

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: **Thursday, December 3, 1998 1:30 p.m.**

Date: 98/12/03

[The Speaker in the chair]

head: Prayers

THE SPEAKER: Good afternoon. Let us pray.

Our Father, as we conclude for this week our work in the Assembly, we ask for Your strength and encouragement in our service of You through our service of others.

We thank You for Your abundant blessings to our province.

Amen.

Please be seated.

head: Introduction of Visitors

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs.

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you two visitors to our province from Burma. Dr. Sein Win is the leader of the national coalition government of Burma in exile. He is joined by Bo Hla-Tint, who is a member of the national coalition government of Burma in exile. They are joined today by members of Burma Watch International from Edmonton and St. Albert, Dr. Alice Win, Jack Freebury, Bill Bocock, and Than Aung. I'd ask that they rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of our Assembly.

head: Reading and Receiving Petitions

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

MR. DICKSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask that the petition I introduced the other day be now read and received, please.

THE CLERK:

We the undersigned residents of Alberta petition the Legislative Assembly to urge the Government of Alberta not to pass Bill 37, the Health Statutes Amendment Act, 1998.

head: Notices of Motions

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. HAVELOCK: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to give notice of the following motion to be moved Monday, December 7, 1998.

Be it resolved that further consideration of any or all of the resolutions, clauses, sections, or titles of Bill 2, Conflicts of Interest Amendment Act, 1998, shall, when called, be the first business of the committee and shall not be further postponed.

head: Tabling Returns and Reports

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

MR. DICKSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted to be able to table this afternoon copies of correspondence sent to Dr. Sein Win, Prime Minister of the national coalition government of the Union of Burma, as a result of a very informative meeting this morning. On behalf of our caucus we're writing to lend our support to ensure that democratically elected

officials be entitled to step into their Legislature and debate, as we have the privilege of doing in this Assembly.

Thank you very much.

MRS. O'NEILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table today four copies of letters sent by a resident of St. Albert, Mr. Henry Chung. They were sent to myself, to Mrs. Mary Robinson, to the Canadian Human Rights Foundation, and to Mr. Barry Gogal of the Real Estate Council of Alberta. It is with regard to his concern and treatment of his verification as a realtor.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

MR. KLEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to file a letter I've just sent to Mrs. Lynne Duncan, the Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development. Mrs. Duncan has served as the chair of the public service division of the 1998 capital region United Way campaign. I recently received a letter from Robert Westbury, chair of the capital region campaign, advising me that Mrs. Duncan and the rest of the provincial public service committee members have helped achieve a record this year in terms of dollars raised in the Alberta public service. I understand that a total of \$535,000 has been raised and that an all-time record of \$550,000 is anticipated by the time the final pledges are counted.

I also want to congratulate Dr. Bob Westbury and the rest of the capital region United Way campaign team on exceeding their goal of \$10 million. This is truly a tremendous accomplishment of which we should all be proud.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

MR. DOERKSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to table the declaration on the Canadian family as adopted by the attendees at the Ottawa Conference on the Family in October of 1998. I have appended my signature on the reverse as being in agreement with this.

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

MR. MacDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this afternoon to table the appropriate number of copies of a letter detailing the problems with untreated pine shakes in the Sherwood Park constituency. This letter is signed by the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Thank you.

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

MR. GIBBONS: Thank, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table two letters of congratulations to the Edmonton area United Way for exceeding their \$10 million goal, which is \$10,132,973. Congratulations to Dr. Bob Westbury and his cabinet. They are to be congratulated for doing this.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. mayor and Dr. Westbury were both shaved at city hall today.

head: Introduction of Guests

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

MRS. O'NEILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour today to introduce to you and through you to Members of the Legisla-

tive Assembly 45 students from Sir Alexander Mackenzie school in St. Albert. They are accompanied by their teachers and leaders Mrs. Lahti, Mrs. Hurley, Mrs. Hosein, and Mr. Bouthillier. They're in the members' gallery. I'd ask them all to stand, please, and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. KLAPSTEIN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly Mr. Chris Pichurski. Chris is a grade 11 student at the John Maland high school in Devon. Chris is here as part of a school-sponsored job shadow program to learn about the role of an MLA. I would ask Chris to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for West Yellowhead.

MR. STRANG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with great pleasure today that I introduce to you and through you a member of my constituency who is a very hard worker and a very great advocate of our forestry industry, an honourable man of Brûle, Alberta. His name is Bob Udell. Kindly stand.

head: Ministerial Statements

Impaired Driving

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of kicking off the 1998-99 Smart Choices impaired driving program on Tuesday, December 1 to coincide with National Safe Driving Week, which runs December 1 to 7. Via fibre-optic video link between Edmonton and Calgary joining me in this exciting launch were representatives from the Calgary Flames and the Edmonton Oilers hockey clubs, Alberta Justice, enforcement agencies, People against Impaired Driving, Students against Drinking and Driving, the Alberta Motor Association, and various other traffic safety and injury prevention stakeholders.

The program is exciting because we're getting closer to getting the right things in place to really impact the incidence of impaired driving in Alberta. As I've said many times, everyone has a role to play if we're going to make a difference. Partnership approaches are critical, whether we are legislators, enforcers, educators, advocates, or just strong supporters. I also believe solid awareness, information, and education programs are key components to combat this issue. Part of the education process relates to getting good information to Albertans about the realities of drinking and driving and the consequences of being convicted of impaired driving.

1:40

I'm delighted to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we have two new traffic safety partners: the Edmonton Oilers and the Calgary Flames hockey clubs. Though they're rivals on ice, they've joined together to help eliminate a very serious social issue, and that is impaired driving. They'll be working with the Alberta traffic safety initiative to get the message out to all Albertans to make the smart choice: don't drink and drive.

