

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTATitle: **Wednesday, March 16, 1983 2:30 p.m.**

[The House met at 2:30 p.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 19****Department of Social Services
and Community Health
Amendment Act, 1983**

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 19, the Department of Social Services and Community Health Amendment Act, 1983. The purpose of this Bill is to enable the Department of Social Services and Community Health to provide advance payments to persons providing services in connection with programs administered by that department.

[Leave granted; Bill 19 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 19 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. FJORDBOTEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 14th annual report of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, for the year ended March 31, 1982. Copies were forwarded to members on January 25.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table copies of the Public Service Employee Relations Board annual report. Copies are available for all members of the Assembly. As well, I'd like to table the financial statements of the Alberta Law Foundation for the year-ended March 31, 1982.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Alberta Racing Commission for the year ended March 31, 1982, the annual report of the Department of the Solicitor General for the year ended March 31, 1982, and the annual report of the Alberta Liquor Control Board for the year ended December 31, 1981; and I want to file with the Legislature Library the 1981 annual report of K Division, RCMP.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the 31st annual report, which is for 1982, under the Public Contributions Act.

MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to table the report of *Alberta Hansard* for the year 1982.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, today it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, some 65 grade 6 students from the Brander Gardens school, situated in the Edmonton Whitemud constituency. They're accompanied by their teachers Mr. Gordon Ingils, Gloria Zaharia, Natalie Esteves, Fiona Bruce, and Bryan Haines. They're seated in the members gallery, and I ask them to stand and receive the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me today to introduce 30 students from the Ranchlands community school in Calgary North West. Ranchlands community school is a unique school, because it was the 44th designated community school in the province and the 12th in the city. Of particular uniqueness to this school was the fact that it was the first community school started on the initiative of the parents of that community. While the children are enjoying the Legislature tour for all the same reasons all the students do, they had a special excitement today. This was for them to have the opportunity to see their much beloved and respected principal, our colleague from Calgary Foothills. [applause] Mrs. Koper was the first principal of the school, which opened in 1981, until the time prior to the opening of this session. The students are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Faye Stead; the secretary of the school, Mrs. Hilda Pratt; four parents, Mrs. Reid, Mrs. Chong, Mrs. Singhal, and Mrs. Daneluk; and their bus driver. They are seated in the public gallery, and I'd like them all to stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, 40 students who are in the college preparatory program at Red Deer College. They are accompanied today by two of their instructors, Mr. Ed Kamps and Mr. Denzil Garret. I'm particularly pleased to see them, Mr. Speaker, because I understand they ran into some fairly foul weather and road conditions coming up from Red Deer today. They're seated in the public gallery, and I wonder if they would rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. FISCHER: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Legislature, 12 grade 12 students from Dr. Folkins school in Chauvin, in my constituency of Wainwright. They are accompanied by teacher Dick Wirges and drivers Mary Turcotte and Sylvia Johnson. They have come 175 miles and are making a three-day tour of the city. They will be attending the open house at NAIT on Friday. They are seated in the members gallery, and I ask that they stand and receive the welcome of the House.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Oil Pricing**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. It flows out of reports attributed to the hon. Premier and is also with respect to certain answers made by the hon. minister in *Hansard* over the last three days. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly clearly whether or not on February 28 at the meeting with the Prime Minister the government of Alberta agreed that there would in fact be no price increase on July 1,

