



Province of Alberta

The 27th Legislature  
Third Session

# Alberta Hansard

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The Honourable Kenneth R. Kowalski, Speaker

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

### The 27th Legislature

#### Third Session

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## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Prayers

**The Speaker:** Good afternoon.

Let us pray. Guide us so that we may use the privilege given us as elected Members of the Legislative Assembly. Give us the strength to labour diligently, the courage to think and to speak with clarity and conviction and without prejudice or pride. Amen.

Please be seated.

### Introduction of Visitors

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Environment.

**Mr. Renner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly His Excellency Kaoru Ishikawa, the ambassador of Japan, who is accompanied by his wife, Masako Ishikawa. Also joining him this afternoon is Mr. Yasuo Minemura, the consul general of Japan in the Calgary office, and Kyoko Minemura, the wife of the consul general, as well as Yuji Sekiguchi, first secretary, embassy of Japan in Ottawa, as well as Naoki Sasahara, vice-consul, culture and information section, consulate general of Japan in Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, we're pleased to welcome His Excellency to Alberta as we celebrate two important milestones in our relations with Japan. I had the honour of hosting the entire delegation for lunch today, and we discussed the fact that it was about 40 years ago that the Alberta-Japan office began its work in Tokyo promoting trade and investment opportunities in our province. As a result of the office's work Japan's JACOS was one of the first international companies to invest in our oil sands.

This year we also mark the 30th anniversary of our twinning relationship with the prefecture of Hokkaido. As part of this relationship Alberta receives a special adviser from Hokkaido every year to help develop Japanese culture and language programs for our school curriculum. We really appreciate the relationship that we have with Japan, and we look forward to many more decades of cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, I now ask that His Excellency and the delegation please stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of all members of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Premier.

**Mr. Horner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour for me to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of 13 representatives of the First Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. The commander-in-chief's unit commendation for 1 PPCLI battle group task force 1-06 was presented on November 29 by the Governor General, and these representatives were honoured here today at a reception attended by MLAs, hosted by myself and the Member for Athabasca-Redwater.

Mr. Speaker, between January and August of 2006 Task Force Orion operated throughout southern Afghanistan with good success. Theirs was to be a transition mission, and as you will hear later today, this small force did the work of the much larger one which replaced it. The task force had over 100 contacts with the Taliban; 50 of these involved intensive firefights, complex battalion manoeuvres, and the use of artillery fire and support aircraft. Despite

some very harsh conditions morale has remained very, very high. They inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, and of course, as we all know in this Assembly, we lost some brave soldiers that year. Their sacrifice contributed to the success of that task force. To say the least, Canada is very proud of the entire battalion.

Our honoured guests are seated in the Speaker's gallery, and I humbly ask that each would stand as I call their name to receive the warm welcome of the Assembly when they are all standing: Captain Dylan Dewar, Corporal Daniel Malho, Corporal Joseph Robb, Master Corporal Shane Stackpole, Corporal Kevin Koldeweih, Corporal Dale Miller, Master Corporal Peter Chan, Corporal Adam Hilton, Corporal Alec Richard, Corporal Darren Lynch, Master Corporal William Tyers, Corporal Michael Mulesa, Corporal Adam Gee. Mr. Speaker, they have now risen in your gallery. I would ask that the Legislative Assembly give their warmest regards. [Standing ovation]

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

**Mr. Bhardwaj:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have two separate introductions for three very special guests seated in your gallery today. First, Mr. Kerry Diotte, who is no stranger to the Legislature and no stranger to many of us who are here today. As we're all aware, Mr. Diotte was a well-known journalist in our city prior to running for city council. Mr. Diotte was elected for his first term as a city councillor in ward 11 on October 18, 2010. Of course, ward 11 shares voters with my constituency of Edmonton-Ellerslie. Mr. Diotte, welcome to public office, and welcome to serving the great people of southeast Edmonton. At this time I ask Mr. Diotte to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome.

Mr. Speaker, for my second introduction I have two school board trustees, who are also sitting in your gallery and who were elected on October 18 to serve southeast Edmonton as well. To begin with, Ms Leslie Cleary, the Edmonton public school board trustee for ward I. Ms Cleary had many years of experience in the nonprofit sector before being elected on October 18. Seated beside her is Ms Laura Thibert. Laura was elected as a Catholic school board trustee in ward 77 on October 18 as well. Laura brings a wealth of experience from the nonprofit sector and has been deeply involved in the community for many, many years. I look forward to working with all of my elected colleagues, and I ask at this time for both of them to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Decore.

**Mrs. Sarich:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly Mr. Dave Loken. Mr. Loken is the new councillor for ward 3 in the capital city of Edmonton, and ward 3 is part of the constituency of Edmonton-Decore.

As a new councillor Mr. Loken has taken on many new roles and duties, and one of these is as the co-chair of Edmonton Salutes Committee. He represents this committee at council, standing committees, and other public functions, which also included joining the military representatives today at the Alberta Legislature. Edmonton Salutes promotes and recognizes the importance of our local military and their contributions both at home and abroad. The ultimate goal of this program is to let our military personnel and their families know how important they are to the fabric of our community and how we truly thank them for their service on behalf of all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I would now ask Mr. Loken, city councillor for ward 3, who is seated in your gallery, to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome.

### Introduction of Guests

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's definitely an honour and a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Legislature 52 young people from Lorelei elementary school. I had the pleasure of visiting that class about a week ago as they're covering right now a social studies unit on government. I have to tell you that their level of understanding of our process and the quality of questions they had were second to none. Accompanying these students are teachers and group leaders Mrs. Ellen Aker, Mr. Mark George, and Ms Karen Mundorf. Also accompanying them are parent helpers Mr. Steve Abbott, Mrs. Zohreh Assi, Mrs. Catrina Fahie, Mr. Lem Mundorf, and Mr. Ed Remesz. I would ask them all to rise and receive the welcome of this Assembly.

1:40

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Health and Wellness.

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's such a pleasure and such a joy to introduce to you and through you some of Alberta's brightest young students from my constituency. They are, of course, from Waverley elementary. They are here today to observe democracy in action, and in a moment I'm going to ask them to rise with their group leader/teacher Mrs. Flook and also their parent helpers Mrs. Davidson and Ms Woychuk. Would they all rise, and would the rest of us please applaud them for being here on this wonderful day.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview.

**Mr. Vandermeer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly a bunch of enthusiastic students from St. Francis of Assisi Catholic elementary school. They are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Kevin McGoey, Mrs. Audrey Fitzpatrick, and student teacher Ms Kelsey Kat. I'd ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay.

**Ms Woo-Paw:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to introduce to you and through you to members of the House three special guests sitting in the members' gallery today: Mr. Dick Chamney, an Edmontonian and the president of International Social Service Canada; Dr. Lorne Jaques, professor for the only international social work master's program in Canada from the University of Calgary's Faculty of Social Work; and Ms Brianna Strumm, graduate student of the international social work master's program from U of C and a social worker with the city of Calgary currently. I would ask my guests to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this House.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Wetaskiwin-Camrose.

**Mr. Olson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to have my two constituency assistants in the Assembly today. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I believe my leg. assistant is with them: Wendy Pasiuk, Laurie Huolt, and Lindsay Cooke. If they would please rise.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Rutherford.

**Mr. Horne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm privileged to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of representatives from the Canadian Federation of University Women, Edmonton chapter.

The Canadian Federation of University Women is an international group comprised of women who have graduated from any university. As a matter of interest, the Edmonton chapter celebrated its 100th birthday last year. In addition to having interests in a number of areas of public policy such as the environment, health, and many others, the group meets once a month to hear from significant speakers. They also provide on a regular basis resolutions to all levels of government and even have a voice at the United Nations.

These guests are seated in the public gallery today, and I would ask that each guest rise and stand as I call her name: Judi Cook, Gerry Cameron, Janet Clark, Jude de Almeida-Beaudry, Betty Gravett, Joy Hurst, Tammy Irwin, Alberta Boytzun, Shirley Shostak, Shirley Reid, and Jean Wells. I'd ask that all members of the Assembly join me in giving this fine group of women the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

### Members' Statements

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Athabasca-Redwater.

#### Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry

**Mr. Johnson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm truly humbled to recognize some of our country's great soldiers, the First Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. This Monday the unit was awarded the rare honour of the commander-in-chief unit commendation by our Governor General at Edmonton Garrison, and I was honoured to be in attendance.

They were recognized for exceptional determination and courage during relentless combat in Afghanistan from January to August 2006. During this time period the 1,200 soldiers in this unit, known as Task Force Orion, operated alone in southern Afghanistan in an area now occupied by over 30,000 NATO forces. Because of their determination NATO was able to assume command in southern Afghanistan and prevent the city of Kandahar from falling to the Taliban.

Mr. Speaker, as the Deputy Premier mentioned, Task Force Orion was involved in over a hundred contacts with the Taliban, and this cost Canada the lives of 19 brave men and women, with another 76 wounded in action. One of these brave men was Corporal Bryce Keller. I had the privilege of meeting his wife, Sarah, his father, Mel, and his grandparents this Monday. It's unfortunate that Sarah cannot be with us today, but Corporal Keller's family exemplifies the sacrifice made by all the families of our lost soldiers.

They can take pride in knowing that the world is a better place for millions of people because of their sacrifice. As just one example, before Corporal Keller arrived in Afghanistan, there were only 1 million primary students, none of which were girls. Today there are 6 million students enrolled in primary school in Afghanistan, including 2 million girls.

Mr. Speaker, the Patricias here today are part of one of the most decorated military regiments in the Canadian Forces, with a proud history dating back to 1914. Their mottos – Once a Patricia, Always a Patricia; Valour and Pride; as well as their unofficial motto, First in the Field – will tell you all you need to know about these very special Canadians.

Alberta is very proud of our soldiers, and I'd ask all the members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating and thanking the 1st Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and their families.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

### Rosza Award Acceptance Speech

**Ms Blakeman:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Last year I introduced Tom McFall from the Alberta Craft Council to you. He was the recipient of the top award from the Rosza awards for arts administration. Now, it's tradition for each outgoing recipient to report on their activities and successes during the Rosza year, and I wanted to share an excerpt from his speech with you as it outlines in his own voice the challenges faced by arts groups in Alberta today. From Tom.

This should be a joyous event, but I need to tell you, the worst part of the year started with the shocking news that the provincial government was cutting \$5 million from its already meagre arts support. Five million may not be much in other sectors, but this is the largest funding cut in the 30 years that I have been working in the arts.

The entire arts sector, including all of the nominees tonight, is being hit hard. The Craft Council as well as the professional and community craft scenes are taking a major hit. The Alberta Craft Council board and staff and I are currently cancelling or postponing major projects. We have cancelled a large touring exhibition called Clay 2010. You could have seen it at the Triangle Gallery later this year. We are cutting national and international projects. We are postponing the search for a proposed Calgary location, and we are also cutting or delaying our provincial travelling exhibitions. One of these, for example, went to 22 locations from Milk River to Peace River and was seen by over 15,000 visitors.

I'm telling you this news at this event because, sadly and ironically, these cuts are to the Craft Council's most adventurous and outward-thinking projects, the very projects that last year most attracted the jurors of the Rosza award. Without these innovative projects I suspect the Craft Council and I would not have been chosen for this impressive award. As we collectively lose millions of dollars of provincial investment in the arts sector, at least, thankfully, we do have the Rosza award to honour, celebrate, and support excellence in arts management.

To close, I think – Laurie thinks – that this government needs to rethink its investment in the arts, quit cutting programs, and aim for economic diversity.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-McClung.

### World AIDS Day

**Mr. Xiao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today in recognition of December 1, World AIDS Day. On this day every year we have the opportunity to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS, to remember those who have passed on, to be thankful for increased access to prevention and treatment, and to realize that there is much more work to be done to stop the spread of AIDS. Around the world people mark this day by wearing a red ribbon as a symbol of their solidarity for people living with HIV and AIDS.

AIDS was first reported in June of 1981. Globally by the end of 2009 approximately 33 million people were living with AIDS. Mr. Speaker, antiretroviral treatment can slow the course of the disease; however, there is no known cure or vaccine for AIDS and HIV at this time. Although the cost of antiretroviral drugs has fallen in low-income countries, the majority of the world's infected individuals do not have access to the medication and treatment.

Mr. Speaker, the stigma associated with AIDS can range from ostracism to violence against the infected individuals, which, sadly, creates obstacles for many people to be tested or to seek treatment. As a result, what could possibly be a manageable chronic illness can

become a death sentence for the infected individuals and also perpetuate the spread of HIV.

Keep the Promise, Mr. Speaker, is a political commitment of universal access. Access to antiretroviral treatment is dependent upon access to quality primary health care where voluntary testing and counselling are available. This year's World AIDS Day theme is Act Aware. I would like to ask all members of this House to take some time today to reflect on the goal of . . . [Mr. Xiao's speaking time expired]

1:50

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** First Official Opposition main question. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

### Publicly Funded Health Care

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On Monday we tabled the government's strategy to privatize health care in Alberta. The government responded with the usual unbelievable denials of, quote, it's just a discussion document. End quote. And, quote, I never saw it. End quote. Since this Premier has totally lost the confidence of Albertans, I'm going to try to help him out with a statement I have crafted today and will send to his office imminently. Will the Premier in writing promise Albertans that a government led by him will never violate the principles of the Canada Health Act?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the member already knows the answer to that question. We had 27 hours of debate on the health bill, and that is specifically stated in the health bill. I hope he's supporting the health bill. It's going to receive royal assent. That's just, I guess, part and parcel of the debate that went on in this House, that nobody really focused on the components of the bill.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, I didn't actually hear an answer to the question, of course, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier in writing promise Albertans he will not allow doctors to work in both the public and the private systems at the same time? Yes or no?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, it's most unfortunate, but we do have doctors that do opt out, and when they opt out, they stay out. That is a provision that's available to doctors today. The one thing that all members should focus on is that the bill that we've debated in this House says very explicitly that Albertans will have a say in the future direction of health care delivery in this province. That means any regulation changes will have to be posted on the website and discussed with Albertans. Albertans will have a say.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, again a bit evasive, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure you'll agree.

Will the Premier in writing promise Albertans that he will never allow private insurance for medically necessary services? Yes or no?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Again, the legislation is very clear in this area. Some other level of government, especially the federal government, may bring about changes, but I can tell you that any changes – any changes – in terms of health care delivery the way we know it today will have to be discussed with Albertans. Albertans will have a say. But the most important thing is that at the end of the day we have to have the money in place. We've done that. We've opened up more long-term care beds, which has taken some pressure off the emer-

gency rooms. Everything is moving ahead, the process. It's a good bill.

**The Speaker:** Second Official Opposition main question. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

### Health System Governance

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Premier. It's now clear that centralized decision-making has brought our health care system to a standstill over the past two years, from no health capital plan for Edmonton and Calgary to a strategic plan that has now been delayed for months. To the Premier: will you immediately shift more decision-making power to local authorities in the system until Alberta Health Services can be dismantled in an orderly fashion?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, today we've got over a thousand projects just in health facilities alone totalling over \$5 billion. To say that, you know, everything has come to a standstill – I know that we have two very good children's hospitals that are operating very efficiently. We have the Maz centre. We have one of only three burn units in the world, and it's here at the University of Alberta. We've got the virology lab. Li Ka Shing could have gone anyplace in the world and invested \$28 million. Where did it go to? It came to the province of Alberta. To say that nothing is being done in health care is totally erroneous and quite mistaken.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I still don't hear any acknowledgment that the structure is the problem.

Mr. Premier, how are you going to put Humpty Dumpty together again without disrupting patient care? How are you going to disseminate decision-making to the regional level again? Do you see the problem, Mr. Premier?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I'm not worried about Humpty Dumpty; I'm not worried about fairy tales. But I am worried about how we deliver health care to Albertans. There's a good plan in place. The minister articulated the five-year plan this morning on radio; he had a news conference yesterday. That's a bold step together with funding that's in place plus the fact that we have listened to the AMA section of ER docs. They told us what to do: open up more continuing care beds and find the protocol to move those that are in emergency rooms and admit them to hospital. And we're doing that.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, if there's one thing that's clear, Mr. Speaker, it's that the structure cannot deliver on these plan after plan after plan. Unless the Premier is prepared to make some tough decisions, we're not going to get these goals met.

When are you going to put real decision-making power into the hands of those in hospitals that know the area, the needs, and know how to fix the problems?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, the people that are working in our hospitals and our continuing care facilities are delivering. They are working very hard. The doctors, the nurses, the allied health care providers are the ones that are delivering the service. Most importantly, they know that the money is in place; they can plan for the next five years. They also understand the well-communicated plan to reduce some of the pressures in emergency rooms. We'll continue to ensure that we're bringing forward a good cancer strategy for the province. I mean, we're the only jurisdiction I know that has three additional radiation . . .

