



Province of Alberta

The 30th Legislature  
Second Session

# Alberta Hansard

Tuesday afternoon, June 8, 2021

Day 111

The Honourable Nathan M. Cooper, Speaker

# Legislative Assembly of Alberta The 30th Legislature

Second Session

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Yao, Tany, Fort McMurray-Wood Buffalo (UC)  
Yaseen, Muhammad, Calgary-North (UC)

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United Conservative: 60

New Democrat: 24

Independent: 3

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Carson  
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Sigurdson, R.J.  
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Dang  
Getson  
Glasgo  
Irwin  
Nielsen  
Rutherford  
Sigurdson, L.  
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Issik  
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Singh  
Turton  
Yaseen

## Legislative Assembly of Alberta

1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

[The Speaker in the chair]

### Statement by the Speaker

#### Hate-motivated Attack on Ontario Muslim Family

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, we had the prayer this morning, but if you would please remain standing. I am grieved to hear the details of the hate-motivated death of a family in London, Ontario. We stand today with our Muslim friends and families. We commit to do better to defend the right of all to live and worship in their own way. Let us take a moment to reflect on the incredible, sad events. Let us reflect on ways that we can each do better.

Please be seated.

### Members' Statements

#### Hate Crimes

**Member Loyola:** The tragic and devastating act of cowardice committed yesterday in London, Ontario that targeted the Salman family, killing four and leaving the youngest child of nine years old recovering in ICU, is absolutely reprehensible. This was an act of terrorism. When will governments across this nation do more to make sure that all people, regardless of their faith and ethnicity, feel safe in the communities that they call home? Unequivocally, this was a hate-motivated crime, and every order of government has a responsibility, at minimum, to denounce these acts that led to the four deaths of the members of the Salman family. Every member of this Legislature knows that more can be done, but does the political will exist to make sure that the hate-motivated actors are deterred from the terrorizing acts that they commit?

Alberta is not exempt from hate crimes perpetrated against the Muslim community. We've seen Muslim women subjected to vitriolic, hateful comments and abuse. This UCP government needs to act. On this side of the House we are more than ready to get the job done, and I call on this government to put aside the ideological differences we may have and commit to action on this important and essential issue, starting with the implementation of a provincial hate crimes unit, that will investigate hate-motivated crimes as well as increased public education along with support for victims of hate-motivated crimes, and especially working together with the federal government to strengthen hate crime legislation to ensure that those who commit these horrendous acts are prosecuted to the full extent of the law. We also continue to demand along with the Alberta chapter of the National Council of Canadian Muslims the creation of a bipartisan provincial committee to deal with the challenges of racist and anti-Muslim hate street harassment.

When will this UCP government act? How many more must be killed in hate-motivated crimes before the changes are made. The time is now. Not one more of our community must be killed. I, the whole Alberta NDP caucus, the Muslim community across Canada, and the majority of Albertans demand this change. The Salman family is #ourlondonfamily.

#### Hate-motivated Attack on Ontario Muslim Family

**Mr. Yaseen:** Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I address the Assembly today. On Sunday, June 6, a family was murdered while out for an evening walk in London, Ontario. This includes 74-year-old Talat Afzaal, 46-year-old Salman Afzaal, 44-year-old Madiha

Salman, and 15-year-old Yumna Afzaal. May God bless their souls. Fayeze Afzaal, a nine-year-old boy, was also attacked but has survived with serious injuries.

This family was targeted because of their faith and ethnicity, because they were Muslims. This was a deliberate act of terrorism fuelled by hatred, and it's disgusting. There is no explanation or understanding, as I see it, for this horrible act. Friends and colleagues from across Canada have reached out to me to express their frustration, anger, and extreme sadness. It was soon made clear to me that this wasn't just an attack against a Muslim family but an attack on all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, the family that was attacked looked like my family. The family that was attacked believed like my family. The family that was attacked was going on an evening walk, like I do with my family every evening.

As we grieve with our brothers and sisters, please know that we will get through this because hate and division must never win. Prejudice and racism and hatred are a disgrace and a sickness of the heart. All Canadians should feel safe in their communities, and they also have the right to feel safe walking down the street. Our society and everyone in it must work together to combat racism and racist intolerance because it will not go away on its own. It is deeply rooted and must be actively condemned by everyone. We need to be better, and we need to do better.

To Muslim friends: I stand with you, and I will continue to fight against Islamophobia and racism in this country and beyond. The young boy, the family, the community, and the country are in my heart. May God bless.

### Job Creation

**Mr. Long:** Mr. Speaker, Albertans want to work. Whether you grew up in Alberta or moved to Alberta, chances are you stayed here or came here because it's the best place to live, work, and raise a family. As we look past COVID, our government and the people across Alberta are about to witness the efforts that have been going on behind the scenes to get Alberta's economy back on track.

We are anticipating an increase in GDP by 7.2 per cent this year, 5.6 per cent next year. This isn't by mistake. Our government has focused on red tape reduction and has been developing policy to ensure business and industry succeed. We created a corporate taxation structure that makes Alberta competitive on the global stage. We are focused on education that provides skills for the labour force now and for the future, and we have worked from day one to unlock capital investment for the province.

We know Albertans want to work, Albertans need to work, and we are doing everything we can to create jobs. We have had thousands of jobs being announced in the tech sector. There are forecasts of over 5,000 jobs to be created in the aviation sector by 2026. We see job announcements in manufacturing and in renewable energy sources. In oil and gas we saw an increase in activity at the start of the year during low oil prices and have predictions of greater activity in the fourth quarter. Companies are predicting future opportunities in geothermal, hydrogen, artificial intelligence, petrochemicals, and pharmaceutical development. Calgary recently broke a record for venture capital investment. Groups are making infrastructure investment in tourism and convention centre builds. Coupled with the film and TV tax credit and the new mandate of Travel Alberta as a destination management organization, our tourism strategy will expand the sector by two times its current size. We are focused on creating an environment for jobs and diversifying our economy.

I look forward to getting these and more announcements out to Albertans as we move quickly and purposely down the path of

economic recovery. This will not be done by mistake but through prudent decisions and the determination of our government for Alberta to lead the country in economic and job growth.

### Premier's Leadership

**Ms Goehring:** Mr. Speaker, I, like many Albertans, had a strong sense of déjà vu this week watching the Premier dine with white linens, bottles of booze, and no physical distancing when clearly the COVID-19 public health orders stated that this isn't allowed.

The audacity of this isn't actually as shocking to some. The Premier has made a habit of breaking the rules, defending his actions, gaslighting those who question him, and then, when people's outrage grows, sometimes making a half-hearted apology. His friends are also above the rules. I'm reminded of January 1, as Albertans were telling this Premier that they weren't happy with his decision to let his MLAs, ministers, and staff travel to sunny international locations for vacation while they were staying at home and following the COVID-19 public health orders. The Premier praised the travellers for supporting the airline industry and said that he wouldn't sanction his colleagues.

We can go back further, too. Back in 2016, when this Premier was just a hungry young leadership candidate, he threw a campaign rally inside a polling station. After he was ejected and his rally was shut down, the Premier professed that the words "in" and "near" confused him. He was fined \$5,000 but bragged that that wasn't much money. Then there was an ongoing investigation into his leadership contest. As a whole, where evidence had surfaced that voting kiosks were run to pile up votes for the Premier, he stacked the deck in his favour, according to many, and completely defied the basic principles of democracy in the process.

The Premier doesn't believe the rules apply to him. It seems he never has. I ask Albertans to think long and hard about whether this is someone who is fit to be Premier: a man who believes the rules don't apply to him and his buddies; a man who condones vacations while you stay home, unable to visit your grandmother, your children; a man who will do literally anything to win an election, even when his opponents are thought to be fellow conservative allies; a man that wines and dines from 11 storeys up without a care in the world for public health orders that most of us have painstakingly followed for so long. Mr. Speaker, this rule-breaking Premier is no leader to me.

### 1:40 Hate-motivated Attack on Ontario Muslim Family

**Mr. Amery:** Mr. Speaker, our nation mourns today. We mourn for the tragic and horrific loss of a Muslim family in London, Ontario, after they were deliberately struck by a man in a truck during their evening walk, leaving four of them dead and a young child in serious condition. Every report indicates that this chilling event was fuelled by hate. We can only describe this as an act of domestic terrorism rooted in Islamophobia. Three generations are gone forever because one man did not like the way they looked, the way they dressed, and what they believed in. My heart bleeds for this family but even more so for the young child who survived this heinous attack, a child who will grow up without the warmth of his mother, the guidance of his father, or the wisdom of his grandmother. Instead, this child will carry the trauma for the rest of his life.

Life is fragile. Life is short. Take care of those that you love and remind them constantly for we will never know when they will be gone from our lives. As elected officials we all have an obligation to condemn acts of hate and racial violence, and we must prevent this from ever happening again. To my colleagues on both sides of

this Chamber: please rise up against bigotry, against hatred, against discrimination, and do this each and every day.

Recently I rose up in this House, Mr. Speaker, to condemn the hate-motivated attacks against the Muslim women in Edmonton and Calgary, and I rise again today but this time to commemorate, to remember, and to honour the lives of that family who died on Sunday. When something like this happens, we say [Remarks in Arabic] This means: to God we belong and to Him we shall return. I rise today to remember the Afzaal and Salman family so that they will forever be part of this province's history, with the genuine hope that their memory will never be forgotten and their death never in vain.

Thank you.

### Seniors

**Ms Sigurdson:** I would like to use my time today to wish Alberta seniors a happy Seniors' Week. Seniors built this province, and this week is a chance for them to be celebrated. When I was minister, I enjoyed travelling across the province to listen to seniors regarding what they wanted and needed from government. Those conversations led to many important actions by our government. We created the office of the Seniors Advocate. We created the seniors' home adaptation and repair program. We created funding for wellness grants, indexed the seniors' benefit, and significantly expanded seniors housing.

As the opposition critic for Seniors and Housing I connect with seniors often. I hear concerns from seniors without a champion in this UCP government. Seniors are worried about losing their pensions. They worry about plans to privatize and add fees to continuing care. Most of all, seniors have felt the inaction of the UCP by how it handled the response to COVID-19.

I want to take time to recognize in this Chamber the seniors who have died from COVID-19. My condolences go out to each and every one of their family members and friends. COVID has hit seniors the hardest, and it was the most deadly in continuing care. Over 1,200 residents have died. I recently had many conversations with loved ones who have lost someone in care, many who have active lawsuits that will likely not go forward because of Bill 70.

All members of this House should be calling for this bill to be stopped now. The MLA for Calgary-Fish Creek is willing to call out the Minister of Health for breaking health guidelines on the sky palace, yet the member is no better. He has no moral high ground to stand on as he's taken the Minister of Health's place as the bill sponsor for a piece of legislation that violates the rights of seniors and their families. While the UCP MLAs are speaking out, it is time they speak up for seniors.

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

### Small Modular Nuclear Reactors

**Mr. Neudorf:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Innovation in the energy sector plays a vital role in diversifying our economy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and delivering jobs as Alberta moves towards a low-carbon future. One promising area of innovation is the recent developments on small modular reactors. Small modular reactors, or SMRs, have the potential to be the future of Alberta's nuclear industry as they provide nonemitting energy for a wide range of applications like grid-scale electricity generation to use in heavy industry and rural and remote communities.

Put simply, SMRs are nuclear fission reactors that are built at a smaller size and in larger numbers compared to most of the world's current nuclear technology. These reactors are compact, easy to

move and transport, and do not produce the same waste as traditional reactors. Most large-scale nuclear reactors in use require heavy water for cooling. This has caused some concerns for Albertans. SMRs do not require heavy water, making them cleaner and safer than old-generation reactors. They are usually cooled by liquid metal or liquid salt and operate at high temperature. This means there is no heavy water formation. The small SMRs coming to Alberta are sealed with fuel that will last up to 20 years. When the fuel is burned, the whole reactor will be taken back to the manufacturer for recharging, renewal, and reuse.

According to Alberta Innovates nearly 15 per cent of Canada's electricity is generated by nuclear technology. Small modular reactor technology could be the future of this industry. On April 14 Alberta joined Saskatchewan, Ontario, and New Brunswick in signing an interprovincial agreement supporting the development of SMRs. All provinces involved have agreed to collaborate on the advancement of SMRs as a clean energy option to address climate change and regional energy demands while supporting economic growth and innovation. As we continue to diversify our energy industry and our economy, technology like this brings us one step closer to a future led by sustainable, Canadian-made energy.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Highwood is next.

### Provincial Reopening Plan and Recovery

**Mr. Sigurdson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take time to personally reflect on the past 15 months, a time where our province has been faced with constant ups and downs. These came in the form of Alberta businesses being open or closed, changes within our schools, or they may have been due to how you can spend time with your family. We've almost come to a point where we are able to put those restrictions in our lives and businesses to rest. Soon we will be able to go to our local restaurants with our families and friends, have our friends over for a barbecue and some beverages, go work out at local gyms, and come together as a community at our local events or charity fundraisers.

Now, it has been a long year where it may have felt as if these restrictions were never going to end. My constituents know that since day one of this pandemic I have been an advocate for a balanced path forward with the least number of restrictions and more freedom for Albertans and businesses. Now more than ever it's time to put this pandemic behind us. More than ever we need to come together as a community and focus not on what divides us but on the things we have in common, our common goals of supporting those in need, building our economy, and supporting local businesses, nonprofits, and charities. We need to focus on the common goal of rebuilding and renewing our province. With the end of restrictions right around the corner, we can finally see light at the end of this very long tunnel.

As always, I want to acknowledge and provide thanks to our front-line workers, health care professionals, local businesses, nonprofits, charities, and everyone in the province who has worked tirelessly to ensure that their communities were kept safe.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Drayton Valley-Devon.

### Kindergarten to Grade 6 Draft Curriculum

**Mr. Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Neurons in the brain that fire together wire together. This helps to explain why repetition and connectivity are key to learning. When our brain places information into long-term memory, the individual pieces are best retrieved and understood when they've been placed into a schema, a pattern of

thought that organizes and categorizes the pieces of information and the relationships between them. This helps to explain why I would have difficulty remembering 15 random letters, but if you placed those letters into a sentence, I could remember the letters and their order with great ease. The letters are no longer random; they are part of a schema that connects those letters into one sentence easily remembered. Conversely, without the hard work of repetition, this learning and retrieval becomes much more difficult. Making those neurons fire in order to place information into long-term memory, with the connectivity of a schema creating the patterns in the letters, is essential to the process of learning.

When I compare the previous K through 4 draft curriculum and the present K through 6 draft curriculum, I see that both have guiding questions and learner outcomes designed to help make the individual pieces of information in the curriculum connect and help student learning. The new K through 6 social studies program is clearly divided up into history, civics, geography, economics, and financial literacy. The learner outcomes are rolled out in a chronological pattern that will help students place the content into an easily remembered timeline. Students will have the capacity to retrieve the information and to make the connections needed to address the higher order thinking. This is put into practice when answering a guiding question like: what was the impact of the great migration on early modern Canada?

While there are still issues that need to be addressed, the design of this new K through 6 social studies program of studies is superior to that of the previous draft. This will help students tackle a content of rich social studies curriculum that will help our students become the engaged citizens needed for a democratic society to thrive.

1:50

### Oral Question Period

**The Speaker:** The Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition has the call.

### Hate Crimes

**Ms Notley:** Mr. Speaker, all of us as Canadians were horrified and devastated by the tragic attack in London. Four Muslim Canadians – a grandmother, a mother, a father, and a teenage daughter – were killed and a little boy seriously injured because of hatred, bigotry, and terrorism in our society. This hate-fuelled violence is also happening here, and we must take action. Will the Premier accept our motion for an emergency debate so that, among other things, he can update this House on what is being done to address rising anti-Muslim violence here in Alberta?

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me express my condolences and, I believe, the condolences on behalf of the entire House to the families that were involved in the situation in Ontario yesterday. It's horrifying, and it's certainly something that needs to be discussed. While we have not seen a copy of the Official Opposition's motion, it would certainly be our intention to support having a conversation in this place this afternoon about this important issue.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms Notley:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's good to hear.

Last month a Muslim family in Edmonton was the target of a road rage incident where a man deliberately rammed their vehicle. In March two Muslim teenagers were punched and kicked while walking along the Bow River, their hijabs ripped from their bodies. A black Muslim woman was attacked in Century Park in February,

and a mother and daughter were attacked at Southgate Centre last December. This must stop. We know that the antiracism council has a report with recommendations to fight racist violence. Can the Premier tell us where it is?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you so much for the question. The report is, of course, very important and took a long time to put together, and I want to thank the ARAC committee so much for doing that. It's actually with the ministers right now. As you can imagine, there's a ton of information to unpack. You don't want to rush this kind of policy, especially in light of the concerning things that are happening in this province.

