, female textile workers from New York's east side held an unheard of strike to protest unsafe working conditions, paltry wages, and long hours. As expected, the reaction from the male establishment was cruel. Several women were beaten and trampled by police horses, but the strike did not go unnoticed. While the women returned to the same working conditions, female factory workers around the world began to follow suit. Textile workers in Montreal held more than 40 strikes between the period from 1900 to 1908. The action caught the attention of a determined woman in Copenhagen, Denmark, named Clara Zetkin, who managed to have March 8 officially proclaimed as International Women's Day in honour of the factory workers who took that courageous first step to speak out against injustice.

International Women's Day represents the tremendous struggles women have had to overcome for generations. Celebrating the day means reflecting on the gains women have made and, perhaps most important of all, honouring their strength, wisdom, and

patience with a world that moves far too slowly in terms of recognizing full equality for women.

I urge all Albertans to find the time to celebrate International Women's Day but to also be watchful of this government's policies, the loss of the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues, and to be able to vocalize their concerns.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

head:

Oral Question Period

Women's Issues

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, there is a silent workforce in this province whose members are not pictured in the company bulletin as the employees of the month. They work long hours and provide vital support for people, yet they receive no pay and very little public recognition. They are our wives, our mothers, our daughters, and our sisters, and it is these women who have become the unpaid caregivers bearing the brunt of the chaos this government has created in health care. To the Minister of Health: is it a formal part or just an accident of the health care restructuring process to have women pick up the pieces when people are released from hospital too early or are forced to wait too many months to find a long-term care bed?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I think maybe on behalf of the wives and mothers and sisters and daughters of this province I'm a bit offended by the hon. member's comments, that in some way negate the important role that I believe women have played in this world since time began and history was recorded as nurturers, as caregivers to their family. I'm also offended on behalf of the men in this world who provide that same care in many cases. I can tell the hon. member of many instances where it is the male in the family that does provide that caregiving.

Mr. Speaker, family support is important to everyone in this province, whether it's during the time of a health issue or an illness, but to somehow try to suggest that the changes in health care have changed women's role is absolutely preposterous. In fact, recognizing the changing role of the workforce - of the workforce - in this province, not saying that one sector or the other has any corner on that, we've introduced first of all, increased, and enhanced home care and home support for persons who for a number of reasons are unable to provide those services to their family members.

Mr. Speaker, it is honourable to care for one's family, whether it is in a time of wellness or a time of illness. It is an honourable thing for family members to care about each other.

MR. MITCHELL: It's interesting that the minister gets indignant about . . .

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. MITCHELL: Why can't the Minister of Health understand that government restructuring and reliance on the volunteer sector really means to her that what she wants is for women to do the work without pay?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, again the hon. member's comments are absolutely preposterous. They are ridiculous, and they're totally unfounded. As the minister responsible for the Wild Rose Foundation, which is a tremendous foundation in this province that supports the volunteer element in the province, I'm

proud of the volunteers in this province. I am not proud of the fact that the hon. Leader of the Opposition stands in this Legislature day after day and makes allegations and innuendos that are not in fact always just exactly accurate.

For example, I was looking through some of this information. Why I would I'm not sure. He stated that we have the highest health care premiums in the country. That's not true. He said that the limit for home care has been reduced by the Capital health authority. That's not true. He cited cases of delays in receiving treatment that in fact when you review them are not entirely accurate.

Let's stick to the facts in this. We have improved the home care support per person. We value the contribution of family members in caring for their family members. That's what Alberta is all about. That's the pioneering spirit. That's what built this province. I live in a part of the country where neighbours help neighbours, mothers help daughters, sisters help mothers, and I'm proud of it.

MR. MITCHELL: And this government hardly helps . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order.

MR. MITCHELL: To the Minister of Community Development, responsible for women's issues: why has this minister implemented only seven out of 86 recommendations on behalf of women put forward by his own advisory council on women?

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Advisory Council on Women's Issues was initiated back in 1986, and over the years they have done a good deal of work. It's not clear to me how it is that the advisory council comes to the conclusion that only seven of the 86 recommendations they've made have been accepted by government. That's not in fact correct.

It's clear to me that the council, just on the issue of maintenance enforcement, made seven recommendations, and many of those recommendations were accepted immediately. Over the years since that tabled report in 1989, a number of further changes were made to strengthen maintenance enforcement, including making it possible to withhold drivers' licences and vehicle registrations from people in default of their payments. Nine of the recommendations that were made by the advisory council in their report Differential Impact and the Alberta Advantage are being looked at right now, and certainly we'll be happy to respond to them at an appropriate time.

I'd point out, Mr. Speaker, that many of those recommendations that have been made over the years have provided the jumping-off point, or starting point, for discussions on those very subjects. So many more than just the seven have been referred to and acted upon. In addition, many of the recommendations that have been made by the council over the years were already in fact government policy, so accordingly, nothing new needed to be changed. We were already doing things that they'd recommended.

2:10

They've made recommendations with respect to Advanced Education and Career Development in offering programs, particularly for women. I'm pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that in labour force participation, because of recommendations that have been made and accepted by government, many more women, some 685,000, are now working in the province of Alberta. The majority of those are in fact full-time employment. At this time

the latest statistics that I have are that 55 percent of all salaried employees of the Alberta government are women, and 24 percent of managers in government are women. That figure is up over the years.