**The Speaker:** Third Official Opposition main question. The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition.

### Five-year Health Action Plan

**Dr. Swann:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'll try a different tack and see if I can get an answer from the minister of finance. The five-year plan from the minister of health is filled with reannouncements, vague promises, holes, and contradictions. To the minister of finance: is it not true that documents on your ministry's website show that the new cancer clinic in Red Deer will be open in 2013?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the website says about the cancer clinic in Red Deer, so I'll have to take a look to get an answer to the member there. I'm proud to say that the five-year plan, the five-year contract, that this government has with Alberta Health Services is going to fund strong growth, responsible growth in medical services both on the service side and the capital side and implement the programs that the hon. minister of health has described.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, to update the finance minister on his own website, it does say that the Red Deer cancer clinic will be operable by 2013.

However, the five-year plan that was released yesterday by the minister of health reveals that the Red Deer health clinic will be open by 2015. To the minister of health: has the minister deferred the cancer centre in Red Deer, or is the five-year plan wrong?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** No, Mr. Speaker. The cancer therapy corridor project for radiation is going ahead. We've already opened a brilliant, beautiful facility in Lethbridge where at least 600 people will be able to benefit from that service in their own community. We've announced that we'll do one in Red Deer as well. There's a design process that has to be worked through, and the Minister of Infrastructure is helping in that regard. So we'll have one in Red Deer as fast as possible. We'll also have another radiation therapy project in Grande Prairie.

**Dr. Swann:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it's really tough to get answers to basic questions in this House. I would hope that we can hold these ministers more accountable in the future.

We're getting very mixed messages on this critical area of cancer treatment, and this government continues to prevaricate. Is this government going to keep its plans straight for the Red Deer cancer clinic and build the faith that people of Grande Prairie will have their hospital with a cancer clinic open in 2014? It's been promised since 2007.

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, we've announced and made it very clear that these projects are moving ahead as quickly as they possibly can. With respect to the Red Deer project to do with cancer care, we know that we have total provincial support of about \$60 million in the budget for that, and it will be built as quickly and as soon as possible. You have to keep in mind that we have to . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

2:00

### Health System Governance (continued)

**Mr. Hinman:** The Wildrose has been calling for a fee for service and a chief medical officer for every acute hospital with the authority and responsibility to operate our hospitals properly. When I asked the minister on November 22, he said that hospitals already



have “a clinical lead and also a site admin lead.” In other words, there are people with local responsibilities that also have the local authority to act. This is false. Yesterday Dr. Eagle agreed with us, saying that we have to give hospital administrators more power to make decisions. What does the minister have to say for himself?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** The statements that I made are true, and so, too, are the statements that Dr. Eagle made. It’s just well known that hospitals, acute-care hospitals, which is the subject here, have a clinical lead person. That’s a medical-type person, and they have a clinical lead administrator. Now, the question is that the responsibility and the authority need to be augmented, and we’ve said that we’re going to do that. What confusion could you possibly have in your own mind? I don’t know.

**Mr. Hinman:** No wonder Albertans are frustrated and confused. You’re frustrated and confused, and your administrators are frustrated and confused. It’s time to end the confusion.

The superboard is imploding before our very eyes. Even the people on it can no longer defend it. Dr. Eagle also admitted yesterday that the superboard has confused administrators, and he insisted that the system needs local innovation and autonomy. When will you dismantle the failed superboard?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, the superboard, as he’s referred to it, is actually the Alberta Health Services, a single regional health authority. They are working very hard to address problems that exist in the system. That’s why we work collaboratively with them, with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, with the College of Pharmacists, with the United Nurses of Alberta folks, and also with the Health Quality Council to arrive at a plan. That plan, which talks about specific performance measures that address these issues, is right there. It was released yesterday. It will be followed, and it will make the improvements that we say.

**Mr. Hinman:** The evidence against this minister has piled up for weeks. Claiming to be blindsided by the ER crisis, he still hasn’t admitted how bad the problem is. He’s withheld information. In the last week he’s desperately turned to scapegoating his CEO and his parliamentary assistant. The best he can do is wave around a Christmas wish with a target that can never be met. The superboard is crumbling, and his reputation is crumbling with it. Even his bureaucracy has lost confidence in him. To the Premier: how long can you stand by this minister, and when will you replace him?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, I’m going to stand with my minister and support him. You know why? Because, I think, all Albertans . . . [interjections] Sorry. I know this isn’t the normal behaviour.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Premier, you have the floor.

**Mr. Stelmach:** Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Attention will be provided, or I will simply ignore those who are heckling in the question period rotation.

**Mr. Stelmach:** Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Proceed.

**Mr. Stelmach:** Thank you. The reason I’m saying that I’m standing behind my minister is because all Albertans need protection from a

member that just got up and said that what we need to do in this province is charge a fee for service when people enter emergency rooms. That begins to worry me, and I really want to know where that party stands in terms of this two-tiered, European-style health care system.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood if you’re ready.

### Publicly Funded Health Care (continued)

**Mr. Mason:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. Two days ago a document laying out the government’s secret plan to privatize health care was leaked to opposition parties. Everyone is denying paternity of this inconvenient new arrival, but I can tell you that the baby has a salt and pepper mustache, a cleft in his chin, and a talent for music and languages. The father is sitting right over there. To the Minister of Health and Wellness: will you admit that you are the person responsible for this secret Tory plan to privatize our health care system?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, let’s be very clear. There is no secret plan. There is no secret agenda. There is nothing on the table whatsoever to do with privatization. There is nothing there to do with a two-tier system. What we’ve made very clear and what I would ask this member to accept and understand is that there are Albertans out there who have opinions of a wide range. Whether we like them or not, whether we agree with them or not, they deserve to be heard, and all that the document reflected is what was heard. Did we act on the things that were contrary to the health act? No.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Mason:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark described how the Minister of Health and Wellness and his sidekick the Member for Edmonton-Rutherford were pushing this secret privatization plan through the Tory caucus. No wonder they tried to discredit him. To the minister: why don’t you admit that this is your plan and that you intend to privatize our health care system just as soon as you’re re-elected, if that happens?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, simply because all of what he just said is not true. There is no agenda of that kind whatsoever. Were there opinions expressed by Albertans? Yes, there were. Will there be opinions expressed again? Probably so. I don’t know. All I can tell you is that we have passed the health care act in this Legislature, and it is a good act that lays out the framework for improvements that Albertans are waiting to see. They want action, none of this rhetoric that they’re trying to spin from the other side.

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, I’ve read the summary of the public’s views, and they didn’t say anything that was in that document that you released.

Albertans simply cannot trust this PC government with our health care system. The minister’s so-called five-year plan is just another of his confidence-building measures intended to lull Albertans into a false sense of security. After the next election the government will again reveal its true privatization agenda. To the minister: after all the deception and incompetence your government has displayed on health care, why would anyone in their right mind ever vote for you again?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, because they know that this government has a solid plan to reduce wait times for hips, to reduce wait times for radiation oncologist visits, to reduce wait times for cataract surgery, to open literally thousands more beds to help, to hire more doctors, to hire more nurses and fix some of the problems that are there. That's what we're doing.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

### Emergency Medical Services

**Dr. Sherman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For years multiple presidents of the Alberta Medical Association section of emergency medicine – amongst them Dr. Peter Kwan, Dr. Paul Parks, and myself – have written to this government and to this Premier pleading for urgent action on access to emergency services. This Premier replied on February 23, 2008, that our “Progressive Conservative government will work directly with emergency physicians to establish, implement and monitor appropriate benchmarks and standards for emergency services on a province-wide basis.” I understand this is actually question period and not answer period, but let's try to get answers here. Why did . . .

**The Speaker:** I'm sorry, sir. Somebody is going to respond. If it is the Premier, he is recognized now.

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is referring to a document that was a letter that was sent to the doctors. This was during the election, and they wrote letters to all of the parties that had candidates in the election. We responded. We said that we'll increase the number of seats in training colleges for physicians. We said we're going to meet a goal of training an additional 2,000 nurses by 2012. We said that we will be building additional continuing care beds, and we've done that.

**Dr. Sherman:** Again to the Premier: given that you said, “We will utilize the AMA's Emergency Medicine Position Statement, including the recommended CTAS benchmark and recommendations for overcapacity protocols, as the foundation for the review, to be completed by June 30, 2008,” why did you promise immediate action and then ignore pleas for help from Alberta's emergency doctors during multiple crises only to respond now when your leadership on health care is in crisis? When was this review completed? If not, why not?

**Mr. Stelmach:** First of all, there is no crisis in health care. There are, obviously, longer waiting times in emergency rooms. But, you know, I was just north in Falher and McLennan and Donnelly, and here were people that have raised issues saying: “You know, we need a few more ambulances. We do have additional space in continuing care. We could accept more patients. There are a number of doctors in McLennan. One will be retiring, and one will be moving to another position.” They raised those issues. Okay. So across Alberta we're trying to meet the needs of Albertans and provide equitable health care from one corner of the province to another.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Dr. Sherman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the Premier: given that many senior citizens have contacted our office, even several seniors from Lamont, Fort Saskatchewan, and Vegreville, your constituents, who have expressed disillusionment with your

government's handling of long-term care, the seniors' drug plan, and access to emergency services, what have you got to say for yourself about failing Alberta's most vulnerable citizens in their time of need, those Albertans who built this great province?

**Mr. Stelmach:** Mr. Speaker, I can stand before this Assembly and say that there is no other jurisdiction in the country of Canada that does more for seniors, whether it's in all of the programs that we have to offer, all of the health services, the number of continuing care facilities that are being built, all of the attention that's being paid to seniors. We know that we are gaining about 2,000 seniors a month. We know that's going to be a huge demographic issue to deal with. In four to five years we'll be looking at about 4,000 a month. These are serious issues, but we're also trying to focus on all of them.

2:10

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne. Edmonton-Gold Bar, you've been called.

### Canada Pension Plan

**Mr. MacDonald:** Thank you very much. I did not hear you. In 2001 in the famous firewall letter signed by the now finance minister, there was a proposal to have an Alberta agenda that included, among other things, withdrawing from the Canada pension plan and creating an Alberta pension. To the Deputy Premier: the minister of finance carries some serious baggage when it comes to the CPP, so will the Deputy Premier take charge and support expanding the CPP to assist workers by doubling their retirement benefits and enabling their employers to offer a decent pension plan so they can retire with dignity and respect?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Premier.

**Mr. Horner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, the question is more directed to our minister of finance than it is to the Deputy Premier because the minister of finance is engaged in those discussions with our federal government as we speak. Perhaps the minister would like to supplement.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Dodge.

Now, given that at this time last year the former finance minister was in favour of expanding the CPP to take advantage of the Canada pension plan's investment success and, of course, its portability, is pension reform a matter in which we can expect this government to flip-flop from year to year and from minister to minister?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see that the Liberal Party is lining up with the Canadian Labour Congress in recommending doubling pension benefits.

**Dr. Taft:** Is that enough for the working man?

**Dr. Morton:** The working man. It's a job killer, Mr. Speaker. It's a job killer. [interjections] Every economist will tell you that if you want to create jobs in a recession, which is what a recession needs, more jobs, you don't raise payroll taxes.

**The Speaker:** I'm going to recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar if we can sort of just quiet down his benchmate. So if you could just put your arm on his shoulder – okay? – and proceed.

**Mr. MacDonald:** Okay.

What an elitist answer.

To the Treasury Board president. Given that the minister of finance has claimed that unemployment is high and even a modest increase in CPP premiums will kill jobs at the same time as we have the minister of labour, who has repeatedly said that job figures for Alberta are good and getting better, can the Treasury Board president tell us where this government really stands? Does this government want to allow workers to retire with dignity and respect, or do you want them living on baloney and bread?

**Mr. Snelgrove:** Mr. Speaker, not only do we want them to be able to retire with dignity and respect; we want them to retire very financially comfortable. Isn't it amazing the bleak picture that they want to present? They don't even really seem concerned about getting Albertans to work. They're worried about their retirement. We're putting the province to work. We're leading the country in economic growth and jobs, well-paying jobs, where people have the individual opportunity to invest in themselves, in this province and to look after themselves in the future.

#### Small-business Tax

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Well, following on the theme of getting Albertans to work, Alberta has long claimed to have the lowest taxes in Canada. Manitoba now has followed on a plan to cut their small-business tax to zero. This is great news for that province. My question is to the minister of finance. Would lowering these taxes increase our competitiveness and reduce the tax burden on small businesses in this province? Will Alberta follow suit?

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, it's, indeed, good news for Manitoba, and I extend my congratulations to Minister Wowchuk there, the Minister of Finance in an NDP government. It may be a teaching moment for the Member for Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood that lowering taxes actually creates jobs. I guess the Liberal Party could learn that, too. But I would remind everybody that when you take all taxes into consideration, Alberta still has the lowest taxes on small business.

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Again to the same minister. Manitoba is a recipient of equalization and other federal transfers. By reducing the revenues, will they get more?

**Dr. Morton:** The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is no. Equalization is based on a formula based on tax capacity, not the actual dollar value of taxes paid but on the tax base. In fact, by lowering the business tax, Manitoba's tax base should actually grow over the next few years and thus shrink its equalization payments. It'll create more jobs, which these people don't seem to understand.

**Mr. VanderBurg:** Well, then, to the same minister. If Alberta reduced its revenues by reducing its small business tax, would Albertans get equal treatment on federal transfers, including the Canada health transfer act? I think you need to work a little harder on that, Minister.

**Dr. Morton:** Mr. Speaker, again the answer is no, which demonstrates the absurdity and the illogical character of the equalization programs. It punishes responsible jurisdictions that keep taxes low and attract investment. It rewards jurisdictions with high taxes. It pays people to stay where there's unemployment. That's why we're going to put this issue on the next agenda of the federal-provincial ministers' meeting.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Varsity, not the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview. I know. You're so enthusiastic I'll gladly give you a spot.

**Dr. Taft:** I love it in here, Mr. Speaker. I am enthused.

**The Speaker:** You love it in here. Okay. I can give you this spot to question and replace Calgary-Varsity because you're chomping at the bit.

#### Parks Legislation

**Mr. Chase:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans were temporarily relieved last week when the parks minister acknowledged that more public collaboration was necessary on Bill 29 prior to its spring 2011 resurfacing. Two recurring faults of the bill were that it failed to recognize the primacy of preserving ecological reserves and wilderness areas over recreational parks and that it attempted to pre-empt public legislation by moving governance into ministerial regulation. To the minister: will your reintroduced bill enshrine this publicly demanded primacy in legislation?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mrs. Ady:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, we feel very strongly that the park legislation was heading in the right directions, but we feel like it could use a bit more work. We're back out in public consultation. I just want to go on record as saying that with the plan for parks and the legislation that we're proposing, really, not one inch of Alberta parks would have been less protected, but we recognize that there needs to be further reassurance of that. We're looking at some methods for that.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Chase:** Thank you. There has to be a differentiation for ecological reserves and wilderness areas, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister commit to grandfathering established park protection precedents in legislation rather than moving them into ministerial discretionary regulation?

**Mrs. Ady:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we're considering a few different options at this time, so I can't comment specifically. But we have been listening. We're working on this at this point in time. I think that when the hon. member sees us bring it back in the spring, he'll see some relief in this area.

**Mr. Chase:** Heaven be praised. Rather than limiting consultation to online surveys, will the minister commit to holding a series of well-advertised public hearings throughout the province prior to reintroducing a parks act in the spring?

**Mrs. Ady:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we've been in three years of consultation. Is there more that can be done? Always. We're looking at different methodologies of doing that, but I will say that when we ask Albertans how they want to be consulted, their number one way is online. They're busy. They have busy lives, and they want to make sure that they have input as well.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

#### Educational Outcomes of Children and Youth in Care

**Mr. Vandermeer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this afternoon are to the Minister of Children and Youth Services and

also the Minister of Education. Children and youth in care are a particularly vulnerable group of students who often have extraordinary needs due to their life circumstances. Significantly more children and youth in care drop out of school, do poorly on achievement tests, fall farther behind in school as they get older, and are less likely to graduate from high school compared to students in the general population. To the Minister of Children and Youth Services: what is your ministry doing to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in care?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mrs. Fritz:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the member. It is critically important that we assist our children and youth with the challenges they may face in school. Success in School for Children and Youth in Care, the provincial protocol framework, is a joint initiative between the Minister of Education and this ministry, and it requires that our caseworkers, our caregivers, our educators, children and youth themselves develop a plan that will assist them with becoming successful with their achievement tests and ultimately with graduating from high school.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Vandermeer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister. I'm very encouraged to hear about what this new educational framework is hoping to accomplish. Is there any evidence to show that this new approach will make a tangible difference in improving educational success for children and youth in care?

2:20

**Mrs. Fritz:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the protocol was based on stakeholder consultation. It was based on a review of research, current leading practices. There were four demonstration sites across the province, and the valuable information that came back to us, hon. member, shows that it does strengthen relationships for our children in care along with, as I said, the caseworkers and caregivers, educators, other professionals. We are planning to implement that protocol framework program across the province over the next three years.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Vandermeer:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Education. There are a number of stakeholders who have the role of playing champions to this initiative for implementing the provincial protocol framework, including Alberta Foster Parent Association, Alberta Teachers' Association, and Alberta School Boards Association. Will you commit that you will keep these people that are closest to them involved in moving forward?