**Ms Notley:** Well, Mr. Speaker, over the last 12 months our caucus has been listening to members of racialized and religious communities, and here's what they're telling us they want to see: the creation of a provincial hate crimes unit; supports for victims of hate crimes; public education; race-based data collection; social media monitoring for hate threats; more funding for the Human Rights Commission, including the Alberta Hate Crimes Committee; and the creation of a bipartisan committee to oversee this work, as first suggested by the National Council of Canadian Muslims. Would the Premier be willing to accept and work with us to implement these recommendations?

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. There actually is a bipartisan committee already, and that's the ARAC committee. We're very, very grateful for the many, many different people from right across this province who have been able to engage. The engagement levels that have happened from this government have been far and wide, as you know. We speak between 15 and 18 different languages in our caucus, so we've had an absolutely amazing opportunity to reach in. These acts only solidify the need for more engagement, for more work, for more kindness, for more compassion, and the opportunity to actually reach out and learn from each other.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition for her second set of questions.

#### COVID-19 Variants and Vaccine Rollout

**Ms Notley:** Mr. Speaker, like all Albertans, I'm encouraged by the huge drop in COVID cases, and I'm also looking forward to the first parts of reopening. However, yesterday, in the midst of his other drama, I was struck by the Premier's prediction of a fall spike in COVID cases along with new variants. This statement appears to run counter to claims that everything will be back to normal and stay that way by the middle of summer. To the Premier: what data, evidence, or advice have you been given about the potential for a fall fourth wave, and will you share that with this House and the public today?

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, Mr. Speaker, back in March 2020 we disclosed to Albertans that the three stages of a pandemic are, first, the containment stage, then the mitigation stage, which we are still currently in, and then there's a stage in which we as a society learn to live with a virus. It will be moving to an endemic stage. That is what we, as the rest of the world, are going to be moving towards,

like with other respiratory illness viruses. Whether there are further spikes or not, I would leave that for Dr. Hinshaw to be able to answer, but we have been listening to her advice on the staging rollout of the . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms Notley:** Well, Mr. Speaker, while vaccines are a crucial line of defence in what sometimes seems to be an unending battle against this virus, we also know that the delta variant is still transmitting even after one dose, and we know there is an outbreak at the Foothills. What data, evidence, or advice has the Premier received regarding that variant, and once again I ask: will he share with this House and the public the information that he is being provided?

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, Mr. Speaker, we are, more than any other province, being more transparent and disclosing more information as we have it available at [alberta.ca/covid](http://alberta.ca/covid). We will continue to do that. But the advice that we have gotten regarding this one particular variant as well as other variants of interest and variants of concern is that the vaccines are proving to be effective. They will continue to be effective, thankfully. The world wasn't sure how effective the various vaccines, including the messenger RNA ones and the other vaccines, are in protecting us against these variants as well as other variants, but the information is quite positive.

**Ms Notley:** Well, that really didn't answer the question.

Separate and apart from the issue of the variants that are not stopped by vaccines, we do know that vaccines play a key role in helping to get us out of the pandemic. Now, the Premier himself has acknowledged that there is now a diminishing demand for first-dose appointments. We've seen many creative solutions for increasing uptake in other jurisdictions like lotteries and gift cards. Is the Premier considering any of these strategies to encourage more Albertans to get their vaccines? We don't have enough Albertans vaccinated now.

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, first of all, Mr. Speaker, no vaccine is, unfortunately, ever going to stop any of the viruses that it protects us against, including the COVID vaccines, but they do, especially on the individual basis, which is the most important way for us to judge the effectiveness of a vaccine, protect us from the severe outcomes, hospitalization and death. When it comes to the uptake of vaccines, thankfully, in Canada and Alberta – our rates are world leading right now, which is good news for Alberta, good news for Canada. It will continue to be that way. To answer the question regarding innovative solutions: yes, we are looking at some of those.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Leader of the Opposition for her third set of questions.

#### UCP Members' Edmonton Federal Building Gathering

**Ms Notley:** Well, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier finally apologized for his sky palace party, where he and his liquor cabinet polished off a forty of whisky while making decisions for 4 million Albertans, which, I have to say, explains quite a bit about the quality of their decision-making. An apology five days later and only done for his own political health: the same approach to humility he demonstrated in January over holiday flights. Unlike Alohagate, there have been zero consequences for the Premier's inner circle of besties. What consequences will the Premier and his ministers face for this unacceptable behaviour?

**Mr. Shandro:** Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday – and the Premier did yesterday as well – both I and the Premier attended an outdoor social gathering. Outdoor social gatherings are permitted in stage 1. We understand that many Albertans, including the NDP, are nervous about that. I, like many Albertans, have tried my best to comply with the public health restrictions. During that outdoor social gathering not at all times were all those in attendance able to separate by two metres. It's something that I regret, and I know that the Premier has said as well that he regrets it. We as elected officials are held to a higher standard, and it is something that we have apologized for.

**Ms Notley:** Sounds like no consequences to me, Mr. Speaker.

His caucus, who he did threaten with expulsion just a few months ago if any of them broke the rules, doesn't seem to agree that that apology is enough. The MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake-St. Paul says that he expects to see consequences, and the Member for Airdrie-East agreed that there needs to be, quote, some sort of accountability. Does the Premier agree with those caucus members that there needs to be accountability, and if he doesn't, can he explain why he and his besties over there get away Scotch free?

**Mr. Shandro:** Mr. Speaker, as I said, the fact that not everybody in attendance at the outdoor social gathering was able to separate by two metres for the entire time is something that I regret, that the Premier regrets. It's something which we should be able to be expected to comply with as well. We understand that, you know, everybody is doing their best to comply with all the health restrictions during this time. We have a commitment to being able to comply with those public health restrictions and giving a better example to all Albertans.

2:00

**Ms Notley:** Well, here's what happens when there are two sets of rules for Albertans and two sets of rules for different UCP caucus members. The owner of the Whistle Stop Cafe climbed on the roof of his establishment and hosted a white tablecloth dinner just like the Premier's. The Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms went into court arguing that the Premier's behaviour is permission for another antimask rodeo. These folks have received fines up the wazoo, but they are emboldened by the complete lack of consequences for the Premier's liquor cabinet. Why doesn't he go beyond an apology and face some real consequences for his behaviour or for at least the guy, the Health minister, in charge of all this?

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, I'm sure that – I don't even remember what the acronym stands for – the JCCF as well as others who have flagrantly campaigned against the public health restrictions and publicly campaigned for civil disobedience, which has resulted in threats towards our public health inspectors throughout the province, will be very happy to hear the NDP trying to help their cause and promoting their cause. It's very disappointing to see that behaviour, Mr. Speaker, to see the NDP actually giving more credence to the people who have created an atmosphere which has resulted in those public health inspectors being threatened. Incredibly disappointing.

### Rural Concerns

**Ms Phillips:** Well, it was a tale of two Saturdays, Mr. Speaker. The Premier was spending his time figuring out how to get himself out of the cabinet revolt and caucus revolt that his pandemic whiskey and wine tasting patio party started. I had the opportunity at the same time to talk to some really remarkable rural Albertans. I

chaired a panel at our NDP convention with several remarkable leaders who had some suggestions for the government. For example, Sturgeon county councillor Karen Shaw said that she wishes she could tell the Premier to, quote, start doing the right thing for Alberta rather than your party. What does the Premier have to say to Karen Shaw? Will he finally start working to create jobs in Alberta rather than just trying to fixate on saving his own? Is he going to . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member opposite conveying concerns and advice from Albertans. We constantly need to listen to Albertans, need to listen to their perspectives and advice. One thing: we know that the pandemic has been difficult for all Albertans and particularly for those who perhaps have lost their jobs. That's why we rolled out the Alberta economic recovery plan in early days. That's why we made a focus on economic recovery, positioning this province for investment attraction. I'm encouraged with the results that we're beginning to see.

**Ms Phillips:** It's nice to hear from the Finance minister after his half-cut apology yesterday. From the curriculum, the plan to tear down eastern slopes, fight doctors during a pandemic, or throw the patio party on the sky palace, the government and Premier's policy is to ignore, gaslight, apologize, maybe, when caught. Another rural leader, Bill Tonita from Strathcona county, said: we're at a time right now where it doesn't seem to matter what the issue is; government isn't listening. Can the Premier explain why he and his government have this reputation among small-town Albertans? Can he explain why he thinks they aren't worth listening to, or is it only just his besties at the sky palace that get his ear?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, reaching out and listening to Albertans and rural Albertans is critically important. I look around this side of the House, and I see so many rural Albertan MLAs who reach out to their constituents daily and weekly to get their perspectives. Their perspectives have helped inform our Alberta economic recovery plan, a plan that's beginning to show real promise. Our May jobs report in this province: when almost every other province went down, ours remained static. Resource jobs went up by 7,700.

**Ms Phillips:** Well, this minister hears awfully different things than I hear from his rural caucus. I hear concerns about health care and, oh, maybe some consequences for the patio party, Mr. Speaker. Now, Wetaskiwin councillor Gabrielle Blatz-Morgan also had a direct message for the Premier. She said: I would definitely tell him to start caring about the people that you serve. Will the Premier come down from the sky palace and explain for Councillor Blatz-Morgan what it will take for him to start caring about Albertans, or is the Premier going to treat her just as he's treated his own caucus and even cabinet who are also asking for less rule breaking and more honesty and humility?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I struggle to understand A question in those remarks. But let me say this again. [interjections]

**The Speaker:** Order. The Minister of Finance has the call.

**Mr. Toews:** This government and this Premier and this cabinet are focused on positioning this province for economic recovery, positioning this province for disproportionate investment attraction and job creation, and, Mr. Speaker, we're starting to see the early results of that. It's positive. There are some great news stories out there: record levels of venture capital investment coming into Calgary and Edmonton and the province, with more to come in '21.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East is next.

### Child and Youth Well-being Review

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The past 16 months have been challenging for all of us but in particular for our children and youth. Based on feedback from parents in my constituency, I felt it necessary and recommended to government to establish a Child and Youth Well-Being Review. While there's emerging research on pandemic-related social, mental, physical, and educational impacts on children and youth, the extent of these impacts is not yet known. While we are close to returning to our lives, our friends and family, and a great summer, can the Minister of Children's Services please inform this House as to why it is important for this review to happen now?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Children's Services.

**Ms Schulz:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for Calgary-South East both for driving this work, which I'm happy to co-chair, and for that important question. As we've started to see emerging data on health and mental health impacts on children and youth, we knew it was important to pull together this review panel and get as much information as we could on what that looks like specifically here in Alberta. We also know that as our vaccination rates continue to rise, cases continue to decline, and as we're reopening for the summer, there is no better time than now to ensure that no Albertans, especially our youngest citizens, are left behind in the recovery.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and to the minister for her answer. The pandemic has undoubtedly affected our most vulnerable disproportionately. Given that the Child and Youth Well-Being Review has a thorough and comprehensive engagement plan and given that it is imperative to informing our path forward that our consultations through the review are broad as well as targeted, can the minister please highlight some of the important perspectives we are seeking to hear from during this review?

**Ms Schulz:** Mr. Speaker, the focus of this work is to understand the mental, physical, social, and educational impacts of the pandemic on Alberta's children and youth. Every panel member brings with them extensive experience and expertise related to education, children's health, and mental health. I'm so glad that they agreed to collaborate on this very important work. From school superintendents in both rural and urban areas to an expert on health in indigenous communities, to respected researchers in child psychology panel members are looking forward to collecting data and feedback from all across the province, and we'll hear the lived experiences of parents and kids, ensuring that their voices are heard now and into the future.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-South East.

**Mr. Jones:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and again to the minister. Given that the Child and Youth Well-Being Review expert panel

will deliver their assessment and recommendations to government on how we should address pandemic-related impacts moving forward and given that the well-being of children and youth is not a partisan issue and requires collaboration, to the same minister: can you inform all members of this House as well as their constituents how they can provide their feedback to the panel so that our response as a government can be informed by their important and unique experiences?

**Ms Schulz:** Mr. Speaker, there are a number of ways Albertans can take part in this review. First, they're invited to share their thoughts and ideas with the panel through an online survey from now until July 31 at [alberta.ca](http://alberta.ca). Second, Albertans will be invited to attend town halls, hosted by their MLAs, to learn more and ask questions or call in to telephone town halls, hosted by the Member for Calgary-South East and myself. Experts, community partners, and organizations will be invited to participate in panel-led virtual round-tables as well as provide written submissions. As the member said, the well-being of children and youth is not a partisan issue, and our engagement with Albertans will absolutely reflect that.

### Renewable Energy Development

**Mr. Schmidt:** Yesterday in this House members opposite, including the Associate Minister for Natural Gas and Electricity, made some wild accusations about our record in government that more resembled something you would find on a climate change denial website than anything rooted in fact. They claimed that the adoption of renewables led to skyrocketing electricity prices, even though our government actually set a record for the lowest renewable electricity pricing in Canada. In fact, the contracts we signed are lower than what Albertans are currently paying for electricity under this government, which means that we actually saved Albertans money. Why is the minister spreading misinformation in this House?

**2:10**

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Energy.

**Mrs. Savage:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to advise that our government has attracted over \$2 billion of investment in renewable energy. That is without a single subsidy. That's with removing the REP program. This is renewable electricity coming according to the free market, and there's more to come.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Well, our renewable electricity program also didn't hand out a single subsidy, and in fact the contracts that we signed are currently making money. To date they've made \$26 million for the people of Alberta, and given that through the renewable electricity program we attracted over \$2 billion of private-sector investment and created almost 1,800 jobs and given that Goldman Sachs predicts that renewable energy could see \$16 trillion in global investment through 2030, why is this government turning its back on investment and jobs at a time when they're desperately needed, and why is the minister standing in this House and trying to discredit renewable energy?

**Mrs. Savage:** Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of our record in attracting renewable energy. The other thing I can advise the Chamber is that while the NDP were in government for four years, they did exactly nothing to attract hydrogen. They did exactly nothing to move on critical and rare-earth minerals. We're bringing in policies to attract and diversify our economy. We're not only

attracting renewables; we're attracting hydrogen, critical and rare-earth minerals, and geothermal.

**Mr. Schmidt:** Given that the minister must be reading the phrase "exactly nothing" from her own strategy book and budget documents and given that the cost of electricity has increased dramatically under this government, given that the government has scrapped price protection for consumers and the price of electricity has doubled, and given that climate denial in the war room is actively chasing investment from Alberta, is the minister really going to continue to turn her back on renewable energy? Is she really going to tell Albertans that their prices for electricity have gone down? We've got thousands of letters to suggest otherwise.

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

**Mrs. Savage:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, we're actually attracting renewable electricity in this province, and we're doing it without subsidies. We're actually attracting geothermal development and investment in this province. We're attracting investment in critical and rare-earth minerals, critical and rare-earth minerals that are used to manufacture batteries for no-emitting electricity in transportation. We're attracting hydrogen. We are diversifying our economy and our energy sector, and we're very proud of it.

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

#### Rural Health Care

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past month eight rural Alberta communities have seen services cut, beds closed, even an entire facility closed due to staffing shortages. Families in Boyle, Edson, St. Paul, Elk Point, Galahad, Westlock, Rocky Mountain House, and Fairview have all seen reduced access to health care because of this minister's failure to keep their hospitals and continuing care centres staffed. Now, the Health minister had time to party on the sky palace patio with his buddies in the liquor cabinet; why hasn't he been able to find any to keep our rural hospital beds open?

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

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some communities as well: Tofield, Redwater, Smoky Lake, Whitecourt. Those are the ones that closed when the NDP were in government. This is a new low in hypocrisy for the NDP. They know that physician shortages have always caused gaps in coverage in services in smaller communities. It's why it happened when they were in government, and they did nothing to fix it. They know that it's more difficult in the summer months, when people take vacations. They know that the pandemic has made it much more difficult for staffing to occur, especially finding locum coverage for smaller sites. They can just keep on attacking us for the same problem they did nothing to fix. We're going to lead this province . . .

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

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, given that COVID has had an impact and given that the third wave of COVID wasn't an accident – it was a direct result of this Premier's and his Health minister's incompetence and ideological decisions – because given that they acted last and acted least and left Alberta with the highest COVID case count in North America and given that it's rural communities who are now paying the price for this

government's, this minister's mistakes with doctor shortages, bed closures, cancelled surgeries, uprooted seniors, will the Minister of Health take responsibility, apologize to his rural colleagues for putting their constituents at risk?

**Mr. Shandro:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to highlight a little bit more of the NDP's failings in rural Alberta and doing nothing to fix the shortages in rural areas. In fact, they had net losses in rural doctors during their four years in government. We've had net gains in doctors during our two years in government, even over the last year, in spite of the pandemic, and we're working on longer term solutions as well. It's why we're spending \$90 million a year on rural physician recruitment and retention. We're spending \$6 million over three years to help students from rural Alberta to pay for medical school, and we're continuing to support our . . .