given at that time the best estimates of price projections by both governments?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to have the opportunity to respond to that question. I've had the opportunity to determine the question that was asked of the Premier earlier in the day, when he was asked how he felt about Ottawa having moved unilaterally on the July 1 price increase. The Premier indicated that, as is well known, on February 28 when he and I met with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, there was of course a discussion of the energy agreement. In the context of that discussion, a discussion about the fact that if the world price were to descend to a particular level and the 75 per cent level were exceeded, then in accordance with the agreement, in that situation there would not be a price increase on July 1. I'm advised that it was in that context that the Premier spoke this morning in Ottawa. As well, I should indicate that I was asked yesterday by a reporter about whether or not I was contacted immediately prior to Mr. Chretien's statement outside the federal House about there not being a price increase on July 1. I indicated quite accurately that I hadn't had any immediately preceding discussions with Mr. Chretien. Both statements are entirely correct. As I have mentioned, there certainly was a discussion on February 28, as there ought to have been, about the energy agreement and its implications. I should go on to say that the province of Alberta does not view the statements of Mr. Chretien as constituting any unilateral action on the part of the federal government, but rather Mr. Chretien's observations in the context of the existing Alberta/Ottawa agreement.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether both the federal and provincial ministers of energy were present during the entire meeting with the Prime Minister and the Premier?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, toward the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Chretien had to leave to appear in the House for question period, and there was an interval during which the Prime Minister and the Premier would have spoken in the absence of both the federal energy minister and myself.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. During the course of these discussions on February 28, was any suggestion made by either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources that the federal government would consider rollbacks as an option, as a contingency, should there be a collapse in international oil prices?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, if I understand the question correctly, there was a discussion about our respective interpretations of the agreement. The Premier made very clear our view that the agreement, in its specific wording, provides that there will be no rollbacks. It was indicated by the federal energy minister that there was another interpretation and subsequently, as was indicated publicly, that there was an honest disagreement.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. In light of the Premier's and the minister's comments with respect to the energy agreement and this particular clause. I believe 5(d), is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly whether the government of Alberta, in an effort to strengthen the position of this province, would be prepared to ask the Supreme Court to make a ruling on the applicability of section 5(d)?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I obviously have to take a question like that on notice.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. As a result of lowered world prices, the draw on the import compensation charge is going to be smaller and the federal commitment thereby smaller. During the course of the discussions, did either the Premier or the minister undertake any specific discussion with respect to a trade-off—that is, a guarantee of a Canadian market for Canadian producers—as a result of the lesser cost to the federal government as a result of lower off-shore prices?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't recall that specific a discussion. As I mentioned, we put forward our view about the agreement providing for no rollbacks, and I've indicated the response of the Prime Minister and the energy minister for Canada. I certainly don't have any recollection of the kind of detailed discussion having taken place that the hon. member is suggesting.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. During the course of those discussions, I presume that the government of Alberta advanced to the Prime Minister its position that oil pricing should be based on market forces only, as the minister and the Premier have advised the Assembly. Is the minister in a position to advise the Assembly what response, if any, was given to that assertion by either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, or both of them?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, the discussion that ensued in general was of the Alberta position as it has been outlined in this Assembly; namely, that as a matter of principle, Alberta advocates a market pricing arrangement. In the absence of federal agreement and concurrence in a market pricing arrangement, we have the energy agreement in place. That was the manner in which our position was put forward and, as I recall, there was no definitive response with respect to the market pricing aspect from either the Prime Minister or the federal energy minister.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. In the presence of a significant disagreement over section 5(d) in the energy agreement, how long does the government of Alberta intend to wait until seeking some kind of definitive interpretation of this agreement from the Supreme Court? Somebody has to arbitrate. It's an agreement between the federal government and the province of Alberta, also the province of Saskatchewan—a slightly different agreement, but basically the same principles intact. How long will the government of Alberta await a request to the Supreme Court for a definitive ruling, or will this be something left up to either the jurisdiction of Parliament or a negotiated settlement? What are the options?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is getting slightly ahead of himself. I will be meeting with my federal counterpart on Friday for further discussions on this topic. There has been no indication by the federal government of an outright rejection of our position. I again encourage the hon. member to read the specific wording of the agreement, which we feel very strongly is very clear with respect to the no-rollback position.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary on this topic. I realize the topic is important, but it isn't the first time we've dealt with it in the question period, and I have a fairly long list of members who are waiting to ask their first question.

MR. NOTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to ask one supplementary question so that there is no misunderstanding, either by myself or perhaps other members. My understanding of the minister's answer is that either the Prime Minister or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources indicated that they had a different interpretation of 5(d), that in fact there was a rollback provision. Is that correct or not?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Excuse me, would the hon. member restate the question? I didn't catch all of it.

MR. NOTLEY: My understanding of the minister's answer is that during the discussions on February 28, the Prime Minister or the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources indicated that they had a different position on interpreting 5(d), and that the interpretation of the province of Alberta is that there could be no rollback provision. I take it from the minister's answer — and the reason I ask this supplementary question is so it will be crystal clear that that is not the position of the federal government — that in fact the minister or the Premier was advised on that meeting of the 28th that the federal position was that there could in fact be a rollback. Is that correct?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: I don't think that would be a fair statement, Mr. Speaker. In the first instance, I suppose I should suggest to the hon. member that while I'm certainly in a position to respond as to what the Alberta position is, if he wants to know the federal position he should ask the federal government. I have indicated that there was no outright rejection of our position with respect to no rollback, and that is as far as I would be in a position to comment on the matter.

Hydro-electric Power Development

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the hon. Minister of the Environment. It flows from comments by the inquiry officer at a recent expropriation inquiry concerning the Paddle River project:

"Clearly, the evidence indicates that, from a cost benefit point of view the project is totally unsound."