I'm also happy to report that we've established a Provincial Impaired Driving Committee of stakeholders to help with the implementation strategies for our tougher impaired driving penalties, which I introduced through the new Traffic Safety Act last week. They'll also help identify provincial programs that support both education and enforcement. Smart Choices, Designated Driver, Alberta Check Stop, Operation Lookout, Project Traffic Watch are all among these.

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

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister of Transportation and Utilities for his statement today and the work he is doing to prevent impaired driving. I would like to thank all those who are working to get the message out to all Albertans: don't drink and drive. We need to be reminded that impaired driving can have serious or fatal consequences.

I commend the Calgary Flames and the Edmonton Oilers for working together to help eliminate drunk driving. I'm thankful to the police who work extra hard at this time of the year to ensure that our holiday season is not marred by tragedy. I praise all those volunteers, including those on the Red Nose campaign, who make sure people get home safely and don't endanger others. I am very grateful to the people who deliver the PARTY program to our schools, and I'm proud of the many young people who automatically appoint a designated driver when they have a night out.

I know what it means to lose someone close to you because of a drunk driver, and I pray for all those families who've had to deal with this tragedy.

head: Oral Question Period

THE SPEAKER: First main question. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

Health Care System

MRS. MacBETH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Albertans are very concerned with this government's lack of credibility in protecting the public health care system. They are concerned that the Alberta government is using the current social union discussions as another means to slip private health care into Alberta. Since we're hearing some disturbing talk in Ontario about opting out of the Canada Health Act, my question is: what assurances can the Premier give Albertans that this government is not following their Ontario cousins' lead?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, there has been no talk to my knowledge, ever, about the province of Alberta opting out of the Canada Health Act. We have repeatedly said that we will completely abide by the fundamental principles contained in that act.

MRS. MacBETH: Well, Mr. Speaker, given that the Premier and the Minister of Health talk about their support of the Canada Health Act, why would they want the federal government to drop enforcement of that act?

MR. KLEIN: No, Mr. Speaker. What we want -- and it's not only the province of Alberta, but certainly all the other Premiers are onside relative to this issue. We oppose quite vigorously an arbitrary and unilateral interpretation of the act. We simply feel that there should be some other form of adjudicating a province possibly being in violation of that act.

Mr. Speaker, this goes to the case revolving around the Gimbel eye clinic, when after 10 years of charging facility fees, the federal government ruled that it violated the act. We didn't agree with that, but we had to eventually abide by the decision. That was a unilateral, arbitrary decision that we didn't agree with. We said as a result of that that there should be a fairer mechanism to adjudicate these situations.

MRS. MacBETH: Mr. Speaker, how can Albertans possibly trust the same government that's been pursuing private health care to fight for ensuring that national standards and enforcement for public health care are strengthened?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we are not pursuing private health care. We are pursuing better and more effective and more efficient ways of doing things, but our commitment to the Canada Health Act is solid.

THE SPEAKER: Second main question. The Leader of the Official Opposition.

Support for Municipalities

MRS. MacBETH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second question is to the Premier. The Premier's own Growth Summit pointed out that provincial government downloading on municipalities has resulted in a

lack of sufficient [funds] for preventative care, increasing financial and social barriers to access, an 'infrastructure deficit' as maintenance and upgrading have been delayed and, in some cases, deteriorating service standards.

In fact, according to Statistics Canada recently, this government has become a king of downloading amongst provinces, dumping nearly \$400 million of its deficit on to Alberta municipalities over the last five years. My questions today are for the Premier. Why doesn't the Premier just admit that his downloading government is responsible for a 30 percent increase in local property taxes in Alberta, the second highest increase in Canada?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, again, the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs is not with us today.

This government made tremendous sacrifices to look, first, at what we could do as a government relative to our own public service. We challenged hospital boards, municipalities, university boards, and so on to do the same thing. Some did it and some didn't.

Relative to restoration of dollars to municipalities, certainly, as I explained yesterday, we have injected \$130 million in a onetime grant this year to address pressure points. We have committed \$150 million a year over the next three years for infrastructure. We have committed to municipalities that we would continue with a task force made up of the mayors of Calgary and Edmonton, the president of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, the executive director of the AAMD and C, and certain ministers and their deputies in government to monitor on an ongoing basis the financial problems and other problems facing municipalities.

MRS. MacBETH: Well, Mr. Speaker, there's only one taxpayer.

Why doesn't the Premier admit that his downloading government is responsible for a 27 percent increase in user fees over the past five years in municipalities, the second highest increase in the country?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, again, the government did all it could then to make municipalities understand the financial position that we were in. We were facing a \$3.4 billion deficit, a structural deficit. Had it gone on that way, we would have been in terrible trouble today. So we challenged municipalities to do as we did as a government, and that was to reduce expenditures, get rid of burdensome administration, reduce our salaries -- I don't know how many municipalities or municipal leaders did that -- and to ask all members of the public service to do the same. Some did and some didn't, unfortunately.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, if I may supplement. During this period of time there has been substantive growth in this province, and certainly as far as infrastructure is concerned,

we've had an additional average of 103,000 new vehicles a year. As you have growth that's that significant, there are also going to be added costs to maintain that growth, and certainly this is part of that process. In order to deal with that, the Premier has already mentioned that there was a task force struck this summer to actually infuse new and additional funding.

MRS. MacBETH: Well, because municipalities have had to cope with this downloading, they certainly aren't able to consider tax cuts. What consideration is being given to suggestions for revamping municipal funding arrangements, including those suggestions coming from the mayor of Calgary?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, that goes to the heart of what we have just done. Believe me; the mayor of Calgary was very instrumental in bringing the task force together to address some of these problems. Our initial step to address those problems was to inject \$130 million one time into pressure points this year, to commit \$150 million a year over the next three years, to commit to the ongoing function of the task force that I mentioned, and to continue to monitor the financial needs and other needs of municipalities and how the province can work in partnership with municipalities to address these needs.