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, the collaboration that we have in this particular project has been exemplary, and we absolutely need to continue that collaboration, continue to involve the people who are actively engaged in the front lines, including foster parents, including teachers and schools. This has been particularly successful for schools because in the past it's been difficult to share appropriately the information that's necessary to ensure student success. Now under this protocol framework our teachers in schools are working collaboratively with social services, with health units, with others in the community to make sure that those students have every chance to be successful.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by the hon. Member for Highwood.

### Arts Funding

**Ms Blakeman:** Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. What is the difference between Mile Zero Dance and Orchesis modern dance? Answer: the minister of culture will continue to fund Mile Zero but not Orchesis, which is affiliated with the university. Arts funding in Alberta is no longer about whether you're an artist but about with whom you associate or under whose roof you perform. My question is to the minister of culture. Does the minister not understand that cutting arts grants to artists in municipalities, universities, schools, and cultural industries is cutting funding to artists?

**Mr. Blackett:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I stood up here in the House the other day and talked about the fact that there were no plans for reductions to the artists and education program. However, we are in reality in the government of Alberta facing a \$5 billion deficit. That's real money. We've made a commitment to health care. We've made a commitment to education. We all have to look at being fiscally responsible and take our medicine. That means not everybody gets to have the same programs year after year that they've enjoyed in the past. We all have to tighten our belts. The arts community, along with everybody else in our department, is going to have to share that burden.

**Ms Blakeman:** Yeah, but not along with everybody else in this government, so back to the same minister. Let's get some clarity. An e-mail from your director of arts development says, "As of April 1, 2011, the AFA will discontinue the Artists and Education program," and "No new grant stream will be put in place to replace [it] or the old Educational Touring grant programs." But Tuesday we hear this same director saying that they won't cut the program until 2012. The ministry has done this flip-flop before in other sectors, so what gives, Mr. Minister? In, out? Yes, no?

**Mr. Blackett:** Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Edmonton-Centre should know, the directives come from the minister of the department, not from the director of the department. That directive had not come through me, was not issued through me. When I saw it, I said that we will not go forward with that. That's where it ends. That's what it is today.

**Ms Blakeman:** The minister is telling me that he doesn't even know what's going on in his own department. Okay.

Well, back to the same minister. Given that this minister has been on a rampage of cuts through the community series grants, artists and education, cultural industries, and grants affiliated with universities, that directly affect artists' ability to make a living in Alberta, why does the minister believe that other grant programs, unspecified, will cover artists who are cut off when no new money has been added to the department or to AFA?

**Mr. Blackett:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is absolutely ridiculous. AFA has received a 55 per cent increase in funding since 2005. Look at other provinces across the country: B.C., reduction of 25 per cent; Saskatchewan, a reduction of 7 per cent; Quebec, a reduction of 7 per cent. We're paying 8 and a half billion dollars for their arts and all their other funding. Ontario, who is ready to rock to the bottom, no reduction. We are a fiscally responsible government, we will do things in a prudent manner, and our artists are very well taken care of.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** I love December. There's enthusiasm. We're 24 nights away from Christmas, and we're starting to exude it here this afternoon.

The hon. Member for Highwood, followed by the hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere.

### Okotoks Water Licence

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now for some elderly calmness. The town of Okotoks is facing the most important water challenge of any town in Alberta. Development is on hold as the town grapples with finding additional water in a closed basin. The Minister of Environment has consistently indicated that safe, secure drinking water is of paramount importance. If this is the case, why has the minister allowed Okotoks to find itself in such a strained situation?

**Mr. Renner:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm very much aware of the unique circumstances surrounding the town of Okotoks. In fact, just last week this member and I met with the mayor, council, and administration to explore alternatives to deal with their situation. They have a very unique situation in Okotoks in that, unlike most municipalities, they have relied on very shallow wells to service the needs of the town. They are exemplary in their water conservation, and they have not applied for licences that they don't need.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member, please.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same minister. The town of Okotoks has two water transfer applications before Alberta Environment requesting a net diversion licence. Since the town historically returns 80 per cent of the water taken, a net diversion licence would essentially triple the amount of water that these licences would provide. The town is waiting. The development is waiting. When can we expect a decision?

**Mr. Renner:** Well, Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear to this member and to all members of the House: the minister does not make such decisions, nor should the minister be making those decisions. I have however been advised by the department that we do expect a decision to be made fairly quickly. The issue of the net diversion is problematic. While it's true that municipalities return water, it's in an inconsistent way, and it doesn't necessarily meet the needs of the river system.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Groeneveld:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again to the same minister. Okotoks is Alberta's fastest growing community in a region experiencing incredible growth. What is the Minister of Environment doing to ensure a long-term water supply strategy for the town of Okotoks?

**Mr. Renner:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the applications that are currently before our department are a short-term solution, and I really do hope that decisions are made shortly. In the long term – these are, in fact, short terms – I believe very strongly in the concept of a regional water system, and that regional water system is already under way in the Calgary region. I would encourage the town and I would encourage the Calgary Regional Partnership to proceed with a regional water delivery system.

### Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark

**Mr. Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, today I'd like some answers from the minister of health. Last week the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark was not the subject of a demand by the College of Physicians and Surgeons for a psychiatric examination. This week he is. This request by the college occurred right after the president of the AMA was contacted by the parliamentary assistant of health regarding the health of the good doctor. This is inappropriate. I don't care what the intent was or wasn't. It was wrong on many different legal and ethical levels, in my opinion. To the minister of health: will he ask the parliamentary assistant to apologize to the member?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, I believe this issue has been clarified sufficiently already.

Thank you.

**Mr. Anderson:** No, it hasn't.

Albertans are tired of the culture of fear and intimidation. We want accountability now. The doctor has been smeared, and I find it beyond belief that a former EA to a health minister, someone who's been around government for years, doesn't understand the inappropriateness and the conflict of interest so obvious to everyone else but him of calling the head of the bargaining unit for doctors, the AMA, in the middle of the night to share his concerns about the mental state of the doctor from Edmonton-Meadowlark. Minister, do you not see the obvious conflict of interest and inappropriateness of that phone call?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, I was not involved in that, and I believe the issue has been clarified.

Thank you.

**Mr. Anderson:** One last time, Mr. Speaker. Many of us have had conversations with multiple members of the media and others that have told us that there is a whisper campaign coming out of this government that the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark is unstable. This is unacceptable in a free and democratic society. I'd like a promise from this minister that he will personally, if he is truly a friend of this doctor, investigate the origin of that whisper campaign, put an end to it, and have whoever was involved beg for the forgiveness of the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark. Will he undertake that investigation?

2:30

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, I don't know of any whisper campaign. I don't believe there is any evidence to that effect whatsoever. As I say, the issue has been dealt with. Let's move on and get on with the improvements to health care that people want.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-North Hill.

### Mineral Development in the Eastern Slopes

**Mr. Hehr:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since 2002 residents near the Livingstone Range have been fighting against proposals for a heavy magnetic ore quarry. This spectacular, untouched piece of the eastern slopes is home to countless species, including elk, bighorn sheep, moose, and golden eagles. Any thought of development there should not even be considered. To the Minister of Sustainable Resource Development: given that this same company has been

applying to develop this quarry for the last eight years with no success, why would the minister consider it at this time?

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Speaker, the quarry in question has been under review for some time, and we believe that the process going forward would allow for proper exploitation of that resource. It's a required resource in the region.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, Mr. Speaker, how can the minister consider approving any development in this region when the land-use framework's regional plan, which is meant to determine the sustainable level of development, has not been completed?

**Mr. Knight:** Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I have addressed that situation a number of times in the House. The fact of the matter is that as we develop the land-use framework across the province of Alberta, which includes seven plans in seven different regions, you can't stop the province and hold it in abeyance and wait for the plans. We need to continue the development, and the plans will fall into place, and the developments will of course fit into the plans as they're developed.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we've been waiting years for the land-use framework, and it appears that we're going to wait even longer. Will the minister commit to a moratorium on the development in the eastern slopes?

**Mr. Knight:** Mr. Speaker, the short answer to that is no. There are ongoing opportunities for development in the eastern slopes, and that, again, will continue. There are, of course, a number of regional plans in place, smaller ones that do protect certain areas in the eastern slopes now. We will respect those. But development will continue.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-North Hill, followed by the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

#### Primary Care Networks

**Mr. Fawcett:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health and Wellness recently released a five-year action plan on health. In there it highlights the importance of primary care networks for the access to and improvement of health care in this province. This really excites my constituents. My questions are to the Minister of Health and Wellness. Can you tell this House and my constituents exactly what role the primary care networks will have in health care in moving the system forward?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, the short answer is that primary care networks will be, I'm sure, for a long time a critical part, a very fundamental part of our health system moving forward. We have 38 of them right now. That involves more than 2,200 family physicians. That includes more than 2.5 million Albertans. Going forward, we'll be adding about 100,000 more per year until all Albertans have access to primary care team members within days, not weeks.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Fawcett:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is good news, and again my constituents certainly support this, but they're having a difficult time seeing the impact right now to their health care services. Are there any barriers that are currently inhibiting this

crucial self-organization of health care professionals and innovation in primary care networks that would benefit my constituents and all Albertans moving forward?

**Mr. Zwozdesky:** Mr. Speaker, if there are any barriers, they may be related to workforce recruitment, workforce retention. They could be related to scope of practice. They could be related to location. There could be a number of factors there that are being looked at. That's why our five-year health action plan has made a strong commitment to further expand our PCN network, to fine-tune it, to also look at innovation within it, and to help ensure that people across this province do have access to primary care in a much more fastidious and effective manner.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-Fort.\*

#### Southern Alberta Flood Disaster Relief

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the last three years the Ministry of Municipal Affairs has spent \$41.5 million paying consultants. Perhaps I'm in the wrong business. With no public accountability flood victims in southern Alberta are still waiting for claims to be resolved. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Albertans have been promised transparency. When will the minister make the LandLink contract public?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, the RFP process has certainly been public, and the contract is for considerably less money than what the hon. member is talking about. Over the next five years the contract stipulates that they would get paid, if they are working, \$20 million. But we've got some positive news in the fact that about 94 per cent of all of the residential claims have been resolved. You know, we are open to doing reviews as required.

**Ms Pastoor:** Can the minister say when the last applicants will actually receive their support?

**The Speaker:** The hon. minister.

**Mr. Goudreau:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, for the last 6 per cent of the residential applications, a lot of them are from the fact or on the basis that we're still awaiting some additional information from them. You know, some of the files are extremely complicated as well because there are a number of other agencies that are providing support to the applicants, and we are sorting those out. We even expect that in the spring some individuals may realize that they had not submitted certain parts of a claim or realize that they've experienced broader damage than in the past. We are open to accepting additional claims at that particular time.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Ms Pastoor:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the victims were displaced from last June and that Christmas is three weeks away, what is an acceptable time frame for this resolution?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, that's a very, very good question. For those who were displaced, we are working with them directly. We're in touch with them on a day-by-day basis, virtually, and we want to ensure that what they qualify for under the guidelines, they get. You know, suffice it to say that we're still accountable to our taxpayers, and we have to follow some of the federal guidelines in all of this as well.

\*See page 1751, right column, paragraph 10

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Fort, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

### Workers' Compensation Payment Deductions

**Mr. Cao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government's priority is in safety and accident prevention for workers, but unfortunately work-related accidents do happen. From my constituency office I learned that two injured workers received similar provincial WCB payments and similar federal CPP disability payments. One is allowed to keep both, and the other got CPP disability deducted from his WCB compensation. My question is to the hon. Minister of Employment and Immigration. On what grounds does WCB deduct federal CPP disability payments?

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it's impossible for me to comment on specific files that I haven't had an opportunity to even take a look at, but I can tell you that the Workers' Compensation Board is an insurance system paid for wholly by employers of Alberta. CPP, on the other hand, is a federal program to which employees and employers contribute 50-50. Those are two independent programs, but maybe I can comment on policy in a subsequent question.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Cao:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, WCB is a provincial insurance program paid by employers to cover injured workers, and CPP is a federal pension program paid by workers. These are two independent programs. My question to the hon. minister: why does WCB tie the provincial WCB compensation to the federal CPP payment?

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Mr. Speaker, that is not correct. Since, I believe, 1996 the WCB does not deduct any payments from CPP. As a matter of fact, it considers itself the first payer, so no deductions have been made since 1996 to workers' CPP payments.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Cao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Injured workers are most concerned about their disability and deeply worried about their meagre income after the injury. The question is to the hon. minister. Are you going to look into this situation and rectify the unfair WCB payment deduction in some way?

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** Mr. Speaker, definitely, my answer to this member would be the same as it would be to any Member of this Legislative Assembly. If you have any files that require consideration, there is an appeal process built into WCB with an independent Appeals Commission, but if there are any issues of policy that need to be looked at, please make it known to myself. There is an independent board of governors, that is made up of employers and employees, that makes policies for WCB, and I'm sure we can direct them to take a look at this policy.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

2:40

### Home Inspections

**Mr. Kang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the '90s the Conservative government gave municipalities power over home inspections, but if a municipality isn't doing its job, the Minister of Municipal Affairs can take action under the Safety Codes Act. My question is

to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Why is the minister refusing to look into cases where residents are being taken to the cleaners because shoddy construction was not found during municipal inspections?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, that's a very, very good question. No doubt, over the last couple of years – and, really, some of the concerns go back as far as 2003 – a survey found that a small number of homes were built to code and that those homes built, for instance, with stucco were actually built to code. In the last few years it was our department – I've indicated that before – that initiated some of the studies. We're certainly looking at a range of solutions to this member's concerns.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Kang:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister again: how are the municipal inspectors supposed to do their job when the government report found that they spend half of their time in courts against shoddy builders?

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, we are providing additional training and support to the inspectors, and we are working very, very closely with those municipalities that have the authority to hire inspectors to do the actual inspections themselves. There's no doubt that over the last year or so here, with the issues being brought up, the construction industry has been paying a tremendous amount more attention than they have in the past.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member.

**Mr. Kang:** Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that finally something has started to happen.

To the minister again: how can the minister allow another sitting of this Legislature to go by without any action for home and condo owners on those shoddy builders? We should have some kind of protection.

**Mr. Goudreau:** Mr. Speaker, we continue to look at the particular issues, and we are working at solutions to help Albertans have confidence in the construction of their homes. There have been a number of solutions that we're looking at to help improve both the accountability of the construction industry and to help protect the actual homeowners themselves.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, in my rush to hear the question of the hon. Member for Lethbridge-East, I denied the hon. Member for Calgary-North Hill his third question, which I will now provide an opportunity for.\*

### Primary Care Networks

*(continued)*

**Mr. Fawcett:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess that in the minister's answer to my second question he indicated a number of barriers that exist to PCNs. What is the plan to break down these barriers so that PCNs can flourish in Alberta for the benefit of patients?

**Mr. Zwodzesky:** Well, Mr. Speaker, the short answer is that there will be more people recruited, more physicians recruited. There will be more nurses recruited. We're looking at expanding the role of pharmacists, for example. There will likely be a greater role for nurse practitioners and so on. There are a number of actions that

\*See page 1750, right column, paragraph 3

will come about now because of the five-year action plan, that I announced yesterday. There will be performance measures to track all of that, and a significant amount of money will go towards PCNs. We're spending about \$1.7 million per hour on health care in this province, and some of that, obviously a large portion of it, will go to help address some of the issues you've raised. It's a very good question that you raised, so please take it back to your constituents that they have a commitment that will be expanding in that regard.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, that was 18 members who were recognized today, 108 questions and responses.

**Statement by the Speaker  
Introduction of Constituency Staff  
Hansard Transcript of All-night Sitting**

**The Speaker:** I've placed on all members' desks a memo with respect to House introductions tomorrow. Because of the large number of constituency staff who will be here, I think it probably would be most effective and efficient if one introduction on behalf of all those is provided from the chair because otherwise we'll be into two hours' worth of introductions.

I would like to draw your attention to something else that might be of historical value to some of you, and that is the *Hansard* of Wednesday evening, November 24, 2010, issue 47, which is 132 pages long. This is the thickest *Hansard* in the history of Alberta going back to 1905. It is, in fact, 24 pages longer than the December 4-5, 2007, issue. You can all take it home. Multiple copies are available for your grandchildren and the like.

When there's great attendance in the House, I'd like to call on the Deputy Speaker to make a special presentation to the pages.

**Page Recognition**

**Mr. Cao:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hon. members, each day of the session we are served by the tireless efforts of our pages. Daily they show patience and understanding of our demanding work in the Assembly. As the Assembly we would like to give each page a Christmas and New Year's gift to say thank you and to wish each and every one a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. One of the pleasant tasks of the Deputy Speaker is to present these gifts to the pages. These gifts are from the personal contributions of each member of the Assembly. I would like to ask Sydney to come and receive her gift and to help distribute the gifts to the other pages. I would like to ask all members to join me in showing appreciation to our pages. [Standing ovation]

**The Speaker:** Thank you.

In a few seconds from now we'll continue with the Routine.

**Members' Statements  
(continued)**

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Mackay.