Will it be the intention of the government to proceed, notwithstanding this position?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the question of the Paddle River project has been debated before in this Legislature. The decision was made to proceed at that time, and I don't see the province stopping the project at this point in time.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of information contained in this expropriation hearing and expert witnesses suggesting that the cost benefits are in the neighborhood of 20 cents' benefits for each dollar of cost, what policy position has the minister instructed the Department of the Environment to take with respect to cost benefits on all capital projects? Is 20 cents on the dollar, benefits-to-costs, to be a criterion? What assessment has been made by this government as to the cost/benefit ratio of all capital projects for the minister's department?

MR. BRADLEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, with regard to this specific project: as I stated, that project has been debated in this Legislature, and those facts were looked at, at that time. The

specific direction we're taking is looking at each project on a project-by-project basis.

MR. NOTLEY: I'm delighted to hear that. Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister advise the Assembly whether or not the Department of the Environment has given any assessment, or has the minister in particular given any instructions to officials of the department on what would be a reasonable cost/benefit arrangement, since apparently one-for-one isn't? In the case of Paddle River, 20 cents' benefits for each dollar of cost seems to be reasonable. Is that going to be a bench mark for other projects? What is the line of demarcation, if you like, between costs and benefits?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, to comment on the specific, the opinion that was expressed to the inquiry officer was the opinion of one individual. With regard to any specific project, certainly we look at the cost benefits and at other benefits to the public, which we assess in terms of the longer term of the project. There are different approaches to cost/benefit analysis. Some people take one economic approach; some people take another economic approach. The decision of the government at the time, to proceed with the Paddle River project, was based on the longer term benefits the government felt would benefit the people in the area, particularly those who live downstream, in terms of flooding some 25,000 acres of land downstream of the Paddle River.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. As a matter of public policy, given this government's concern about the right to property, is the minister able to explain to the House how it is possible to construct at public expense a project that will benefit some landowners to the tune of \$2,600 an acre while it expropriates land from other landowners at \$375 an acre?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. leader has obviously submitted an argument rather than a question. Perhaps we might have one more supplementary on this topic and then go on to the next member.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can rephrase the question to the hon. minister. From a policy point of view, what considerations have been given to expropriation prices, on one hand, compared to the public benefits bestowed on other land, as a consequence of any project undertaken by the Department of the Environment?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think I have already responded to the question the hon. member raised, in terms of how we look at every project we proceed with in terms of the economic benefits. [interjection] I think the cost/benefit analysis the hon. member refers to is one opinion. There are other opinions with regard to those benefits. Also, one must take into consideration the other, longer term benefits. I think it's a question of some debate.

Health Care Facilities Financing

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care is with regard to the recent special warrant of \$148 million, I understand to cover operating deficits for active-care hospitals as well as nursing homes. I wonder if the minister could indicate whether any direction has been given to the hospital boards with regard to handling a deficit or their budgeting for the fiscal year 1983-84. Has a

public statement been made with regard to how they should handle it?

MR. RUSSELL: I have spoken many times to groups of trustees, both at their provincial convention on December 1 last year and later to smaller groups at regional meetings. I think the message is out pretty clearly that the government doesn't intend to pick up deficits from here on and that they will be on their own if they do run up deficits. Along with that went a commitment on my part to try to get funds to put them on a good, sound financial basis for this year. That was the reason for the very large special warrant, which I believe will accomplish the goal we had in mind. They are also receiving a series of bulletins and letters from either myself or my deputy minister, with respect to the details of those issues.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. I am not asking for budget percentages, budget dollars, or what the increase will be in the 1983-84 budget. Would the budget for hospitals and nursing homes in Alberta be established in terms of the total 1982-83 dollar expenditure, where we had a 14 per cent increase over the 1981-82 year plus an 11 per cent increase in terms of the special warrant, which would bring about a 25 per cent increase in budget this current fiscal year? Would the base of expenditure for 1983-84 be that gross total, or would it be on the net in terms of where we started with the original estimate for the 1982-83 budget?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, if I understand the member's question, it's based on the gross, if we know that additional funds are necessary for a particular hospital board and that those required funds are going to be there on an ongoing basis, that becomes part of their base budget for next year. Any additions are above and beyond that.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. Has the government made any decisions with regard to a user fee in terms of hospital income?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker, we haven't. I've mentioned on many occasions that that is something we're always looking at. I think the day is coming when hospitals are going to have to be given some additional discretionary source of funding, either by way of a municipal requisition, user fees, or some other source of income that could be found for them.