THE SPEAKER: Third Official Opposition main question. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Norwood.

1:50 Aboriginal Police Services

MS OLSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Eighteen months ago I identified serious problems with aboriginal policing. The Minister of Justice told this Legislature that they would be dealt with. Now we have the Cardinal report. To the Minister of Justice: why does Alberta have a two-tier policing system, with a different set of standards for training aboriginal police officers?

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, Mr. Speaker, when I was first appointed Minister of Justice, this was one of the very first issues that was brought to my attention, and that was the reason why I asked the hon. Member for Athabasca-Wabasca to take a look at the matter. As I've indicated publicly upon receipt of the report, we're certainly taking a very strong look at it. We want to ensure that all aboriginal police officers are provided with sufficient training so that they can carry out their duties safely and responsibly. I give the House assurances that we're taking the report very seriously, and hopefully we'll be bringing forward recommendations in the near future.

MS OLSEN: Mr. Speaker, given that the province sets standards for police training, why has this problem gone so wrong? What's wrong with this program?

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, when I first became aware of this, we got on to it as quickly as possible. We've had a very extensive consultation process in place. What this government is attempting to do is rectify the problems that were identified. We recognize that there are some issues associated with this, and as I just said in my previous statement, we're going to take the recommendations seriously and implement them as quickly as possible.

MS OLSEN: Mr. Speaker, why hasn't the minister ensured that the aboriginal police services meet the standards set by the international Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies?

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, again, she has asked the same question three times. We're aware of the problem. We're trying to resolve the problem. That's the reason why I asked the Member for Athabasca-Wabasca to take a look at the issue. We knew there were some difficulties. This department, this minister, and this government are going to fix the problem.

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

Public Lands Management

DR. PANNU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month the Agricultural Lease Review Committee report on agricultural leases on public lands was released. This report says that promoting biodiversity and providing habitat for plants and animals is an important function of public lands. To the Minister of Environmental Protection: how can Albertans have any confidence in the proposed stewardship code of practice when the compliance audits will be done by provincial agrologists, who are experts in and are concerned about maximizing agricultural productivity, and not by ecologists, who are concerned about promoting biodiversity and protecting natural habitat?

MR. LUND: Well, Mr. Speaker, somehow the hon. member doesn't realize that in fact it's a joint administration, and we do have experts from our department that look at these areas. As a matter of fact, a lot of the public land is not let out for leases simply because the ecological value of that land is more important in a preservation mode than to lease it out. I find it rather insulting that the hon. member would suggest that people in the agricultural community don't care about the ecology, because that is not the case. As a matter of fact, many of the areas that have been nominated for special places are areas that have been in the hands of leaseholders for a hundred years, and they are so well preserved and looked after that now people are calling them a special place.

DR. PANNU: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleasantly surprised that this minister gets so easily insulted.

My question to the minister: what is the minister's position on the report's recommendation that oil and gas rental payments continue to go to ranchers holding grazing leases for a period of 10 years rather than going to the government, which owns these lands on behalf of all Albertans?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. member's first question, about how we get applause, well, it's very simple. When you're right, you get applause.

Mr. Speaker, on the other issue, as far as the 10-year rental, over time what has happened is that many properties have been sold and traded, so they do have a very significant value. In some cases the price of those properties was based primarily on the third-party compensation. We had to somehow recognize that in fact that revenue in the whole picture of the farming operation does create a very important source of income. On all new well sites and oil activity the new rules will apply, and the owner of the property will be getting a greater portion of the revenue that is currently paid by the oil and gas industry.

DR. PANNU: Mr. Speaker, to the same minister: how can the minister claim that biodiversity is a guiding principle and a goal not only of the report but of this government when the report says -- and the minister seems to accept it -- that up to 40 percent of the productive upland can be converted and may be converted from forest to permanent pasture?

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, over time many of these areas have had a lot of public input, and in those plans, which originated far ahead of this report, the estimation was made that on many of these lands up to 40 percent of the land could be cleared and used for the production of forage. But I must go back to my first answer and point out that in many areas of public land and areas where people would like to lease the land, we are not putting it out for lease because of the very important environmental considerations on that particular property.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Creek, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Provincial Fiscal Policies

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the surplus projected for the end of this year is \$667 million, which includes about \$420 million in revenue cushions. I can understand the need to respond to proven pressure points, and I've certainly supported some of those initiatives. I know there are different areas that would naturally benefit from some increased spending. However, I also know that oil prices in particular are reaching very, very low levels, and the world economy is at best unstable at the present time. My questions are to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. How is it possible, Mr. Treasurer, or is it possible at all for you to continue increasing provincial spending in the short term given what we see at the global level?

MR. DAY: Well, there's no question there's turmoil globally. I just happen to have from today's newspapers just a scattering of articles: "World Bank warns of global recession," "Economy is lagging," "Canada warned at the OECD," and "Oil prices hit worst slump in 25 years." The silver lining in that dark cloud, Mr. Speaker, is that the Alberta economy continues to stay on track. In 1986 approximately 59 percent of all the dollars, all the revenue that we took in from the corporate sector came from oil and gas. As we closed out the 1997 books, about 22 percent of all our corporate revenues came from oil and gas. So it's still a very significant part of the economy, and much should be said about that. However, we have considerably diversified the base of the economy. There's been significant diversification so that we can absorb a price shock like that.

In terms of a spending increase, any government can increase spending. That's a very easy thing to do, and if they want to run debts and deficits, they can go ahead and do that. We have to look, I believe, at the prudent measures by which we've been doing our forecasting and budgeting to date and recognize that that has put us in this present enviable situation.

The main part of the spending that we've reflected on and even that we have voted on here in the Assembly this session has been those areas of growth. The Growth Summit was very clear, areas of growth, because the Alberta advantage should be addressed. So in health, in education, in infrastructure, in those key areas we have seen an increase in spending, but it's been as a result of growth, mainly population growth and more people coming to Alberta to do business.