So with changes that have been made with respect to the Students Finance Board, Advanced Education and Career Development, also in Family and Social Services . . . [injections]

THE SPEAKER: Order please. The time allotted for this question is well over the average.

Maternity Ward Discharges

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, the safety of newborn children in this province is in jeopardy because the government's restructuring means that mothers and their newborn infants are now staying in the hospital for no more and often considerably less than 24 hours. Recent research in the *Journal of Pediatrics* indicates that decreasing the length of stay for mothers and newborns results in dramatic increases in the rate of readmissions for babies who otherwise would have remained healthy. It further indicates that babies have in fact died because of early discharge. Upon what basis does the Minister of Health disagree with Medicine Hat's Dr. Donald Davis of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada when he says: doctors are concerned that there is neither the level of care nor the experience to move into the early discharge programs?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I think there are a couple of points to make here. First of all, it is the physician that decides when a person is discharged from the hospital. Also, I would remind the hon. member that when the Capital health authority did a report and a survey of some of their patients, they found that 29 percent of persons felt that they were discharged too early from maternity. They suggested that they should review that and ensure that they could improve those numbers, and I support that. However, the decision should be made by the physician and the patient. Every person has some different circumstances. It could be different circumstances at home. It could be different circumstances around the birth or the health of the child. I also would remind the hon. member that I believe his caucus supported us moving ahead with allowing midwives to do births in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's make some sense out of this thing. There are health professionals that make those decisions, and we should listen to them. If that advice from that doctor is there, I hope the physicians in this province will listen to that advice and that they will make the decision on when to say their patient should be discharged from that area or any other on that basis.

MR. MITCHELL: The Minister of Health should listen to them, and she should listen to her own policy . . .

THE SPEAKER: Order.

MR. MITCHELL: Can the minister tell Albertans why her early release policy specifies 24 hours, when clearly that is the period of time which is indicated by current evidence, current studies to be potentially dangerous to the health of the mothers and of the newborn babies?

MRS. McCLELLAN: I have to say again, Mr. Speaker, that 24 hours is probably most appropriate for a great number of people,

but it is not for all. The physicians in this province will make the decisions as to when a mother and child should be discharged. My advice to the hon. member is that we do leave that in the hands of the physicians. However, a number of guidelines that are in place in this province, whether it's for bed numbers or discharge days, are simply guidelines that are taken from numerous sources of evidence in this area.

So the hon. member can take one article and quote it. I hope, as I say, that the physicians will review that article and make that decision in conjunction with the institutions that they work with, but, Mr. Speaker, that is the physicians' decision.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, why doesn't the Minister of Health take the pressure off the physicians and off the patients by establishing a minimum standard of 48 hours in-hospital care unless the doctor and the mother agree that that's not necessary?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe, again, that the physicians are in the best position to make the decisions with the patients. There are guidelines for a number of areas in discharge. They are guidelines. They are guidelines, and if the hon. member knew what a guideline was, he would know that is exactly what they are. It is not right for everyone, and that's why we have physicians who study for about 10 years to make those decisions with their patients and with the full knowledge of both their patient's physiological evidence as well as knowledge of their home, whether they have other children at home, and many other factors that the Minister of Health does not deal with with each individual patient.

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

Child Prostitution

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is fitting on the eve of International Women's Day that we recap this government's lack of action on child prostitution despite the latest report from Calgary with sound recommendations on this most disturbing problem. The Minister of Justice claims that it's a federal issue. The Minister of Family and Social Services dismisses it with rhetoric and empty promises. All this government wants to do is talk and natter away about it. Well, enough talking. It's time for some action over there. It is time to stop the ongoing sexual abuse of children for money. My questions are to the Minister of Education. Which of the seven recommendations will you be implementing from the Calgary handbook to help create awareness among parents and teachers so that children vulnerable to the sex trade can be more easily identified and supported?

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the overall area of criminal activity, school violence, and this very troubling area of prostitution, we have undertaken initiatives in Education. We've worked with school boards. We've held discussions, a couple of major conferences. We have worked with school jurisdictions in providing advice in terms of dealing with this whole series of issues that face local communities across this province. There was a question not too long ago in the House with respect to an undertaking to meet further with the police authorities in Calgary with respect to these issues.

The specific question about putting into the handbook – and I'm not quite sure which handbook she's referring to – a section on child prostitution is not something quite frankly that we had

contemplated, but in terms of being aware of this very serious issue in the context of many of these issues that we have in some of our communities, we certainly are working with school boards and teachers and legal authorities to try and improve this situation.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's the Handbook for Action

What are you doing through the school system, Mr. Minister, to prevent and reduce the number of children we are losing to the streets? You've been given three more recommendations. When are you going to quit talking and do something for the kids?

2:20

MR. JONSON: Well, in terms of programs of the government, Mr. Speaker, we, I think, addressed the supplementary question in part by my previous answer, but also through the overall efforts of four departments that are involved and the establishment of the commissioner for children's services initiative, there is planning taking place involving communities in terms of addressing needs in that area. I note that some of the pilot projects that have been approved by the hon. Minister of Family and Social Services' department deal with this particular area of children's needs and those that are related unfortunately to actual crimes being committed or their being involved in that type of activity. It is not that we are not taking action across this province with respect to this particular issue.

MRS. SOETAERT: My final supplemental to the Minister of Family and Social Services: what is it going to take to make you move into action and protect these kids under the Child Welfare Act? Are you afraid that helping children off the street may cost some child welfare dollars?