**International Child Protection Initiatives**

**Ms Woo-Paw:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the spring of 2010 South Africa's government initiated a project to strengthen and improve child protection services. The project was supported by the United Nations and the Canadian International Development Agency, and Alberta was there and contributing. Graduate student Brianna Strumm commenced a 13-week internship with South Africa's Ministry of Social Development last summer to complete her advanced master's of social work degree at the University of

Calgary. Brianna worked to compile child protection research from around the world so that best practices can be applied in South Africa.

Back here in Alberta, Mr. Speaker, the University of Calgary offers the only international social work master's program in Canada. Instructing this unique class is Dr. Lorne Jaques, who strives to achieve integrity in his students' experiences. International Social Service Canada also played a role in Brianna's internship. Dick Chamney, another Albertan, is president of ISS Canada, and he made the South African connections that brought Brianna's internship to fruition.

International Social Service is an NGO headquartered in Geneva. Its focus is children and families in distress related to crossing international borders. ISS serves 50,000 people a year in 120 countries through a network of branches, bureaus, and correspondents. ISS Canada handled 250 cases last year, 53 for Alberta children's authorities. Almost all Alberta cases dealt with child welfare or child protection. Alberta cases in 2010 will exceed 60.

In May 2012 ISS International Council members from all continents will gather at beautiful Banff to pursue greater global collaboration supporting children and families at risk. Alberta is a global energy leader and has world renowned expertise in sectors like agriculture and health sciences. We can be proud to add that Alberta is also a leader on the world stage of child protection and social development, and Albertans like Brianna are on the front lines.

Thank you.

**Absence of Democracy in Alberta**

**Mr. Anderson:** Mr. Speaker, these are very dark days for our democracy: an emergency room doctor kicked out of the government caucus for standing up for the sick and dying; that follows the ejection of the Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo for defending the interests of his senior constituents; smear campaigns initiated by this government about the reputations, health, and state of mind of political opponents; this House shut down by the government without opposition members even given time to speak or voice their final dissenting arguments on important bills; our Wildrose caucus of four intimidated and censored repeatedly by those who should be protecting our rights; our leader, Danielle Smith, being the only human on the planet that we are not able to quote as supposed free members of this Legislature; members of our political party fired and bullied for being a part of the resistance.

**2:50**

I ask the Assembly as we move forward, each and every one of us, to look in the mirror and decide: are we supporting this culture of fear and intimidation, or are we fighting against it? I give my thanks to the New Democrats, Liberals, and independents for courageously defending our democracy at every turn and defending the rights of those they disagree with politically. You are statesmen and -women of the highest calibre.

As I lay awake in bed at 1 this morning, for the first time I felt some fear creep in, fear of the powerful people who despise me and would like to find a way to silence me or tarnish my reputation. But know this: I will not be held silent. The Wildrose will not be held silent. We will fight every bully tactic and smear, every inch of injustice, and we know Albertans will support us and other opposition parties as we do. The night is darkest just before the dawn, and the dawn is coming.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.



### Emergency Medical Services

**Dr. Sherman:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday democracy was given a time limit. The voices of elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta were silenced in order to attend Christmas parties while we discuss the most important issue in one of the shortest legislative sessions in history. Albertans were told by the government: “Trust us. We know what we’re doing. We don’t need to talk about it in the House.”

Trust, Mr. Speaker, is freely given. But once it is betrayed, trust is difficult to earn back. Albertans elect members to this Assembly to represent their hopes, to speak the truth, and to defend their causes. They are given the sacred charge of serving the public good, not their own political party’s interest. The Old Bailey courthouse in London, England, has these words inscribed on its walls: “The welfare of the people is supreme.”

I can think of no other place in this great province where Albertans’ welfare is more in peril than in the emergency departments and the waiting rooms of this province. Our so-called leaders say, “It’s not a crisis; it’s not a crisis,” yet our trusted and dedicated front-line health care workers cry for help, while facing a potential catastrophic collapse. Who can Albertans trust? Who can they turn to to speak the truth and defend the public good when the Premier broke his promise to the emergency doctors, to the vulnerable seniors, and to all Albertans who seek care?

In the last two weeks we witnessed elected members from all political allegiances on this side of the House put aside their differences to work together on the most important issue facing this province and nation, the delivery of health care. Not so on the other side of the House, where we saw dogged adherence to political ideology winning out over common sense.

Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful and optimistic. I’m hopeful that our new CEO of Alberta Health Services, Dr. Chris Eagle, has the expertise and leadership to re-engineer the health system. I am hopeful that the front-line staff, the dedicated staff will continue to go above and beyond their call of duty. Finally, I am hopeful because I know that Albertans are not easily duped and will follow their conscience when selecting. . . . [Dr. Sherman’s speaking time expired]

**The Speaker:** Thank you, hon. member.

### Notices of Motions

**Mr. Mason:** Mr. Speaker, I’m rising to give oral notice of a motion for the introduction of Bill 223, the Health Statutes (Canada Health Act Reaffirmation) Amendment Act, 2010.

Thank you.

### Introduction of Bills

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

#### Bill 220

#### Tailings Ponds Reclamation Statutes Amendment Act, 2010

**Ms Blakeman:** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As a member of the Official Opposition you don’t get to do this very often, so I’m very pleased to be requesting leave to introduce a bill, being the Tailings Ponds Reclamation Statutes Amendment Act, 2010. It is Bill 220.

Mr. Speaker, tailings ponds are the centre of our international environmental black eye. As an Albertan and as a legislator I really want to see some concrete steps taken to stop creating tailings ponds

and to eliminate those that we have. I think those steps include some very direct action around transparency and accountability.

Part of what Bill 220, the Tailings Ponds Reclamation Statutes Amendment Act, 2010, is looking to do is to create a reporting requirement around ERCB directive 074, which would cover an instance of an operator failing to meet the reduction that is stipulated in directive 074; any example where a project has significant changes to the overall tailings management plan, whether or not this requires an amendment to a previous approval; any amendment that has been granted by the board to a plan for a dedicated disposal area, an overall tailings management plan, or an annual tailings management plan, and the reasons for granting that amendment; and any instance where an operator has failed to meet or submit an annual tailings pond management plan.

As part of that I think it’s very important that this report, when completed, should be completed no later than a set date; I happen to have chosen September 30. The annual report must be presented to the minister, who then must table it in the Assembly, and that makes it available to all Albertans who want to be able to check what’s happened there.

Further, in the act I’m seeking a section that would disallow any amendment or repeal of directive 074 unless this is very well publicized, and I’ve set out a number of steps that they could go through that. Actually, I’ve used some of the government examples around consultation, so I’m sure they’ll be very accepting of it. This amendment would be publicized, and it would include a public consultation process that could be followed. Again, the information would be submitted in a report, the report would go to the minister, and the minister would table it in the Assembly.

In addition, any noncompliance would be noted, especially if that noncompliance is related to the phase-in sequence of reduction in fluid tailings or the overall tailings management plan by an operator. The board would not allow an amendment or a change in any of that unless they can demonstrate extraordinary circumstances. I would argue that some of what we’ve seen thus far would not have fit under that definition. Notwithstanding anything else, any information that is submitted by an officer around compliance issues with directive 074 may be made publicly available.

I’m pretty excited about this as you can tell, Mr. Speaker. I’m very glad to get the opportunity to ask for first reading of Bill 220. I look forward to everyone having their own printed copy in their hand so that they can go out and talk to their constituents about it. Gee, I’m hoping we won’t adjourn tomorrow and I’ll have plenty of time to debate it in this Assembly before Christmas.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 220 read a first time]

### Tabling Returns and Reports

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Service Alberta.

**Mrs. Klimchuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I’m pleased to table five copies of the 2009-10 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy annual report. This is the 15th annual report on the operation of this act. The report summarizes the activities related to the FOIP Act and outlines significant accomplishments for the 2009-10 fiscal year. The report includes statistics, showing the number of requests made to the Alberta government and local public bodies and the response times. Alberta’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act came into effect in 1995. Since then provincial government bodies have responded to 34,600 requests for information.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make two tablings, please. The first is the appropriate number of copies of a petition urging the government to "include Complex Decongestive Therapy in the list of accepted therapeutic procedures covered by Alberta Health Care." CDT is an effective means to manage lymphedema, which is a progressive disorder. The petition has 201 signatures.

The second tabling is the appropriate number of copies of 190 letters signed by Albertans concerned about proposed changes to our health care laws. They ask that the government instead consider ways of strengthening the public health care system such as pharmaceutical reforms, primary care reforms, and more prevention and promotion. These letters were received prior to the news coming out earlier this week.

Thank you.

3:00

**The Speaker:** Under Standing Order 7(7) at 3 o'clock I must advise the Assembly.

That being the case, then, before we go to Orders of the Day we must deal with a point of order. The Government House Leader.

### Point of Order

#### Members' Statements

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rose on a point of order during Members' Statements, which I admit is most unusual. In fact, in our practice we normally don't rise on points of order under Members' Statements, but it is allowable under *Beauchesne's*, and I'll provide citations. I rise under 23(j), "uses abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder," and also under *Beauchesne's* 374: "Pursuant to Standing Order 31" – that's of the federal House – "Members other than Ministers may make . . . statements . . . The Speaker may cut off individual statements if improper use is made of the Standing Order."

Mr. Speaker, members' statements are a wonderful instrument in this House. It's an opportunity for members of the House, private members of the House who come and serve their constituents to bring forward issues of constituent concern, to raise issues of policy and then make a two-minute statement. Our normal practice and our agreement since we instituted these in the House pursuant to a House leaders' agreement a number of years ago is that they would be an unfettered opportunity for people to make statements about things. We've had wide utilization of that. In fact, we've had utilization that's even breached some of the provisions in *Beauchesne's*, which suggests that poetry shouldn't be allowed, but we have in fact allowed poetry.

But, Mr. Speaker, there has to be some element of legality and respect in those statements. What we heard from the hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere today were statements of fact which were allegations, which were smearing members of this House in saying that, basically, a smear campaign was done against another member. What he was doing was using an opportunity, an unfettered opportunity, to state as fact on the record of the House things which are not fact, and there's not been any evidence that those particular instances have taken place. He's had plenty of opportunity to put the evidence forward if there is any evidence, but that hasn't been put forward.

I don't at all wish to stand in the way of that member or any other member making a heartfelt, impassioned plea for any matter of public policy, any matter on representative constituents, any matter that's of public importance to Albertans. In fact, the two-minute member's statement ought to be there so private members of this House, whether opposition or on the government side, can make

exactly those statements. But, Mr. Speaker, they ought not to be used in a manner where no response is allowed or provided for, to provide for unmitigated smearing of the character of members of this House. That's, in fact, what he did today. When that hon. member suggests that all members are involved in smearing another member or raising those sorts of issues, that is inappropriate. The hon. member ought to know it. He talks about morals and ethics. He should use them.

**The Speaker:** On this point of order, Airdrie-Chestermere.

**Mr. Anderson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here we are again. We debated something similar, too, yesterday or the day before. I forget. It's all a blur now. I think you can see why I made the member's statement that I made. Just the fact that I can't stand in this hall without a member from that side, the hon. House leader, making a case for what I can and I cannot say – it's absolutely amazing that he can't see, in my opinion, his hypocrisy in that.

He says that I slandered all members. What's so ridiculous about that statement, Mr. Speaker, is that I clearly did not slander all members. I simply said that there is a whisper campaign. My questions today, in fact, asked the minister to find out who was involved in that smear campaign. I've repeatedly in this House, as has the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, as have multiple people on this side of the House, told of conversations that we've had with reporters. We've seen the letter from the president of the AMA, clarifying what happened that night. These things have happened. These are matters of fact.

Now, I agree our interpretations of the facts are very much different – no doubt about that – but they are interpretations of fact. We feel very strongly on this side of the House that what we are saying is true. I need to go over the text of what I said because the hon. member is saying that I've somehow smeared the members. Okay. I'll speed up, Mr. Speaker.

The one thing he specifically mentioned was that all members were slandered. This is what I said: "Smear campaigns initiated by this government." Now, government does not just include, as the good member knows, all MLAs. It includes the people that work for the MLAs. It includes the staff in the Premier's office. It includes the Public Affairs Bureau. It includes anybody in government, okay? When I say government, that's who I'm talking about. It might be MLAs. I sure hope that it's not.

I'll tell you one thing. There is a smear campaign going on right now on that good doctor, in my opinion. I think the facts point clearly to it. Whether it was MLAs, whether it's staffers for MLAs: that's the question. I still hope that the government, the House leader will look into that. I really do hope he will.

I did also refer to that I felt a little bit of fear last night over some of the, I guess, perceived enemies, the events that have happened, some of the acrimonious things that have happened. As someone in opposition you feel somewhat vulnerable. This is new to me. I've never been in opposition, obviously, and I feel somewhat vulnerable, not necessarily from individual MLAs over there, but things have been said that have made me feel very vulnerable, not so much in this House but outside this House. That's a very real fear for me.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just ask that you please protect my right to speak in a member's statement of matters of opinion and interpretation of events and not allow this hon. member to curb my ability in that regard. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Others to participate?

Hon. members, I am prepared to deal with this. This concept of Members' Statements originated out of a series of negotiations that

took place in late 1993. I happened to be the Government House Leader at the time at which negotiations were held with the House leader of the Official Opposition, Grant Mitchell. We agreed on some 100 changes made to the standing orders. This thing was implemented. We also had one-minute recognitions as well. Then over time House leaders have come together and basically said: "Well, okay. Fine. The members don't want to have the Recognitions thing. We'll go essentially to a two-minute member's statement proviso." Which we did and which we conduct today. We've even increased the numbers of them from the handful of members' statements there were to six or seven at a given time.

When I introduced this in 1993 and at subsequent times after 1997, when I was elected as Speaker, there were some principles that were enunciated. Those principles, just to repeat them: number one, that there be given as wide a latitude as possible with respect to members' statements, that members would have an opportunity to stand in the Assembly and to provide a statement in the widest possible latitude, period; number two, we would ask the Speaker never to interfere and intervene and not deal with a point of order about things that are said in a member's statement. Point number three was that members would speak on policy issues and with the highest civility and the highest decorum and not bring in personalities and personal attacks on other members.

This is not the first occasion on which members have intervened – and this has happened on both sides – and basically said: "Speaker, let's have a point of order. Tell somebody they've got to sit down. They can't deal with it." I want to respect the principles that were enunciated and that we have followed in this Assembly with respect to members' statements. I want to repeat again that there should be as wide a latitude as possible provided, that the Speaker should not deal with points arising out of members' statements, but that the members themselves have to discipline themselves with the civility and decorum that's requested and deal with policy matters and not personalities. Without that, it turns into a donnybrook, and the next day somebody else gets up and slams the person from the day before for two minutes about the irresponsible, universal condemnation of everybody and the euphoric enthusiasm to find conspiracy everywhere and that sort of thing.

We've heard the points. The Government House Leader is certainly within his rights to rise on a purported point of order and to raise the matters that he did. An opportunity was provided to the other individual, Airdrie-Chestermere, to deal with this. It seems to be a point of clarity with respect to this. Because of the tradition that we've really established in the House and the latitude given to members' statements, I will not find this as a point of order.

But, once again, I'll repeat what I've said before. Civility, decorum, respect are very important. This is not an opportunity for someone to personally attack someone else. If it is, I would strongly recommend to the members of the Assembly: eliminate Members' Statements from our Routine. I would stand up as the Speaker and say that. If it is to be negated by providing for a chaotic witch-hunting environment, that would be irresponsible. Civility, decorum, and policy, not personality, and things work.

3:10

### Orders of the Day

#### Government Motions

##### Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee

28. Mr. Hancock moved:

Be it resolved that a Select Special Ombudsman Search Committee of the Legislative Assembly be appointed consisting of the following members, namely Mr. Mitzel, chair; Mr. Lund, deputy chair; Ms Blakeman; Mr. Hinman; Mr. Lindsay; Mr.

Marz; Ms Notley; Mr. Quest; and Mr. Rogers; for the purpose of inviting applications for the position of Ombudsman and to recommend to the Assembly the applicant it considers most suitable to this position.

- (1) The chair and members of the committee shall be paid in accordance with the schedule of category A committees provided in the most current Members' Services Committee allowances order.
- (2) Reasonable disbursements by the committee for advertising, staff assistance, equipment and supplies, rent, travel, and other expenditures necessary for the effective conduct of its responsibilities shall be paid, subject to the approval of the chair.
- (3) In carrying out its responsibilities, the committee may with the concurrence of the head of the department utilize the services of members of the public service employed in that department and of the staff employed by the Assembly.
- (4) The committee may without leave of the Assembly sit during a period when the Assembly is adjourned.
- (5) When its work has been completed, the committee shall report to the Assembly if it is sitting. During a period when the Assembly is adjourned, the committee may release its report by depositing a copy with the Clerk and forwarding a copy to each member of the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to move Government Motion 28. It's, unfortunately, necessary for us to proceed with the appointment of a select special committee because of the resignation of the current Ombudsman for reasons which were outlined in a letter, which I believe you tabled yesterday. Unfortunately, I had to give notice of this earlier. I think it's important for us to move ahead. Given that the standing orders provide for the session to end tomorrow, it was important for us to move ahead quickly to put in place a committee so that the work of the committee could be done and that an Ombudsman could be in place at an appropriate time to take over the important duties and functions performed by that office for Albertans.