Health Care Insurance

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary with regard to that special warrant. I understand there are a large number of delinquent medical care premiums at the present time. I wonder why this situation has occurred and what steps the minister is taking with regard to this matter?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the arrears in health care premiums the hon. member is referring to have been steadily accumulating since the days in 1969, when the medicare program was introduced in Alberta. They increased at a rather regular rate each year until the last two years, when they took a sudden jump. We believe that was because of the amount of construction activity that was going on in the province, the number of transient workers, people moving in and out of the province very quickly, plus some other reasons that are fairly self-evident. It has now reached the stage where obviously it

can't be permitted to continue at the present rate, and steps will be taken to correct that situation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the government or the minister considering taking steps such as have been taken in Ontario and British Columbia, where coverage could be cancelled after a specified period of non-payment?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, we've looked at both of those provinces' criteria, Mr. Speaker, because their arrears problem is certainly much smaller than ours.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, does the minister foresee an increase in the existing premiums relative to the Alberta medical health program in the coming year?

MR. RUSSELL: Again, Mr. Speaker, the matter of health care premiums has always been reviewed on an ongoing basis, looking at the trend in health care costs, I think the record shows that from time to time, increases can be expected. The immediate future is no exception to that rule, and I have to say that is a matter that's getting active consideration.

Health Care Facilities Financing (continued)

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. I viewed with interest the variations of deficits of hospital boards throughout the province. Some have very large deficits; others have none. Could the minister advise whether there is any indication that hospital boards with large deficits provide better service than those with no deficits?

MR. RUSSELL: I couldn't give an answer to that, Mr. Speaker, although I think it's fair to say that the service in hospitals that don't run deficits is every bit as good as those that have the large deficits.

MRS. CRIPPS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. For clarification, would the minister make it absolutely clear that the increased costs of wages and heating, which the supplementary warrant was for, will be in the base for next year?

MR. RUSSELL: That's correct, Mr. Speaker. Any deficit that was picked up from the previous year by special warrant, any appeal funds granted by way of special warrant for the current year, and any costs beyond the control of the hospital board, such as the wage settlements and the arbitration awards, have been built into the boards' bases and will be carried forward into the next fiscal year.

AGT Work Reduction Program

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications. It's prompted by a number of phone calls I've received. I wonder if the minister could explain why the employees of Alberta Government Telephones all received notice that they are forced to take one day off, without pay, out of 10?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, in May 1982 the Alberta Government Telephones Commission established a policy of freezing all hiring to reduce the number of employees. With the downturn in the economy, we did not have sufficient work to keep all employees busy. The matter has been reviewed on a monthly

basis by the commission. Earlier this year, recommendations were reviewed and approved by the commission to implement a work reduction program for all craft employees. That plan came into effect earlier this month, I believe March 6 and, as the hon. member indicated, requires all craft employees to take one day off, without pay, per pay period. That's equivalent to two days per month, Mr. Speaker.

MR. McPHERSON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The hon. minister mentioned craft employees. Does this action also include any of the other employees of AGT, or indeed does it include any of the management personnel of AGT?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, there are four basic classifications of employees with Alberta Government Telephones. The craft employees, who are represented by a union, are the largest of the four groups. The other two union groups are clerical and traffic, and of course the fourth group is management. Through the plans initiated by the commission in May 1982, the surplus employees in the other three categories have resulted in a workload that's equitable. Unfortunately the same results were not achieved in the craft area, and that's why the work reduction program was necessary.

MR. McPHERSON: One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the hon. minister advise if any of the employees have any recourse with respect to these decisions?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, through the collective agreement between the union representing the craft employees and the Alberta Government Telephones Commission, there is a provision whereby the union may grieve a matter that it deems to be unfair and outside the terms of the agreement. I have publicly urged the union to do that if it feels it has a legal case. It's my understanding that the matter is being grieved and will be dealt with accordingly.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the hon. Member for Calgary McCall has been patiently waiting to get in with a supplementary.

MR. NELSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications: how long do we anticipate that this particular area of the craft employees of AGT will have this one day every pay period to take off?

MR. BOGLE: It's difficult to give a definitive answer, Mr. Speaker. It depends on a couple of factors. First of all is the hiring freeze that's now in place in Alberta Government Telephones and how successful that will be over the next number of months. Secondly, we've instituted in Alberta Government Telephones an early retirement program for all employees, and it's really too early to indicate how successful that will be in encouraging older employees who have been with the telephone system for some years to take early retirement. The third factor, of course, is the economy and how strongly and quickly it rebounds. We hope, Mr. Speaker, that we're looking at a short period of time.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. It appears that with this loss of income, a number of employees who have been with AGT for a number of years are having a hardship effect relevant to their pension programs. I wonder, Mr. Minister, if some thought was given to continuing their employ on a more permanent basis, and possibly having a look

at reducing some of the income by having days off for some of the managers of AGT?