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, this is a very complicated issue, and I've said before that we are doing everything possible to make sure that the human resources are there and also the financial resources are there and community participation to design programs that will work towards the elimination of this.

Just remember, I listened to question period with very much interest today because both the leader of the Liberal Party and the member that asked the question were concerned about social support programs. This new budget that was announced yesterday will reduce hundreds of millions of dollars of social transfer programs to Alberta to support the same programs, and I know the leader supported that yesterday.

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

DR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure you're pleased that the intelligent, respectful Taylor is still here.

Canadian Wheat Board

DR. TAYLOR: My questions are all to the minister of agriculture. Alberta farmers have long been concerned that the Canadian Wheat Board has hampered their ability to get the best price possible for their wheat and barley, and as a result they voted for dual marketing. A study just recently released indicated that this position is supported. Studies also reveal that the administration costs of the board can cost farmers as much as \$20 per tonne. Can the minister provide any details to the Assembly about the

study, the costs of the Wheat Board, and its findings?

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

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to answer an intelligent question. The hon. member has certainly asked something that is of great importance to the agricultural community and that we recognize in working in conjunction with the agricultural community in trying to resolve. March 15 is the scheduled day to release the study. What was released Tuesday was a synopsis of the study. The information had to be gotten out because of the panel that is traveling throughout western Canada dealing with the issue.

The Wheat Board has always argued that indeed they are saving the farmers a considerable amount of money through the monopolistic type of operation. So what was done was a study of the operations of the Wheat Board to try and identify what the costs of the Wheat Board are, and this is the first time to the best of my knowledge that this type of a study has ever been conducted. Indeed, the hon. Member for Cypress-Medicine Hat is correct in that the synopsis has indicated that there is an actual cost to the supposed savings by the operation of this monopolistic board. The costs were identified as somewhere in the area of \$20, and when the study is released, those additional costs will be identified.

DR. TAYLOR: While there are ongoing discussions with the federal government about the future of the CWB, what effect will this study have on our efforts to have more marketing freedom for Alberta farmers?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Well, first of all, I want to make it clear that the Alberta position is not to get rid of the Wheat Board. The Alberta position is to allow for dual marketing, and this has always been our position. This is what we're advocating, and that's what we're working towards. That's what the farmers have asked for. The farmers are the producers, and they have that justifiable right to be able to market wheat and barley in whatever manner they so choose. Wheat and barley in western Canada are the only two commodities that producers are not allowed to market in a free enterprise system.

So making it clear: we're not advocating getting rid of the Wheat Board. What farmers are asking for is the opportunity for dual marketing. What we're trying to do through this study is to truly identify where the benefits are. Are there actual benefits, and what would be the best way of making a transition in the process?

So just to make it very clear: we're not trying to remove the Wheat Board. What we're trying to do is allow for dual marketing and to find more efficient and more effective ways of dealing in the marketplace.

DR. TAYLOR: What is the next step for the minister in working toward greater choice for Alberta farmers in dealing with the Canadian Wheat Board?

MR. PASZKOWSKI: We're looking at many avenues in conjunction with the producers of the province to find ways. We've established an industry group that is looking into all the possible avenues that are available. We're dealing with the Department of Justice in looking at a constitutional reference that may allow us

to find some avenues that will allow the Alberta producers to dual market.

What we really have to do is obtain an opportunity to get a higher value for our barley and for our wheat right within the province. The way we have the structure today, it doesn't allow for that. I don't know if the information is true or not, but I've been told that only 2 percent of the wheat has value added to it within the province. Two percent is not a workable number. We should be able to enhance that and do better, and that's our objective. That's what we're striving to achieve.

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

Emergency Medical Services

MR. DICKSON: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Calgary emergency services are committed to a response time of less than 12 minutes anywhere in that city, but with the closure of the Holy Cross emergency ward, the response time has already been pushed back to the limit. Now, clearly when the Bow Valley centre emergency is closed, it will take longer for ambulances to respond. My question is to the hon. Minister of Health. What steps has this minister taken to ensure that a Calgarian with a heart attack can still get an ambulance within 12 minutes even after both downtown hospitals have lost their emergency facilities?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I should be well prepared for this question, because I had this practically word-for-word exact question in estimates on Monday evening, I believe, from the same member. However, I will endeavour one more time to cover this. The Holy Cross hospital is closing at the end of this month. The emergency there has been closed for some time, and that area has been taken up in other areas. Secondly, the Bow Valley centre is scheduled for closure in about a year, and the Calgary health authority has made it quite clear that they are reviewing the issue of downtown emergency services.

The other point I made and would want to make to the hon. member again is that we are reviewing all ground ambulance services in this province. The hon. Member for Lacombe-Stettler is chairing a committee that has indeed Mr. Tom Sampson – I believe he's with Calgary emergency services – on that review panel to look at the effects of regionalization on ground ambulance. Mr. Speaker, I ask the hon. member to work with that committee, if he has got information that would be useful to that committee, to pass it on to them. If he would like to talk to Mr. Sampson, who is a member of that committee, and give him information to pass on to that committee, they will be bringing their report forward.

We're working closely. In fact, I could say to the members for Edmonton, who I am sure are concerned as well, that the mayor of Edmonton asked us if they could indeed have a member on that committee, and we agreed and they are having a member on there too.