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

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, given that those are welcome steps forward but they come after the minister took about a dozen back and given that this past weekend, in fact, I know we heard from leaders in rural Alberta who told our NDP convention that this Premier, this minister, and this government have stopped listening to their communities and given I heard first-hand that the top issue for those rural communities is funding and keeping health care professionals but this minister is still at war with doctors, planning to fire 11,000 front-line health care workers and more than 700 nurses the moment the pandemic is over, can the minister promise these communities that there will be no more bed closures on his watch? Yes or no?

**Mr. Shandro:** Mr. Speaker, 833: that's the number of increase in nursing positions through the last year under our government. Let's remember last week when the member falsely claimed that the Galahad care centre was closing. Totally . . .

**Mr. Sabir:** Point of order.

**Mr. Shandro:** . . . totally, totally untrue; temporarily 18 residents being transported by AHS to make sure, as they have throughout the pandemic, that everybody in the province is getting the care that they need. They've done that throughout the pandemic, and they're going to continue to do that. The NDP will continue to make their false claims.

**The Speaker:** A point of order is noted at 2:16.

The hon. Member for Calgary-Currie is next.

#### COVID-19 Vaccine Second Doses

**Mr. Milliken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that vaccines are likely our way out of this pandemic and given that our nation-leading vaccination program has continued to push COVID-19 numbers down, I know that at least for my family and I – we have a one-year-old daughter who has only known COVID-19 life – vaccines are definitely going to make this summer my family's best summer ever. Can the Minister of Health please tell Albertans when they can expect to receive their second dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every Albertan who has received their first dose will be eligible to book their second-dose appointment before the end of the month. Alberta is leading the country in our second doses, thankfully. About 14 per cent of

Albertans who are 12 and over have received both doses, and more than 75 per cent of those who are 75 and older have been fully immunized. Last week we opened second doses to everyone who got their first dose in March or earlier. In the coming days we're going to open them up to people who received their first doses in April, and by the end of the month we'll open up second doses to everyone who was immunized in May.

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

**Mr. Milliken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization has provided further guidance on vaccine sequencing, so getting a different vaccine for your second dose is acceptable if the vaccine used for the first dose is not available or if you request a different vaccine. Given that some Albertans may have questions about potential side effects associated with certain vaccines, to the Minister of Health: how will the government reassure Albertans that mixing vaccines is a safe and effective practice?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We take safety seriously, and we're following the advice of the medical experts in Canada as well as around the world and here locally in Alberta. The NACI, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, has clearly stated that it's safe and effective to receive different vaccines for your first and second dose. This recommendation was based on the studies and the trials that were done in Germany, U.K., and Spain along with the emerging evidence from other countries. All the vaccines that we're using are safe, highly effective, so you can be confident in whichever vaccine you receive. I strongly urge everyone to book their second-dose appointment as soon as they're eligible.

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

**Mr. Milliken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister of Health. Given that we know the COVID-19 virus poses an increased threat to older Albertans and those who have underlying health conditions and further given that we are reducing the amount of time between first and second doses for all Albertans, to the same minister: what is the government doing to ensure that vulnerable groups in our population are prioritized and once again put first in line to receive their second dose?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, thanks, Mr. Speaker. Since day one we've prioritized those who are most at risk. With limited supply older Albertans, health care workers, and those with underlying conditions were the first groups to receive vaccine doses, so we're following the same order. We've spaced out the start dates so that those vulnerable groups can have priority for their second doses. With vaccine supply increasing, every Albertan who wants a second dose will be able to receive it in the next couple of months.

### Calgary Stampede and Calgary's Economy

**Member Ceci:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier has hitched his summer reopening wagon to this year's Calgary Stampede. I plan to attend, just like I have every Stampede that's been held since 1995 as an elected person. However, I'm deeply concerned to read in today's paper that the Stampede is in difficult financial shape and is now asking the city of Calgary to waive or amend its debt servicing and credit requirements. The Stampede generated \$154 million in

revenue in 2019 but just \$25 million due to COVID last year. Is the UCP planning to step in and help the Stampede with temporary COVID financial support in this difficult time? Can they provide specifics of that support?

2:20

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Finance and the President of Treasury Board.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first thing I have to say is that I'm so pleased that we're talking about reopening. I'm so pleased that we're talking about the Calgary Stampede going forward this year. I know that COVID has been extremely hard on so many organizations, including the Calgary Stampede organization. They've made a number of moves to reduce their costs. They've adjusted and pivoted, and they're going forward with a plan for this summer. We're happy to sit down and hear from officials at the Calgary Stampede in terms of their current challenges.

**Member Ceci:** Given that the city of Calgary chief financial officer, Carla Male, said that it would take support from governments, lenders, and the community to keep the Stampede's saddle on straight and given that the Stampede generated \$450 million for the Calgary economy and \$540 million for the Alberta economy annually, what guarantee can this government give that the Stampede will continue to be the Greatest Outdoor Show on Earth under its watch? It may require much more than running a truncated exhibition this year.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and the Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know that the member knows this, that we did a stabilized tranche just recently out to large sectors like the Stampede – in fact, I'm so glad you asked me this question because we actually work collaboratively with organizations to fund raise on dollars with the government in order to stabilize organizations like the Stampede – plus other dollars that we already contribute to them. So, yes, indeed, I'm very happy to report that we have put money towards the Stampede, hence the reason they're going to be open this summer.

Thank you.

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

**Member Ceci:** Thanks. Given that this government talks a big game about supporting Calgary's economy but always comes up short and given that under their watch we lost tens of thousands of jobs before the pandemic even began and there are currently 200,000 Albertans looking for work and given that Morgan Stanley became just the latest company to box up its downtown Calgary office last week while the Finance minister sipped wine atop the sky palace and given that the Stampede is struggling and the downtown is in disarray, to the minister: how is this government going to replace the tens of thousands of jobs it helped destroy? Please don't go back to old talking points. Let's have something new.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board.

**Mr. Toews:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because of the challenges as a result of the pandemic and the largest collapse in energy prices in modern history we've rolled out an economic recovery plan that looks to position this province for investment

attraction, and I'm very pleased to say that it's working. Mphasis is setting up its Canadian headquarters in Calgary, bringing at least 1,000 good tech jobs. Infosys, a tech giant, is bringing 500 jobs. Telus is investing \$14.5 billion, creating 8,000 jobs. The Conference Board of Canada claims Alberta will lead the nation in GDP growth.

#### **Premier's Remarks on Canadian Historical Figures**

**Ms Goehring:** Yesterday I acknowledged the comments from the minister of culture as she took the Premier to task for his disgraceful comments on so-called cancel culture and white men when our focus should have been on the Kamloops residential school tragedy. We got no apology from the Premier yesterday for his comments, only a lecture from the Minister of Transportation, who chose to quote a federal politician from another province. To the Premier, the minister, or anyone else willing to answer: does a federal former Liberal and now independent MP have a bigger say with your cabinet than the minister of culture, who, by the way, is also the deputy leader of your government?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I stand here acknowledging 215 little souls. When we think about what that means, not only to B.C. and Canada but also to this province, I'm very honoured to be able to stand here before you to say that our government is going to work very hard with our First Nations brothers and sisters to not only help with what's going on right now but to help reunite them with family members that have been missing for a long time as we go through the process of looking for and repatriating remains to the First Nations.

**Ms Goehring:** Given that the Transportation minister's attempt to change the topic to be about old white men and old grey statues rather than the suffering of indigenous communities and families was horrendous and unbecoming of such a long-time member of this House, will the minister today rise and apologize to the indigenous communities that he offended yesterday? If not, will the Minister of Indigenous Relations rise and commit to having his colleague undergo cultural sensitivity training?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for having my back to the member. It's horrible not being able to talk this way.

I just wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, again, that when we think about the work that needs to be done with First Nations, I think the most important thing that we do is consult and work with and make sure that we're all together in helping to reunite these families and especially when we learn about what has happened in Kamloops. We all owe collectively to our First Nations, every single person in this nation, an apology for all of the horrific things that have happened to these folks in the past, and I'm looking forward to working together with them in the future.

**Ms Goehring:** Given that challenging the Premier in a public way, as the minister of culture and deputy leader did, is a difficult thing to do – and I respect her for it – and given that it's clear, based on the recent comments, that the Premier still does not understand the issues and the hurt that his words have caused and given that if only he would listen to his deputy leader, he might actually gain some

insight into the damage he's caused, will the minister of culture, not the Minister of Transportation, not another white man, rise in this House and explain to the Premier why his comments were so hurtful? Thank you, Minister, in advance for educating this Premier.

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you again Mr. Speaker, and again I'd like to reiterate that when we speak about our First Nations, our brothers and sisters across this country, it's actually about unity. It's actually about moving forward and reconciliation. Nobody wants to be defined by the horrific things of their past, but if we don't recognize that and understand that if we do not put a face to these children, if we do not understand what has happened to them, if we do not call out action, then we are continuing pain and hurt as we go forward. I look very forward to working with all members in this House collectively to make sure that we do everything possible.

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

#### **Residential School Deaths**

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a previous life I devoted a substantial amount of my career to representing indigenous communities. It crushed me to learn of the discovery of the remains of 215 children that were found at a former residential school in Kamloops, B.C. This tragedy comes as a stark reminder of Canada's dark history and the mistreatment of our indigenous population. To the Minister of Indigenous Relations: what is our province doing to help ensure that Canada's dark history and the treatment of our indigenous communities is never forgotten or overlooked?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Labour and Immigration.

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for the question. This discovery was absolutely devastating, and our thoughts and our prayers remain with the families and their loved ones in Kamloops and those impacted by the news. Our government and our colleague the Minister of Indigenous Relations is committed to doing everything that we can to help in the healing process. The minister recently announced Alberta's commitment to fund research into undocumented deaths and burials of indigenous children who did not make their way home. Alberta will provide funding for community-led research and engagement efforts to identify which indigenous communities are affiliated with each residential school in Alberta and will listen and act on the community's wishes.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Calgary-Cross has the call.

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that our government has committed to preserving and remembering indigenous history within our province and given that this government must lead the charge for the movement to protect and preserve the history and significance of indigenous contributions in Alberta, what steps is the Minister of Indigenous Relations doing to ensure that Albertans are well informed about the government's steps towards truth and reconciliation, and what is being done to inform Albertans of the historical treatment of our indigenous communities?

**Mr. Copping:** It is critically important, especially now, that we learn about indigenous history in Canada, Mr. Speaker. By taking the time to learn, we can move even closer to reconciliation. I would

also like to commend the Minister of Service Alberta for taking action last week to waive fees indefinitely for individuals to reclaim their indigenous names. June is actually National Indigenous History Month, and June 21 this year is the 25th anniversary of National Indigenous Peoples Day. This is an important opportunity to learn about the diverse history, languages, and cultures of indigenous people in Alberta, and each weekday in June you will find a fact or story about history, place names, culture of indigenous people on the website for Indigenous Relations.

2:30

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

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you, Minister. Given that our government has now had the opportunity to fully process the horrific events that were uncovered in Kamloops and given that the public interest must be served by focusing efforts to locating any and all potential sites that may have other undiscovered remains and given that a number of these sites are held on private lands such as lands owned by historical societies, the church, or other level of governments, what is the Minister of Indigenous Relations doing to ensure that any and all potential gravesites are investigated by this province?

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

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very proud of the announcement that my colleague the Minister of Indigenous Relations made last week about focusing on this issue. There were 25 residential schools operating in Alberta between 1862 and 1975, some with multiple sites. This includes now on private lands, some on federal lands, some on provincial lands. Some graves and cemeteries associated with residential schools are known and still maintained while others are unknown or not documented. We recognize that this is a delicate matter, and decisions about how to proceed must be indigenous community led and reflect the perspectives of community elders.

**Mr. Feehan:** In March this government passed the Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month Act, which did not include residential schools because, and I quote, not everything will meet the standard and be recognized as genocide. End of quote. The United Nations definition of genocide describes it as committing acts intended to destroy an ethnic group such as “killing members of the group,” “imposing measures . . . to prevent births,” and “forcibly transferring children of the group to another.” Every single atrocity that I just mentioned happened behind the closed doors of residential schools. Now 215 innocent children have been found, yet this government still refuses to accept these facts. When will the government let go of their ignorance and accept that this is . . .

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Labour and Immigration.

**Mr. Copping:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, this was absolutely tragic, what was found in Kamloops, the 215 bodies. Our government and our Minister of Indigenous Relations are focused on supporting reconciliation here in the province of Alberta. I was very pleased that an announcement was made last week to fund research to find undocumented burial grounds here in Alberta and to try to identify all of the children and make sure that families know what happened in their past.

**Mr. Feehan:** Given that these children were forcibly taken from their parents, which is genocide according to the UN definition used by the UCP, and given that these children were then abused, raped, and murdered at these institutions, which is also genocide according

to the UN definition used, will the UCP government finally recognize residential schools for what they were, institutions created to destroy the indigenous population in Canada, and will they apologize to the indigenous community for their refusal to recognize this with the word “genocide,” Minister?

**Mr. Copping:** As indicated previously, Mr. Speaker, this was absolutely tragic, the finding at the residential school of the 215 bodies. Our government is focused on true reconciliation. Our government is focused on supporting aboriginal communities within our province. I was very pleased not only with the announcement in terms of funding to be able to find these undocumented sites here in Alberta but also supporting indigenous communities to grow economically through items such as the Alberta Indigenous Opportunities Corporation.

**Mr. Feehan:** Given that the Premier loves to talk about cancel culture and lament that he sees it as disrespectful to the architects of residential schools and given that indigenous leaders have rightly pointed out today that the real cancel culture occurred with residential schools, which were designed to end the indigenous population in this country, will the government recognize this truth, or are the 215 shoes on the steps, just metres from this House, not enough for the Premier to visualize the reality of this tragedy?

**Mr. Copping:** As indicated previously in this House, Mr. Speaker, by myself, by my colleague the minister of status of women, and also by my colleague the Minister of Indigenous Relations, this was absolutely tragic. We know that we need to work towards reconciliation, and we all know that we need to work together. We are going to be focused on assisting indigenous communities within Alberta to find those undocumented sites, to reunite families so that they know what happened in their past. We are focused on supporting indigenous communities and will continue to do so.

### Cystic Fibrosis Treatment

**Member Loyola:** Mr. Speaker, living with a chronic illness is rough; just ask my constituent Marc, who is living with cystic fibrosis. However, there is a new medication, Trikafta, which could save Marc. It’s the best medication available, but funding barriers mean that only a select few can actually get these drugs. The federal Health minister has agreed to fast-track this drug’s approval through Health Canada and two other amazing drugs, Kalydeco and Orkambi, one of which could help 50 per cent of people with cystic fibrosis and has already been approved by Canada. Will the Health minister do his job and help people like Marc by putting those drugs on the list of Alberta-approved drugs?

**Mr. Shandro:** Well, Mr. Speaker, for both of these new medications, as with a lot of the new medications coming online for rare diseases, the process is first determining the safety through Health Canada’s processes and then, with the CADTH process, the effectiveness. Once it finishes with those processes, then we as provinces enter into negotiations with the manufacturers. Of course, we as Alberta want to push the PCPA, the Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance, to do that process as quickly as possible so we can put those drugs in our formulary.

**Member Loyola:** Given that without access to necessary drugs cystic fibrosis may damage the lungs to the point where people need lung transplants, which are incredibly risky, and given that not everyone can get a transplant and it takes a long time to get wait-listed for lung transplants, waiting in addition to waiting on a wait-list, so much waiting that people have died from waiting, and given

that the recovery from surgery is very expensive, will the Minister of Health protect Albertans from those problems by funding the life-changing drugs I mentioned earlier? If not, why not?

**Mr. Shandro:** I just gave the answer, Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry; I'll repeat it. The next step is now going into negotiations with those pharmaceutical manufacturers for us to be able to list them in the formulary. Of course, with all rare diseases and some of these new drugs that are coming online, especially some of the new gene therapies we saw with some of the SMA medications, we moved very quickly as a province to putting Spinraza in the formulary, thanks also to the advocacy of the Member for Calgary-South East, as well as Zolgesma and being able to do an interim agreement with that manufacturer before they completed their negotiations with the Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance.

**Member Loyola:** Given that funding issues unfairly restrict access criteria, which means that these people will have a poor quality of life, which will progressively deteriorate, and given that the Health ministers of Ontario, P.E.I., and Newfoundland and Labrador have already committed to fund Trikafta, will the Health minister ensure access and work with clinicians to ensure prescribing criteria is based only on genetic mutation and age, that is approved by Health Canada? Clinicians are just as anxious as patients to see them gain access to any of the three life-saving therapies.

**Mr. Shandro:** Mr. Speaker, I gave the answer. Yes, we're very happy to be able to proceed with the next step, which is the Pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance now engaging with the pharmaceuticals so that we can put it in our formulary. I'm very happy when we can all as provinces provide this medication to everybody who has CF throughout Canada. To be able to have access to this medication is going to be life changing. We're looking forward to it. I provided the information to the member. Happy to reiterate it for the third time.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock.