2:00

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you. I'm wondering if the Treasurer can tell us how he plans to achieve that balance between fiscal issues, on the one hand, that preoccupy Albertans' minds, and the requests for increased spending, on the other, given the state of the world economy and the depressing effect that it's bound to have on our provincial revenue picture.

MR. DAY: Well, it's a key question. It's very clear by the figures that the incredible growth that we had as we closed out last year, which was 7.2 percent, beyond what anybody had expected or predicted -- we're not going to have that same degree of growth this year. We're looking in the range of 3.6 percent; 3.6 percent is virtually the envy of North America in terms of a jurisdiction having that kind of growth, so we will take that.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, the concern here in terms of how we balance it. The government and this caucus will make final decisions on that budgeting, but it will be based on what we're hearing from Albertans. On what we're hearing from Albertans. Just a few weeks ago we mailed to every household in this province the dilemma, the question, because our net debt is hitting zero, and once we actually hit zero, we need to look at the question of whether we have legislation which continues to compel us to pay debt down at the same rate. We've asked questions about those spending priorities. That was just a few weeks ago, and I'm happy to say that as a result of a count that we just did today, it looks as if the response to that mail-out could set an all-time record for public response in consultation ever in this province. Fifty-nine thousand Albertans already have responded to that.

MR. ZWOZDESKY: Thank you. In fact, I think I'll pick up on that because I'm interested to know on behalf of my constituents what it is that other Albertans are telling you, not just those who live in Edmonton-Mill Creek. What general kind of feedback are you getting on this issue of deficits possibly returning, on provincial sales tax talk, and on other issues of a provincial picture budget revenue nature?

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the member has not lost his touch in terms of being a very good finance critic. He's very much on target, and it seems to be causing some consternation across the way.

The polling results which have come in from Albertans, personally from Albertans -- and I commend every Albertan who has taken the time to sit down to read through that brochure and grapple with these issues and then send in some guidance to us. That is in the process of being collated. We don't at this point have the results out of the computerized end of the evaluation, but they are coming soon and to more than a theatre near you, Mr. Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Highwood.

Employment Standards Enforcement

MR. MacDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this province the government chooses to remain silent when blatant employment standards violations are brought to their attention. Workers are bullied and intimidated by employers who have lost all respect for the law. My questions today are for the Premier. If your government is customer based and concerned about people, why are some employers who violate employment standards not prosecuted even after five years of chronic abuse?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Labour is dealing with this particular situation, and I will have him respond.

MR. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually, the whole question is erroneous and is misplaced. When the member does his research, certainly he'd come across an item that would talk about Alberta Labour filing suit against a specific company for the return of wages. This was filed November 27 in the *Edmonton*

Journal. The member clearly knows that the work that's being done with the specific instance to which he refers is under way. There was a prosecution in this area in 1998. It was, as a matter of fact, in July. As a matter of fact, when we did do a comparison with what happens in the Alberta market versus those with alleged worker-friendly administrations in British Columbia and Saskatchewan, Alberta has more prosecutions than either British Columbia or Saskatchewan, who had none -- none -- in the last two years.

MR. MacDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My second question is also to the Premier. Why does your government not consistently enforce the Employment Standards Code to protect workers from being reprimanded and fired for standing up and speaking out for their individual rights?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, if there are violations of the code, those people will be prosecuted. Again I'll have the hon. minister supplement.

MR. SMITH: Well, thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Speaker, about half the workers in Alberta are covered by employment standards, but there is another half that are not covered. So you have to find other ways. I believe the hon. member said: how do you prosecute; how do you protect people who speak up? For example, last year. Here's the case of a woman who ended an employment and had such bad feelings -- and I'm reading from the *Edmonton Sun* -- that she filed a small claims court action against her former employer yesterday claiming she's owed \$2,525 in severance pay and health benefits. The party from whom the woman is seeking compensation is the Liberal Party of Alberta.

MR. MacDONALD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My third question is also to the Premier. When will you restore credibility to the Department of Labour by replacing the Minister of Labour with someone who is not soft on crime so that all Alberta workers can get the protection they deserve?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, there is no need to restore credibility to the Department of Labour. The Department of Labour and this minister have all the credibility we need; believe me.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Highwood, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview.

Aboriginal Justice

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issue of justice for Alberta's people is a complex and troubling matter that needs our attention. To the Minister of Justice. Yesterday your department released the study of First Nations police services, which is an assessment based on consultations. Were Alberta's First Nations consulted, and if so, why did the consultations not include the Tsuu T'ina and Blood First Nations?

2:10

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, as I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, when I first became minister, I became aware there were some problems associated with First Nations policing. Many of the services are in the early stages of development, so certainly there are some weaknesses. Nevertheless, we should also not ignore the fact that there are some very good things going on in this area.

Nevertheless, in July of '97 I asked the hon. Member for

Athabasca-Wabasca to review First Nations police services. An initial consultation took place with over 100 key persons participating in First Nations policing, and that would have included community members, chiefs and council members, First Nations police commissions, and other stakeholders associated with this particular area.

As concerns the Blood and Tsuu T'ina nations specifically, I was made aware that the consultation meetings took place with the Blood on September 17 and October 15 and with the Tsuu T'ina on October 29. Subsequent to the formal meetings a questionnaire was given to the community members to allow for further input, and they compiled that input along with the consultation meeting input and developed a report. That report was then distributed to all stakeholders for further comment, and their responses were reviewed and considered in the final report.

So there's been extensive consultation, Mr. Speaker, but what I would like to emphasize is that this is simply the first stage. On any and all changes which we intend to implement as a result of the report, you certainly have the commitment of this department that we will fully consult with the aboriginal peoples before we make those changes.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, my first supplemental is to the Minister of Justice. If this is the first stage, what is your department going to do or doing to reduce the overrepresentation of aboriginal people who are in custody in Alberta's jails?