2:30

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. DICKSON: Certainly, sir. Since the minister doesn't share the commitment to a 12-minute response time, there are some 700,000 Calgarians that would like to know from the minister: how long should they have to wait for an ambulance? Fifteen minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes?

MRS. McCLELLAN: I will review *Hansard*, but I don't recall in my answer saying that I do not support a 12-minute response time. I don't recall that, Mr. Speaker. Frankly, I am getting vastly irritated with the amount of liberty that is taken with answers in the supplementary questions. I did not say that.

I believe that we should develop a ground ambulance system including emergency medical services for this province. I can tell you that there are a lot of places in this province that would be delighted to have a 12-minute response time.

MR. DICKSON: Mr. Speaker, would the minister not agree that the way we provide first-class service, which she says she wants to provide, is to try and meet the highest standard we have in the province, not to dilute it to the lowest possible denominator?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I subscribe to meeting the highest standard. I'm not sure 12 minutes is that.

I do subscribe to listening to communities, to working with municipalities wherever they are in this province to ensure that we have the best quality ambulance services in this province. This government has done more to forward quality ambulance services in this province in the last few years than I believe anywhere in Canada, Mr. Speaker. We can be proud of that, and I think we are taking the responsible role by doing a review of that to ensure that ground ambulance services are still maintained at the highest quality level for persons in this province regardless of where they live.

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

Federal Budget

MRS. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health. Could the minister please inform this Assembly about the implications of yesterday's federal budget on health care in Alberta?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. MITCHELL: Jim, no wonder you're edgy today. You saw a real budget yesterday.

MR. DINNING: A real budget. Are you kidding? A hundred billion dollar increase in the debt. A real budget. You bet.

THE SPEAKER: Order. [interjections] Order please. Could the hon. Provincial Treasurer and the hon. Leader of the Opposition please discontinue their conversation to allow the Minister of Health to answer a question?

MR. DINNING: Good idea.

THE SPEAKER: An excellent idea.

MRS. McCLELLAN: It's hard to understand how the hon. Leader of the Opposition can talk about "a real budget yesterday" that continues a reduction of about \$246 million in transfer payments for health. I was rather surprised, Mr. Speaker, to see the hon. member stand last night and say that this is a wonderful budget. I hope he tells all Albertans that he supports a \$246 million reduction in transfer payments for health in this province.

What I can tell Albertans, Mr. Speaker, proudly, is that because of the sound fiscal management of this government those cuts will not be passed on to the people in this province.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental questions.

MRS. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister, on the matter of federal transfer reductions, tell how these reductions will affect Alberta's health budget.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, obviously they are quite significant: a \$246 million reduction. However, I will say that we have been able to plan to handle these cuts, and I will not be passing on to my regional health authorities requests for further reductions. It is indeed unfortunate that many other provinces in this country are not in that position, and they are feeling the effects of those reductions today.

MR. DINNING: Absolutely. In all the other provinces.

MRS. McCLELLAN: Every other province.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister please explain to the Assembly what the benefits will be to Alberta of the new federal health services research initiative?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I haven't had an opportunity to discuss this initiative with the federal minister, but I do look forward to doing that because we have had a health services research fund in Alberta for about four years. Members will recall that just this year we transferred that responsibility to the Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. I will be asking the hon. minister if he would consider transferring the portion that might be available to Alberta to that program so that we can use all of those dollars for research rather than building in another administrative structure. I would rather think that the hon. Minister of Health for Canada might be quite receptive to that idea.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Sherwood Park.

Ethics Commissioner's Report

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under the Conflicts of Interest Act this Legislative Assembly must deal with the Ethics Commissioner's report on Multi-Corp within 60 days of your tabling on February 15. We are now at day 21 and counting. On behalf of our constituents, my colleagues and I are anxious to deal with this inaccurate and incomplete report and to raise the questions the Premier refuses to answer. My questions are to the House leader. When will the House leader bring forward the Multi-Corp report so the House can deal with it?

MR. DAY: In due and appropriate time according to Standing Orders, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Government House Leader, a supplemental question: given that the Government House Leader sets and controls the business of the House other than private members' business and given that we only have 17 precious days of sitting before the 60-day period under the Act expires, will the House leader ensure that we deal with this report before the 60 days expire?

MR. DAY: I've already answered the question, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Government House Leader could repeat that because I missed the answer to the question.

MR. DAY: If the member opposite would ask his colleagues to be quiet, they'd be able to hear the response, Mr. Speaker. I said: in due and appropriate time according to Standing Orders this will be dealt with. Absolutely.

MR. COLLINGWOOD: I'm not sure if that's a yes to within the 60 days.

I'll ask the House leader one further question. Will the House leader confirm that he'll meet with the Premier to accommodate his schedule so that when the House deals with the Multi-Corp report, the Premier will be able to join us for the debate?

MR. DAY: Well, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's attendance here to address questions is outstanding, and I think that should be noted.

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

Federal Seniors' Programs

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Any time there are changes to programs for seniors it creates uncertainty, and it can sometimes be stressful for their families and for themselves. Yesterday the federal government brought down its budget and announced a new seniors' benefit program. My question is to the minister responsible for seniors. Would the minister please tell the seniors of Alberta what this new budget means for them?