MR. BOGLE: As I indicated in an earlier response, Mr. Speaker, there are four basic groups within Alberta Government Telephones. Through the attrition program, there has been sufficient attrition in the other three categories to allow the workload to be distributed properly. Unfortunately that is not the case in the largest of the four groups, namely the craft. For some months, we have carried employees on a full, 40-week basis even though there wasn't sufficient work to keep the employees active during that period of time. It is our hope that we'll be able to discontinue this program in the very near future. As well, Mr. Speaker, if the union feels that this is a matter which goes against the legalities of the contract, then they have the right to grieve, and I understand they have. Depending on the results of the arbitration process, the commission will certainly abide by that decision.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Apparently we have three more supplementaries on this point, but I've got six more members who haven't yet asked their first question. Perhaps we could have one more supplementary, and then get back to the topic if there is time. Or perhaps something might keep until tomorrow.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister, with regard to the question he answered for the Member for Red Deer. Is the minister telling the House that the alternative to the layoffs at AGT would be higher telephone bills to Albertans?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure all hon. members of the Assembly are aware, AGT sustained a rather sizable deficit during the 1982 calendar year, a deficit approaching some \$56 million. That cannot continue. The commission has approved it and it is currently before the Public Utilities Board — a request for an across-the-board increase of some 6 per cent in the rates. So the commission is looking very carefully at meeting the government's stated objective for Alberta Government Telephones: that it break even. It is not intended to be a profit maker, but we do intend to provide the best possible services, province-wide, at the most reasonable cost.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. Minister of the Environment has to do with hazardous waste disposal sites. Can the minister indicate to the Assembly if his department is going ahead with special testing in the Consort region in the Special Areas, where they are looking at a hazardous [waste disposal] site location? Is the department still going ahead with testing in that area, in light of the fact that there is an overwhelming rejection from the people in that area of the site going in there?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, all the testing in the Special Areas was completed some time ago.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. minister indicate to the Assembly whether the plant design — the type and safety of those plants — was indicated to the people in the area in the public hearings before the plebiscite was taken?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there was a series of public information meetings at which a number of questions were raised, including the safety of the plant and the type of plant envisioned.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. minister indicate to the Assembly what information as to the safety and the cost of the transportation of hazardous wastes from the generating sites to the disposal site, was given to the people at the public hearing?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if that specific information was provided. It certainly is public information, and I believe it has been made public.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the minister indicate where the water supply was going to be obtained if the site was chosen in the Consort Special Areas? Can the minister indicate if there would be a requirement for water to be piped into the area?

MR. NOTLEY: A Peace River diversion.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't have the specific answer to that question. I'll take it under advisement.

Licence Issuing Office — Mundare

MR. BATIUK: My question is directed to the hon. Solicitor General, Mr. Speaker. Last spring the local licence issuer in my home town of Mundare retired. Since then I've got a folder of applications and communications with the department, and I'm sure I must have gone to the minister's office 20 times. Could the minister advise whether he is ever going to take action on this issue?

MR. HARLE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The oldest motor vehicle operator in my constituency is 92, in Mundare. There are others almost as old. Would the minister feel that it's justified to tell these seniors to drive 15 miles to a community to get their licence plates? Do you think that's justifiable?

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the type of question — I'm sure the minister's feelings on various topics could fill many question periods. I'm assuming that the member intends to ask the question in relation to ministerial or departmental policy.

MR. BATIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's quite a concern in the constituency, because I just got a copy of statistics on my desk, and no doubt all hon. members have. For the town of Mundare, between 1976 and 1982 the population increased by almost 40 per cent. I believe this is because of our government's decentralization programs. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: I thought that I had successfully come to the rescue of the question so that the minister might answer it.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I had hoped that the minister would answer it. Could the minister advise whether he agrees with these decentralization programs?

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, I'm endeavoring to get a replacement for Mundare.

MR. BATIUK: One final supplementary, I hope, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise whether he has any intention of maybe screening some of the deadwood in his department, so his department could once again have the reputation it did when the hon. Roy Farran was the Solicitor General? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has asked a very serious question. I think we deserve an answer in this Legislature, because it applies to other communities where we don't get services fulfilled on time. We wait for political appointments for jobs ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I'm asking the minister, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the minister ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question was really a representation. There could be various views around the Assembly as to how serious it was. I'm suggesting that we now go on to the next question. We're running out of time. The hon. Member for ...

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. My question was going to be very straightforward and serious. Will the minister give a commitment to this Legislature to meet the Mundare community needs in terms of a community service, I believe licensing? That's what I'm asking the minister to give a commitment to. If the answer is no or yes, then we know whether we have to make further representations and convince the hon. minister about the population and other factors. But my question is clear, and it defines itself well enough for a yes or no answer.