MR. HAVELOCK: Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious problem, and it is, I think, exacerbated by the fact that the present justice system, as good as it is, needs to be more sensitive to the cultural needs of the aboriginal community. Our commitment to deal with this is indicated by a number of initiatives which we have undertaken during the past year. I'll briefly go through some of those. For example, we're in the process of establishing First Nations and Métis advisory committees. I will work directly with the First Nations and Métis to address their issues in the area of justice and some of the other areas that we're looking at. We're considering the implementation of a tribal court, and that was recommended by the Calgary-West MLA. We are looking at implementing that next year.

Some of the other initiatives which we've considered. Certainly the First Nations policing, which I just indicated we'll work closely with the community on. We've put in aboriginal camps as an alternative to traditional incarceration. We have moved trials to the Siksika reserve recently to, again, try and be more sensitive to the needs of that community. We have been transferring community corrections to First Nations. We funded justice workshops and conferences. Also, Mr. Speaker, as part of the Justice Summit, we have made aboriginal justice issues a key component of that initiative. In fact, we have very significant representation from both the Métis and aboriginal peoples on the Justice Summit steering committee and working committee.

So those are some of the issues that we're working on right now. We are certainly very committed to trying to resolve the fact that there is certainly an overrepresentation of aboriginal peoples in the justice system.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, my second supplemental is to the hon. Minister of Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs. Given that Alberta does not have primary responsibility for aboriginal people, what steps are you and your department taking to ensure adequate resources are devoted to improving appropriate treatment for aboriginal people?

MR. HANCOCK: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to be able to answer that question. I think my colleague the Minister of Justice is doing good work in this area of overrepresentation of aboriginal people in our jails, and while dealing with policing, dealing with the courts, and dealing with alternative remedies are all very important, it's really just symptomatic of a larger problem, and that's the problem of the lower socioeconomic standards and lower socioeconomic levels of our aboriginal people in Alberta and across the country for that matter.

First of all, one of our priorities in aboriginal affairs is to settle land claims. It's important that First Nations have resources, and settling land claims that are outstanding is an important way to get resources into their hands. So that's one first step towards it.

We're also working very hard at areas such as capacity building and building self-reliance, trying to make sure that we help our First Nations people build partnerships with business in Alberta so that they can take advantage of economic opportunity in Alberta and improve the socioeconomic status of their people.

But the hon. member has also recognized one other thing which is very important, and that is that responsibility for aboriginal people is a federal responsibility. One area of concern that we have that's ongoing is that the federal government tends to read the Constitution Act and the Canada Act as referring to Indians. It says Indians and land reserved for Indians, and they choose to read it as Indians on land reserved for Indians, and that's an inappropriate interpretation. They're off-loading again, and this is part of the social framework agreement that we're trying to deal with to make sure that they take full responsibility in that area. It's of concern to Alberta. It is of concern to Alberta because if they do not do the job that's necessary to make sure that aboriginal people across this country have adequate resources, have adequate access to education, have the opportunity to participate in economic opportunities, then it comes to the province to deal with the symptoms of that issue, the aboriginal justice questions: overrepresentation in our jails and overrepresentation in our child welfare loads.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview, followed by the hon. Member for Livingstone-MacLeod.

Children's Services

MRS. SLOAN: Children in need are unmarried minors who cannot access parental support. Family and Social Services categorizes these children separately from child welfare, and they further single these children out based on their attendance at school.

To the Minister of Family and Social Services: what is the relationship between the 160 percent drop in the children-in-need caseload and the \$43.7 million in the same program area?

DR. OBERG: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take a look at that and undertake to answer that question. The children-in-need program is a very important program in our department. As we've gone to the community delivery of services, there will not be any children that are falling through the cracks. The actual budget amount that she's talking about, I'll certainly take a look at it.

MRS. SLOAN: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the money cut from this program area is being used to subsidize this government's underfunding of AISH and child welfare.

DR. OBERG: Mr. Speaker, that's a very interesting question.

MRS. SLOAN: Do you think these things are funny?

DR. OBERG: Yeah, I do think it's funny, because all the hon. member has to do is take a look at what our AISH caseload is doing. Our caseload is going up roughly 160 to 180 people per month. The other thing that I will comment on is that the children's services budget this year is up around 9 or 10 percent, or the equivalent of \$25 million to \$30 million. Mr. Speaker, that is not peanuts.

This is a question that the hon. member has written to me, and the quote in the question is: what are you doing in your department to hide these funds? Quite literally, the SFI caseload is down. The SFI caseload is down around 30,800, which is the lowest since around 1975. We have transferred those funds from the SFI into children's services, into AISH, into the programs that need it, and that's one of the benefits that we have in our department. The downside of our department is that we're extremely caseload dependent. So if, for example, the SFI cases went up, we would be in some trouble, but the SFI caseload is down, and we're transferring that money across.

MRS. SLOAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the minister would explain the contradiction between this government's fiscal flexibility with business loans and their fiscal rigidity when it comes to vulnerable children.

DR. OBERG: Mr. Speaker, you know, I really should not even consider answering that question, but I will anyway.

There is no fiscal rigidity. Our money for children's services quite literally is going up 9 to 10 percent. As the hon. member knows, our caseload in children's services is going up. Mr. Speaker, take a look at what other departments in this government are spending. I will put it to you that children's services have received the largest increase in funding in this department.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Livingstone-MacLeod, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

Michener Centre

MR. COUTTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are some concerned parents in Livingstone-MacLeod who are members of the Southern Alberta Community Living Association. They are fearful that a \$40 million planned expansion of the Michener Centre will take southern Alberta children from their own program in Lethbridge and place them in Red Deer. My questions are to the Minister of Family and Social Services. Can the minister advise if he is acting on the Michener recommendations?