MR. MAR: Mr. Speaker, at this point I haven't had the opportunity to look at this new program in detail, but from a first glance it would appear that the seniors' programs of the federal government are being merged such that old age security and guaranteed income supplements are going to be put into one single program. I want to assure Alberta's seniors that the government of Alberta will continue to monitor those changes and look at them under the federal program.

I also want to point out that the Alberta government will continue to be one of only five provinces which provides provincial income supplements to seniors, that augment the federal benefits. So we'll certainly continue to work with our federal colleagues to ensure that there's a co-ordination of these two income support programs.

2:40

THE SPEAKER: Supplemental question.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister: as one cannot help but draw a comparison when the new federal program is named after our own seniors benefit, can the minister responsible please tell how these two programs compare?

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's often been said that imitation is the greatest form of flattery, and we have to admire the federal Liberal government for taking a page out of the Alberta provincial government's game plan. In fact, they've taken many pages out of our book. When you look at the principles of the federal

seniors benefit program, they include: protecting lower income seniors, basing benefits on income, streamlining administration by creating a single program, and creating a sustainable and affordable program, as the Provincial Treasurer would say, just as we did two years ago.

THE SPEAKER: Final supplemental.

MRS. BURGNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the minister: now that the federal government is catching up with us, what plans do you have to ensure Alberta's leadership in meeting the needs of seniors in the future? Also to the same minister: how can we communicate that effectively to Alberta seniors?

MR. MAR: Well, Mr. Speaker, very clearly the provincial government is in a leadership role. I'd like to remind colleagues that in co-operation with my colleagues the Minister of Health, the Minister of Family and Social Services, and Municipal Affairs the first governmentwide three-year business plan for seniors has been developed and was tabled with my estimates last night. That clearly is one way that seniors can be made aware of the types of changes that we are expecting over the next three years.

There are a number of highlights, Mr. Speaker, with the seniors business plan: certainly the intraminiistry initiative, the recognition of the desire of Alberta seniors to lead independent and healthy lives, and issues with respect to residential care options.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has clearly reached the same conclusions that we've come to, that what we need to do when there's a limited amount of resources is benefit those people who are in the greatest amount of need, and you do so based on an income basis, the criterion of need.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-West. [interjections]

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Don said that he wants to come with me next time. I said no. I notice he's not here today.

Petroleum Marketing Commission

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Mr. Speaker, the energy industry is very suspicious of the Energy minister's reasons for wanting to privatize the APMC in view of the minister's recent overwhelming support for this organization. It is this previous support from her and this sudden shroud of secrecy surrounding the selection process for the APMC contract that has made the industry, including her former deputy minister, very uneasy. My first question is to the Energy minister. Why have you reversed your earlier support for the APMC and now proceeded towards its privatization?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see the hon. member is back, but he's about two years too late. In February of 1994, when the restructuring program for the Department of Energy was put out, I announced that we would be moving into a streamlined system. I also held a number of meetings with industry players, along with my department. The one question asked – and many of you have heard me say this – was: is it the role of the government to be in the marketing business? The answer that came back was clearly no. It is not the role of the government to be in that business.

That prompted a very extensive review and task force analysis of how the government would get out of the marketing business

and the private sector take that over. Eight months after the task force launched its review, they came back with a recommendation to move into a type of royalty scheme that was (a) not going to get us out of the business entirely and was going to cost the taxpayers, the people and resource owners of Alberta, more money than they were already paying to do the marketing function. So I rejected the recommendation.

However, in the time frame that was there, Mr. Speaker, the cost of the review was astronomical and very, very difficult, because not only did we lose dollars and cents on the marketing side, but we also lost our marketers. However, I did go back to the industry players at that point and say that if they could come forward with a proposal that would get us out of the marketing business, I would in fact consider it, and I did not desert my support for the APMC. I said that the APMC had done a fine job, even though it was not identified as a core business of government, and they would continue on with the marketing of the Crown's crude oil until such time as something came along that could replace them.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table four documents from the vice-chairman of the Petroleum Marketing Commission wherein he refutes that response. In response to the industry's concern, will the minister disclose the criteria being used to determine the successful bidder to market the province's crude?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd be delighted to do that. In the summer and fall of this last year there were several industry players that came forward with unsolicited proposals to market the Crown's crude. I hired the company of Purvin & Goertz to help with not only a review of the previous proposals that were there when we first launched the task force but also to help me carry forward with a set of criteria to look at how we could identify players that in fact could take over this job. I believe there were 15 or 16 criteria that were identified through Purvin & Goertz and my department as to what were important elements for a proposal to have in order to replace the Department of Energy marketing the Crown barrels.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we went outside, back to our industry players, to CAPP and SEPAC and individual players, and said, "What else is important?" They identified a number of other criteria, such as market strength, such as the fact that they felt that there should be confidence in a producer as opposed to a marketer. [interjection] Well, I was asked for the criteria. Now, if you want me to answer the question in the House, I'd be delighted to, or I could respond with the list to the hon. member directly. I believe it's very important. This is an important function.

We looked at situations of whether small producers would be allowed to come into a marketing scheme along with the Crown's producers. Market share was very important. Would there be a distortion of the marketplace? Would there be an impact on the . . .

THE SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. minister might take the opportunity of undertaking to table this information with the Assembly at the next sitting.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd be delighted to do that.

MR. DALLA-LONGA: In conjunction with that I would ask that

she respond to the industry as well, because they're the ones asking.