### AgriStability Program

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the last federal-provincial-territorial meeting of agriculture ministers the federal government at the eleventh hour brought forward a proposed change to AgriStability. The current proposal to direct new funding towards AgriStability supports a short-term approach that would not address the bigger issue of providing a more effective and equitable risk management program. To the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry: what is the current status of Alberta's involvement in AgriStability, and are we continuing to negotiate for a better, more worthwhile deal?

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

**Mr. Dreeshen:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member for that very important question. As he rightfully pointed out, we need to make sure that we have business risk management programs for the agricultural sector that actually work for our front-line farmers and ranchers and everybody in our ag sector that every day put food on the tables of not just Albertans but so many families around the world. That's why something that we are fighting for is a better deal. Since the '60s Alberta has transferred about \$600 billion net to Ottawa, so it's about time that Albertans get a better deal.

**The Speaker:** The hon. Member for Athabasca-Barrhead-Westlock.

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that it is difficult to justify the proposed changes for a program that has declining participation and does not work for all agricultural sectors and given that the enrolment rate in AgriStability is only 21 per cent and continues to drop and given that this government has announced its commitment to looking for a replacement for AgriStability, to the same minister: what progress has been made on an alternative program, and how will this government program entice a higher percentage of enrolment?

2:40

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

**Mr. Dreeshen:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a very timely question because this month is actually going to be the consultation month where I go out and talk with industry to make sure that we have their input on how AgriStability, one of the four business risk management programs, can be reformed. As the member rightfully pointed out, about 20 to 21 per cent of our agriculture producers are actually enrolled in AgriStability, and of that only 3.6 per cent actually receive a benefit. We owe it to our ag producers in the province to make sure we have a better AgriStability program.

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

**Mr. van Dijken:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the minister. Given that AgriStability is a federal-provincial partnership program and involves our neighbouring provinces, as they are equally impacted by threats to agricultural viability, and given that the role of business risk management programs is to provide producers with tools to protect the viability of their operations and help with risks beyond their control, to the same minister: is the Alberta government working with other provinces to establish a better deal for AgriStability or in helping to build a new and better program?

**Mr. Dreeshen:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are actually working with Saskatchewan and Manitoba to develop a pan-Canadian AgriStability possible replacement program, but as I mentioned earlier, we're also consulting with industry here in the province to make sure that we can put our best foot forward.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, this concludes the time allotted for Oral Question Period. In 30 seconds or less we will continue to the remainder of the daily Routine.

### Notices of Motions

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

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give notice that at the appropriate time I intend to move the following motion.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly

- (a) acknowledge and mourn that four Muslim Canadians – a grandmother, mother, father, and teenage daughter – were killed yesterday and a little boy seriously injured because of hatred, bigotry, and terrorism in our society;
- (b) denounce and take immediate action to prevent anti-Muslim hate and the rise of hate crimes in Canada and Alberta, where a number of hate-motivated crimes have taken place across this province, including recently;
- (c) further urge the government of Alberta to work with BIPOC communities and all parties of the Legislative Assembly to prevent hate crimes, support victims of hate crimes, fund public education and race-based data collection, and increase funding to and expand the mandate of the Alberta

Human Rights Commission with respect to preventing hate crimes;

- (d) further urge the government of Alberta to table the reports and recommendations of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council by Thursday, June 10, 2021, and release a concrete antiracism action plan by August 30, 2021; and
- (e) strike a bipartisan committee of the Legislative Assembly within three weeks of the passing of this motion to codevelop, implement, and report progress on the antiracism action plan.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give oral notice of Government Motion 84 to be put on the order paper in the hon. the Premier's name.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly

- (a) express its deepest condolences to the loved ones of the four members of a Canadian family killed in a brutal act of Islamophobic terrorism in London, Ontario, yesterday while uniting in hope for the recovery of a young boy who was seriously injured in the attack,
- (b) convey its shared grief with Canada's entire Muslim community following this heinous hate crime while affirming that Muslim Albertans must be able to live in security without fear,
- (c) denounces unequivocally the hatred of Islam, which motivated this attack, while condemning all forms of hatred in our society;
- (d) calls upon the government of Alberta to strengthen law enforcement, educational, and other efforts to combat Islamophobia and all forms of bigotry and hatred;
- (e) encourages the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council to study and report on hate crimes targeting religious and ethnic minority communities.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, we are at points of order, and at 2:16 the hon. the Deputy Opposition House Leader rose on a point of order.

#### Point of Order

#### Allegations against a Member

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise under 23(h), (i), and (j). In response to a question from the Member for Edmonton-City Centre the Health minister rose and accused directly the member, that he falsely claimed something. I think that was a direct accusation, and it's clearly offside the rules of this House.

**The Speaker:** I'm happy to hear the Government House Leader on this point of order. I made many comments about this yesterday, but perhaps the Government House Leader would like to . . .

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Nothing to add, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Thank you for your submission.

Hon. member, I do have the benefit of the Blues, and the hon. the Minister of Health made two comments. He's speaking about a number of health-related things, and then he goes on to say:

Let's remember last week, when the member falsely claimed that the Galahad care centre was closing. Totally . . .

A point of order was called. He then proceeded to say other comments, but the comments in question are:

The NDP will continue to make their false claims.

Yesterday I spoke at some length about the use of the words "deliberately misleading the House," about individuals lying to the Assembly, but simply making a claim that what someone said was

false is much the premise of the debate that takes place inside the Chamber. This is very clearly a dispute of the facts. It is impossible to know whether or not the member made a false claim, so this is not a point of order. I would encourage the Deputy Opposition House Leader to not prolong debate by using points of order, particularly, that have been quite recently ruled upon.

#### Privilege Misleading the House

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, I am prepared to rule on the point of privilege from yesterday. The point of privilege was raised on June 7, 2021, by the hon. Member for Central Peace-Notley. The question has to do with statements made by the hon. Premier and the Minister of Health in the Assembly during Oral Question Period on Thursday, June 3, 2021. The Member for Central Peace-Notley provided notice of the question of privilege to my office at 11:24 on June 7, with a copy to the hon. the Premier, the Minister of Health, the Government House Leader, and the Official Opposition House Leader, thereby meeting the notice requirements under Standing Order 15(2). I also find that this matter was raised at the earliest opportunity, as is required under the standing orders.

In his submission the hon. the Member for Central Peace-Notley referenced a number of comments made in response to questions posed by the opposition during Oral Question Period on June 3, 2021. On the matter of the gathering that the Premier and ministers and the Minister of Health, among others, attended on June 1, 2021, on the upper patio of the Edmonton Federal Building, the member contends that these statements exemplify the Premier's and the Minister of Health's efforts to deliberately mislead the Assembly.

#### 2:50

First, the Member for Central Peace-Notley highlighted a question posed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glenora concerning the gathering, to which the Premier responded:

On Tuesday we moved forward with stage 1 of Alberta's open-for-summer plan, which included expanding outdoor gatherings to a maximum of 10 people. We had a business dinner, which we moved outside, with six people, that was fully rule compliant.

These remarks can be found on page 5212 of *Hansard* for June 3.

The Member for Central Peace-Notley then referenced the Premier's response to the Member for Edmonton-City Centre's question on the same matter, to which the Premier stated in part:

With respect to the rules, we made every reasonable effort to be physically distanced, [outside], rather than doing an indoor meeting, fully compliant with the rules.

These remarks can be found on page 5213 of *Hansard* for June 3.

In addition, the member referenced the Premier's response to a question from the Member for Calgary-McCall in which the Premier stated, in reference to the phase 1 reopening plan:

The same rules apply to everyone, and even members of the [Legislative Assembly] . . .

These comments may be found on page 5213 of *Hansard* for June 3.

Lastly, the Member for Central Peace-Notley highlighted a series of questions posed by the Member for Edmonton-South on gatherings, to which the Minister of Health indicated in part that there were "no rules broken." This exchange can be found on page 5214 of *Hansard* from the same day.

In his arguments in response to submissions from the Member for Central Peace-Notley the Deputy Government House Leader argued that although the Premier had expressed regret that compliance with the rules

may have fallen short at points during the event in question. This does not mean that the Assembly was misled [when it heard

responses to questions on June 3, and it] certainly does not mean that the Assembly was intentionally misled.

These submissions may be found on page 5240 of *Hansard* for June 7, 2021.

Hon. members, it's not the first time during the 30th Legislature that a purported question of privilege concerning the matter of deliberately misleading the Assembly has been raised. Nevertheless, I wish to clarify at the outset that this type of question of privilege, which purports that a member made statements to deliberately mislead the Assembly, is treated as a contempt of the Assembly. As indicated on page 307 of *Erskine May's Treatise on the Laws, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament*, 25th edition, with respect to the United Kingdom, "The Commons may treat the making of a deliberately misleading statement as a contempt." As noted on page 85, *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, third edition, "The provision of deliberately misleading information to the House or one of its committees by a Minister or by a Member" has been raised as a matter of privilege.

As noted on July 7, 2020, at page 1764 and June 25, 2019, at page 1174 of *Hansard* for those days, the test for deliberately misleading the House is very difficult to meet. This test is set out in the fourth edition of *Parliamentary Practice in New Zealand* on pages 75 to 76. While there may be many Albertans – and certainly the Member for Central Peace-Notley may believe that this case is a case that is cut and dried. It, in fact, isn't. The test has three elements, and in order to be seen as a point of privilege, it must meet all three parts of the test. The statements must, one, in fact have been misleading. Now, given the benefit of hindsight, many members of the Assembly may feel that the statements made by the Premier were misleading. Number two, the member must have known that the statement was inaccurate at the time at which the statement was made. Number three, the member must have intended to intentionally mislead the Assembly.

Based on the statements made in Oral Question Period on June 3 and on the question of whether the statement is misleading, it is entirely conceivable that the hon. Premier and the Minister of Health believed that they had been in compliance with the public health rules. The fact that these recollections changed in hindsight does not detract from the fact that when the statement was made, they may have believed it to be factual. In addition, as the Deputy Government House Leader pointed out in his arguments, that can be found on page 5240 of *Hansard* for June 7, paragraph 494 on page 151 of *Beauchesne's* holds or reads as follows: "It has been formally ruled by Speakers that statements [made] by Members respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted." We must take a member at their word even when it may be uncomfortable for the Speaker or other Albertans or when it may seem unlikely.

Therefore, the first element of this test has not been met. The statements made by the Premier and the Minister of Health do not meet the threshold of deliberately misleading this Assembly and do not constitute a contempt. Accordingly, I do not find a prima facie breach of privilege, and this matter is concluded.

In addition, the chair acknowledges that the Premier did in fact apologize for statements that had been made that are the subject of the question, and the chair accepts the apology at its face value. The Premier did so a number of times during question period yesterday and expressed regret for the gathering during a public apology previous to that.

I consider this matter dealt with and concluded.

## Motions under Standing Order 42

**The Speaker:** At the appropriate time during today's Routine the hon. the Member for Calgary-McCall gave notice of his intention to move a Standing Order 42. He now has five minutes to do so, in which I encourage him to speak to the urgency of this matter.

### Denouncing Hate Crimes

Mr. Sabir:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly

- (a) acknowledge and mourn that four Muslim Canadians – a grandmother, a mother, father, and teenage daughter – were killed yesterday and a little boy seriously injured because of hatred, bigotry, and terrorism in our society,
- (b) denounce and take immediate action to prevent anti-Muslim hate and the rise of hate crimes in Canada and Alberta, where a number of hate-motivated crimes have taken place across this province, including recently,
- (c) further urge the government of Alberta to work with BIPOC communities and all parties of the Legislative Assembly to prevent hate crimes, support victims of hate crimes, fund public education and race-based data collection, and increase funding to expand the mandate of the Alberta Human Rights Commission with respect to preventing hate crimes, and
- (d) further urge the government of Alberta to table the report and recommendation of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council by Thursday, June 10, 2021, and release a concrete antiracism action plan by August 30, 2021, and strike a bipartisan committee of the Legislative Assembly within three weeks of the passing of this motion to codevelop, implement, and report progress on the antiracism action plan.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you mentioned, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 42 to request that the ordinary business of the Legislative Assembly be adjourned to debate a motion in regard to a matter that is both urgent and pressing. The motion, which I read under Notices of Motions, has been distributed to members of the Assembly, as I have provided the appropriate number of copies. An electronic copy has also been provided to the table. Further, while a motion under SO 42 requires no notice, my office did provide advance notice to the Speaker of my intention to introduce a motion under the appropriate standing order as per the Speaker's memo. We also have shared in advance the wording of the motion with other parties and members in the House.

As my colleagues have frequently pointed out, Standing Order 42 is an opportunity for all members of this Assembly, specifically the private members of the Assembly, to ensure that matters that are important to their constituents are debated and addressed in this House. Allow me to briefly outline why this motion and its outcome are urgent and pressing today.

Mr. Speaker, four Canadians were targeted and killed yesterday in London, Ontario. We mourn together today and with the families and loved ones of Salman and Madiha Afzaal, their daughter Yumna, and the family's grandmother, whose name has not been released. Our hearts break for the Afzaal's son Fayez. But mourning is not enough for us today. This attack is an urgent reminder that anti-Muslim actions and hate crimes are on the rise in Alberta, and we must act now to prevent any further hate-motivated crimes in this province. The Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women said today in this House that the policy work in this area cannot be rushed. We could not disagree more. In fact, we must rush.

3:00

We must have this debate today so that we can say that we acted, that we acted when we could to stop any more moms, dads, grandmas, aunties, uncles, or sisters or brothers from being targeted by acts of hate and violence. Mr. Speaker, we have actions that can be taken today. We must consider these today. I'm urging the Legislature to put aside routine business and focus on the actions we can take together to stop acts of hate in Alberta immediately.

I also want to say that the Government House Leader has given notice of Government Motion 84, which deals with this attack but does not contain the action that the community is looking for. Two actions I will outline. One, the community is looking for the release of the antiracism report with an action plan. Two, the community is looking for a bipartisan committee of this House to address the rise of racism, and that has been requested by many community groups, including the National Council of Canadian Muslims. In a sense, Government Motion 84 essentially takes away these actions and makes this motion weaker.

For this reason, I'm asking the Assembly to grant unanimous consent to adjourn the ordinary business of the House to debate this urgent and pressing matter. I am moving this motion on behalf of those who are more insecure, who are more fearful after every incident. I hope that the Government House Leader will let this standing order and this motion stand and not try to water down the actions that are contained in this motion.

Thank you, and I hope everybody supports this motion.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 42 there is the opportunity for a response to the arguments made by the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall. It appears that the hon. Government House Leader will be providing the response. He has up to five minutes to do so.

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, thank you for that, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the hon. member and to the Official Opposition for bringing an important motion to this Assembly today and indicating the need for the Chamber to have an opportunity to be able to have a discussion about what was a really horrific situation that took place in Ontario.

As I indicated earlier in question period today, Mr. Speaker, through you to everybody involved, our condolences to all the family involved as well as to the people of Ontario on what is really just a horrific and unacceptable moment in our country.

I indicated to the Leader of the Official Opposition that we would like to be able to have a discussion about this in this Chamber today. That is still the case. I think I can speak for all members that we believe that this is an important issue to be able to discuss today. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we did not receive the notice of the Standing Order 42, which is not required by the Official Opposition. I did not receive it until after I had answered the questions of the Official Opposition leader. We've looked through it today in the brief time that we've had. We have some concerns, quite frankly, with things around royal prerogative and the way financial motions could work inside the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, those are procedural issues and not something that we would want to spend time on. We agree with the Official Opposition that it's important to debate this issue today, and that's why throughout question period I rushed to be able to get another motion on the Order Paper so that we don't focus on points of order, on procedural matters inside the Chamber but can actually get to debating this very, very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, we will be saying no to this Standing Order 42 motion, and immediately after that I will be rising to ask for unanimous consent to be able to move the House to the new

Government Motion 84 to be able to make sure that we can facilitate that debate going forward.

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

This is a request for unanimous consent. I am thinking carefully about the words that I use because it is important for the future of precedent around notices of motions. The reason why I say "carefully" is that I hope that it doesn't impact the way that a member might provide consent or not.

But I will just say that it is rare and particularly, you know, outside of the context of which a motion other than a government motion would be proceeded with with respect to specific requests for funding. I lay that at the feet of the Assembly more so for the future than for today, that a request for funding does provide some challenges in the context of this legislative tool.

[Unanimous consent denied]

**The Speaker:** We are at Ordres du jour.

### Orders of the Day

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

**Mr. Jason Nixon:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for unanimous consent to waive notice requirements on Government Motion 84 to proceed to its debate this afternoon.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, the hon. the Government House Leader has made a request for unanimous consent to waive the notice requirements of one day on the Order Paper for a government motion and immediately proceed to debate on Government Motion 84.