I would ask for support of the motion.

[Government Motion 28 carried]

#### Time Allocation on Bill 24

25. Mr. Hancock moved:

Be it resolved that when further consideration of Bill 24, Carbon Capture and Storage Statutes Amendment Act, 2010, is resumed, not more than two hours shall be allotted to any further consideration of the bill at third reading, at which time every question necessary for the disposal of the bill at this stage shall be put forthwith.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not delighted to rise to move Government Motion 25, but it is my duty to do so. I'm not going to repeat the arguments that I made in moving a similar motion yesterday. It is unfortunate that we've got to the stage in this House that we have opposition utilizing the time of the House to basically stop the business of the House and of government rather than to put forward a reasonable argument and amendments. That's what we've seen, in fact. I don't have the hours in front of me today in terms of how many hours we've spent in debate. Indeed, it may

be inappropriate, as some have pointed out, to measure the sufficiency of debate by the number of hours, so I'm not going to go there.

I would say this. When there is a clear indication to the House – and we have had that from members opposite – that the only way in which the business of the House can progress is by allocating time to the rest of the debate, then it is my duty as House leader and the person who's charged with ensuring that the business of the House gets done from the government perspective to bring forward a motion to say that with two more hours of debate we should be able to cover all of the topics that are necessary to be covered if that hasn't been covered before. All members would then be aware of the amount of time they had and can direct their remarks accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo on behalf of the Official Opposition.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the hon. House minister for that introduction. It does cause me some concern, again, that we're here today speaking on what is essentially a closure of debate in this hon. House on what is a very important bill going forward for the Alberta people.

Carbon capture and storage is one of those issues that will affect us for a long time. The government is spending quite a bit of money on this new and unproven technology and is taking on a considerable amount of liability. We see other places around the world where there have been some questions of whether this technology should be going forward. We see that in places like Germany and other places like that who are worried about the liability that's going to be undertaken and what pore spaces are actually supposed to be used for, whether CO<sub>2</sub> is actually going to be harbored underneath the earth and whether it's going to be successful to, I guess, reduce emissions going forward to combat global warming and all of those good things. It's necessary for us, looking at the importance of this bill, to give it time for us to speak on it.

It's also important for another way that I'm going to speak to this, the importance, actually, of the democratic process itself. Really, I think, if you look at it, the government has a large majority, and they can pass bills, you know, essentially when they want to. Allowing the opposition a full and fair opportunity to discuss things at various stages would be fine. I just don't think that in third reading we're getting a fair shake here. We could be spending more time in this House to allow this bill to be discussed. I think it's a heavy-handed approach that the government has taken in regard to this discussion, and I hope at some point in the future we can get on with having more debate, not less debate.

I thank you very much for the opportunity to say my piece, and we'll move on from here.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 25 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 3:18 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

For the motion:

Bhardwaj	Goudreau	Mitzel
Brown	Griffiths	Morton
Dallas	Groeneveld	Olson
Danyluk	Hancock	Quest

DeLong	Horner	Sandhu
Denis	Jablonski	Tarchuk
Doerksen	Jacobs	Vandermeer
Elniski	Leskiw	Weadick
Fawcett	Lukaszuk	Woo-Paw
Fritz	McFarland	

Against the motion:

Anderson	Hehr	Notley
Boutilier	Hinman	Pastoor
Chase	Kang	

Totals:	For – 29	Against – 8
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[Government Motion 25 carried]

### 3:30 Government Bills and Orders Committee of the Whole

[Mr. Mitzel in the chair]

**The Deputy Chair:** Hon members, I would like to call the committee to order.

#### Bill 28 Electoral Divisions Act

**The Deputy Chair:** Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to be offered with respect to this bill? May I remind everyone that we are on amendment A2 as proposed by the hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere, that amends by striking out “Calgary-Elbow” and substituting “Calgary-Preston Manning.” Also, a reminder that the limit is one hour.

The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere.

**Mr. Anderson:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Funnily enough, this is very appropriate because we're talking about renaming a riding after one of the most, I would say, important reformers of democracy in our province's and in our nation's history, possibly not the most important but definitely one of the most important.

You know, I related a story in the wee hours of the morning about Preston Manning that I'll sum up. When we invited him to come speak at an event at the law school I was attending for a group that we had made – and I think the hon. finance minister actually spoke to that same group. He wasn't in the Legislature at that time. It was the Students for a Stronger Alberta, and he was our first speaker. Then we had David Kilgour in to talk about crossing the floor over the GST issue and how he stood up for his constituents on that. Then we had the minister of finance in to talk about all kinds of different things, Senate reform and other different democratic principles that he was very involved with promoting.

We had several others, but another one was Preston Manning. When he spoke, he spoke about the need for real representative democracy. It was funny. I thought he was going to talk about Senate reform because he was kind of known for pushing that idea very hard, as were many others, but he spoke about representative democracy and the importance of an MLA representing the interests of their constituents above all else. I got to thinking about that, and it really had an effect on my life and on my perception of politics.

These two weeks for me, personally, have been a very tumultuous couple of weeks, just seeing the very problems of our democracy on a very close and personal level and how we really have let our system become something that is almost a bastardized form of democracy. It has some elements of fairness and democracy in it,

but in most cases it's not. We've fallen away from what representative democracy was meant to be.

I think of the writings of George Washington and some of the things that he said about representative democracy and how he abhorred parties and party discipline. He thought parties eventually would lead to the end of his new nation, the United States of America, the reason being that parties would take away the autonomy of an elected representative to represent his constituents before all else, that party welfare would be more important to them eventually than would the interests of their constituents. You know, that's a very serious thing, and I think we've seen that. It's not just this Legislature. It's the Parliament. It's other Legislatures. Certainly, other countries have the same issue.

I think that we do see instances where we still have that sort of representative democracy. You see that a lot more in municipal politics. You see that there are no party lines, so municipal politicians generally are responsible to their constituents only. They really do a good job, I think, generally speaking, of standing up for their constituents and what their constituents want. I'm not saying that we need the abolition of parties, but I am saying that we need to put parties in their proper place.

The proper place of a party – and I think Preston Manning would agree with this – is that it's a way to bring natural alliances together and to bring people with common causes together so that they can organize and move the agenda forward on certain key issues that are important to them. I think Preston Manning would say that parties should not be the be-all and end-all. Loyalty to party, loyalty to donors, loyalty to special interests, loyalty to lobbyists: those things shouldn't matter in the end. In a political sense, when you're talking about how someone votes, not even loyalty to friends should supersede that.

The first loyalty when you go to vote as an MLA should be: what is in the best interests of my constituents first and foremost? What is in the best interests of my constituents? What do they want? What is in their best interest? I believe our democracy right now, our system, is not about that at all. It's about supporting the party that you are a part of, and as long as those allegiances are aligned with the party, it works. When your allegiances come in conflict, it doesn't.

If there's one thing we learn from Preston Manning – and it's the reason I think we should name a riding after him – it's that loyalty to one's constituents is by far the most important thing that one should take into account when voting on a bill or when doing anything in government. I just hope that as we move forward, we can try to embody the spirit of Preston in that regard. That's why I think, again, Mr. Chair, that it would be a great idea to name this riding after Preston Manning. He understood this principle, and it's a principle that I think we should all work toward following.

I have a long biography here of Preston that I wanted to talk to you about. Maybe I'll talk a little bit more about the principles that he espoused and why I think it's important to recognize those principles that he had by naming a riding after him.

**3:40**

Over the last several weeks we've seen what happens when people are disciplined for speaking up for their constituents. It hasn't been pretty. No one can say in this House, I think, that they're happy with the way things have occurred over these last couple of weeks with regard to the doctor and, I think, even before with the Member for Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo. I know that my decision to cross the floor was based almost entirely on the fact that I felt that I could not vote with the government on a variety of issues going forward, and I felt intimidated into doing so lest I lose certain committee work

and so forth and lest I be disciplined in some manner. I didn't feel that was appropriate, and I couldn't go along with it anymore, so it opened up some of those kind of raw feelings.

At different events and things I've had the opportunity to speak with Preston and others about this and just have the counsel there, that understanding that: "Yeah; you know what? As long as it's being done, if you're doing what you're doing for your constituents, if you're doing what you're doing to remain loyal to them before anything else, then it's the right thing to do."

I feel very strongly, and, you know, it's going to be tough to reform this democracy that we have, because it's so entrenched. I'm not just talking about the governing party being around for forty years. That's not what I mean. That's part of it, but what I'm talking about is just that the whole system is entrenched. We saw that with Preston trying to change the federal system and how entrenched that was.

We're really going to have to work hard as a body here, as a group if we want to see the type of democracy that maybe he envisions and that, I think, I hope, many in here envision; that is, a democracy that puts loyalty to constituents first and foremost. It's a democracy wherein parties can work together and cosponsor bills and legislation regardless of whether they're in opposition or in the governing party, where all votes are free, unfettered, where the votes of nonconfidence in the government are separated from all pieces of legislation so that a government can't fall on a bill being voted down.

Think of the good things that could come out of that co-operation if people were free to represent their constituents, if people were able to work with members in different parties on cosponsoring legislation that they felt passionate about. It would change the whole dynamic. Of course, most legislation would still be spurred out of the Premier's office and out of his cabinet, but that would be fine. With a free vote at least you would have the ability as members to veto legislation that wasn't good. Absolutely. Those are the principles, I think, that Preston Manning espoused, the freedom to vote for one's constituents and the freedom of democracy.

One thing I loved about Preston is that he was never a bully. He was never someone that would stand up and try to bully someone into believing in his way or try to shut them up or try to shut them down. He wouldn't use any types of points of order or privilege or anything else to shut people up. He was very, very consistent, and he would always try to appeal to people's better sides, to their better angels, and try to convince them in that way as opposed to fear, intimidation, and so forth. To me, he was a true statesman in that way.

I think that it's entirely appropriate that we have the opportunity to sit here and discuss whether we should name Calgary-Elbow, part of his old constituency, falling in that constituency boundary that he used to represent, Calgary-Preston Manning, give it some meaning. Not that Calgary-Elbow is a poor name, but the feelings of democratic renewal and respect for democracy and statesmanship that are elicited in the vast majority of Albertans when you hear the name Preston Manning I think would be very well served and our democracy well served in naming this constituency after him. I'm sure he would never ask for such a thing. It would be totally beyond his character to ask for such a thing because of the humility that he has, but I think it would be a very noble thing for us to do in this House, to name this constituency after him.

Some of the other principles that Mr. Manning espoused, that I think will justify having a constituency named after him – it's just the effect he had not only on federal politics but on provincial politics. I mean, the coalition of fiscal conservatives, of kind of smaller government libertarians that he brought together became a

huge part of the government of the day, the provincial government of the day. Many great members of the PC Party during the late 1980s and 1990s came from that movement that was started, and it affected a lot of the legislation that you used to see in this Legislature.

You know, I think of the 10 per cent flat tax that Stockwell Day brought through. A lot of those ideas were brought forward and inspired by that reform movement. [interjections] I guess the hon. members opposite don't feel as highly about Mr. Day as potentially I do, or maybe they do, and I'm misinterpreting what they're saying. [interjections] Mr. Chair, do I still have the floor?

**The Deputy Chair:** You still have the floor.

The hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere has the floor.

**Mr. Anderson:** Okay. I was just checking.

I think that as we move forward, a lot of those principles were inspired by that reform movement, so a lot of our own legislation provincially was inspired by Preston Manning, maybe more so than many of the provincial politicians that were there at that time, potentially even more than former Premiers.

I think we need to not just recognize someone for their contribution as an MLA, as we have done in the past, but I think we should open that door more broadly to who the senior statesmen of Alberta are that made a huge difference in this province's history. That shouldn't just be provincial politicians; that should include federal politicians, and it should include other people that aren't politicians, depending on the contribution that they've brought. In any event, that's what I believe.

I would just say that if there's one principle that Preston Manning espoused, it was loyalty: do not misplace your loyalties. As a politician put your loyalties where they belong, and that is to the people that you serve, not to donors, not to a party, not to special interests or lobbyists but to the people that go into that booth and mark an X next to the name of a community member who they have entrusted to represent and serve and watch out for the interests of their family and of them personally.

It is that discarded principle that thousands of our countrymen have fought for and died for, millions more have lived for, and it is that principle that I believe we should be fighting to restore to its proper place in our democracy. Because of that, Mr. Chair, I think that renaming a Calgary riding that used to belong in Preston Manning's federal riding is a very appropriate way to recognize the incredible contribution of this man to our democracy, to bringing forward ideas that may have gone to the wastebasket but are now part of our society and are part of our democratic dialogue and, in fact, in the past have become policy of the government in power and in future will continue to become policy under potential future governments. I think that's something that we need to recognize.

3:50

A final point about Preston is that as much as he did belong to a party, this is a man that respected people from all party backgrounds. I think of some of his closest friends; Rick Anderson, for example, a well-known Trudeau Liberal who he brought over to be part of his group. He reached out to people beyond party lines and brought them into that reform movement. I think there is something to be said. That's the type of statesmanship I think we should reflect as well.

We've seen some of it this week. We've had the opportunity to see what it's like to work with other parties in a common cause. Some things aren't partisan, Mr. Chair, and that's what Preston, I think, really did understand, that there are some things that aren't

left or right or Conservative or Liberal or Wildrose. You know, there's just a right way and a wrong way of doing things sometimes. No party has the corner on the market of truth and good ideas.

So I think that we need to reflect. It sure would be nice to change the rules in here to reflect that principle, to be able to co-sponsor bills with different parties across party lines and to be able to work together on common causes. Wouldn't that be an exciting thing to do? I think we'd get so much more done on health care, on finance, and on all of these things.

Congratulations to Preston Manning for being such a great man.

**The Deputy Chair:** The hon. Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs.

**Mr. Denis:** Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to say thank you to the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere for his comments on this amendment and, in a broader sense, on the bill itself. I think it's grand that this member has a particular affinity towards a past leader in the country like Preston Manning. I've only met Preston a couple of times, but he has had a profound impact on our province and, indeed, upon our country.

Similarly, there are other people that we also could look at that we as politicians in this era admire. The member mentioned that some members over here don't admire Stockwell Day. I really admire Stockwell Day, and his legacy of a flat tax and the lowest tax rate in the country is still with us today. In fact, that member was at a fundraiser of mine featuring Stockwell Day in 2008. There are also local people who we admire. He has mentioned, of course, Preston Manning, but people I admire include Jason Kenney or Ric McIver, people in my particular area.

Interestingly enough, the member has mentioned that the southwest area of Calgary was represented by Preston Manning. He's quite correct, it being Calgary Southwest. Well, at the same time, provincial constituencies are usually smaller, as they are in that case, so we could also name other constituencies. The Member for Calgary-Glenmore could want to name his constituency Calgary-Preston Manning. Even part of my constituency, a small portion, is in Calgary Southwest. Just some food for thought.

In a broader sense, Mr. Chair, a review of our electoral boundaries happens every two elections, and this is necessary because the reality is that Alberta is changing. Places like Calgary, where I'm from, grow exponentially over even a short period of time. In fact, in the period in which I've been in Calgary, it has increased in population greater than the size of Regina. That's quite incredible to look at as well.

So we take this opportunity to talk about some issues raised during second reading, specifically this amendment itself. With respect to the concern of adding four electoral divisions, one of which could be named Preston Manning, I want to remind all hon. colleagues that this was a decision of this Assembly in 2009, so there's been a significant amount of time in which to consult upon this issue. By passing Bill 45, the Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 2009, this Assembly directed the commission to divide Alberta into 87 electoral divisions. Of course, this was previously 83.

Now, there are a few we've decided to rename, of course. Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley we've named after the late Grant Notley, something that I supported, someone who made a significant contribution to this province and who once sat in this Assembly. Calgary-Egmont, again, is being renamed Calgary-Acadia, and I think that reflects the modern reality. In fact, many people, Mr. Chair, would call me from the northwest part of the city, an area called Edgemont, thinking I was their MLA. This reflects the modern reality.

Calgary-Montrose has been renamed Calgary-Greenway; Calgary-North Hill – I said North Hill, not Nose Hill – has been renamed Calgary-Klein after the former Premier. We have the new Calgary-South East, and Edmonton-South West is new. Former Airdrie-Chestermere is renamed Airdrie. Chestermere-Rocky View. Fort McMurray-Conklin is one of the new constituencies, and the other new name I found was Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre. So there's nothing wrong with renaming a constituency, and we've had some spirited debate on this floor here as well.

I do want to just address the issue of the number of constituencies, one of which could be named after Mr. Manning as the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere has indicated. Canada's system of Confederation, Mr. Chair, is set up to recognize unique differences across the country. The tradition in Canada is effective representation, not absolute parity as we see south of the 49th parallel. The balancing of these interests is a delicate one. It involves examination in the depth of social history; it involves demography of communities and, really, a wide sense of criteria as well.