Mr. Speaker, how will the energy industry know that the successful bidder was chosen for sound economic reasons based on the interests of Albertans and not for the same reasons that the initial chairman of the ERCB was chosen?

MRS. BLACK: Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, sometimes the sun has a great effect on someone's thought pattern. There are basically 40 potential marketers of crude oil in the province of Alberta. Twenty-four proposals, unsolicited, came forward from marketers in Alberta. From that and based on criteria that is quite rigid, that was laid out, my department along with outside consultation has narrowed that down to seven proposals that they are currently reviewing to see if in fact they are able to meet the requirements to take over the marketing function for Alberta. Clearly – I want to make it very clear – this decision is very important, and if there is the right mix and it does the job, we will move forward with it. If it is not the right mix or the proposals are not adequate to do the job, we will not move forward with it. That analysis has taken a number of weeks, and it's not something that is entered into lightly.

However, I have to say that when the recommendations from my task force group come back to me in the next few days, Mr. Speaker, I will be moving forward with a decision relatively quickly, because again – and the hon. member knows this – the marketing function that we are performing today, which is the sale of 150,000 barrels a day, is being discounted at market because of the uncertainty around this issue, and again we have a threat of losing our marketing people because this process is under way. So clearly we will move forward in one direction or another, and it will be done for the benefit of Albertans.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Highwood.

2:50 Crude Oil Production

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions, too, are to the Minister of Energy this afternoon. Crude oil revenues – whether royalties, sale of exploration rights, property taxes and the like – make up an important part of Alberta's general revenue fund. What are the annual crude oil production forecasts used to calculate the government's revenue for the current three-year business plans?

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I think it's a very important question as to how we forecast, and I will say at the start that a forecast is in fact just that: a forecast. I would like to sort of set the stage. In the past we've heard from analysts and economic modelers that our conventional crude oil is on a rapid decline on the production side. I guess that probably started about 10 or 12 years ago, that we would see this rapid decline take place. However, that hasn't been the case. In fact, there has been more of a leveling process with our conventional crude oil production. As a matter of fact, when we factor in the production numbers for conventional oil, we look at it in different categories – that being old oil, new oil, third-tier, and freehold oil productions – to give us a total production base for conventional. In fiscal 1995-96 we estimated that we would have 962,000 barrels a day of crude produced in Alberta. In 1996-97 that went to 935,000 barrels a day. In 1997-98 that number moved to 894,000 barrels of conventional crude. On the nonconventional side our production model shows for 1995-96 438,000 barrels a day moving to, in

1997-98, 483,000 barrels a day for a total production in '97-98 of 1,377,000 barrels a day.

MR. TANNAS: To the Minister of Energy, Mr. Speaker: could the minister tell us what the projected mix in royalty revenue is between the crude oil types; for example, the conventional heavy oil and the tar sands?

MRS. BLACK: Again, Mr. Speaker, these are projections, so we always have to look back at the estimate to actual on this. For fiscal 1995-96 we forecast on the conventional side – again which includes the blends between the old, the new, the third-tier oil – \$1,078,000,000. For 1997-98 we forecast on the conventional side that that would decrease to \$803 million. On the nonconventional or oil sands area we look at a \$259 million royalty income in '95-96 to a \$248 million income in '97-98.

THE SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired, but before moving on to Members' Statements, might there be consent in the Assembly to revert to Introduction of Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

head: Introduction of Guests (reversion)

DR. MASSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The students I introduced earlier are now in the gallery. They are 50 students from the University of Alberta enrolled in political science 220 along with their instructor Brenda O'Neill. I would ask them, with your permission, to stand and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly two ladies who are observing our page Joel Scheurman. Mrs. Scheurman is Joel's mother. She's accompanied today by her daughter, Joel's sister, Jillene Mowser. You'll recall that Jillene gave excellent service as a page in our Assembly some time ago. I'd like to ask both of these ladies to rise and receive the warm traditional welcome of the Assembly.

head: Members' Statements

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

Ethylene Plant Expansion

MRS. GORDON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A continuation of question period Monday, sir. Last week I was able to witness firsthand the Alberta advantage when Novacor Chemicals and Union Carbide jointly announced an equal ownership venture to construct an ethylene plant in Joffre, Alberta. Following start-up, scheduled for the year 2000, this location is expected to be the largest ethylene manufacturing complex on one site in the world with a production capacity of 5.4 billion pounds per year of ethylene.

What does this mean to my constituency? One hundred and thirty new jobs; a vast number of companies, some of them local, will be needed to act as on-site contractors; up to 900-plus tradespeople will be employed during peak construction periods;

not to mention the economic benefit from supplies and services required and purchased locally.

Union Carbide also announced its intention to build a new polyethylene plant at Prentiss. The project at Joffre will ensure a ready supply of raw materials for this new polyethylene plant at Prentiss. This new plant is expected to create approximately a hundred permanent jobs. Needed will be employees with engineering, technical, and trade skills. During construction there may be as many as 400 jobs at peak periods. The number of other or downstream jobs which may be created as a result of this new plant is estimated to be approximately a ratio of 4 to 1; that is, four other jobs for each one created in the plant. Good news indeed.