[Unanimous consent granted]

### Government Motions

**The Speaker:** The hon. the Premier.

### Denouncing Hate Crimes

84. Mr. Kenney moved:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly

- (a) express its deepest condolences to the loved ones of the four members of a Canadian family killed in a brutal act of Islamophobic terrorism in London, Ontario, yesterday while uniting in hope for the recovery of a young boy who was seriously injured in the attack;
- (b) convey its shared grief with Canada's entire Muslim community following this heinous hate crime while affirming that Muslim Albertans must be able to live in security without fear;
- (c) denounces unequivocally the hatred of Islam, which motivated this attack, while condemning all forms of hatred in our society;
- (d) calls upon the government of Alberta to strengthen law enforcement, educational, and other efforts to combat Islamophobia and all forms of bigotry and hatred;
- (e) encourages the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council to study and report on hate crimes targeting religious and ethnic minority communities.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

**Mr. Kenney:** Madam Deputy Speaker, first of all, let me thank the Official Opposition and the hon. the Member for Calgary-McCall

for having first raised a proposed motion. I regret there was a procedural issue, but this is an opportunity for us to join our voices together in an unequivocal denunciation of the terrorist hate crime which brutally took the lives of four innocent people yesterday and has hospitalized with severe injuries a young boy.

Madam Speaker, it is still, I think, for all of us hard to contemplate what kind of evil in a person's heart could lead them to such a random but also, in a sense, premeditated act of terrorism. It's not hard to imagine that this young man, who is under arrest in Ontario, set out in his truck to drive through an area of London knowing that many people were out for an evening stroll, many people from diverse backgrounds, including members of London, Ontario's, large Muslim community. Apparently, based on the reports that we have seen, the alleged criminal, a young man, drove his truck off the road and drove over a family that was out simply peacefully, quietly minding their own business, walking and enjoying a spring evening.

According to London police he did so deliberately because this family was visibly Muslim. Madam Deputy Speaker, apart from the infamous shooting attack on a Quebec City mosque several years ago, this stands as the most vile and lethal violent hate crime certainly targeting Muslim Canadians in our history.

**3:10**

In my thoughts and, I think, for all of us, let our thoughts go first of all to the loved ones of the family that has been destroyed, to all that knew them, to their friends, neighbours, but, most especially, to their young son, who is apparently fighting for his life in the hospital in London, Ontario. Our prayers go out to that young boy for his complete recovery.

More broadly, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think it's necessary that we express our sympathies to the entire Canadian Muslim community. I was speaking to the Member for Calgary-North last night about this and to the Member for Calgary-Cross earlier today, and I said to both of them that I cannot even imagine the sense of insecurity, of vulnerability, of fear that this terrorist attack must have created for all Canadian Muslims, most especially for those who maintain traditional practices that are more visibly Muslim, because that is why, I imagine, these people in London were targeted.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the first responsibility of the state of government is to maintain and protect public security, public safety. This has sent a deeply troubling message to our Muslim neighbours across Canada, including here in Alberta, who now wonder, if they step out of their home to go for a walk in a park, down the sidewalk, whether they are going to be targeted by hateful violence. Every crime, every murder is deplorable and tragic, but a crime of this nature is of a different character, in my view, such a flagrant and disturbing targeting of a particular religious minority community for lethal violence. This should be a call for all of us to, first of all, show real solidarity and compassion for our Muslim neighbours, friends, and fellow citizens. Compassion: the root of that word means "to suffer with." I invite all members and all Albertans to find some way to express authentic compassion to the hundreds of thousands of wonderful Albertans of the Muslim faith.

Madam Deputy Speaker, perhaps some imagine, those who communicate, convey these twisted and hateful ideologies, that Islam is a new and somehow foreign religion in Canada. Perhaps that's part of their twisted ideology. The truth is this. In this province we are fortunate to be able to say that in many ways Alberta is the cradle of the Muslim community in Canada. The very first mosque in North America, the Al Rashid mosque, was built here in Edmonton in collaboration between Muslims supported by their neighbours, Christians and Jews, in a beautifully Canadian

story. The very first Muslim elected in the Commonwealth was Larry Shaben, who served in the cabinet of Premier Peter Lougheed. His family actually helped to build that first mosque. The very first Muslim Member of the Canadian Parliament was Edmonton MP Rahim Jaffer. The very first Muslim mayor of a major Canadian city: His Worship Mayor Nenshi of Calgary. The very first Muslim vice-regal representative in Canada, of course: Her Honour the Honourable Salma Lakhani, our wonderful Lieutenant Governor. These individuals and stories represent the presence of a Muslim community in this province that goes back over a century to, in fact, before we were a province.

To those who try to – I don't know – as part of their twisted ideology of hatred, imagine that this is a community that is somehow not at home in Canada or Alberta: they don't have a clue about our own history, Madam Deputy Speaker. Let me be clear. Islam has a long history in Alberta. Islam has every bit as much protection under our constitutional freedom of religion as any other faith, not a patina less. Muslims in Alberta have made a huge and oversized contribution to our vibrancy and prosperity as a society. They are law-abiding, patriotic, community-oriented citizens who love their families and, yes, are loyal to their faith, which I think speaks so highly of a community that is motivated by its faith to give to others. So let us together denounce any effort to try to identify or separate Muslims as, quotes, the other. They are us.

Muslims in Alberta and Canada must know that when they leave their homes, when they gather for prayer, when they live their normal lives, that they live in peace and security. They must know that all of us stand with them in solidarity and will not tolerate – of course not – these acts of violence nor the ideologies of hatred that motivate twisted individuals to such murderous acts as these, as we saw on Sunday in London. We can speak to those convictions in this motion. At the same time this must be a call to action for all of us to do better.

The motion speaks to a request of the Alberta Anti-Racism Advisory Council study and report on hate crimes targeting religious and ethnic minority communities. Of course, there should be a particular focus on Islamophobic hate crimes, but we have also seen, even in recent months, targeted vandalism and threats and occasional violence directed at people from other ethnic and religious minority communities, recently targeted attacks against members of Alberta's Jewish community, and, of course, Sikhs and Hindus and Christians have also seen targeted expressions of hatred. I hope that out of a tragedy such as this people of all faiths and backgrounds can come together in a sense of shared solidarity to defend all minorities.

Madam Speaker, I know that the hon. the Minister of Justice will be making an announcement in the days to come about a heightened focus in the administration of law in Alberta on hate crimes. I know that he has worked very closely with the police agencies across the province in prioritizing the prevention of and prosecution of hate crimes and will be coming forward with additional measures to strengthen that police focus on the prevention and prosecution of hate crimes.

**3:20**

The government of Alberta will also be announcing in the days to come the security infrastructure project, which we committed to in 2019. That will provide direct grants to vulnerable community institutions like mosques, synagogues, Hebrew schools, Islamic schools, and others that have been targets of vandalism and hatred to help them harden their own security and protect their community members and cobelievers. We must and will review our broader efforts with respect to education and engagement to combat Islamophobia and all forms of bigotry and hatred.

I know that our police agencies are in constant contact with leaders of the Muslim community and other communities that have faced hate crimes, and we encourage them to redouble their efforts at this particular time. I think that we all, in the back of our minds, are afraid, Madam Deputy Speaker, about other crazy and hateful people being motivated or triggered by acts of violence such as this, so I hope and expect – and I say this to the Solicitor General – that police services are making every effort to reach out to those vulnerable communities and ensure that they have all of the necessary access to resources and protection from the police services.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this kind of crime is just so profoundly wrong on so many levels. I mean, one level where it just touches me is the notion of attacking an entire family: mother and father and children, young children. This is not just an attack against individuals; this is an attack against the family, the family where children have their security and gain their sense of their place in the world, secure to be with their parents out in what is, we imagine, a peaceful country. To have an entire family unit attacked and destroyed in this way is particularly pernicious.

Then, Madam Deputy Speaker, this is also an attack not just against the Muslim people and the religion of Islam, but I submit it's an attack against all people of faith. You know, religious freedom means nothing if it is not freedom for all religions, and religious freedom means nothing if people of faith cannot operate in a society, function in a society without security. I would plead with people who may not understand Islam, who may have distorted or hateful prejudices, to understand that if they have deeply held convictions, if they have a different faith, attacks of this nature undermine the cohesion and security of our society, which we all rely upon for the protection of our rights.

Madam Speaker, I want to express a particular word of sympathy and concern, as I have said, to all Muslims in Canada. We have a number of Muslim members of this Assembly. I honestly just want to express sincere condolences to them. These are good people. They represent a community that too often faces casual prejudice, soft bigotry. Now for them to have to take onboard the targeting of this kind of mass murder in their community is too much. It must be too much. I just invite the Muslim members of this place to please convey to their neighbours and family and friends in the broader community that in this place today we are putting aside politics, we are putting aside our factions, we're putting aside our own backgrounds to say that we stand united with the Muslims of Alberta and Canada today.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I see the hon. Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie.

**Member Loyola:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It's with an incredibly heavy heart that I get up to speak inside the House today. I'm sorry. The events that happened in London, Ontario have impacted our community so immensely. So many of the Muslim brothers and sisters in our community are feeling completely afraid to even be outside in public. Most of all, our Muslim sisters because they are obviously – they wear a hijab, and people can tell that they're Muslim. For us men, if we're not covering our heads, we can pass. This is a direct attack on our women, our partners, the people that work with us day in and day out to make sure that we're a strong community. I'm absolutely heartbroken because when I think about that family, when I think about the Salman family in London, Ontario, I think about all of the beautiful families that live not only in my riding but all over Edmonton and all over Alberta. It could have been any one of those families. They were just targeted by the way that they were dressed.

I think that we have so much work to do. I appreciate the members of this House who are getting up and denouncing this because, as I said in my member's statement today, this is the bare minimum that we can do. The bare minimum. I know for a fact that we can do more. I know absolutely for a fact that we can do more. I ask this House and politicians across this land: analyze, legitimately analyze how this hate is started. It comes from the polarization of specific values that we have in our society, when we start seeing other people as the other, as somehow less Canadian. Oh, they're immigrants; they've come here, and they somehow are less. They have less right to be here. We all know that this is not true.

Everyone in this House knows that we need to strengthen hate crime legislation. We need to do our best to help at the federal level to make sure that hate crime legislation is strengthened. I want to address for a moment that one of the young, black, Muslim women that was targeted here in the city of Edmonton, when she went to police, they tried to persuade her not to make the claim that it was a hate crime or a hate-motivated crime. So we have to ask ourselves: what is happening within our institutions when people are trying to be persuaded not to say that it is what it is, that a hate crime is not a hate crime? What is happening?

3:30

Now, I know that perhaps you can say, "Well, this was just one individual," but the sad reality is that it's individual after individual after individual within the institutions, and we have to ask ourselves: what is happening with how these individuals are being trained within these institutions, that are then telling people to not make the claim that it's a hate-motivated crime? That's where we need to do better.

We all know that we need to make sure that we do as much as we possibly can to educate one another about hate-motivated crimes and racism in our society. I've gotten up a number of times in this House and talked about the racism that my own family had to endure when we came to Canada back in 1976 and me, just as a child, helping my dad rake leaves during the fall and kids riding their bikes in front of our house and saying: go home, you dirty Chileans. They had no idea what Chileans are. Where did they learn that hate?

One of the things that we need to absolutely make sure – and what we could do at an individual level is to make sure that when we hear racism in public spaces, we stop right then, right at that moment, and say: I'm sorry, but what you're saying is racist. I want to encourage people to do it in the most respectful way possible. You know, people may be, like: well, how could you respect someone that's saying something racist? But the reality is that if we get into a conflict with that person, perhaps they'll never change. And you know what? They may not change their mind at that moment, but when we use humility and we use respect, then maybe they'll go away from that conversation and later on think to themselves: wow, that person was a really good person to me, and even though they called me on racism, maybe they were right.

I want to speak specifically about this word "Islamophobia." I mean no disrespect to the people who are using it, but I want us to think about the words that we use. A phobia or phobias in general are unnatural and beyond people's control. When it comes to this type of racism, we need to centre the people in the discussion. This is not about a fear of Islam; it's about hate towards our existence as Muslims here in this land. We need to call it what it is: it's anti-Muslim hate. That's what it is. It's anti-Muslim hate, and it comes from somewhere. It's born from somewhere. I want us all to do better, including myself. We need to make sure that we don't make – we need to think about the language that we use because

sometimes we hear other people use language and we think: oh, okay; well, that's what these people are saying, so we're going to use that.

Like, the whole talk – I'm on several social media and WhatsApp discussion groups. The whole Muslim community is: well, why aren't they calling it an act of terrorism? The whole community is like: how come the politicians aren't calling it an act of terrorism? That's what it was. It was an act of terrorism, and I would really appreciate it if everybody in this House would call it what it is, because when is it going to stop? How many more people from the Muslim community have to die or get attacked? And not just people from the Muslim community, because we all know that it happened in several communities, against several different ethnic communities.

Canada has never been a white nation. Immigrants have been coming here since the dawn of the creation of Canada, and even before that, the indigenous people were here, which is their rightful land. We need to make sure that every Albertan and every Canadian has those types of discussions where we recognize that we all live in indigenous territory, that we are settlers here. We need to talk about racism and the effects of racism at the dinner table, at the lunch counter, at the water cooler and not be afraid to stand up for just relationships between people that are ethnically diverse and of other religions. It's easy to say, "We can all get along," but we need to do more to strengthen legislation.

We've called for it in this House several times, that we need a provincial hate crimes unit. This is something so important because the people who have the potential of committing these acts of terrorism are on social media. They are on public forums, and they are there preaching their hate. A provincial hate crimes unit can look into these things, track these people, see the things that they are saying, and at least attempt to stop them before they go and kill somebody or hurt somebody in our community. That would be real action on this file, on this front, making sure that we have a provincial hate crimes unit that legitimately deals with these kinds of scenarios.

We need more supports for victims of hate-motivated crimes as well. We've called for that in the House time and time again. I really do hope, as I stated in my member's statement earlier today, that we can put the ideological differences aside when it comes to this issue. Let's work together to make sure that we can get this provincial hate crimes unit established, more supports for victims of hate-motivated crimes, make sure that we have more public education for all Albertans, try to figure out how to get the information out to as many people as possible so that people are having these conversations day in and day out, because it's not going to go away unless we address it. We need to keep bringing it up.

Yesterday I tried to keep myself incredibly busy because every time I stopped to think about what happened, I just wanted to burst into tears. It wasn't until I went to go pray my last prayer of the day at the masjid along with my community that I couldn't hold back the tears of sadness and frustration any longer. As I prayed, I cried and I cried and I cried because even though here I am in a position of privilege, able to help in the decision-making process, in the democratic decision-making process, I feel powerless because we're divided. We continue to use rhetoric that continues to polarize the people of Alberta. We need to take responsibility for this. We need to watch the words that we say in debate, be careful with what we are saying because although you may not have the intention of making it sound like it's hate, the people that do hate interpret it that way. Then they go out, and they act upon that hate. Let's be realistic. That's what's happening here. So let us think twice, three times, and even more before the words that come out

of our mouths exit. Let us understand that we are either contributing to the problem or the solution.

**3:40**

To the Muslim community I want to convey my deepest, deepest sympathy, and as a representative in this House that is a Muslim, I promise I'm going to keep doing the most that I possibly can so that this never happens again. I call on our Muslim community to be as united as possible at this very difficult time. Let's keep working together to make sure that all governments all over this land begin to implement real legislation and policy that will address this problem to make sure that it never happens again on Canadian soil. It's happened way too many times already.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'd just like to remind all members that a copy of the motion has been distributed to members of the opposition, and to those wishing to receive a copy themselves, they are available at the side tables.

I will now recognize the hon. Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues that have spoken. It's hard with COVID and not being able to embrace each other at these very difficult times. I want to start off by saying to my colleagues that we're not divided. This is not division. This is hatred that exists in the shadows and has a space where it can grow. But I want to acknowledge to our Muslim brothers and sisters that there's no division, especially amongst us and in this act of terrorism but also collectively in the terror that it brings to all of us knowing that our friends and families could be targeted.

I remember the Solicitor General when the two young girls in the hijabs were attacked in Calgary. Something that will remain with me for a long time is when he stood up and spoke about it, and he said: those could have been my daughters. Can you imagine walking down the street or walking in the park and suddenly somebody just lashes out at you and pushes you to the ground and yells at you and tells you that you're not worthy or that you look different and that that somehow justifies this absolutely horrific behaviour? And then to escalate to this point where an entire family was annihilated, short of a young man who will carry this story with him for this rest of his life: not only will we mourn with him, but the whole country will carry him as a child of this country, where we will help.