2:20

DR. OBERG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, just to straighten out a little bit of what the hon. member said, there is no \$40 million planned expansion for Michener Centre. The total budget for Michener Centre is \$41 million. I think that the bottom line on this question is that we have around 400 people in Michener Centre who have been there for 25 or 30 years. This is a very vulnerable population, a population that has quite literally grown up in Michener Centre. Michener Centre is their home. This government will not yank that home out from under those people.

MR. COUTTS: My first supplemental then. It has been indicated that there are about 300 individuals and that the budget is more than \$40 million. How is the funding for the Michener Centre determined?

DR. OBERG: Mr. Speaker, first of all, there are around 450 clients presently in Michener Centre. The budget is \$41 million.

The budget is determined in this Legislature in the budgetary process as we go forward.

The one issue that I have with Michener Centre is that there are a lot of buildings there. What you have to remember is that Michener Centre used to house roughly 2,000 to 2,500 people. Over the past 10 to 15 years the population has been declining significantly. We're now sitting at about 450 people. As I said before, we are not going to be closing Michener Centre; we are not going to be yanking the rug out of a place that those very vulnerable people call home.

MR. COUTTS: My last supplemental then. As individuals leave the Michener Centre, can those dollars be used for services for children with special needs?

DR. OBERG: Mr. Speaker, first of all, if a client in Michener Centre chooses to leave Michener Centre, that is his choice, and it would be under his own volition. Those dollars that have been used for that client in Michener Centre will be transferred to whatever region of the province the person ends up going to.

The question is: are those dollars just gone? Have they evaporated? Do they stay with Michener Centre? Mr. Speaker, the budget for Michener Centre has been going down significantly over the past 10 years. I anticipate that that will continue as the people move out of Michener Centre, quite frankly, as the population decreases. So those moneys, although perhaps not specifically available for children's services, will certainly be available for persons with developmental disabilities services.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, followed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan.

Seniors' Housing

MR. BONNER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A 78-year-old gentleman in Calgary has written to me very concerned about the future of the seniors in his apartment building, where rents will be increasing by \$35 on March 1, 1999. The building used to house 24 seniors, but with repeated rent increases there are only four seniors left, including a 78-year-old blind woman across the hall who's called this building her home for nearly 20 years. To the minister responsible for seniors: where are these seniors to go?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, there is no question that when you have an economy as strong and as robust as the economy is in Alberta, it does put pressure on housing. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and I have discussed this issue a number of times. Obviously, there are a number of things that could be done. There are a number of things that should not be done, in our view.

One of the answers that we have, because we're concerned about seniors at the immediate time, is to contact seniors through our network and through the seniors' advisory network to let them know that if they are suffering undue costs because of rent increases, they may do two things: one, immediately call our offices. I would remind the hon. member and he could let this gentleman know that we do have a storefront office with people in Calgary that would help this person. They can apply immediately to the Alberta seniors' benefit program. The increased rental costs will be considered as a part of their expenses, and that can be adjusted right away. That could make a difference to the amount of cash benefit that that senior would receive, and that in fact could assist them.

The second thing that can be of help and that, again, is immediate and responds very quickly is the special-needs program. I know that the hon. member is fully aware of that

program. Seniors should call our 1-800 number or their storefront offices. We have 11 of those sites in this province.

Mr. Speaker, one other thing that I would like to make sure the hon. member and all hon. members in this Assembly are aware of is that if a senior is housebound and unable to get out, we have people who will indeed go to their homes, to their places of residence to immediately help them with these issues. The biggest challenge that we have, hon. members, is: how do we communicate our opportunities for assistance and for aid in those areas?

So in that respect, I thank the hon. member for raising this issue and helping each one of us in this House today communicate to seniors that indeed there is a place to call, a place to go, and there is assistance available for that very important part of our society.

MR. BONNER: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, why won't the minister finally adjust the Alberta seniors' benefit so that it accurately reflects the cost-of-living increases faced by seniors on fixed incomes?

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is aware that when the Alberta seniors' benefit program was put in place, the universality of seniors' programs in many cases -- and this is one of them -- had to change. The Alberta seniors' benefit program is directed at assisting lower income seniors, and it has been successful.

The area of raising the limit is an interesting one, and I would be happy to share with the hon. member the research that shows that if you were to increase this, say, by a thousand dollars, raise it up another thousand, it would provide a very, very small benefit to everyone. By focusing those dollars in the special-needs program or, as I indicated in my earlier answer, the opportunity to put those extraordinary expenses into that assists in a very significant way those very vulnerable seniors who need our assistance, and that is where the focus of our program will be.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar-Fort Saskatchewan, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs.

Advanced Education for the Disabled

MR. LOUGHEED: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Advanced Education and Career Development, who I know understands and believes that accessibility to postsecondary education is essential for all Albertans. I'd like to ask: what is the minister's department doing to ensure that Albertans with disabilities have the access that they require?

MR. DUNFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by reminding everyone that just over a year ago we had a Growth Summit here in the province, and people development of course rose to the top of the priority list. Certainly in Advanced Education and Career Development we take the term "people development" very seriously, and of course we take that to mean all people. So we want to make sure that we find ways in which all people can benefit from an excellent postsecondary system. We actually provide, then, quite a wide range of services for disabled Albertans. These can include special financial assistance, training programs, and then of course support services right on the campuses themselves.

MR. LOUGHEED: Thank you. The minister responded with respect to financial assistance available. Could he further clarify what financial assistance is available for students with disabilities?

MR. DUNFORD: There are really two ways that our department responds. [interjections] I realize of course that it is the season

for giving and people are in a jovial mood, but I'm not sure I find the topic that we're discussing very trivial. I think it's quite serious, and I think most members of the opposition would join me . . .

THE SPEAKER: Hon. minister, please, through the chair and to the question.

2:30

MR. DUNFORD: Sorry. Just simply couldn't resist, Mr. Speaker.