As the MLA for the Lacombe-Stettler constituency I wish to congratulate Novacor and Union Carbide on this major step forward. Both companies have been good corporate citizens, and I know they will both continue to maintain and build upon the co-operative relationships which they have established with their neighbours, adjacent municipalities, and community. I would also like to congratulate the Alberta government for fostering a business climate conducive to growth and for focusing their attention on the creation of new jobs and their continued commitment to increase trade worldwide. Definitely the Alberta advantage.

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

Aboriginal Women's Rights

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past aboriginal women who married nonnatives lost their Indian status and the right to live on a reserve. In 1985 the federal government's Bill C-31 amended the Indian Act to end this discrimination and gave these women the right to return to their reserves with their children.

Unfortunately, some are not able to do so. Several native bands in Alberta who have money to fight and are unwilling to share the resources launched a lawsuit to contest Bill C-31. Last year a federal court judge upheld the law saying that the bands must allow the women to return. Despite the fact that costs for the case were awarded against them the first time, the bands are now appealing the decision. Several groups will probably wish to appear at the Federal Court of Appeal to put the case of aboriginal women who want to return to their reserve. However, aboriginal women do not themselves have the financial resources to contest their rights.

Governments are elected to help those experiencing injustice and stop exploitation. It is therefore appropriate for the Alberta government to now intervene on behalf of these women. The government does not need to change the law – the federal government has already done that – but this government could make a stand for the rights of a group of Alberta citizens who are being denied their lawful right to determine where they live. Only the government has the financial muscle, prestige, and weight of public opinion to fight in court on an equal footing with the bands that are contesting Bill C-31.

3:00

The status of aboriginal men who married nonnative women has never been questioned. The law has terminated discrimination against aboriginal women who marry off-reserve, and the province now has the duty to see that this law is upheld. In all, about 8,000 women in Alberta are entitled to return to their bands. Our

survey shows that many have not wished to do so. However, the province should surely stand up for those who do want to return to their former home. Surely one of the duties of any government in a free society is to stand up for those who without government's help would not see justice done.

I'd just like to say that this private member's statement was done on behalf of the former Member for Redwater, who was scheduled to do that this afternoon. As we all know, he is now Senator Nick Taylor and was unable to do so.

Thank you, Nick Taylor.

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

Alberta's Business Climate

MR. AMERY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A continuation of the good news from this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I spend much of my time between sessions visiting with my constituents in Calgary. On many occasions I have met with individuals who are starting a business in Calgary or moving their businesses here from another location. Investors and businesses are recognizing our province as an outstanding location in which to live, work, and raise a family. Our superior economic performance and well-educated workforce coupled with a competitive tax and business climate are attracting new industries and investments and fueling our economy.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta is the most competitive location in western North America for warehousing and distribution operations. It is the least-cost location for producing and distributing products. In fact, Alberta is the distribution hub for many manufacturing industries in western North America, and Calgary is second only to Toronto as the largest distribution centre in Canada. Businesses are establishing distribution centres in Alberta to improve profits and attain a cost-effective service. Alberta is located in a growing market of 7 and a half million western Canadians and has easy access to markets in the Pacific Northwest, California, central Canada, and Pacific Rim countries.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, Alberta has the lowest overall outbound truck haulage rates in western North America and a modern network of roads, rail, air, and pipeline facilities. Numerous transportation companies have moved to Alberta. Companies like Canadian Pacific, Canadian Freightways, and Mullen Trucking have chosen to locate their head offices in Calgary, many of them in my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta advantage is attracting business to Alberta. A number of sizable distribution operations have recently relocated to Alberta, including Canada Safeway, Consumers Distributing, Shoppers Drug Mart, Wal-Mart, and Ford Motor Company of Canada. The Alberta government strongly supports the development of private enterprise and continues to build a climate conducive to investment, wealth generation, and job creation.

Clearly, Mr. Speaker, Alberta is the place to do business.

Thank you.

head: **Projected Government Business**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Government House Leader what he plans for next week under Projected Government Business and, in particular, whether we're going to deal with the Multi-Corp report.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, Monday, March 11, in the afternoon we would propose to look at second readings of Bills 6, 7, 8, 9, and 12, and, if there's still time after that, then Committee of the Whole on Bills 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. In the evening we'll be in Committee of Supply looking at the estimates of the Provincial Treasurer and also Public Works, Supply and Services, then moving out of Committee of Supply into second reading of Bill 11, the appropriation Bill.

On Tuesday, March 12, in the morning I will consult with the Opposition House Leader, and we'll look at the order of business for that hour, depending on what was accomplished the evening before, on Monday. In the evening we'll be in Committee of Supply with departments reporting from their previous session in Committee of Supply – those will be Transportation and Utilities, Municipal Affairs, and Labour – and then finishing with Committee of the Whole on Bill 11.

On Wednesday in the evening the three departments reporting in Committee of Supply will be Executive Council, science and research, Advanced Education and Career Development, and then third reading on the appropriation Bill, Bill 11.

On Thursday in the afternoon, Committee of Supply. The three departments reporting would be Justice and Attorney General, Energy, and Community Development.

THE SPEAKER: During question period the Chair noticed that the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti wished to raise a point of order; also the hon. Member for Bow Valley.

The hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti.