To the member's point, there is so much to do. The Minister of Justice, I'm sure, will be highlighting actions that will be coming forth on the hate crimes, so I will leave that for him to discuss. But I want to honour the words that have come here by the actions that will be taken not only by government but all of us collectively here together, because we're not divided. We're not divided. We're family. It might be a family that doesn't always agree, but in this there is no other place to stand other than side by side because if they can divide us in here on these matters, then out there anything is possible. But if we're willing to take a stance in here and debate at this level in this House collaboratively, together, on how we can do better, we will do better.

I wanted to talk a little bit about – legislation, as we all know, does not move quickly, and it takes time to make sure that the legislation is reflective of the world that is out there and how we can actually help. It's easy to put things into words sometimes but not so easy to make sure that those are carried out in a mechanism that will actually change things. To hear that this young woman was told by the police that she shouldn't file under the hate crimes is so disturbing.

Recently, as you also know, there was a report that came out about a noose that was hung on the door of a Nigerian doctor. It's another similar case where we question the validity of the information that comes out when suddenly that is not considered racist. These are all things that are happening. As hard as this is, I have to say how grateful I am to be able to stand amongst all of you here, to be able to rise to the occasion, to be able to be part of the solution.

I just wanted to read from one of the articles – and I'll make sure to table this – from Chief Steve Williams, who was at the site of this horrible crime. He said that this was an act of mass murder perpetrated against Muslims, against Londoners and rooted in unspeakable hatred. He said: this act of unspeakable hatred, this act of Islamophobia must be followed by acts of compassion, acts of kindness, acts of empathy, acts of solidarity, justice, and, above all else, love. I want to tell all of you in here that all of those things are necessary. We all stand in here with great humility and love for our Muslim brothers and sisters and all others who have been impacted in this way. We've seen so much of it this year.

I won't speak for too much longer because there are many who want to speak right now and many who have very personal stories when it comes to what is happening. We're not divided. I refuse to believe that the general population is divided. There are people who will try to divide us, but it's truly up to us to be above that and to work together and to be able to bring forward in these places amazing pieces of policy and operational pieces that will help us to be better and to help define our society in a way we want to see it go forward so that future generations not only will feel safer, but they'll stand in solidarity together to make sure that Canada grows into the country that we know it can be.

To the family. So many eloquent words have been said before me. As a mom I can't even fathom it. I just want to offer my deepest condolences right across this country on behalf of myself and our government to this family and to others who've been impacted by this and to let them know that the government of Alberta stands with them.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to rise and speak to the government motion today. I'd like to begin by expressing my deepest condolences to the young man who lost three generations of his family to this brutal, heartless act of domestic terror. I want to thank those who've spoken before me, in particular my colleague from Edmonton-Ellerslie for his deeply felt, passionate words. He is a man with great integrity, great empathy. I know that this hurts and wounds him deeply, as it does all members of the Muslim community, and sadly at a time when they have already experienced so much hurt, sadly right here in our city and in our province.

3:50

This act does not stand alone. Unfortunately, it is one of far too many that have occurred over the last few years, from people being gunned down in mosques to attacked on the street. But there is a particular brutality in this particular act, a family which was just in the simple action of going for a walk being brutality targeted and run down in the street.

I appreciate the words that were shared by the minister, expressing her empathy, expressing her wish that this not be divisive. I share that. But I think it's incredibly important, Madam

Speaker, that we cannot stand here today and condemn this event in isolation, particularly given our role as elected officials, who work within a particular landscape, indeed, as my colleague from Edmonton-Ellerslie noted, who carry enormous weight and power with our words. I think it's incredibly important that we acknowledge how we got here. This was not something that sprang out of nowhere. The issues we currently have with anti-Muslim hate are something that was created, that was fostered. People have intentionally fanned those flames for political gain, for financial gain, for gain of power. People have used this for their own ends.

While we recognize, indeed, that issues of racism and the targeting of visible minorities have been ongoing for some time, we know that there was a particular growth in targeted anti-Muslim hate following the events of 9/11, when we saw governments, I think at times, take some significant overreach based on public fear, and we saw the beginnings of political movements that chose to capitalize on that fear and chose to do so by targeting the Muslim community. We have seen that continue to grow ever since. While indeed we have seen, as we often do, that be far more visible and perhaps far more obvious in the U.S., it is also taking place right here in Canada, and we have had individuals, purported media outlets, politicians, and others who have chosen to inflame that, again seeking to do so for their own political advantage.

Now, I am happy to say, Madam Speaker, that we have seen that dial move significantly in terms of what is considered to be acceptable now in our public sphere. I think it does us well to remember that it was not that long ago that a simple motion on the floor of our House of Parliament in Ottawa, Motion M-103 – that was only in 2017, 2018 – denouncing anti-Muslim hate became a political football, with politicians lining up to stand behind it and decry it, to misrepresent it, and, in doing so, empower anti-Muslim hatred, to excuse it as acceptable free speech to attack a Muslim woman, the MP Iqra Khalid, who brought it forward, much as we see folks targeting Muslim members of Congress in the U.S.

It was not that long ago that there were still politicians, there were still political individuals who considered that to be acceptable, and we still have the results of that here today. While, thankfully, it is now only the most fringe of these far-right politicians that will still put this venom in the public sphere that will still appear with outlets like Rebel media, it was not that long ago that indeed there were members of this House who, while they did not personally espouse these views, were willing to stand beside them. I say that not to be divisive. I will not name any names today, either here or politicians in other parts of Canada; I just merely wish to note that this does not occur in a vacuum. We have to reckon with that.

Indeed, there are members in this House today who have made significant progress in their views from some of the choices that they made in the past and policies that they put forward from positions of power at various levels of government that they would not do today. They have clearly changed the manner in which they speak, and for that, I give them credit because we have to end this kind of conversation, this empowering of anti-Muslim hatred in the public sphere. It's difficult, I recognize, Madam Speaker, because it has become intertwined with so many other things. We saw recently, with much of the COVID skepticism, the anti-mask movement. Again, we know that individuals who are a part of white supremacist groups that promote anti-Muslim hatred tried to infiltrate other political movements to recruit and radicalize. Indeed, that is what we saw through some of these recent movements.

It can be challenging when we have friends or family or folks who may support us politically, who may be invested in some of these views to call it out. But, frankly, Madam Speaker, that is a small sacrifice for each of us to make compared to the sacrifice that

has been asked of this young boy who now has lost his entire family, the three people that lost their lives, the women that have been attacked here in the streets of Edmonton, the entire Muslim community, which as my colleague from Edmonton-Ellerslie so aptly noted, now lives in fear. Those who, when we are talking about things like anti-Muslim hatred, speak loudest about the need to protect free speech are those who least feel the effects of it. They're not the ones who have to think twice before they step out their door. They're not the ones who have to think about whether the person that is walking behind them is merely going in the same direction or is intentionally stalking, whether that person staring at them from across the room is a threat.

There is no denying that we have to weigh things carefully when we are looking at antihate legislation. I'm pleased to hear that there's something that the Minister of Justice is considering, and I look forward to seeing what he might bring forward. I recognize that there are complex things that we have to balance there, but, Madam Speaker, we truly have to consider what the impacts of our words are and the impact of allowing the kinds of hateful speech, particularly towards the Muslim community, that have been allowed to foment for far too long. It is a challenging conversation, but it is one that we must not shy away from, which is why when we brought forward our notice of Standing Order 42 today, we put in very specific actions that we would like to see taken.

4:00

Now, I recognize that the government felt that there were some there that, because it would involve the increasing of funding for the Alberta human rights council and other things, were not appropriate to bring forward in such a motion. Fair enough. But I think it is important that we do work to take real action. Over the last year we've had the opportunity to speak with many from racialized communities across the province of Alberta, to work to develop policy, to develop ideas. There are many active steps we can take together, and we are willing to work with the government to do that.

I will end by saying to all those who may be listening today from the Muslim community in Alberta, to all those who may listen later, and to those who may not ever hear my words: we see you. We recognize the incredible pain this brutal attack, this brutal case of domestic terrorism has for you and others in your community, that it builds on other attacks that have happened over the last year. We value you. We welcome you. You are part of our community. You have every bit as much right to be here as any of us, and we will not rest in our work in this Assembly to ensure that you are able to feel safe, walk proud in your community as a Muslim Albertan.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, the hon. Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Madu:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me begin by thanking the hon. Premier for introducing Government Motion 84, and let me also thank all of my colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, that have provided their comment on this important motion on the sad occurrence that we just witnessed in London, Ontario. Let me offer my condolences as Alberta's Justice minister and Solicitor General to all of our Muslim brothers and sisters here in our province and across our country on this heinous crime committed against this family.

We grieve the loss of the Afzaal family: Salman Afzaal, the father and husband; Madiha, a mother and a wife; Yumna, their daughter; and Yumna's grandmother. We are grateful that their young son

Fayez survived this attack. We will keep him in our prayers and thoughts for a full and swift recovery. Whilst we know that the days, weeks, months, and years to come are going to be rough for that young man, I hope he knows that all of us, his fellow countrymen and -women, will be praying for him.

You know, there is no question, Madam Speaker, that this is a despicable act of terror and hatred. When this was brought to my attention, I issued a statement, and I called it for what it is. I wrote:

The terrorist attack that killed a Muslim family in London, Ontario, is truly sickening. We grieve for the tremendous loss of this family, and we pray for the recovery of their nine-year-old son who was also hurt in this horrific, calculated act of murder.

I also said publicly that

while Canada has made great strides in combatting bigotry and racism, this is a dark day for our country. This is an attack on all Canadians, and we must continue to confront racism, wherever it rears its sinister head.

I offered my condolences to the entire Muslim community who are here, at home, and across our country.

I have often stood before the floor of this Assembly to say that racism, bigotry, discrimination, and hate – hate of any kind, much less hate that is motivated by what you look like, the perception of who you are – have got no place in our society, in Alberta, and in this country.

You know, I say this as someone who, like some of my colleagues that have personal experience with hate, racism, and discrimination, has had to deal with this from birth. I do want the members of our Muslim community to know that they do have an ally in this government, in their fellow Albertans, and in me as their Justice minister because I have a profound understanding of the impact of hate and racism and discrimination on our lives, on our confidence, on whether or not we are going to be able to live our life in a way that ensures that we achieve our dreams. Just take a look at what happened in London, Ontario: three generations of a family wiped out in just one hate incident, one hate attack. How does one wrap his head around this sort of thing? Just take a look at the enormity of what has befallen nine-year-old Fayez.

In Edmonton many of you know that I am of the Igbo stock in southeast Nigeria. I grew up living side by side with Christians and Muslims. As a young man in university, in hostels: bunk beds, side by side, Christians and Muslims. Many of my friends are of different ethnic backgrounds: Muslims, Christians, Jews; you name it. You know, when it was time for me to do the national service – in Nigeria that's what it's called – when it was time for me to embark on national service after my law degree, I chose a place called Borno state. Many of you may not know that Borno is the birthplace of Boko Haram. When I was in law school about to graduate, I was hearing cases of people being arrested by law enforcement without being given the opportunity to be brought to court to at least be told what crime they had committed, to answer for their crime if they had committed a crime. They were just being dumped in prisons across that particular state, left to rot there, forgotten by the entire legal system, forgotten by their society.

When I got to Borno, I offered to work for, first, the Legal Aid Council, Maiduguri, in Borno state. My job was to make sure that I attended every single prison and correctional facility in that particular state to force the state and law enforcement to bring these individuals – they were being sometimes kidnapped from the street, without their families and friends knowing where they are, and dumped in dungeons.

4:10

You know, we are fortunate to live in the western world. Prisons, correctional facilities here are palaces where I come from, where I was born and raised. This is not a joke. Those were the types of

places where those individuals were dumped. I fought the state and law enforcement. Thank goodness, I survived. There were days when I was targeted for assassination. I was shot at. My saving grace was being able to go to court to obtain court orders. At least it was public. If anything happened to me, they'd know the nature of the work I was doing.

When I knew that there were limitations with Legal Aid Council in being able to successfully get that particular job done, I negotiated with the Attorney General of that particular state. By sheer dint of a miracle, he offered me a spot where I now had the tools to actually go after the people, those individuals, and get them to court. There were many of them, you know, who had been kidnapped or arrested just because of what they look like, because they quarreled with somebody that was powerful, because they said something they should not have said, or because they refused to bribe somebody. That was how many of them saw the light of day from the dungeons where they were kept, brought into the court room, and from there to their freedom.

I tell you this story so that the Muslim community knows that although I can't comprehend the extent of the pain that they are going through right now, although I can't comprehend the extent of the state of helplessness that they feel, I do want them to hear me that we will pull through this. We will act. I have always said that the promise of our province is that it doesn't matter who you are or where you come from, that in this province we guarantee that you are going to be able to live freely, pursue your lives, worship as you please, and fulfill your God-given potential. That is the promise of this province. I am committed to making sure that we live up to that promise.

You know, my first encounter with hate as a young Canadian with a young daughter. I went to see a dentist with my young daughter. As we were about to exit out of our car, there was a car that pulled beside us and yelled: go back to where you come from. This is real for many Canadians. This is real. That is why I also say that all of us have a responsibility, a responsibility to condemn hate wherever we find it, not to pick and choose. We must not pick and choose hate because they have profound consequences on us, and we have no idea how that is going to impact the next person, when we pick and choose. That's why I have always called for unity in this Assembly, in our province when we talk about hate.

No hate is lesser or greater than the other. That is the one message I want to leave with all Albertans. If you are home, wherever you might be watching and listening to this debate, no hate is lesser or smaller or bigger than the other. When we close our eyes and pretend that a particular hate doesn't affect us and go, "Oh, this doesn't affect me; therefore, I'm going to just close my eyes and look the other way," this is what we get. This is what happens. This is what happens. That is the lens with which I look at the files that come to my desk as a minister of the Crown, as a public servant. That is one of the lenses with which I make my policy and legislative choices.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. Are you rising under Standing Order 29(2)(a), hon. member?

**Mr. Yaseen:** To speak to the motion.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I'm looking for Standing Order 29(2)(a).

I see none, but I will recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton-Castle Downs and then the hon. Member for Calgary-East.

**Ms Goehring:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. [Remarks in Arabic] Translated, it means: peace be upon you. It's a phrase that I hear

almost every day in my community. It literally means: peace upon you. It's Arabic.

[Mr. Amery in the chair]

As I stand here today to talk about the government motion that came to be because of the terrorist attack in London, Ontario, my heart is breaking. Terrorists killed three generations of a family – a grandmother, a mother, a daughter – and a nine-year-old son was injured. I think about what's happening all around the world, and I agree with what members of this House have said. There's a feeling of helplessness. There's a feeling of fear. When I listen to my friends talk about being afraid to be outside because they wear a hijab, because they are visibly identified as being a target of hate, I don't know what words I could ever share that could help other than: I love you, I stand with you, and I will do whatever I can to try and help.

4:20

Over the recent years we've watched so many acts of hate, anti-Muslim hate right here in Edmonton. I live in Edmonton-Castle Downs. I've been there since I was a teenager. I went to Queen Elizabeth high school. So many of my dearest friends are from the Muslim community, and knowing that there are people out there that drive around in vehicles with "hate" written on them in an attempt to terrorize that community is devastating. Watching the community come together to plan ways to stay safe, going to the Al Rashid mosque with my friends, with my peers, with my colleagues for prayer and having to walk through police because there is a legitimate risk that some hate, some terror could happen at your place of worship is devastating.

When we look at Muslims in Canada, I'm so proud that the very first mosque was built here in Edmonton, the Al Rashid, 1938. That was my brother's mosque, and that is the mosque that so many of my friends, neighbours, loved ones attend.

[The Deputy Speaker in the chair]

We're in the middle of a pandemic, and the pain that I hear from community about not being able to gather and mourn together and grieve and share fear – Madam Speaker, it's heartbreaking that we have to stand in this House to talk about this, that we have to try and convince people that the attacks on the Muslim community are terrorism. This family was murdered. We need to listen to the outcries from so many in this province, so many across this country that more needs to be done. We need to continue to call out acts of hate, acts of terrorism. Call it what it is. We can't let people that are inflicting this hate win.

The fact is that a few years ago some members from the white supremacy group walked right into Al Rashid mosque. Bold. Walked in. Terrifying. Ever since what happened in Quebec with the bombing of the mosque, people are afraid to go to church. People are afraid to go to mosque. They're afraid to have any sort of outward expression of who they are. That fear can be absolutely devastating.

I stand in the Chamber as a proud representative of my community. I have such a beautiful, diverse community, but I also stand asking for the government to do more. Listen to those involved in the antiracism groups. Listen to what they're asking for. When we hear that there's a request for a provincial hate crimes unit, I think we need to look at what that means. I think the experience that I've had in Edmonton-Castle Downs with the hate crimes unit for Edmonton has been powerful to watch, because the leadership in the community relies on them. After the Quebec mosque shootings, the police showed up, and they were welcomed by the leadership, but there was fear among so many that attend that

mosque. There is a fear of the police. There is a fear of reporting hate crimes. There is so much work that needs to be done.