Now, of course, population and population density vary greatly from province to province, and each provincial government has a challenge to go and reflect that. But let's just compare ourselves to a few other provinces here. My home province of Saskatchewan has about 1.04 million people. I think it's hit a million people a few times; a few people like me keep moving out. There are 58 MLAs, so you're dealing with approximately 18,000 citizens there per MLA. Ontario has approximately 13 million residents and 107 MPPs, approximately 123,000 per MPP. Alberta, as we know, has 3.7 million residents, and we're now proposing 87 MLAs, which is about 42,000 per MLA, so we're somewhere roughly in between, Mr. Chair.

One other thing I also wanted to mention. I was just doing some quick math on this whole topic, and 1986 is the last time that the amount of MLAs was changed. In 1986, over 20 years ago, there were 2.3 million people in Alberta. So we had 83 seats then, 27,000 per MLA. In 2010 it's 3.7 million people with 87, so we're dealing with 42,000 per MLA. Even dealing with that, there are more people per MLA, including in constituencies urban and rural. That's an average. So a single benchmark like locking population to the number of residents doesn't work across the entire country, and the fact is that our country reflects that different things work differently in different parts of this nation.

Mr. Chairman, the Electoral Divisions Act is a vital tool for democratic process in this province. The province amends this every two elections, as I mentioned. Again, it reflects a modern Alberta. Albertans vote for the person they support in the area they live, and the fundamental democratic principle is that members are always aware, or should be, of the thoughts and concerns of the people living in the constituencies that we each represent. Of course, there are many ways to represent your constituents. You know, you could represent them in your caucus privately, you could advocate on their behalf through letters, you could represent them publicly.

In the past, for example, I've publicly voiced my concerns with government policy, and sometimes it has not been onside with my own government. Last year I was very outspoken about the government's response to the changing world economy. This year, fortunately, I have a chance to put this into practice in my own department. At the same time, I've also stood in this Assembly and stood against my own government's legislation. I did so earlier this year in a spirited debate on Bill 7. In both cases, though, I was not admonished publicly, I wasn't kicked out, I wasn't admonished behind closed doors or threatened with sanctions, and no one told me that the knives were out for me.

Mr. Chairman, I believe members in this House are hard working, and I believe that we all have the best interests of Albertans in mind. I'll give you an example. I think a good constituency MLA is the Member for Calgary-Buffalo. I don't agree with him on a lot of things, but he is a good constituency MLA. The same with Calgary-Glenmore. I think he works really hard in his constituency. That's just a fact. We don't agree on a lot of things, but these are two members who work hard and who put their constituents first. The difference is that we don't single out members nor do we put blame on groups of people. The best of us focus on an issue without laying blame.

[Mr. Cao in the chair]

Now, Mr. Chair, there were some comments from hon. members with respect to the composition of the Electoral Boundaries Commission. I'd like to underline that the Electoral Boundaries Commission looks at all of the names, they look at a variety and a number of factors, but the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act sets out how members of the commission are in fact chosen. Most other provinces choose their commissions in a very similar way. Indeed, I remember that when I was working in the Saskatchewan Legislature, it was done in a very similar way.

4:00

Bill 28 only addresses the placement of electoral boundaries and the names of divisions. I've dealt with some of the names before. We named divisions after certain leaders. Again, Edmonton-Decore was named after a former mayor and Leader of the Opposition from Edmonton, whom I didn't have the chance to meet. It's not about parties. We've recognized people who make contributions regardless of their partisan contribution.

The Member for Airdrie-Chestermere has spoken, again, very highly of Preston Manning, and I think very highly of him as well. At the same time, Preston Manning also was a leader who had to invoke discipline in his caucus. I recall back to May 7, 1996, when I just had finished third-year exams, when I found out that the Member for Calgary Southeast, the area that I represent now, Jan Brown, had been booted out of the party. That was where he had actually put in some discipline as well. So leaders make discipline from time to time, Mr. Chair.

I also want to address some previous comments from Edmonton-Riverview on this amendment. The Member for Edmonton-Riverview in the debate on Government Motion 26, which was related to Bill 28, expressed what I would characterize as concerns with the length of time this House has dedicated to Bill 28 and its respective amendments. The Member for Edmonton-Riverview stated – and I'm quoting from *Hansard* – that “six and a half hours is not an abuse of time.” He went on to say: “This is not a minor bill; this is a significant bill. It will affect every single member of this Assembly, and it will affect every . . . citizen of this province.”

I would agree with the member that Bill 28 is indeed a significant bill. I would also agree with his statement that the bill will affect every citizen of this province. The hon. member and I do disagree with the length of time dedicated to the development of this legislation. The time allotted to Bill 28 may not satisfy the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview; this is clear, again, from his statement from last night. However, days and months of work from Albertans across the province have been dedicated to the legislation before this House, and the Albertans who contributed to its development should be recognized. In no way do I want to besmirch the Member for Edmonton-Riverview by reading too much into his comments, but I do want to address the assumption that not enough work has been done on Bill 28, Mr. Chair.

As I and other members of this Assembly have stated, there's a long process to develop, draft, and debate legislation and amendments to expand the number of constituencies. This, again, occurred in 2009. There were public consultations throughout the entire province. After that there was a draft submitted with the names of each constituency, and then there was a final draft as well. I was once told as a junior lawyer that unless everybody is a little bit upset, you haven't done a good job. Well, no, this is not a perfect scenario, but I think that the people on the commission have done a good job with the names and with the boundaries, and I think that we should thank them for their service because I do think, Mr. Chair, that it's really a thankless job.

There was another process set out in legislation to create and appoint the Electoral Boundaries Commission. These great Albertans are selected out in the Election Act, and they go to all regions of Alberta. They solicit thoughts and concerns from Albertans on the shape and size of the electoral boundaries. I have to say that this isn't a job that I would want. The sessions and submissions were used to create the first draft of the report, which included the names of the constituencies, which led to the second report being presented in this Assembly.

This report led to a motion in this House, which included extensive and important debate. The discussion on the motion led to important constituency name changes. I dealt with some of those earlier. These changes included recognizing contributions of some great Albertans and some former political leaders. The interesting commonality between them all is not their party, not their ideology, not their particular views, Mr. Chair, but rather that they all served in this Assembly. The passage of the motion that led to debate on the bill is where we're at now in Committee of the Whole, the amendment from the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere.

Now, with respect, Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Riverview, as I mentioned earlier, had some comments, and he's raised many points throughout this process. I do believe that there have been many opportunities for members to raise relevant points regarding Bill 28. I've heard some from the opposition that I agree with, I've heard some from the government that I agree with, and vice versa. That is honestly true. As the hon. House leader has stated last night, we've heard a debate that's very lengthy, very verbose. I think that we've had some meaningful comments, but there does come a point in time when I hear from members, you know, "We're going to continue debate until it gets to closure" – there is a balance in democracy. A great man named Morris Shumiatcher once told me that there are rights and responsibilities. With the right to debate, you know, we want to be responsible in that type of debate. At the same time, I don't think that it's out of line to ask for time allocation at this juncture.

There is also a difference, of course, in people's meaning of democracy. Many people say that it's undemocratic. In a lot of cases a lot of things can be undemocratic. Similarly, you can't say something is undemocratic just because it doesn't go your way. I've been part of many losing battles in my life and some winning ones too. But you know something? That's just the nature of democracy. It's majority rules, but we also try to protect the minority against the tyranny of the majority. I do think that we have made that appropriate balance in debating this bill and in debating this amendment.

So in the interests of democracy and developing electoral boundaries that reflect a modern Alberta, we should now move forward. We should move forward through this amendment through committee and through third reading. Bill 28, Mr. Chair, reflects the commission's report as amended by the Assembly and will bring Alberta's electoral boundaries and divisions up to date with its population and its current needs. With reasonable accommodation

and also with pride we will honour two great Albertans here. Again, the difference is that these two great Albertans served in this House.

If we're going to name a riding after Preston Manning, I think we should push the federal government to do so on a federal level because he was always a federal politician. We've named Edmonton-Manning after his late father, Ernest Manning, a former Premier of this province, who sat in this Assembly for many years. At the same time, Mr. Chair, his son, as great a man as he is and as great a legacy as he leaves this province and leaves this country and his work with the Manning Centre for Building Democracy, he did not sit in this Assembly.

So I will not be voting in favour of this, but I want this House to know the great deal of reverence and the great deal of appreciation that I have for one of the great leaders of Alberta's history, Preston Manning. I do think that this is something that we should pursue on a federal basis: an Alberta riding, probably in Calgary, maybe a riding in Calgary that even overlaps the constituency that I represent. So I will not be voting in favour of this amendment, and I encourage all members to follow suit.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** The hon. Member for Calgary-*Buffalo*.

**Mr. Hehr:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I've listened with great interest to the presenters who have gone before me, and I, too, shall now make some comments on the amendment to rename one of the constituencies after Preston Manning. It is with some note that we learned that Preston Manning has been an influence on Alberta in many things, and I think that goes without my saying here.

To reiterate what the hon. Member for Airdrie-Chestermere said, he was a democrat who really espoused representing your citizenry and voting as your citizens of your constituency wanted you to vote, that type of representation. Whether it always happened or not, that is another thing, but he at least espoused that principle. I'm sure that from time to time even the Reform Party had to go away from it to enforce party discipline. I know that for the majority of time he at least espoused that principle.

I think Preston's first election was in 1993.

**An Hon. Member:** It was 1988.

**Mr. Hehr:** In 1988. Thank you very much. I'm reminded there of the history of Alberta.

I think the initial Reformers ran on not taking their pensions. I'm not sure if I'm right – and maybe someone can correct me on this – but every last one of them took their pensions.

**Mr. Anderson:** Except for Preston.

**Mr. Hehr:** Are you sure about that?

**Mr. Anderson:** Absolutely. He's the only one.

**Mr. Hehr:** Well, then, that's very good. That is one of those things. Then that is actually very good, a leader of a party who actually ran in that election on that and didn't take his pension. I'll tell you what. That's very honourable. That's actually very honourable.

I did listen to the comments from the hon. minister of housing, and he did point out the fact that most of the people we've been naming our ridings after in this House have been provincial representatives, people who have served in this hon. House. On that point we look at people who have been named before: Decore, and the



new riding of Calgary-Klein. I supported that amendment because of Premier Klein's contribution to this province. Whether you agreed with him or not, he gave up a significant portion of his life to represent us on a provincial scale. That's why I supported that change to that riding.

**4:10**

However, given that Mr. Manning was a federal politician and did not serve in this House, I am going to vote against this amendment. I'm not taking anything away from what the man did or his service to this country and his contributions to the political landscape. In my view it would be unwise for this Legislature to do that and set that precedent.

On that point, I believe it's better to have a separation between provincial electoral districts and federal electoral districts, to make it easier for people to keep track of those things. In my view, muddying the waters by naming this after a federal politician would be a disservice.

On that note, I'm going to vote against the amendment and would encourage all members of this hon. House to do the same. Thank you very much, sir.

**The Chair:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore on amendment A2.

**Mr. Hinman:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to rise and speak in favour of amendment A2. I find it almost humorous that the minister of housing would say that . . .

**The Chair:** Hon. member, I must apologize here because from my view I couldn't see the hon. member stand up. The process is: opposition, government, opposition, government.

**Mr. Hinman:** Well, I'll be brief if you recognize me.

**The Chair:** No. Now I must recognize the government side so we follow the proper process. We will recognize the hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod.

**Mr. Berger:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm grateful for the opportunity to rise today and join the debate on the amendment to Bill 28, the Electoral Divisions Act, being brought forward by the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere. Mr. Chairman, when you look at the bill, it formally accepts and implements the revised names and boundaries of Alberta's electoral divisions. The bill as it is is the combination of a long and detailed process involving extensive debate, consultation, and public hearings. Before I go on, I would like to also take time to thank the Electoral Boundaries Commission for all the work they did in laying the groundwork for this important piece of legislation.

**An Hon. Member:** You've got to be kidding.

**Mr. Berger:** After all, this groundwork was extensive. You know, we can say, "You've got to be kidding," but they were all over the province. People were consulted, and people brought forward their submissions, both verbal and written.

When we look at an amendment to put a name in there, we have to go forward and say, as has been mentioned in the past: is this name that we're putting forward more to the line of a federal constituency or riding boundary? The great things that this person, Preston Manning, did for our province were as well for the greater part of the country. I would submit, in agreement with some of the

earlier speakers, that we would be better off to lobby federally, when we come up with more ridings, that that name be given to one of those ridings. Respecting all the contributions, it was not just to the province of Alberta, but it was to all of Canada that Preston Manning has contributed and continues to contribute. I think we should honour that.

That is why I can't really agree with the amendment as offered because when we look at what was accomplished by the Electoral Boundaries Commission, it was not an easy task. The commission had the seven considerations that it had to take into account while plotting our new boundaries, and I think everyone in here probably knows what they included. One was the need for effective representation, without a doubt the most important consideration and the one entrenched in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It's not necessarily all about names, as in the amendment, but it's about the rights and the consideration of that in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Two, the need to address population density in Canada. We have a system where a vote in one area does not have to be equal to a vote in another but, instead, insists that they are not unduly disenfranchised. Once again, no mention of the name.

Three, to balance the common community interests, including Indian reserves and Métis settlements. After all, it is important that all communities be kept together. There, too, there is no mention of the names.

Four, the need to respect municipal boundaries wherever possible. Separating a municipality into several ridings could hamper the effectiveness of MLAs in meeting the needs of their communities. Once again, we're not talking about names.

Five, we recognize the challenges faced by the total number of municipalities and local authorities. After all, more municipalities mean more city councils, more school boards, and more interested parties to meet with. There again, no mention of the names.

The sixth, to work with geographical features like roads, rivers, mountain ranges, physical barriers, which are clear guidelines for electoral divisions. Once again, we are not speaking about the names. [interjection] Yes, there are mountains that we could name.

Seven, strive towards clear boundaries whenever possible. This reduces confusion. Names, I would submit, do definitely reduce confusion, and people get used to the names, and we do have to rename new ones and such things, but right now, as we speak to this, in those seven pieces there is no mention specifically of names or this amendment.

Now, if you look at the commission, it's remarkable that they were able to balance all of these often conflicting criteria. Without a doubt one of the greatest challenges faced by the commission was population growth. That was the whole purpose of this, not a name. Mr. Chairman, we all know Alberta has seen tremendous growth in recent years. We are, after all, a beacon of economic promise and prosperity, and Alberta offers a level of freedom not found in most places in the world. It offers a level of economic prosperity not found in most places in Canada. That's talking about the whole province, not the name of any one single constituency.

As a result of this, we have seen a huge influx of people coming to our province. However, this growth has not been consistent and even throughout the province. Without a doubt the largest growth has been in Edmonton, Calgary, and the central Alberta corridor. We don't change the name for that. It doesn't go back to that amendment either. These two cities as well as the municipalities which lie between have grown at an unprecedented rate.

Mr. Chairman, the unevenness of this growth has resulted in the situation where the Electoral Boundaries Commission was forced to redistribute the boundaries of several ridings throughout the province. The only way to balance this growth would have been to

move predominantly rural ridings into one of the major cities. This shift would have been incredibly detrimental to people all over Alberta.

When you have three or four rural municipalities and maybe 14 small urban centres in a constituency, they all, too, would like to have their name in that constituency title, which is impossible throughout the province when you take the diversity of it with the amount of municipalities we all represent.

When you're talking about how many of these municipalities you do represent, especially in a rural constituency such as mine, and the different difficulties that each one is facing at the same time, you're never dealing with the same issue in the whole constituency. You may be dealing with a water system problem in the town of Claresholm. You may at the same time be looking at a waste-water situation in the Crownsnest Pass or even a highway situation in Pincher Creek. You're all over that, and amending the name doesn't help anyone, I think.

4:20

As it stands now, many of Alberta's rural ridings are already so large that they are challenging to represent effectively. If the commission was forced to remove a rural riding, it would force these already large ridings to grow and, effectively, remove any idea of having a local representative in the Legislature. Once again, when you get out into the rural ridings, they know the riding name, they know their town may not be a part of it or the former member or anything else, or even a federal member may not have his name in the name, which leads me to believe that we do have some provincial names incorporated but not federal. Appreciating the intent of the amendment, I still say that it's better left federally.

Now, when you look at the idea of having a local representative in the Legislature – it's something, I believe, I have first-hand knowledge of – Livingstone-Macleod was at one time three separate constituencies. After this is adopted, it will be over three and a half former separate constituencies. Because we were able to increase the number of ridings by four, we were able to address the growth of our urban centres while in some cases preserving the size of our already overstretched rural ridings.

Mr. Chairman, I'm proud that the Electoral Boundaries Commission had the ability to effectively recognize this and decided to make the recommendations that they did. Once again, their recommendations and the naming is a difficult thing, but we could amend this forever. I think we have to take into focus that we have given this adequate debate, and it's now time to move it forward. It has been stated in this House that this bill is being passed too quickly. This amendment is being debated. This bill is of importance and to some should have more debate and public input. I would argue, however, that the holders of this position misconstrue the purpose of Bill 28.