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. There's a very definite procedure in place to advertise for applicants. As those applicants come in, they are assessed. When we find a suitable appointment, we'll appoint somebody.

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, since the minister said yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary on this topic.

MR. BATIUK: It will be. I have noticed advertisements and letters of communication from last June. So how long will it take to act on this? That's what I'm wondering about.

DR. BUCK: John, they're out of PCs to give it to. [interjections]

MR. HARLE: Mr. Speaker, some applicants meet the requirements we have, and some don't.

Gasoline Pricing

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I return to a question I put to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources yesterday. Could the minister tell us if there's any policy in place in his department that would account for the great price differential in gasoline in Montana, at some 34 cents a litre with the equivalent of the Canadian dollar, and the 38 cents a litre in Alberta,

recognizing that the United States is at world price and yet we are apparently at three-quarters of the world price?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to have the opportunity to respond to the member's question. I appreciate his having inadvertently given me notice yesterday. I respond by saying that the information I've been provided with would confirm the hon. member's view that at the present time, the price in the Montana market is lower than the existing Alberta price. In analysing the reason for that differential, one has to take into account a number of factors.

First of all, looking at the Canadian price, we have the federal excise tax and sales tax, the Canadianization levy, and the petroleum compensation charge. In fairness, however, there are other levies in the United States, by way of the Montana road tax and a federal tax as well, which would tend to modify, if you will, the differential that would otherwise be caused by the Canadian federal levies. I would also have to make mention of the fact that at the present time, there appears to be some considerable difference in dealer markups, otherwise known as price wars. That is occurring in the United States in the same way it has occurred here in Canada. I would simply draw members' attention to the fact that in Edmonton last fall, gas was selling for about 25 cents a litre through the dealers when in fact that was some 10 cents a litre below the price the market forces would normally otherwise charge.

Mr. Speaker, I should go on to say that the discrepancy between the American and Canadian prices is even more exacerbated in other provinces in Canada, given the fact that only Saskatchewan and Alberta do not levy a gasoline tax. I think mention has been made in the House on previous occasions of the fact that while the Alberta/Ottawa energy agreement did in fact provide a mechanism for lower prices for consumers in Canada, that advantage has largely been taken away by provincial gasoline taxes levied in other provinces throughout Canada.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If in fact the federal government is taking such a large share, what is this government doing with regard to endeavoring to get prices down to reasonable levels at the pumps for Albertans, in view of the fact that we produce 85 per cent of the gasoline used in Canada?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, certainly on the part of the Alberta government, we have a policy of no gasoline tax. Beyond that our policy position, a matter of principle, is that of market pricing, as the hon. member is well aware. We believe that if the market pricing arrangement were allowed to prevail, many of these anomalies would simply not exist.

MR. GOGO: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Recognizing that the consumption of gasoline probably falls within her department, is the minister's department in any way monitoring the prices of gasoline at the pumps in Alberta?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but not in a formal way.

Sexual Offences

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. Attorney General. I'd like to raise a question of public policy that flows from the recent publicity about a most serious crime, that of rape. Is the minister in a position to

inform the House whether the government supports the position of Justice William McGillivray of the Court of Appeal, to the effect that a woman should not be surprised if she is raped while socializing with a man late at night?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I respectfully point out to the hon. member that it is not among the official duties — of course, in the question period ministers are asked about their duties as ministers, and their departmental policy and government policy. But there is no minister I'm aware of who includes among his or her ministerial duties that of commenting on decisions by our federally appointed courts.

MR. MARTIN: Okay, let me put it this way. Is it government policy to distinguish between rape on the street and rape in a social setting? That falls under the Provincial Court.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I take the question in the way it is asked: to be asking for my opinion rather than any response on a matter that is factual. However, I'm aware of the circumstances in which the hon. member asks the question. I would only say that with full regard to the sensitivities of such situations and the great difficulties the courts have in deciding cases where obviously both sides are represented by counsel and everything that can be said on behalf of each party is said — given all of that, in my view it would be a grave matter if we were to try to politicize any of the duties and responsibilities which have to be carried out in the court. I think any answer I would give on the matter, here or elsewhere, would depend primarily upon the independence of the judiciary.