We really respond in two ways. One is perhaps somewhat indirectly, but in the operating grants that we provide to the institutions, we recognize and they recognize that there's some funding in there for special needs. Then of course for the financial assistance that we provide to students, we do recognize the particular situation they might be in, whether it be mentally or physically. We try to then take a sensitive approach and look at what might be additional either educational or living costs. Certainly we all are aware that there might be some special needs as far as technology would go, and certainly we can assist in the purchase of that technology.

MR. LOUGHEED: Thank you. Beyond the financial assistance, I'd like to inquire: what kind of support services may be available for students with disabilities?

MR. DUNFORD: Well, this would be involved primarily again at the institutional level. Of course, I would invite any member that wants to inquire further into this to approach any particular institution that they would be involved with. But for some examples of the assistance that would be provided, we would look at preadmission planning and orientation. I think this is going to be very, very important, because many of the people that will be involved with the course might have come out of some special situations, and they're now approaching a postsecondary institution. I can remember from my own experience, Mr. Speaker, that trying to develop a relationship with a large institution was particularly traumatic, at least in the early stages. So we're really pleased that many of the campuses do actually get involved in counseling and especially in orientation. [interjections]

Well, I would like to carry on. I hear the concerns that people have, certainly with equipment rentals, with learning aids, and particularly with volunteer learning assistance. So we think that in Alberta we provide a friendly environment for disabled Albertans.

THE SPEAKER: Three hon. members today have indicated their desire to participate in Members' Statements, and we'll proceed in this order. First of all, the hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake, then the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie, then the hon. Member for Red Deer-South, but we will not begin for another 30 seconds.

In the meantime, we're going to revert to Introduction of Visitors and ask the hon. Minister of Education to proceed. In 30 seconds I'll call on the first hon. member.

head: Introduction of Guests

(reversion)

MR. MAR: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour for me to rise today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly Dr. Eugene Meehan, a former professor of law of mine from the University of Alberta. Dr. Meehan is an expert in constitutional law and Supreme Court of Canada practice. He is now a partner with the law firm of Lang Michener in the city of Ottawa and also the president-elect of the Canadian Bar Association. He is in Edmonton today to give a

seminar organized by the CBA, Alberta branch, on the role of the Supreme Court. In his capacity as president-elect of the Canadian Bar Association he has worked hard on ensuring that people in the public know about the good work done by lawyers throughout this nation. I ask him to rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

head: **Members' Statements**

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Innisfail-Sylvan Lake.

Pine Lake

MR. SEVERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1991 Alberta Environment released a report on the water quality of Pine Lake which indicated that something had to be done to prevent the lake from becoming a dead lake. At that time a group of cottage owners, resort owners, and local farmers formed a committee that led to the formation of the Pine Lake Restoration Society.

Over the past few years, the group has undertaken a number of projects around the lake that have improved the water flowing into the lake, but the problem of heavy buildup of phosphate on the lake bottom still persists.

This summer the solution to this problem became a reality with the installation of a hypolimnetic withdrawal system. This system consisted of a 22-inch plastic pipe over 5,000 feet long; that is, almost an entire mile. Because of the flotation of the pipe, 350-pound cement weights are attached every nine feet. At the intake is a 7,000-pound structure which allows the water to flow into the top of the pipe. This structure sits about seven feet from the bottom of the lake. Water then flows down the pipe and discharges downstream of the weir structure.

The provincial government and the county of Red Deer assisted the Pine Lake Restoration Society with financial contributions. Equipment was loaned for the project by some major businesses, including Halliburton, Kipp Scott, Deermart, and Central Equipment Rentals.

What I find the most amazing of all this is that all this work was installed and this system done by volunteers, in fact over 2,500 man-hours. At this time I'd like to make special mention of two people: first, Danny Fisher, the president of the society, who headed up this project and put in over 300 hours; and second, the late Bill Wearmouth, who was instrumental in forming the Pine Lake society. I would also like to thank all the volunteers from around the province for their contribution.

I'm happy to say that at the 18th annual North American Lake Management conference, the Pine Lake Restoration Society received a reward for volunteer service in lake restoration, protection, and management. This is one of the highest honours given out by the society, and it's an award that is internationally renowned.

On behalf of all Albertans I'd like to congratulate the Pine Lake Restoration Society for their great accomplishment and their tremendous effort to ensure that the enjoyment of Pine Lake is there for years to come.

Thank you.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie. You have an extra 30 seconds as well.

Special Places 2000

MS CARLSON: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly will use it.

In 1992 the government announced its Special Places 2000 program as Alberta's commitment to the United Nations

biodiversity convention. This program was supposed to protect the full range of landscapes, environmental diversity, and special natural features throughout Alberta. Instead, what has happened is that the government has manipulated the special places process to accomplish their agenda of aggressive economic development regardless of the environmental cost. As a result, the integrity of many special places has been jeopardized by oil and gas well activity or logging, all activities that are incompatible with protection, no matter what this government says.

What was supposed to happen was that a provincial co-ordinating committee and local committees were to work together to protect areas. What has happened is that the government accepts proposals made by local special places committees when they fit the government's pro-development agenda yet rejects them when they effectively protect an area. This has happened many times, and it is why many of the people have withdrawn from this program.

MR. WHITE: Almost all of them.

MS CARLSON: Almost all of them.

Several new special places are awaiting designation, and local committees or the provincial co-ordinating committee want them properly protected. These include special places in the Bow corridor, the Sheep River area of Kananaskis, and the Whaleback, which is the largest remaining area of intact, montane landscape in Canada. We must not allow the spectacular ridges, forests, and grasslands of these areas to be despoiled by drilling rigs and logging. Protecting habitat is the best way to protect species, and we have too many species on the endangered or vulnerable lists now.