All we're asking is for people to feel safe, to be able to walk outside. It seems like a small task; it's huge. And it starts with important conversations like this one we're having today. I'm happy that we're talking in an emergency motion. It shows progress. But we need to see action. We need to stop hearing thoughts and prayers and condolences and see action. We need to put action behind our words, or it's meaningless.

I need to express my sincerest appreciation for all of those that have stood in this Chamber and shared their experience, shared their stories. I hope that everybody in this Chamber agrees that something more needs to be done. Madam Speaker, I'm sad, I'm worried, and I'm heartbroken for so many, not just in Ontario but people all around Canada that are grieving with this family.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Calgary-Cross.

**Mr. Amery:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and thank you to all of the members in this House this afternoon for joining together in this emergency debate to recognize and debate the tragedy that our country currently mourns from east to west. It has been a very difficult few days for members of the Muslim community and generally for Canadians all across the country. What we witnessed following the terrorist attack that happened on Sunday was horrific, and there are very few words that can adequately describe the tragedy that took place. We heard it before, and thank you to all of my colleagues for speaking about it and putting it so eloquently: generation upon generation upon generation wiped away in one hate-filled decision that will undoubtedly have impacts for everyone in this country.

Madam Speaker, this heinous crime has captured headlines across the country, but the reality is that marginalized groups and minorities have fallen victim to hatred for far too long. Earlier the Premier and some of the colleagues mentioned various examples, and sadly these are not isolated incidents. In March 2019, you all may remember, a gunman entered a New Zealand mosque and gunned down 51 innocent worshipers. We said that that was a world away. In January 2017 a gunman opened fire on worshipers at a Quebec City mosque, killing six innocent lives and injuring many more. Again we said that that was far away from here.

But what we saw in this province this year and late last year truly hit home as well. We saw a number of incidents where hijabi women, visibly Muslim women, were targeted in attacks, hate-filled, racialized attacks. I was with the hon. minister of culture at the Al Rashid mosque when it was vandalized about a year ago by hate groups. There are many more incidents that take place across the world and indeed in our country and our province, many that go unreported, many that go underreported as well.

For us as Canadians, as great as this country is, in my view, collectively our greatest asset is the diversity and our strength in the differences that we have. We have built a home where our principles of law and order, of diversity, and of inclusion are the forefront of society and the envy of the world. We see incredible examples everywhere, from the members in this Chamber to every corner of our general society and province.

Madam Speaker, more importantly, the diversity forms our strength as Canadians. Despite this strength, events like that which happened this weekend, events that happened in the past in our province that targeted hijab-wearing women in both Calgary and

Edmonton, events that happened in London or in Quebec or elsewhere must end immediately.

4:30

The violence that we are seeing today is not the Canada that I remember growing up. It is not the country that has become the envy of the world for its fair treatment of all groups, for embracing all different societies. All members in this House, irrespective of which side you sit on, must commit to the denouncement and the condemnation of attacks on religious groups and act to stop these actions without any further delay. Madam Speaker, this spring session I rose to condemn the violence that we saw here in this province earlier, and this afternoon I rose to make a statement about what happened last Sunday.

The horrific act that shattered a Muslim family forever has impacted the entire country, and the death of four family members and serious injuries to a child of just nine years old should never be forgotten. Madam Speaker, the young child, who I understand is in serious condition and is still in hospital, doesn't fully understand the gravity of this situation and, in fact, doesn't know exactly what happened just yet.

If that isn't heartbreaking enough, we heard the statement from the Member for Calgary-North, a statement that hit home, and I think it should hit home for all of us. That family looked like all of our families. It was a family taking a stroll on an evening. It could have happened to anybody's family in this room. It could have happened to anybody's family in this province.

How are we to display the moral principles that Canada possesses, principles such as diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism, to our minority groups and to those who live elsewhere who dream of escaping war-torn countries filled with hate, the very hate that we are here denouncing, if we don't act on that immediately, if we as the leaders of this province, if we on both sides of this, who represent the majority or all of Albertans, do not stand up united to denounce this? How are we to convince people across the world that we are leaders and pioneers in diversity?

What happened on Sunday was indescribable. It is unacceptable, and it is not the Canada that I grew up to love. Madam Speaker, it's truly disheartening again to hear the statements from all members in this House who have personal experiences and who have heard from their communities about similar incidents: incidents of violence, incidents of racism, incidents of hate. All members in this House need to stand together to address these hateful acts.

The Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie talked a lot about our differences. I think I want to disagree with him. I think our similarities in this House are far greater than our differences. We are united in our goals for our families. We are united in our goals for our dreams, for our children, in fact. We both want the best for our children, for our parents, for our neighbours. That's a fact that nobody here, I think, can deny.

What happened in London was incredibly tragic, and it is a reminder of the racism and intolerance that plague our society. But we must remind ourselves that when these tragic events happen, it is not the Canada that we all know, it is not the society that we all know, and it is not the people that we all know. These are people that sit on the very fringes of society. Those who committed these acts and commit these acts are not the Canada that we know and understand.

Madam Speaker, the event that took place will forever be remembered. It is, in fact, a tragedy, but it is an opportunity for us to speak more about what happened, to speak more about what we can do, to talk to our Minister of Justice about the initiatives that undoubtedly he will bring forward to help alleviate the concerns for all of our racialized communities, our marginalized communities.

In doing so, it is one step towards coming together as a province, as a nation, as a Chamber to ensure that this event never happens anywhere in our province or in our country again.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available.

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to speak to this motion. As we heard, four Muslim Canadians – a grandmother, a mother, a father, a teenage daughter – were killed yesterday. Three generations of a family were wiped out. A nine-year-old was the only survivor, who I hope will survive but is also scarred forever. In our faith when somebody dies, we say [Remarks in Arabic]. What that means is that to God, to Allah, we belong, and to Him we shall return. This family was targeted. They were the target of a terrorist attack, and I strongly condemn this act of terrorism. I mourn with the family, the community at large, and the Canadians who are mourning this loss of fellow Canadians.

As legislators I want all of us to come together and do everything we can in our power to make sure that never happens again, and we do have many things in our power that we can do. All we need is the willpower that we are willing to act. In Alberta we have seen hate incidents. In the recent six, eight months we have seen a rise in hate incidents, and we have not seen any action.

Madam Speaker, those who were killed looked like me. They were of the same faith as me. They looked like my family. Many Albertans who look like me are thinking about that. Will they be next? The only reason they were targeted was that they looked different. They were Muslims. They looked like Muslims. That's why they were targeted. That makes many in Alberta communities fearful for their safety. Should they be watching over their shoulders when crossing sidewalks, when going out for walks?

4:40

Many in the community have reached out to us, reached out to me, to my colleagues, and I'm sure that many in the community have reached out to the government side as well. People of colour are living in fear. With every incident that fear grows, and with our inaction that fear grows. We need to put an end to that growing fear.

We do know that it's far from an isolated incident. Six people were killed in a Quebec mosque in 2017. At that time the entire country came together. There was some hope that we wouldn't see that happen again. There were a number of incidents right here in Edmonton. In a span of two months six black Muslim women were attacked. Their attackers tried to rip off their hijabs. Just last week or so a Muslim woman with her kid was attacked at a C-Train station in Calgary. A few days ago a Palestinian man was stopped on the road and all kinds of racial slurs were thrown at him. So it's far from an isolated incident, an isolated situation.

We need to acknowledge that this hate exists in our societies, and we need to stop saying that this is not us. We need to stop saying that because this is happening in our communities, in our cities, to our fellow Albertans. Until we stop this, we need to stop saying that this is not us.

I do understand that it's not a partisan issue, and when I say that it's not a partisan issue, it doesn't mean that it's not a political issue. It is absolutely a political issue. Earlier I was listening to the hon. Premier's remarks. The Premier said that our Muslim community has faced – he used the words “casual prejudice, soft bigotry.” The words used by the Premier were “casual prejudice” and “soft bigotry.” With respect I disagree with the Premier. I ask the Premier, I urge the Premier: come talk to us who are on the

receiving end of this hate about whether it's casual, whether it's soft. Let us explain it to you. Many people in our communities, when you talk to them, don't see it as casual prejudice. They don't see it as soft bigotry. They see these incidents as extremely prejudicial and institutional bigotry.

Let me remind the members of this House that the niqab ban was not a soft bigotry. That was not a casual prejudice. That was institutional prejudice and institutional bigotry. The barbaric cultural practices hotline: that was not a soft prejudice; that was not a soft bigotry. That was institutionalized bigotry.

There was a motion before the federal House of Commons, Motion M-103. The entire Conservative Party of Canada voted against it, and all that motion was asking was for the House to denounce Islamophobia. That was institutional bigotry, to not be able to denounce Islamophobia. Every time a person like me goes to the airport, they are singled out for random checks. That's institutional bigotry. If a person with the name Mohammed or even a name like mine tries to check in online before flying, they get denied even online check-in for random reasons. That's institutional bigotry, and we need to call that out. These things are political. These things are done by certain political groups. We need to call them out as well. This needs to stop.

The motion that we put forward earlier, before this motion, had specific actions, and those actions were based on the consultation that our caucus did with racialized communities. Every step of the way those communities told us that they want action. They demand better safety, better security. They ask for measures to address hate crimes and incidents, including public education, supports for victims of hate incidents, information sharing, monitoring of social media, improving responses to hate incidents, and collection of race-based data.

The government motion took whatever action was included in our motion and watered it down. I thought that on a day like this the government would avoid doing trickery based on House rules and just engage in a good-faith debate to address the rise of racism in this province. But, no, we didn't see that, and I have every right to call that out as well. As I said, we have enough thoughts and prayers. We need to move beyond that. We need to take concrete steps, we need to take action that can help us address this rise of racism in our province.

I have an amendment that I will make, Madam Speaker, that will simply ask this government to release the antiracism council report, which they have had now for six months.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Just wait till I have the amendment, and then you can explain it to us.

This will be amendment A1.

Hon. member, please go ahead.

4:50

**Mr. Sabir:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. This amendment is simply asking the government to commit to two things as a starter. One, the government has had the antiracism council report for the last six months now. I have been in cabinet. I have received those reports as well. I think that six months is enough time to analyze that report, to read that report. So, for God's sake, release that report, and with that report release an action plan, and with that action plan strike a bipartisan committee of this House, who can codevelop an implementation plan and report on the progress. That's the least we can do.

That report is based on consultations with indigenous communities, with black communities, with persons of colour communities. A group of 25 Albertans spent two years on that report. Albertans paid for that report. They deserve to see that

report. The government needs to stop this culture of secrecy and step up to address this problem of racism. And let me say another thing on the floor of the House: we do have that report – we do have that report – and if the government doesn't do that, I might consider releasing that report.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available. The hon. Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women.

**Mrs. Aheer:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'm just going to speak for a minute to the member. We're here today to discuss the murder of a family. This is what happens over and over again. It is supposed to be a moment of recognition and to talk about things that need to be done, which I'm happy to share with the member. The threat of releasing a draft document that, as he stated, took two years to put together, that requires substantive work from multiple ministries to actually carry out the necessary work, implementation of short-, medium-, and long-term goals – there is so much. And to politicize the pain – we've had tears; we've had conversations; we are hurting – that is what is going to come out of our opposition today, a politicization of a family that got murdered.

I hope that the people of Alberta watch what just happened here. I hope that they understand that that's where racism comes from: that fear, that divisiveness, that absolutely abhorrent behaviour. We have a bipartisan committee – it's called ARAC – and they're doing amazing work. To undermine that because of the timing of when a report is supposed to come out versus the spirit of the implementation of that plan and the work that goes into that, Madam Speaker, is disrespectful to the family that died and everyone else who has suffered. It's despicable to use such a horrible situation for your own momentum. Absolutely despicable. I hope that the people of Alberta just watched that. It took away from all of the importance that needed to happen today for this family. I am truly sorry for this beautiful family and for the rest of Albertans and Canadians that will suffer alongside and mourn with them.

There are so many actions that need to be taken. That's not the answer. That behaviour, Madam Speaker: that's actually what drives division, drives racism, drives anger and hate, because that is anger and absolutely disingenuous behaviour towards this family. It takes years of engagement. Every culture – every culture – every family is different. It is not a broad-based discussion of one idea and one item that's going to fix this. It doesn't get fixed overnight. This is an entire situation across not only our country but globally. The Minister of Justice just told a story about his own country. Do you think that even if he was there, he would be able to fix that overnight with a report?

How unbelievably disingenuous and how politicized, despicable. And they say that they want to work together? That was absolutely planned and meticulous and completely against any ability to work together. That was planned, disingenuous, and against the ability to work together and build a collective society. That's not how you do it. If this debate was brought into this House by that member in order to politicize the death of a family, shame on him. I hope that every single person who's watching this expresses that exact same language towards him and the absolute shame that he brings upon all of us by politicizing the death of a family. He should come back in here and he should apologize.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre, with 20 seconds.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to take a brief moment to respond to the comments from the minister. I disagree. I fundamentally disagree. We are indeed here today . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** Sorry, hon. member. I should have made that more clear. That was still the remaining moments of Standing Order 29(2)(a). However, as an amendment has been introduced, I will allow an opportunity for the government to respond, and then I will allow the hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

The hon. Minister of Justice.

**Mr. Madu:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to build upon the comments made by the hon. Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women to equally express my profound sadness and disappointment with the comments made by the Member for Calgary-McCall on this amendment before the floor of this Assembly. You know, there are moments in life that call for statesmen and stateswomen, moments that call for unity, moments that call for all of us to rise above pettiness and petty politics and division.

[The Speaker in the chair]

We have been listening to the comments, statements by all members of this Assembly, regardless of your political stripe, on the profound sadness that we all feel with the tragedy and the disaster that took place in London, Ontario. We heard from the hon. Premier of Alberta, in moving this particular motion, strong words to condemn the terror that took place in London, Ontario, and he called upon all of us to reject and to condemn hate, racism, and bigotry and made it clear, as he has always done from time to time before the floor of this Assembly, in condemning crimes like this.

Yet what we see and get in return are the usual politics from the NDP. This is not a moment of politics at all. I hate that the Member for Calgary-McCall has just injected petty politics. First, he chastises the Premier of Alberta on his perception and interpretation of the Premier's remarks. How shameful. This is why, sadly, from my own vantage point of view, as one of the recipients of the topic we're discussing here tonight, no one other than those who have political motives, political gains to make on this particular topic takes the NDP seriously. On this particular issue they have zero credibility.

5:00

I hate that we are speaking this way on a motion that is meant to condemn the terror that has been meted out against this Muslim community. There's a time and place for everything. The members opposite must have the discipline to interpret their environment correctly. They must develop the discipline to know their boundaries. I am really sad.

You know, Mr. Speaker, earlier on in my remarks I was talking about where I was born and raised, and I alluded to the fact that I am of the Igbo stock of southeast Nigeria. Anyone in this particular – pick up your phone or your tablet; google, do a search of the Igbos of Nigeria. As we speak, those people in southeast Nigeria are under constant attack. There is no single day that passes by that an Igbo person is not killed in Nigeria. There's no single day. Why? Simply because of what we look like, our religion, our way of life, our God-given values. No single day. If you doubt me, do a search right now – right now – as we speak. I know hate. I know racism. I have lived it all my life. That is why I swore that every opportunity I have, I would work as hard as I can to move that particular needle to build a more perfect union.

There are certain matters that are so complicated and have been in existence long before you and I, all of us, were born. They have

been a subject of controversy and fight and hatred and war for generations to come. Had we overcome them by being sincere, being honest with ourselves, by building bridges, by working in a co-operative manner to deal with something that affects each and every one of us – it's really sad that on Government Motion 84 this sort of amendment would be introduced, essentially, to do what? To compel the government to do what, really? So that you could have the usual, you know, political talking points, Facebook, Twitter clips to show that the members opposite are not interested in racism. What else will you get from it? To say: members opposite don't care about what has happened in London, Ontario. Everything to the members opposite ends up, sadly, in petty politics.

As the Minister of Justice I can tell you that I am very familiar with the work of the Anti-Racism Advisory Council. I know how hard the minister of culture and myself have been on this file, and we don't need to be reminded by the NDP. As I continue to say – and I say this with all sense of humility when I say that since the inception of this government we have done more to move that particular needle towards a more perfect union than the NDP ever dreamt in their entire four years. Those are facts. Those are facts. I have been a very close, objective onlooker since before coming to this Assembly. The members opposite are the reason why I'm here.

This amendment defies all sense of logic, defies all sense of responsibility and the mood of the country at this point in time. I understand that they want us to make progress. I get all of that. Please, I get all of that. You want us to move. The members opposite have had the privilege of being in government before. This is the sort of amendment that further divides us in two. I paid very close attention to every single word that the Member for Calgary-McCall was using in speaking to this particular motion and responding to the members on the government side. It's appalling. It is not enough to just wag your finger or to talk. Many of you know that I have accused the NDP of talking for the sake of talking, not action. When given the opportunity, they go. Boom. They disappear. No one sees them. This is not the place for this. This is not the place for this.