MR. MARTIN: Let me ask a different question in a different way. I'm sure you can answer this one. It's estimated that one out of 10 rapes is not reported to the authorities. I suggest that no doubt it's because women are being blamed for their own rape, by the recent court decisions. What is the Attorney General doing to try to raise the awareness of this problem to the courts?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, my duties include those of prosecuting the criminal law in all of its aspects, including rape. There is no doubt that in cases where a complaint is made and there's evidence, that is precisely what is done: the cases are vigorously prosecuted. The hon. member raised the question of what occurs, or what may have occurred, to bring about a situation where some rapes are not reported. Mr. Speaker, undoubtedly it is like other crimes. Some rapes involve a person well known to the victim; that is a certainty. Other ones are for other reasons and, given the judgment of the victim at the time, they decide not to bring forward a complaint. Surely the duty to bring forward a complaint is primarily that of the victim. If the police never become aware of an offence, whatever the offence may be — a break-in or anything else — without the information it is extremely difficult for them to try to find a way of following that up.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the last supplementary. We have exceeded the time for the question period. I accept the blame for that. We perhaps had too many supplementaries by those who were first recognized. Perhaps we should adopt the principle of six and five in that regard. I was going to ask if the House would agree that we might have one more supplementary on this. I did mention the hon. Member for Calgary Egmont, and I know the hon. Minister of Education wishes to

deal with a matter that was raised in an earlier question period. Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question that does come under your department. It's the Alberta Crimes Compensation Board. It's my understanding that awards were given to only three rape victims, as compared to 94 other assault victims. The key to this is that they're both assault. What steps is the government planning to ensure fair compensation for victims of rape? Are they looking in the direction of the Ontario example?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, my feeling is that undoubtedly that does deserve being looked at. The explanation for the small number of rape victims receiving compensation is perhaps, once again, the small number of persons who happen to bring forward a complaint. I should add that I'm not familiar with what the hon. member refers to as the Ontario system. We have recently revised some provisions of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act in order to assure that in most circumstances where a person is a victim of a crime, the board can at least consider whether or not compensation should be paid. However, I'm not aware of any guideline or attitude that rules out giving compensation or reducing the incidence of cases where compensation is given in rape situations. But because of the statistic the hon. member has used, it is a matter that should no doubt be followed up.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary Egmont, if we might just deal with a short question and answer, followed by the hon. Minister of Education.

Young Offenders Legislation

DR. CARTER: My question is to the Attorney General, and it involves at least two questions. First, the federal government has under consideration a young offenders Act. I wonder at what stage of proceeding that Act is and what age has been put into legislation to be the bench mark, if you will, between juvenile and adult crimes?

MR. SPEAKER: That may be a matter in which the province has a part. As far as the progress of legislation in the House of Commons is concerned, I would suggest that that question might be asked in a different forum.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can briefly deal with it. Because of the existence of federal legislation which will shortly be proclaimed, the situation of what we now call juvenile offenders, and under the federal legislation is called young offenders, will change. Over a period of time from now until 1985, federal law will require that the age limit be 18 rather than 16 for both males and females by 1985. That will change the current situation in Alberta, where the present age is 16. The new legislation does not provide for provincial local options in respect of age.

Mandatory Comprehensive Examinations

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, in response to a question about comprehensive examinations yesterday, I made a mistake in speaking that I would like to correct.

MRS. CRIPPS: We didn't understand it anyway.

*The following motion should have appeared under Government Motions. 4. Moved by Mr. Hyndman: Be it resolved that the messages of His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor, the Supplementary Estimates of Investment (A) 1982-83, and the 1983-84 Estimates of Proposed Investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division, and all matters connected therewith, be referred to the Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

MR. KING: I said yesterday that comprehensives would be available to students in math and science at the end of grade 10, grade 11, or grade 12. It will be the choice of the student, because math and science are only compulsory in high school till the end of the grade 12 level.

Obviously, I meant to say "only compulsory until the end of the grade 10 level".

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS*

5. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:

Be it resolved that the Assembly do resolve itself into Committee of Supply, when called, to consider the Supplementary Estimates of Investment (A) 1982-83 and the 1983-84 Estimates of Proposed Investments, of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division.

[Motion carried]

head: CONSIDERATION OF HIS HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Moved by Dr. Elliott: That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Frank Lynch-Staunton, Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Debate adjourned March 15: Mr. M. Moore]

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's indeed a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to serve as a member of this 20th Legislature, a fourth term as the Member for Smoky River. It's an even greater pleasure to know that the 15,000 people which I represent in Smoky River responded to the policies of our government and the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta by electing me on November 2 with the largest majority ever.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you on your re-election by my colleagues to your fourth term as the Speaker of this Legislature. Indeed, I think all of us can be proud to have in the Speaker's Chair in the Alberta Legislature an individual of your capacity who is recognized throughout Canada and the Commonwealth for the way in which you serve this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. Member for Grande Prairie and the Member for Calgary Foothills, who moved and seconded the Speech from the Throne. I am always delighted, as I know many of my colleagues are, when people who are newly elected to this Assembly come in and, on the first day we're actually in operation in terms of debate, deliver such an effective message on behalf of their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1971, in the constituency I represent there were no secondary roads. There was certainly no pavement on secondary roads. Many of our improvement district roads had little or no gravel, and there was a great deal of work to be done. In fact, not unlike the Member for Drumheller, I ran my first two campaigns on getting better roads in Smoky River con-

stituency. All that has changed a great deal over the last 12 years.