This bill is not about setting the electoral boundaries. If that were the case, I would agree that more consultation could be useful. This amendment is not about the boundaries. It's directly about the names. Rather, what we should be debating here is about accepting the electoral boundaries set out by the boundaries commission, accepting the names as we have brought it forward with no further amendments.

Mr. Chairman, the level of public input and debate was far beyond the level we see for most government bills not only in this province but in Canada as a whole. Contrary to the beliefs of a few, the bill overall, even with the amendments, has received much more than six hours of debate. Moreover, it received extensive debate at the local level, and I will say that names were debated. I know the constituency of Livingstone-Macleod was considered to be changed to High

River-Macleod at one point. There were many people that came forward and said that that would cause a mix-up, so they went back to Livingstone-Macleod even though they changed the electoral boundaries and added a large part of Turner Valley, Black Diamond, and right up to High River.

People in all of Alberta, throughout the province, who wanted to participate did so either verbally or through written submissions, and there weren't that many directed to names, as this amendment brings. As mentioned, throughout their travels the commission met with stakeholders and community members from every corner. This included people who wanted more urban representation. For a new constituency I don't think names came into it at all. It was just creating the constituency in most cases.

It also included people who were concerned about the size of rural ridings. They, too, wanted to discuss names, but they wanted to keep their name in most cases. The odd one wanted to incorporate the name of a town within that constituency, make it more centric to that. It also included people who wanted to ensure that the traditional voting boundaries were upheld wherever possible. Travel patterns, school districts, the geographical boundaries, that I'd mentioned earlier, and a myriad of other issues were all part of what the deliberations were that the boundaries commission took in.

It was up to the commission to review all of these presentations and submissions and balance them with the proper population figures wherever possible. This, I submit, was a monumental task and one that I do not envy. I sat in on the hearings myself in Lethbridge and listened to the comments from the public, the mayors, the councillors, the rural Reeves that came forward, and there I did hear questions on names, but it was keeping them the same, again. I've never heard anything since we started debating this from the public to come forward with any more names than what we discussed earlier.

Mr. Chairman, it's also important to note that this work was done in an impartial and nonpartisan setting. The commission was made up of people appointed by both government and the Official Opposition, and they had a mandate to serve the people of Alberta, not any particular political party. I don't believe that when we look at this amendment, we're looking at it from that position either. We're looking at it strictly on the names.

The commission's objectives were to create an effective electoral boundaries system that serves our needs not only now but into the future, 10 years into the future, until the next commission would be called into service, at which time it would be an opportune time to bring forward a name in advance, and this name may be one to bring forward at the time. But right now I believe Mr. Manning is best left at the federal level, and hopefully his name will be reflected and honoured through a federal riding name.

I also believe that with the shift in demographics, job opportunities, we may well see some of the rural ridings actually shrink geographically next time. That would be quite an accomplishment. If you walk down the members' hallway and look at the pictures, it's amazing when you take into consideration the population, the amount of members. But look at the size of the constituencies at the time. They were quite small, very small, to be exact.

In addition to creating electoral maps that address the needs of today, the commission had to look at the growth trends and figure out where the people were moving to and where the people were moving from. There again, we have this amendment for a name, but that isn't exactly what we need to be looking at. We need to be looking at this bill as it is amended to date. As I mentioned earlier, the seven considerations that the commission needed to address when plotting out the new boundaries were addressed, and those

seven did not include any name issue. Now, I'm saying that they had to take all of these considerations and put them in place for not only right now but for the next 10 years.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the bill as it has been amended, without this current amendment that's offered, is the culmination of over a year of hard work by the Electoral Boundaries Commission and is indicative of the dedication these individuals put towards addressing their difficult task. Moreover, it is representative of all the submissions made by Albertans to the commission's hearings throughout the province. I don't believe that we need to continue to discuss and debate an amendment on a name change. In passing the bill without the amendment, we will recognize and thank the Electoral Boundaries Commission for their hard work, and we will position Alberta's electoral map for the coming decade.

Now, I would like to thank the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere for offering the amendment. I believe that all of us in this House feel that that name is one that will be honoured in the future if this is the exact venue for that or by a federal riding or, as one other hon. member had mentioned, maybe there's a mountain at some point that becomes that name.

**Mr. Lukaszuk:** A new mountain?

**Mr. Berger:** A new mountain, yeah. Well, there are some that aren't named, actually, strangely enough. As well, there are even creeks that aren't named out there.

I want to thank the Electoral Boundaries Commission for all of their efforts. I thank all the Albertans who took time out of their busy lives to present a submission on this important topic.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my comments on the amendment. I urge all hon. members to support Bill 28 but to not support this amendment as offered. I think we have debated this long enough now. It's time to move forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will take my seat to hear the rest of the comments on the amendment.

4:30

**Mr. Hinman:** Well, it's certainly interesting with this closure of debate that's been brought in by the government how they like to talk and go on and on. The hon. member did a great job of saying he was closing but kept waiting to try and talk the clock out.

It is a fitting name. It's fitting to have it provincial. To say that it's because he served federally is very shallow, in my opinion. He's a true honour to all Albertans, someone that we can be proud of, just as the other names that have come forward. To say that, you know, the three names that came forward were fitting for debate but this one is not is another, I just think, error in judgment in what they're looking at.

Mr. Chair, Bill 28 did not do the best job about looking at the boundaries. I think the hon. housing minister spoke on that, the way his riding was being divided up. In Calgary-Glenmore to take Southwood out and put it across to Acadia doesn't make any sense, or to bring in Lakeview on the north across the reservoir. So I'd have to disagree with the hon. Member for Livingstone-Macleod in that he's in error in what he's looking at and didn't really look at the whole big picture.

The bottom line is that it's obvious this government and the members of this government have no respect for Preston Manning. I understand that. I'm sure they're going to vote overwhelmingly no, and I sure hope that they prove me wrong on that, Mr. Chair. He's a great provincial elected representative that we should all be proud of.

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Chair, point of order.

**The Chair:** A point of order, hon. member. Do you want to address it now?

**Point of Order**

**Allegations against Members**

**Mr. Horner:** Mr. Chairman, under Standing Order 23(h), (i), and (j) the hon. member is imputing the fact that hon. members on this side of the House disrespect a true Albertan, someone who has spent a lot of time in political life, as have many of my relatives. I think the hon. member should retract that statement because almost every one of the colleagues that spoke said that they truly respected that individual, so for him to say it, it's a lie.

**The Chair:** Hon. members, I hesitate to interrupt. The one hour is up, so pursuant to Government Motion 26 agreed to on November 30, which states that after one hour of debate all questions must be decided to conclude the debate on Bill 28, Electoral Divisions Act, in Committee of the Whole, I must put the following questions to conclude debate.

[Motion on amendment A2 lost]

[The clauses of Bill 28 as amended agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

**The Chair:** Shall the bill be reported? Are you agreed?

**Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Opposed? Carried.

The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

**Mr. Hancock:** You keep demoting me, Mr. Chairman.

**The Chair:** Government House Leader. Sorry.

**Mr. Hancock:** I hope I don't take a commensurate pay cut.

Mr. Chairman – or should I say deputy chairman of committees?

**The Chair:** Touché.

**Mr. Hancock:** I would move that the committee now rise and report Bill 28.

[Motion carried]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lethbridge-West.

**Mr. Weadick:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Committee of the Whole has had under consideration a certain bill. The committee reports the following bill with some amendments: Bill 28. I wish to table copies of all amendments considered by Committee of the Whole on this date for the official records of the Assembly.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Does the Assembly concur in this report?

**Hon. Members:** Concur.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Opposed? So ordered.

## Government Bills and Orders Third Reading

### Bill 28 Electoral Divisions Act

**Mr. Denis:** I'm pleased to move third reading of Bill 28, the Electoral Divisions Act, on behalf of my colleague the hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Mr. Speaker, we had a very spirited debate in first reading, in second reading, and again just recently in Committee of the Whole on this bill. Indeed, this bill goes to the very fabric of our existence here. We're all elected from a particular constituency to represent the constituents there. Interestingly enough, everyone here was elected under a party banner.

I'd be remiss if I did not mention just a couple of words about my own constituency and the name, which is going to be changed from Calgary-Egmont to Calgary-Acadia.

Years ago, Mr. Speaker, I went and met the former member from my constituency, a gentleman named Denis Herard. He held the constituency from 1993 up until 2008, when I was fortunate enough to take over. I asked him: who was Egmont? Again, I thought it was Edgemont not Egmont. He informed me that, in fact, Calgary-Egmont was named after the Earl of Egmont. I did a little bit of research as to who the Earl of Egmont was, and I'm advised that this individual actually owned a 28-room house on a site at or near what is now known as Southcentre mall, in the south portion of my constituency.

This riding, again, was named after the Earl of Egmont in 1971. I follow three great representatives who represented that area: of course, Merv Leitch, followed by a former Speaker, who used to sit in your chair, Mr. Speaker – his name was David Carter – followed by Denis Herard, former minister of advanced education.

A bit about the Earl of Egmont, to close off his legacy here. The property that this gentleman owned was owned by the Kelwood Corporation, which developed much of what's known now as Fairview in Acadia as well as Willow Park, including the Willow Park golf course, Maple Ridge, and Lake Bonavista, which is slightly outside of the constituency. I've been told that the Earl of Egmont himself actually lived, again, on Macleod Trail and Willow Park Drive S.E. According to the *Calgary Herald* report, the reporter met a fellow at a house and asked if the earl was around, and the fellow said that he was away. If I recall correctly, this was back several decades ago. So the reporter left, and the man was the earl himself.

My understanding is that there is only one part of this house that still remains, and that's actually the spiral staircase, which is in the Black Swan pub just in the constituency, across Macleod Trail from his home site. That's all that remains of the Earl of Egmont's home. You'd never know that there was a connection. I've actually never been there, and one of my staff this week was telling me I need some more hobbies. Maybe I should go there for a drink.

The earl is part of the history of south Calgary but also the rural south of the city. The great ranches of the Calgary area, including the Burns ranch immediately east of the Egmont ranch as well as the Cross ranch, tend to overshadow some of the characters who make up the history of ranching around Calgary, Mr. Speaker. Granted, this is one of the lesser players, but so were Sam Livingston, John Glenn, John Ware, the first African-American rancher, as well as many others who make up the history of Calgary. It's not without some regret that this name is actually leaving.

I can't say simply that all good things must come to an end. I do support the commission's recommendations to rename the constituency Calgary-Acadia. As I mentioned in many of my earlier

speeches, one thing in the modern context of Calgary, there is a northwest community named Edgemont, which I believe is in the constituency of the Member for Calgary-North West. Our offices do get many calls for that. Many people don't know where Egmont actually is, and I do think Acadia reflects the modern reality of the constituency that I have the privilege to represent. A more practical and less romantic form of the name change is, again, that Edgemont is something that is just confused on a regular basis.

4:40

I do want to comment as well in third reading on the commission's report, which was tabled in the Assembly in June of this year. On October 26 a resolution was made in this Assembly, and the contents of the report were debated. All of the boundaries recommended in the commission's report were approved by this Assembly, as were the majority of names and electoral divisions.

There were, of course, some changes to the suggested names of electoral divisions. Mr. Speaker, these suggestions were made in order to better reflect the history and the context of these divisions as well as the desires of the constituents. There have been many submissions made. You can go to the website. The website will reflect that people from anywhere from individuals to organizations, community groups, even political parties have made submissions, and I would say parties of all stripes. These suggestions were made in order to again better reflect the history and the character of these divisions.

Some of the changes, again, we've dealt with. The electoral division of Strathcona is now named Strathcona-Sherwood Park. I see the member over there smiling at me. I see the electoral division of Calgary-Montrose is reflected by the name of Calgary-Greenway. Calgary-North Hill is now named Calgary-Klein, as I mentioned earlier. Dunvegan-Central Peace is now Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley.

I think that the commission has made a good estimation of what the constraints that they have are, mostly dealing with population as well as with density. Canada, in general, Mr. Speaker, is a very difficult country to govern, and Alberta is no different. We have two major centres, obviously Calgary and Edmonton, but the rural areas are important as well. Interestingly enough, my constituency you can drive across in traffic in 20 minutes tops – tops – and that's in gridlock Calgary traffic. I've heard from people, from the Member for Little Bow for example, who represents a very diverse constituency which takes many hours to drive across.

So we have to realize that more than population is at play here. It is important that we have adequate representation in both urban and rural contexts, but in a rural context you are also dealing with the accessibility of your member. That's something that we have to always consider. I bet you that several members from rural Alberta are just really grinning with Cheshire cat grins that a city boy like me would actually go and recognize that, but that definitely is the case as well. I'm happy that the Member for Little Bow actually does enjoy the golf course in my community. I'm sure that there are many in his community as well.

In conclusion, I just want to mention that Bill 28 reflects the commission's report as amended to this Assembly. This act will repeal and replace the existence of some names. Some new boundaries come into effect, again reflecting the changes in demography and population. Further, Bill 28 will bring Alberta's electoral boundaries and divisions up to date with population and current needs. Bear in mind that everything that we've said here and the commission's actual report will come into play again two elections from now, as the report for the 2004 electoral divisions does come in today.

So I will be supporting this bill. I encourage all members to do the same. I am happy to have been able to take a breath in this speech, but I also want to say, particularly, thanks to Matt Stepan from my office for doing some good work on looking into this bill and the need to have this passed so that we can have a representative democracy in Alberta in the next election and in the election after that, until this is revisited again.

I predict that in two elections, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have a very different discussion, but a lot of the same issues will be brought up. The Electoral Boundaries Commission, I would not want to be a commissioner here because the work that they do is quite incredible for this Assembly, for the people of this province, and I think we really need to have our hats off to the five members.

With that, I would move third reading vote of this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

**Mr. Hehr:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a privilege to rise and speak to this in third reading of Bill 28, the Electoral Divisions Act. I was listening to the little historical vignette of Calgary-Egmont by the hon. minister of housing. I came forward that I have been in the Black Swan pub. I have actually been in that pub and had a beverage there, but I didn't really view the staircase that the Earl of Egmont used. It may precipitate another journey out there. I can tell you that this summer when I did go to the Black Swan I was with my new executive assistant, Brendan Wade, who was meeting some friends out there. Although they were a tad younger than me, I was convinced to go along. It was a wonderful adventure out to the hon. member's constituency.

Nevertheless, if we return to Bill 28, the Electoral Divisions Act, this bill was not without its controversy. We have added four more MLAs to the payroll here in this Assembly at a time that the coffers of Alberta may not be as full as they once were. With the addition of four more MLAs comes a price tag of roughly \$50 million over the course of a four-year legislative term. That is no small price we're paying for the addition of these MLAs. In my view, we could have done this province a great service by resisting the temptation to add these new MLAs, by redrawing the map and sufficing with 83 MLAs. I think it would have allowed us to lead by example in this House by showing some restraint in a time of economic downturn. That, to me, Mr. Speaker, was very disturbing and actually something I was not too fond of when we saw the redrawing of this electoral map.

I'd also like to comment a little bit about the composition of the members on the commission. There's no doubt that these five members worked pretty hard. Two are selected from the government's side, and two are selected from the opposition's side, with one more appointed by, I believe, the Speaker. Nevertheless, everyone knows at the end of the day it's a 3 to 2 split. The redrawing of the map is not without its political considerations.

**Mr. Hancock:** The chair is a judge.

**Mr. Hehr:** Nevertheless, I think it's fair enough. The person who got selected to chair the commission is a political appointment. For us not to say that there were political decisions made in the redrawing of the electoral map, in my view, would be ignoring the essence of what the commission was established to do.

On that note, you saw specific things that came back with different areas carved up in different fashions and in some very interesting ways. You saw after the initial draft especially the way Grande Prairie was initially redrawn with more of a city focus. Then to the howls and screams of many it got sent back to the drawing

table, and it was redrawn in the fashion that may have been more appropriate to some political considerations. For us to deny that that happened and was happening throughout this process, in my view, would be naive. That is just a comment.

If we look at this going forward, this will set our boundaries for the next two elections. In my view, it also didn't do an adequate job in representing our urban constituents. If we look at the way the map was drawn, clearly one more seat should have gone to an urban constituency. If you look at the actual numbers that were drawn out, the natural constituency for this would have been Calgary. Instead, you saw different aspects. It saw rural Alberta rewarded in a fashion that did not necessarily reflect the population that is currently at play. I understand the arguments of effective representation. This map could have been drawn very easily to recognize the density of our populations in our urban regions and how they have grown significantly. It could have reflected that in a much better fashion.

4:50

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, we have gone up and down with this bill. It appears a fait accompli. My hope would be that in the future this become a less partisan process with maybe an independent panel set up to do this who simply goes by the numbers of where the citizens are and what actually would happen to take out the political considerations and eliminate the weird boundary redrawings and go forward on that note. Nonetheless, I thank you for your time and for allowing me to comment on this for the last time.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** On the government side, the hon. Minister of Seniors and Community Supports.