The Anti-Racism Advisory Council has tabled a report. We know that. Government is near completion of its work. Bill 63 is already before the floor of this Assembly, the one that bans carding and reforms street checks. You heard the hon. Premier of Alberta talk about many of the initiatives that we are working on that will be rolled out in the weeks, the days to come. Sometimes you have to take yes for an answer.

We have many folks from the cultural community who have been alienated from their government for a long, long time. Today they have a sense that their government is getting closer to them because of the hard work that is seen and unseen that we have embarked on since we took office. Members on this side of the aisle prefer to get to work, to tackle problems and challenges. We may not be good at advertising them or talking about them, but we do get to work. I promise you that we will get the job done because, as I said before, this is a province that promises equal opportunity and treatment and respect regardless of where you come from.

Let's not politicize a tragedy. You know, when you are mourning and when you attend a funeral, that's not the setting for politics. That's not the setting for policy disagreement. Let's rise above pettiness and petty politics. Let's be stateswomen and -men. I know that the members opposite would rise to attempt to defend the Member for Calgary-McCall. That wouldn't surprise me at all. It would not surprise me at all, but let them go ahead. Citizens all across our province are watching. They have tuned in to this debate. Go ahead and defend the Member for Calgary-McCall, that minimizes the powerful speech, the humble speech that has just been delivered by the Premier of Alberta.

5:10

The response of all of us on both sides of the aisle on this tragedy: please, I ask you, do not defend something that doesn't make sense. Let's speak on the issue before this particular Assembly. Let's not introduce politics. Fayeze, the nine-year-old son that is lying in hospital right now, doesn't deserve that from us. There will be a time and place where we will have to deal with the report from the Anti-Racism Advisory Council. It is not now, but I can assure you that that particular report is welcomed, and we are looking at it with every seriousness that you can imagine, and we will act. We have already taken steps, including the ones that, again, are not the subject of today. I would love to roll them out and tell you what the minister of culture and multiculturalism and myself have been working on for some time now, many of which stem from that particular report, but this is not the place for it. We are mourning that Muslim family. We are speaking to that particular tragedy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has a brief question or comment for the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General.

Seeing none, the hon. Member for Edmonton-City Centre.

**Mr. Shepherd:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the amendment and some of the remarks that have been brought forward by the ministers in regard to the amendment that was brought forward by my colleague from Calgary-McCall. The accusation on the floor is that bringing forward an amendment calling for the release of the report that was submitted by the first Anti-Racism Advisory Council is politicization.

We are coming out of a tragic event. We are recognizing that tragic event today. We are recognizing the very real damage that has been done by anti-Muslim hate, and indeed that is why we are here today, Mr. Speaker. That is why we are holding this emergency debate. We are indeed recognizing that a young man has been orphaned, that he has lost three members of his family, three generations, due to the actions of one hateful individual in a brutal act of domestic terrorism. We have had some good words on that today.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would say that that is not the only reason that we stand and speak on this today. Far too often when we have tragic events which are in and of themselves preventable, which unfortunately have been deeply rooted in ideology, when we talk about solutions, when we talk about real actions that can be taken, it is decried as politicization: it's too soon to speak about this; you shouldn't talk about that; we just need to recognize that something terrible happened.

Now, the Minister of Justice admonished and suggested that we not get up and speak to the remarks that he and the minister of culture put forward because Albertans are watching. I'm well aware, Minister, that Albertans are watching. I have many of them reaching out to me throughout this debate, and many of them have had thoughts and comments on everyone that has spoken today, on his words, the minister of culture's words, the Premier's words, my own, my colleague for Edmonton-Ellerslie. I can tell him that there is a pretty wide and diverse range of opinion. Once again, I would advise him that I don't think racialized communities in the province of Alberta are quite the monolith he seems to suggest they are.

Now, I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that these are delicate situations, that this is complex. I tried to be very careful in my comments earlier today in walking a line between recognizing the weight and immediacy of the tragedy – this, of course, is an event that just happened on Sunday – but also in noting that we cannot simply,

when these things happen, just stand and condemn them and say, “This is terrible” and “We’ll get back to this later.” We can’t divorce it from the history that has brought us here. We can’t ignore decisions and actions that have led us to the point where we find ourselves now.

My colleague from Calgary-McCall spoke probably with a bit more fire than myself, but of course he is a Muslim man. He is from that community. He is talking to the people who are facing this every single day. I support him in sharing that anger, that frustration in bringing those voices to the floor. Indeed, in bringing forward this amendment, that is in part what we are doing as well, Mr. Speaker.

I’ve spoken with many, many Albertans who are looking for action, for something tangible in response to this. The minister talked about there needing to be more than words. I agree. Now, they may feel that this particular action is not the correct one here. Fair enough. He can have a difference of opinion on that. But there is work that was done under our government – it was done later in the term, did not get to completion, but there was the beginnings of work towards a provincial hate crimes unit. There was acknowledgement of steps that needed to be taken. We’ve had other opportunities that have been brought before our Assembly, agreement by all MLAs that we should be looking at banning hate symbols in the province of Alberta, and there will in fact be an opportunity for this government to demonstrate what steps it is going to take. I’ll look forward to seeing that, and I will give it fair and due consideration as a member of this Assembly.

This report that was brought forward does indeed have some concrete recommendations. It was the government – if I heard the minister correctly, she feels that they don’t want to release the report until they are prepared to take some action or determine more of what they are going to do in response to that report before it is released. It would be my hope that Albertans would have access to information sooner rather than later. I don’t consider it to be harmful for Albertans to see what the committee has recommended even before the government has decided what actions they are going to take on those recommendations.

Indeed, we have seen that with many reports that have come into this government. The MacKinnon report was released before we knew specifically what actions the government intended to take to fulfill it. Same with the Fair Deal Panel. Same with a number of other situations: the report is released, Albertans have the information, the government determines what action it wants to take. I don’t personally consider it politicization to bring that conversation here, to look at one tangible piece, and I certainly am not going to take lectures about boundaries, Mr. Speaker, given the actions I’ve seen taken by some of those who have been speaking today.

5:20

We will each continue to do our work. We will each continue to do that in the full view of Albertans, and Albertans will have the opportunity to be the judge. We are all accountable to our communities. We are all accountable to the folks that we represent. We are all accountable to the people that we serve. Our words will be here on the record for them to see and reflect on. I stand by the words that I’ve shared here today on a terrible tragedy, on an unconscionable act, on the steps that have brought us here, the actions and choices of individuals with power, with platforms, that have chosen to wield them badly and for selfish interests, that have fanned the flames of anti-Muslim hatred here in our country.

It is challenging, I will admit, Mr. Speaker, that this work needs to be done within the political sphere, which is built on a system of opposition, a system of, for lack of a better term, antagonism. I think

probably we have all been at different odds and different points on different issues, where we feel one side or the other is politicizing an issue more than the other. There is a good deal of passion on many of these issues.

This is a system we have, and this is a system we need to work in to accomplish the goals in that work. While we may disagree at this point – now, I am not casting any aspersions; I am not judging the character of anyone who was involved here – I truly believe that they have the best of intent and wanted to achieve the same goal that we do. Though we may disagree on the tools we may use at times to accomplish that, the tone or the words that are chosen, ultimately, I do believe that we have the same goal, which is ensuring that the act that we are here and remembering today does not happen again, though, sadly, Mr. Speaker, it likely will. We’ve got a lot of work to do to get to a point where this kind of incoherent hatred and anger is not something that is turned on innocent people and costing lives.

That said, I will support the amendment that was brought forward by my colleague from Calgary-McCall. It may not be the action that the government feels should be taken. It’s not necessarily the only action that could be taken. There are many, many more, and I look forward to seeing those actions, those options, those possibilities brought into this Assembly and being duly debated. We may find that there will again be some points of friction and tension there, but we will use the imperfect tools that we have, wielded by admittedly imperfect people, to try to find a way to deal with any incredibly difficult and deeply rooted issue.

To the Albertans that are watching today: I thank them for engaging on this incredibly difficult issue. I encourage them to reach out to me, to reach out to all members of this Assembly to share their thoughts indeed on this amendment, on the words that have been said, and on the actions they feel should be taken to truly address anti-Muslim hatred and the impact it is having on far too many Canadians.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Hon. members, Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has a brief question or comment.

On amendment A1 are there others? The hon. Member for Edmonton-North West.

**Mr. Eggen:** Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate deeply the opportunity to speak on both the motion and the amendment that we have before us here this afternoon and indeed the Standing Order 42 that sort of began the proceedings here this afternoon. As I have each of those three documents before me, I certainly see much more of a thread of commonality moving between each of the intentions of the Standing Order 42, the government motion, and then this amendment, much more in common than I see in terms of differences. What I think the common thread is that runs through each of these documents is that there is a strong desire, reflected by the strong desire that exists in our society today, to do something about anti-Muslim hatred in our society and indeed racism and hatred of all stripes.

It’s a continuation of something that we’ve seen for many, many years, but certainly through this last year it’s come to a head. With the murder of this family on Sunday, again, it’s like we all want to reach out for something. We all want to reach out for something that is tangible, something that we can say: yes, this is something that we can do. That idea, that concept runs through the government’s motion, it runs through the Standing Order 42, and it runs through the amendment as well. I think the spirit of this amendment is that we want something to be done, and we want to

send that message out to Albertans, that something will be done as well.

All of us are lost for words when we see tragedy in our own families – we reach out to someone in the community who may have lost someone or experienced tragedy – or something as horrific as on this scale. Those words are meaningful and important as well, and they're something that's necessary for people to go through a process of grieving and of healing as well. But what our job is here is to give and reach out for something more than that, which is something tangible, so that people can say: "Well, this is happening so often. It's so awful. I feel helpless. I feel as though, you know, I'm scared, quite frankly, insecure."

I know that in the Islamic community in Edmonton – I know it well because I represent the area where the Edmonton Islamic Academy, the Al Rashid mosque are, and I have done so for many years. What has built up – it was simmering; it was always there and insidious, but it has reached quite an alarming pitch – is that fear and insecurity have overcome a sense of security and justice, and once you reach that tipping point, Mr. Speaker, it's very difficult to pull it back.

People reach and look to us every step of the way to do something concrete. We have the beginnings, the frame of an antiracism action plan. We know that it's there. We want to get it out and into the hands of Albertans, to say: yes, this is a place where we can go. The antihate commission, or whatever it will end up being called, again, is something tangible that people can have, that says: yes, I can utilize this as a deterrent to keep my family safe and as a way to seek justice when or if something happens.

5:30

There are lots of ways by which we can demonstrate this, and I think that this debate that we've had this afternoon has been a demonstration of potential and possibility as well. It's part of what we do in here, to look for places to go between different ideas and constructive criticism, and we move from there to positive action. I believe that this is an extension of it. It can be a little bit bumpy at times, but I think that I've been certainly edified by all of the speakers here this afternoon. I found it to be very emotional and to be both intellectually and emotionally edifying and something I can move forward in a positive way with as well. I think Albertans are feeling that, tentatively, as well, and I think that this amendment to the motion is an extension of that, too. Certainly, I do support it, and I hope that others in the Chamber here this afternoon would consider it as well.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has a brief question or comment.

Are there others wishing to speak? The hon. Member for Calgary-North.

**Mr. Yaseen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, all members who have taken the time to speak on this tragedy today. I would like to bring discussion back to the family and the victims of this tragedy. Earlier I gave a statement on the horrific hate that took place in London, Ontario, on Sunday, June 6. First, I would like to express my sincerest condolences to the Muslim family who was killed by a hit and run at the hands of a young individual. Police are calling it a hate-motivated attack. That is exactly what it was. It was disgusting and cowardly. To target a family because they have a different skin colour and have different religious beliefs is shameful and very disheartening.

Mrs. Afzaal, Salman Afzaal, Madiha Salman, and Yumna Afzaal were killed after a truck drove at them as they were taking an

evening walk. Fayez Afzaal, the young boy who is nine years old, survived but is suffering from serious injuries. My heart goes out to this young boy. My heart hurts for this young boy. I want him and his family to know that this atrocious act will not be forgotten, and their memories will live on.

Racism, discrimination, hatred, and religious intolerance have no place in Canada. It is a sickness of the heart. As a member of this community and a member of this Legislature it is my duty to stand up today and address what happened in the east. Mr. Speaker, every person should feel safe and protected in our country regardless of who they are or where they come from. For Canada to reach its full potential, we cannot be held back because of racist attitudes, lack of understanding, and fear of change.

Mr. Speaker, my family takes evening walks every day. I cannot help but think: could this have been us? The fact that this could be me, my family, or my friends is an unfortunate reality. I want my fellow Canadians to know that I stand with them, I am here to support them, and I will continue to fight against discrimination.

Combatting racism requires a group effort. Through active listening and sharing our experiences, we will be able to build the bridges and relationships needed to fight against prejudice and tackle racism and hatred in this country, in this province, and in our communities. Acts of racism and hatred like this require immediate action. Standing up against racism requires every single one of us to come together as a collective and stand up for each other. I will continue to fight against Islamophobia and all other forms of discrimination in this country.

Many friends and colleagues from across the country have reached out to me to express their frustration, sadness, and anger. Although my heart is broken, I am encouraged by the love that I am seeing across this country. Taking the life of another person is completely inexcusable. There are no words to describe the pain and suffering that members of this family are experiencing, and my colleagues and I mourn with them today. As we grieve with our brothers and sisters, please know that we will get through this because hate and division will never win.

I fiercely condemn racism in all forms, including and not limited to Islamophobia. By sharing our experiences and creating awareness, we can help combat racism and help stop it in its tracks. Once again I would like to thank our government for bringing this very important motion forward. The first step in beginning to heal is to bring these injustices to light and to let the victims not be forgotten.

I agree that this is time for action. In this regard, I am looking forward to the options and actions being considered by our Justice minister to combat racism and hate in this province. I am sure that we as a province could have done things four years ago, five years ago, but it's never too late. I look forward to that, and my heart is with that family tonight.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has a brief question or comment for the hon. Member for Calgary-North. Under Standing Order 29(2)(a), the hon. the Minister of Infrastructure.

**Mr. Panda:** Mr. Speaker, I just want to echo the words of my good friend and colleague the Member for Calgary-North. We both have a lot of common friends of different faiths, but today we are all Canadians coming together to overcome the grief and to extend our sympathies and assure solidarity with the Afzaal family, as the Member for Calgary-North noted.

Four members of the family lost their lives: Mrs. Afzaal, the grandmother; and the two parents of Fayez, Salman Afzaal, the dad,

and Madiha, who is the mother; and his sibling Yumna Afzaal. Fayeze lost all of them when they all went to walk in London, Ontario. The only reason they were attacked was that they looked different and they wore different dress. Yeah. I stand here on behalf of the people of Calgary-Edgemont to express our grief and to wish Fayeze: may peace be upon him and he recover soon. I wanted him to know, through his relatives and friends – but it's going to be hard for his schoolmates and his sister's schoolmates or his parents' colleagues at work, feeling about this, thinking about this.

5:40

We did the right thing today here by stopping our regular business, setting aside the agenda of the day, and discussing this motion to let these racist and violent people in Canada and all across the world know that the members of this Legislature stand with the Muslim community in Alberta, in Canada, and across the world. We are together with them. Most importantly, this young Fayeze: I wish him a speedy recovery, and through the members here – the Member for Calgary-North, the Member for Calgary-Cross, the Member for Calgary-McCall, and the Member for Edmonton-Ellerslie – we're going to convey our solidarity to the Muslim community that we are with them.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Standing Order 29(2)(a) is available if anyone has any additional comments to make.

Seeing none, are there others on amendment A1?

If not, I am prepared to call the question on the amendment.

[The voice vote indicated that the motion on amendment A1 lost]

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung at 5:42 p.m.]

[Fifteen minutes having elapsed, the Assembly divided]

[The Speaker in the chair]

For the motion:

Bilous	Eggen	Loyola
Carson	Goehring	Sabir
Dach	Gray	Shepherd
Deol	Irwin	

6:00

Against the motion:

Aheer	Jones	Rowswell
Allard	Long	Rutherford
Amery	Lovely	Savage
Copping	Madu	Schow
Dreeshen	Nally	Schulz
Fir	Neudorf	Sigurdson, R.J.
Goodridge	Nicolaides	Smith
Gotfried	Nixon, Jeremy	Toews
Guthrie	Panda	Turton
Horner	Rosin	Yaseen
Issik		

Totals: For – 11 Against – 31

[Motion on amendment A1 lost]

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to Standing Order 3(1) the House stands adjourned until this evening at 7:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 6:03 p.m.]







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