I ask the government to make a new commitment to protect what we still have. I ask them to stop watering down the protection that they have already provided to wilderness areas. In 1992 Alberta made a commitment to protect the province's biodiversity. Mr. Speaker, we still have a very long way to go, and we see by the comments made by the Environmental Protection minister in this House today that he is not prepared to do what this government has committed to. It is a shame, because you are wasting the future of our children in this province.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Red Deer-South.

2:40 Declaration on the Canadian Family

MR. DOERKSEN: Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon I tabled the declaration on the Canadian family. I would now like to read that declaration into the record.

We, the attendees of the Ottawa Conference on the Family (October 1-3, 1998), hold the following statements to be true:

1. The family is an institution ordained by God and rooted in human nature. It exists to satisfy the longings of the human heart to give and receive love, to propagate the human race, and to provide a safe and secure environment in which to nurture, teach and love children.
2. The family is society's fundamental social unit, sharing a home that serves as the centre for social, educational, economic and spiritual life.
3. A family is based on the lifelong covenant marriage of a man and woman and includes the children born to or adopted by them. It encompasses by extension grandparents, other close relatives, and those struggling with less-than-ideal circumstances, such as those faced by single parents.
4. Parents -- not governments, courts, or other social agencies -- bear the ultimate responsibility for all aspects of their children's well-being. Any efforts which would undermine that responsibility are detrimental to the health of the family,

and therefore to society.

5. We in Canada need to protect the family from those in society who, whether for social or political reasons, seek to undermine it, change its definition or diminish its importance.
6. The family is the cradle of life, and is therefore responsible for the defence of life in all its dimensions. This includes the unborn child, the aged, the widowed, the mentally and physically challenged, and every other condition in which humanness is expressed from conception to natural death.

Mr. Speaker, that is the end of the declaration. I urge every member of this Assembly to append their signatures to the declaration, as I have, and so show their support for the Canadian family.

head: Projected Government Business

MR. SAPERS: You don't know how much I looked forward to this today, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Government House Leader to please provide the Assembly with some indication of projected government business for next week.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. HAVELOCK: Yes. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to advise the House as to what we'll be doing next week. There is a slight change from the document which the Opposition House Leader has.

On Monday, December 7, in the afternoon we will go into third reading on bills in this order: bills 48, 38, and 21. That evening we will then do the same order -- bills 48, 38, and 21 -- then Committee of the Whole, Bill 2, and then third reading of Bill 2. We intend to follow that pattern for the rest of the week.

THE SPEAKER: There was notice given to the chair during the question period about a purported point of order. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Norwood.

MS OLSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Actually it's a point of clarification. [interjections] Okay.

THE SPEAKER: Such a point does not exist. I recognized the hon. member on a point of order. Do you wish to proceed; yes or no? Yes?

MS OLSEN: Sure.

THE SPEAKER: Citation?

Point of Order Tabling a Cited Document

MS OLSEN: Okay. The citation would be 495(1) and 495(5) in *Beauchesne*. The Minister of Labour in his response to a question read from a newspaper article. He didn't table that document. He referred to it as being from the *Edmonton Sun*. Under 495(1) it says, "A Minister is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House without being prepared to lay it on the Table." Mr. Speaker, it's obviously acceptable to be quoting, but unless the minister is going to make clear whether he's merely referring to it or he's quoting it, what his intention is for that document, then in fact he should table it for the rest of us to see. I believe that under 495(1) the Minister of Labour in fact has violated that section.

MR. HAVELOCK: Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. Minister of Labour would like to supplement. I know you're a very patient man; however, when an hon. member stands up and admits that

they have a point of clarification and then scrambles to try and find a point of order, I would hope that you wouldn't let it proceed in the future.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. Labour minister would like to add something.

MR. SMITH: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I certainly look forward to your guidance on this because I was actually unsure that when the Liberal Party of Alberta was involved in an unfair labour dispute -- I didn't know if I could just say that directly, that the Liberal Party of Alberta was being sued by a former employee, or if I had to, in fact, read from an article in the newspaper, which I would be more than pleased to table, which outlines the case of unfair labour dismissal between a former student of NAIT and the Liberal Party of Alberta.

THE SPEAKER: Well, I'm going to get involved in this exchange with respect to this point of order and actually take some encouragement from the words echoed by the hon. Government House Leader with respect to the patience I display in the chair. This chairman was certainly patient in not drawing to order a member of Executive Council who made mention of the fact that another member was not in the House today. There was no interjection then.

This chairman was also very patient in not bringing to order a member of Executive Council, in this case the Government House Leader, who did not refer to another hon. member by that title but instead referred to that hon. member as "she," which violates.

This chairman was also very, very patient in not rising when another member of Executive Council had several newspaper articles in front of him when referring to a particular question.

This chairman was also very, very patient in not having interjected or risen when a member of the government, in providing a member's statement today, went clearly 30 seconds over the time frame that we have agreed to deal with.

This chairman was also very, very patient in not having interjected when the custom of this Assembly is that when an hon. member has the opportunity to provide a member's statement, they have the right to say anything that they want. That was the reason why this Assembly agreed to members' statements. They have that right as hon. members to give whatever statement they wanted about anything they wanted to, and it was expected that all hon. members, if they chose not to listen, at least would not interject.

This patient chairman did not interject when one hon. member in this House today was giving her member's statement and there were a whole series of interjections coming from one side of the House.

Now, this patient chairman -- this patient chairman -- also recognizes, in listening to the response from the hon. Minister of Labour, that while he did have this wonderful source of information in a newspaper article in front of him, he did not deliberately quote from it. He may have cited or referred to it. That is not a point of order.

So with respect to all of that, let us proceed.

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. HAVELOCK: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As indicated in Projected Government Business, Thursday, November 26, 1998, to accommodate everyone's participation in the Premier's lighting of the lights, I move that we call it 5:30 p.m. and that the Assembly adjourn until Monday, December 7, 1998, at 1:30 p.m..

[Motion carried]

[At 2:48 p.m. the Assembly adjourned to Monday at 1:30 p.m.]