**Mrs. Jablonski:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have some comments that I, too, would like to make on this bill, but at this time I would like to call for adjournment.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

## Government Motions

(continued)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

### Time Allocation on Bill 28

27. Mr. Hancock moved:

Be it resolved that when further consideration of Bill 28, Electoral Divisions Act, is resumed, not more than two hours shall be allotted to any further consideration of the bill at third reading, at which time every question necessary for the disposal of the bill at this stage shall be put forthwith.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The last of these, I hope, for a long time. Again, we've expended quite a considerable amount of time on electoral boundaries. It's an important bill, no question about that. But the clear indication from the Wildrose is that they wish to stop government business, stop the business of the Legislature, hold things in abeyance, and talk forever on the bills. That was a very clear indication on the record in this House. While I personally and I think every member of this Legislature believes that there should be fulsome debate, complete debate on every bill that comes forward, there is a time and place when one has to say: enough.

So I would move Government Motion 27.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Lethbridge-East.

**Ms Pastoor:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak to the motion that's just been put on the floor regarding time allocation. I find it quite interesting that time allocation brings out the government members to be very verbose. Actually, they can go on for 20 minutes. Amazing. So in one hour we have the government for 20 minutes, we have the opposition for 20 minutes, and then the government for 20 minutes. Well, you know, that really isn't quite balanced, clearly a way of doing their own little filibuster within their own little time allocation.

It's interesting because we can hardly get a peep out of them during any debates on bills, and especially at 4 o'clock in the morning we hear nothing from them. But, my, time allocation and they're just popping up. Is it fair? No. Is it balanced? No. Is it democratic? Yes. Unfortunately, those are the rules of this House, and these are the rules that we play by on each side of this House.

It's a shame when the opposition has been told by Albertans that they would like to see what they feel is very, very poor legislation go back to the drawing board. I believe that the opposition doesn't stand up and try to filibuster for no reason. There is a reason. They've been told by other Albertans that they don't like the legislation that's coming forward, and it's our job to make sure that we try to persuade the government of the day that they should be listening to us more and that maybe that should go back to the drawing board.

I don't believe it's something that anybody really enjoys, sitting up all night. I know that the first time it happened to me I really was persuaded not to come in with my jammies, my fuzzy slippers, and my hair curlers in my hair. I thought I showed great restraint on that. However, we have had a few evening sessions since, so I realize what happens.

I do believe that by filibustering we are representing Albertans' voices, and I don't think that it should be dismissed as irrelevant. If the government would even give a wiggle on some of the conversations that the opposition does in a filibuster, paid attention, and actually maybe made some movement on that, then I don't believe that time allocation/closure would be necessary.

With those thoughts, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The chair shall now call the question on the motion.

[The voice vote indicated that Government Motion 27 carried]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 4:57 p.m.]

[Ten minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Bhardwaj	Goudreau	McQueen
Campbell	Griffiths	Morton
Dallas	Hancock	Olson
Danyluk	Horner	Quest
DeLong	Jablonski	Renner
Denis	Jacobs	Sandhu
Doerksen	Knight	Tarchuk
Elniski	Leskiw	Vandermeer
Fawcett	Lukaszuk	Weadick
Fritz	McFarland	Woo-Paw

Against the motion:

Anderson	Hinman	Notley
Boutilier	Kang	Pastoor
Hehr		

Totals:	For – 30	Against – 7
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[Government Motion 27 carried]

**5:10 Government Bills and Orders  
Third Reading  
(continued)**

**Bill 24  
Carbon Capture and Storage Statutes  
Amendment Act, 2010**

[Adjourned debate November 30: Mr. Chase]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Calmar.

**Mrs. McQueen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and participate in third reading of Bill 24, the Carbon Capture and Storage Statutes Amendment Act, 2010. There has been a lot of vigorous and good discussion on this bill, and before I offer some of my perspectives, I would just like to take the opportunity to thank all hon. members for their participation in this debate.

I agree with the sentiment, surprisingly, from the Member for Edmonton-Riverview that we are going to keep using power in this province. It's an undeniable fact. Albertans expect to be able to enjoy the conveniences of modern life. Mr. Speaker, those conveniences mean things like driving cars, using appliances, heat, plastics, electricity; you name it.

The great majority of all of this is derived from oil, natural gas, and coal. I recognize that in this House there may be differences of opinion relating to whether or not our reliance on this type of energy is a good thing, but the essential truth remains that we will continue to use these fuels well into the foreseeable future. Furthermore, this province is blessed by the fact that it contains some of the most abundant energy resources in the world. That means that Alberta's future is certainly tied to the continuing development of our energy sector.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that any member would dispute this. I am not implying that things will remain the status quo or that we will continue to develop our resources and market them without undue environmental consideration. I recognize that there is a global movement towards implementing green technologies and conservation into the energy mix. The world needs energy, but the question of what type of energy the world will use is a continually evolving concept. For now it would appear that while the global appetite for energy is ever-increasing, so, too, is the demand that the energy we use also become cleaner. The pursuit of carbon capture and sequestration technology is a part of our government's response to both demands. Alberta's future as a global energy provider is linked to its ability to create clean energy.

Mr. Speaker, on that note, I would also like to add that Alberta's two largest universities are also becoming hubs of expertise in this technology. In August the University of Alberta announced its reservoir experimental facility, also known as GeoREF. This facility will also allow for testing of carbon capture and storage and apply recovery techniques to unconventional resources. This facility is expected to open in June 2011 and will be one more reason for students to look to Alberta for postsecondary education.

The University of Calgary's Institute for Sustainable Energy, Environment and Economy is also a key player in CCS research and education. The CCS research group has a number of projects on the go, including analyzing the costs of CCS and looking at legal and regulatory issues required to move large-scale projects forward. Obviously, there is a tremendous demand for CCS education, and Alberta is offering students and the world the opportunity to be on the rising curve of this technology.

Mr. Speaker, this government accepts that climate change is an issue. It accepts that the energy sector is vital to Alberta's future. It accepts that this province has a broad portfolio of energy resources that all have a role to play in our energy mix, and it sees carbon capture and storage technology as playing a huge role in both clean energy production and enhanced oil recovery. I would also add that regardless of where some members in the House stand with respect to the issue of climate debate, this global shift towards clean energy is undeniable.

Alberta needs to work in partnership with other jurisdictions, and the energy sector needs to continue to adapt with changing global realities. While there are some who would glean short-sighted satisfaction in taking a combative stance, any Alberta government that would actively deny the world's climate issues would risk isolating the province from its global partnerships and ensuring that Alberta's energy industry becomes obsolete. Any approach that would see Alberta address climate issues by relying on one or two principle energy resources is equally narrowly sighted and ignores historical precedent to the contrary.

Mr. Speaker, turning to some of the specifics of Bill 24, this proposed legislation is an important piece of the puzzle required to implement carbon capture and storage. Bill 24 makes clear that the government would assume the long-term liability for carbon capture and storage, and it provides clarity to industry with respect to the issues surrounding access to underground CO<sub>2</sub> storage. Some of the opposition I've heard on this bill relates to the issue of liability, and I would really like to take a moment to address that. The liability of carbon capture and storage projects is one of the more obvious impediments to the development of this technology. One of the reasons for this is because carbon capture and storage is a long-term, indeed, permanent concept, not a short-term one.

Within a long-term time frame projection for a carbon capture and storage project it is entirely feasible that some industry operators would evolve into other entities or may even cease to exist. That being the case, government is realistically the only entity with the capacity and durability to assume this liability. It should be mentioned that this liability will not be entered into lightly but will be contingent upon strict conditions related to the issuance of a closure certificate. Mr. Speaker, any potential lessee would be required to comply with all closure criteria and site monitoring prior to receiving their certificate.

In addition, government's ability to monitor closed project sites will be facilitated by the postclosure stewardship fund. My understanding is that the fund would be established through costs covered by an industry-generated levy collected during the operational phase of a carbon capture and storage project. It will be a key element in ensuring that the means to deal with any postclosure issues for a given project will be able to be addressed, and it adds additional security to government's assumption of liability.

Mr. Speaker, I'm treading on familiar ground that my colleagues have addressed, but I want to reiterate that I do not see this as assuming unnecessary risk. It is part of the package required for the deployment of carbon capture and storage technology. In fact, liability currently remains the biggest question mark for industry. By assuming it, government is ensuring that these technologies are allowed to move forward.

I also recall earlier in our discussions on this issue that an hon. member raised some questions regarding Joffre, and I would like to make a comment. I believe this was a reference to the enhanced oil recovery project in the Joffre-Viking field east of Red Deer, a project which began in 1984 and as of 2009 has stored approximately 1 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over the past 25 years. Mr. Speaker, what I can say is that 25 years is a long time. We obviously have experience and familiarity with this technology. It is not new or unknown.

Incidentally, other jurisdictions have also been pursuing similar projects. Case in point: the United States has over 90 enhanced oil recovery projects in operation. Most of these are based in the basin west of Texas, and others are found in Wyoming and Mississippi. In fact, CO<sub>2</sub> enhanced oil recovery makes up approximately 37 per cent of all U.S. enhanced oil recovery operations, and that number is expected to grow. I would suggest that many operators are comfortable with this technology.

In addition to the countries I visited in Europe earlier in the year and the U.K. and Norway, today I also met with His Excellency the Japanese Ambassador. He brought up the fact that Japan is also very interested in what Alberta and Canada are doing with regard to carbon capture and storage.

5:20

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by saying that I recognize that carbon capture and storage technologies are not the singular answer to a clean energy future and climate change. I do however believe that it definitely has a key part in a secure future for Alberta as a global energy supplier. It is also uniquely suited to our province in the sense that it creates further opportunities to better develop our conventional reserves through enhanced oil recovery. I know communities like mine in the Pembina cardium field certainly look forward to opportunities that would exist with enhanced oil recovery.

Members, I would encourage all of you to support this bill as I think it will make great progress for our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Government House Leader.

**Mr. Hancock:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If it is in order, I would move to adjourn debate on this bill so that we can proceed with Bill 28 very briefly and that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona might be able to make comments on Bill 28 at this time.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

## Bill 28

### Electoral Divisions Act

(continued)

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

**Ms Notley:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to members of the Assembly for allowing me an opportunity to get up and speak on this issue. While in Committee of the Whole this House passed an amendment to this act, Bill 28, to rename the riding of Dunvegan-Central Peace to Dunvegan-Central Peace-Notley. As members know, I was not in the House when that vote was taken, as I believed it was more appropriate to recuse myself for that particular decision.

As well, members may also know that I spoke out in opposition to the renaming of the riding to Calgary-Klein, so I have to say that in considering coming forward to speak positively about the change with respect to Dunvegan-Central Peace, I was somewhat conflicted because it appears somewhat hypocritical on the face of it. Nonethe-

less, I concluded after considering it that it was such an important honour that I thought that the decision of the House warranted comment.

On behalf of my family, my brothers Paul and Stephen, my uncle Bruce Notley, my children Ethan and Sophie, I'd like to offer my sincere thanks to my colleagues in this Legislature for the honour bestowed upon my father in his memory. You should see me at a grade 6 graduation. It's much like this, actually.

Dad's first commitment was to the NDP. He was present when the party was formed. He ran as a candidate in the first election after the party was formed. He left law school to take on the role of provincial secretary when he was 23 or 24. He was elected leader of the party at the age of 28, and after finishing in fourth place in the area of Edson-Hinton, he was elected by the people of Spirit River-Fairview in 1971 at the ripe old age of 32.

My mom and my dad met when my mom started volunteering for the NDP. She finally attracted his attention when she made a deal with him. She would find candidates in Calgary at the last minute if he would take her out on a date. She did, so he did, and the rest was history.

I first met my dad a month after I was born. He'd been in Saskatchewan managing an election campaign for the NDP at the time. When my first brother was born, it only took a week for my dad to make it back from his political assignment. By the time my youngest brother was born, his time management skills, along with my mother's growing annoyance on this issue, had grown to the point where he was actually there for the big event.

My father's commitment to the NDP came from his passionate belief that the values and the policies of the party, simply put, would help the greatest number of Albertans the greatest. He was concerned about our environment and the future of environmental protection in the face of oil and gas development. He believed that Albertans needed to share in the wealth created by our resources, the resources Albertans owned. He actually wanted to see Alberta develop an equity interest in the oil sands, a decision that, had we made it at the time, would see Alberta's wealth from its oil and gas resources far exceed that of Norway or any other oil-producing jurisdiction in the world, rather than falling as far behind as we have.

He cared deeply for our system of public health, and he fought against the introduction of user fees and advocated for greater care for our seniors and for a provincially run pharmacare system. He advocated passionately for the interests of Alberta's most disadvantaged. Indeed, the day before his untimely death he had pressed the government on their treatment of a young indigenous youth who had committed suicide after years in foster care.

As much as the NDP tends to be seen as an urban party, my father was a tireless advocate for the residents of rural Alberta. Having grown up on a dairy farm just west of Olds, he made repeated calls for the government to support the family farm and its long-term sustainability.

Throughout his career in this Legislature my father either sat alone in opposition or, at the very apex of his career, when he served as Leader of the Official Opposition, he benefited from the Herculean efforts of his caucus of one. Speaking entirely objectively, I can say that one-person caucuses can be surprisingly talented.

Although the profound imbalance between government and opposition during my father's time in this Assembly created an almost folk hero-like image, I know that my father believed deeply that a more even balance between parties would have improved public policy substantially. I think it is only after the fact that we learned how effectively he was able to fill the role of an opposition 20 times his size to bring about moderation and increased thoughtfulness in the agenda of the government at the time. I believe there

is a strong consensus that part of the reason he was able to achieve that was through his respect for this Assembly and his remarkable work ethic.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take just a bit of a moment to provide a slightly more informal picture of my father. People sometimes mistakenly associate the NDP with the notion of overspending. As we pointed out recently, a review of spending histories shows that NDP governments have actually balanced their budgets more often than any other political party in Canada over the course of the last 25 years. I think it's fair to say that had my father ever been elected Premier, he would have increased those numbers substantially.

On a personal level, his reputation for being tight with his money was legendary. There are copious stories about this particular personality trait of my father. However, I will share one with members of this Assembly, who may find, in addition to their shared history with my father on the basis of sitting as elected representatives in this Assembly, one other common cause with him. In particular, what I refer to is the likely level of annoyance experienced by government members opposite when they are forced to listen to me argue for more money for a worthwhile program in as public a forum as possible.

What happened was that I was going to college in Grande Prairie, and my father was travelling across the province doing public hearings on the issue of poverty. He went up to Grande Prairie. He was at the Grand Prairie motor inn, and I believe there were about 50 people there. It was sort of a hearing format, and everybody took turns talking about how their lack of money was creating hardship in their lives. He dutifully took notes, and the media was there, and it was a good event.

As the event was ending and people were just starting to file out, though, I stood up in the back row and said quite openly so everyone could hear: "Mr. Notley, I have a question. My father makes too much money, and I can't qualify for a student loan. We're into the third week of the month, and I don't have enough money to buy groceries, and I only have Premium crackers left in my cupboard. What should I do?" The staff who were with him at the time, both of whom ultimately ended up becoming members of this Assembly, Tom Sigurdson and Pam Barrett, pretty much fell over laughing. But my father, very concerned that the media was there, quickly rushed me out of the room in order to deal with my very public request at the time. Probably the thing that goes most to the heart of that particular characteristic of my father was that, bearing in mind that I'd just described how I only had Premium crackers left in my cupboard for the rest of the week, he pulled out a \$10 bill and gave it to me and said: "That should do it. Out with you." You can trust me. Had he become Premier, there would be no deficit right now.

I suspect that the members opposite could easily find that much in common with my dad. When they start to feel a bit irritated with my opposition efforts, it's arguable they come by that sentiment honestly, as did I when it comes to my origin of my advocacy tactics.

Joking aside, I want to emphasize how important the Peace Country was to my father. After spending usually two weeks away somewhere else in the province carrying the weight of provincial opposition on his shoulders, he would come home, meet with constituents, and then relax for an afternoon in our home overlooking the Peace River. Dad would walk for hours around the Peace River hills on the side of the valley, thinking through policies and composing speeches, followed loyally by our pony, Billy, who seemed to think he was more of a dog than a horse. In short, although my father's reputation was established across the province, his heart had taken root in the Peace Country just up the road from Dunvegan.



5:30

I would like to thank the many residents of the Peace Country and from across the province who sent letters to the boundaries commission in support of renaming Dunvegan-Central Peace after my father. I would especially like to thank Mandy Melnyk for her energetic campaigning on this issue as well as Eileen Coristine, Betty McArthur, and the Macklin family.

Once again, to my colleagues, I personally appreciate the recognition accorded to my father through the amendment included in this bill. Thank you to the Member for Calgary-Currie and also to all members who rose to speak in favour of this motion. I read their comments, and I very much appreciate them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [applause]

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Government House Leader.

**Mr. Renner:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would move that we adjourn debate.

[Motion to adjourn debate carried]

**Mr. Hancock:** Mr. Speaker, I think that is a beautiful note for us to end the afternoon on, and I would therefore request the permission of the House to adjourn until 7:30 p.m.

[Motion carried; the Assembly adjourned at 5:31 p.m.]



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