Point of Order Decorum

MR. JACQUES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to rise pursuant to a point of order regarding Standing Orders 13(4), 23(j), and I would also ask that you give consideration with regard to 24(1). I don't rise lightly with regard to this point of order. [interjections] A hundred and ninety pounds of muscle. But that's okay, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on numerous occasions you have ruled on a point of order with regard to the Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert. Today it was interesting that when the hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition was asking his questions, during the period of time the two respective ministers were answering his questions I counted 49 separate interjections by that member. I did not keep track after that point. You may recall, Mr. Speaker – and I wish I had the *Hansard* in front of me, but I do not – that at one other time, I believe in the spring session of 1995, I rose on a separate occasion with regard to the same point of order on the same member. I would ask that you reflect on your ruling at that time with regard to the admonishment that you gave to the member at that point.

What is happening, Mr. Speaker, is that this conduct is unbecoming to this Legislature. It's particularly unbecoming to the members of the opposition. It is reducing this House at times to a complete embarrassment, not only to the members who are sitting here but particularly to those in the gallery.

I would also remind the Speaker that when the hon. member rose to ask a question of the hon. Minister of Community Development, she unfortunately received a somewhat hostile reaction from this side of the House. I don't apologize for that, but I can understand it on the basis of the complete disregard that that member has shown for the level of decorum in this House. I think that is commensurate with what we saw today.

Mr. Speaker, when I mention 24(1), I do that in all seriousness. I would ask that you give it consideration. It is a serious thing to name a member, but with regard to the constant rulings that you have given over basically two and a half years, of which there are many recorded in *Hansard*, on points of order on this member, I would ask that you take that under consideration.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking in response to the hon. member's purported point of order, the member, on one hand, stands up to chastise a member on this side of the House and says that he does not apologize for interjections from his side of the House. Now, perhaps because of the location of his seat he missed the chirping of the Provincial Treasurer – it was not words; it was literally chirping from the Provincial Treasurer – that continued unabated during the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert's question. Eighty-six is the count we have from over here, so it seems . . . [interjections] No, I did not hang on his every word. I can assure you of that, hon. Government House Leader. It seems that this is a case of the pot calling the kettle black.

I would agree that the level of decorum needs to be improved in the Legislative Assembly. However, to point out just one member of the Assembly does not seem to be appropriate. Therefore, I would suggest there is no point of order here, Mr. Speaker.

3:10

THE SPEAKER: Well, the Chair does believe that the hon. Member for Grande Prairie-Wapiti has raised a valid point of order, because it is quite clear that the hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert does not pay any attention to Standing Order 13(4)(b), and it doesn't matter whether it's their leader speaking or some other member of the House. The Chair would again admonish the hon. member that she must take some steps to change her ways.

MR. WHITE: What about the Treasurer?

MR. BRACKO: What about the Simple Six?

MR. WHITE: Have you listened to them?

THE SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Mayfield, you do not have the floor, so you could start paying some attention to the rules too. I've just been mentioning 13(4)(b). I think it would be useful for you two hon. members to write that out about a hundred times. That is exactly what's been going on in here for far too long, the fact that you've been behaving in ways that you have gone after your own students for when you were in the classroom, hon. member. You don't realize the messages that the Speaker's office gets from people who visit our galleries, most of whom are schoolchildren and are looking for some type of example. They write and they let us know that they are not impressed by the behaviour of hon. members.

When hon. members seek election, I know they do so with the noblest of intentions. They don't get elected to come and behave like children. Unfortunately, that is the impression that is given to schoolchildren, that they're behaving worse than any classroom they've ever been in. We do receive a lot of those visitors, so I would again urge hon. members.

The hon. member makes a good point: if this continues and continues and continues and people absolutely will not pay any attention to the rules, then they will probably have to face the ultimate sanction. The Chair has wanted to relax the atmosphere from some other occasions that we've had in this Legislature, but if members do not have the maturity to accept that challenge, then I guess the Chair is going to have to take a different attitude. So the Chair will leave that with hon. members to conjure on.

As was quite clear, the Chair did not intervene when the noise came back from this side. I don't think the hon. member enjoyed her questioning being interrupted in that way. She should have some feelings for some other people in the Assembly as well. For sure, this can't be allowed to continue when the noise comes from both sides.

The hon. Member for Bow Valley.

**Point of Order
Tabling a Cited Document**

DR. OBERG: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On a much kinder, gentler point of order I rise under Standing Order 37. In the hon. Leader of the Opposition's question to the hon. Minister of Health, he alluded to a document in the *Journal of Pediatrics*. His whole question was centred around that journal. As well, he was seen to be showing it, like this. I would quite simply ask that he table a copy of that article so that the rest of the members of the Legislature can peruse it if needed.

THE SPEAKER: The Chair believes the hon. member will do that in due course.

MR. BRUSEKER: Agreed.

head: **Orders of the Day**
head: **Committee of Supply**
head: **Main Estimates 1996-97**

[The committee sat as subcommittees A and C from 3:15 p.m. to 5:20 p.m.]

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

THE CHAIRMAN: I'll call the committee to order.
The hon. Member for Little Bow.

MR. McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Subcommittee C of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain resolutions of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to table copies of documents tabled during the subcommittee of supply meeting this day for the official records of the Assembly.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.
The hon. Member for Dunvegan.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Subcommittee A of the Committee of Supply has had under consideration certain

resolutions of the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the committee concur in the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed? Carried.

MR. DAY: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee 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 the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, reports progress thereon, and requests leave to sit again.

Mr. Speaker, 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: Thank you, hon. member.
All those in favour of the report, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Opposed, if any? Carried.

[At 5:22 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]