There is much to be done and, for that reason, I was pleased that our Premier saw fit to appoint me as Minister of Transportation, a post I hope to serve in over the course of this Legislature. It was pleasing to be appointed to that position after a record year in 1982 of road construction; in fact a record four years, from 1978 until 1982. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my predecessor, the hon. Member for Chinook, who so capably and ably led the Department of Transportation during the last legislative session; the member who has now moved into his chosen field, I guess, of looking at the business of managing water, particularly as it affects parts of Alberta he has lived in and represented all his life — managing water, I might add, with a firm commitment not to move it from north to south but to manage it where it's at.

Mr. Speaker, this afternoon it's pleasing to be able to deal with a number of matters of importance to the constituency of Smoky River, and then to spend a few minutes talking about some of the aims and objectives that I have with respect to the Alberta Department of Transportation. First of all, insofar as my constituents are concerned I want to make reference to the efforts that were undertaken on behalf of all the people of Alberta — certainly those who live in the north — by the former Minister of Utilities and Telephones, the member from High Prairie, for his efforts in bringing in the Electric Energy Marketing board. I just received, a couple of days ago, some information from Alberta Power Limited, indicating the relative costs of electricity as we might expect to see it in 1983 as compared to 1981 in the area served by Alberta Power, and note that not because anyone else is paying more but because of a very large subsidy from the government of Alberta, power rates in all the areas served by Alberta Power are less in 1983 than they were in 1981. I might add that the now Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications will be responding, if he hasn't done so already, to the nonsense that has been broadcast in recent days about this particular marketing agency having somehow or other increased the cost of power in Edmonton city. Indeed, it has not. It has been a benefit in fact to residents in more than just the Alberta Power area, and we look forward to that benefit continuing over the years ahead.

I want to talk briefly about natural gas. Over three-quarters of farm homes and rural dwellings in Smoky River constituency are now served by natural gas. With the exception of one or two areas, which we're now working on, I expect that we will be able to say in that constituency, over the course of the next three years at least, that we've completely finished the program providing natural gas to rural Alberta.

The farmer and small business interest shielding program, that is being so effectively administered by my colleague the Minister of Tourism and Small Business, the Member for Peace River, has been extremely effective in ensuring some real benefits to the farming community, and the small business community in Smoky River as well. You don't hear a lot of people talking about it on the street, Mr. Speaker, but it did bring some real relief in terms of planning for their future to those who were involved in loans at very high interest rates, and allowed many of them to get that needed assistance to make it, if you like, through the tough times we've had during the course of the last year.

I don't need to mention to people in Smoky River, but I certainly do in this Legislature, our thanks for the thoughtfulness and foresight that was shown by our former colleague the Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, in pushing forward with an emergency crop drought assistance program in the Peace River region, and for my colleague the

now Minister of Agriculture for carrying forward with that program and administering it in a very effective way.

Related to that, Mr. Speaker, are the very important changes that have been made by the Minister of Agriculture with respect to the crop insurance program. Indeed, all of us hope that the crop insurance program in this province will be the kind of vehicle that is used in terms of drought, frost, flood, or other kinds of crop emergencies, and that it will be effective enough so that we don't have to resort to emergency programs. The provision of payment of the premium by the province of Alberta over and above a certain level is effective in ensuring that individuals will have coverage that, in my belief, is without any question the best in Canada in terms of crop insurance programs, and could provide a measure of support that will at least equal the input costs in times of crop loss. I hope every farmer in the Smoky River constituency, if he hasn't already done so, will consult with his hail and crop insurance offices and take out crop insurance in 1983.

I want to move briefly to some other concerns with respect to the farm sector in my constituency, and refer specifically to the debate now going on across western Canada and in Alberta with respect to the Crow rate. I notice that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview finally, after 11 years in this Legislature and in serving rural Alberta, got interested the other day and had to borrow a resolution from Saskatchewan. I think we need to resolve this problem, and we need to present our concerns with respect to this problem on the basis of what is occurring in Alberta, what is occurring in Smoky River constituency. I want to talk about that.

The biggest single concern that the grain farmers in my constituency have for the future of grain production and selling grain on a world market is: can you move it? Can we get our grain off the farm, into the elevator system, and to the ports and to our customers around the world? In this day of high costs in terms of farming operations — the high costs of storage, the cost of money — we can't afford to leave crops sit in the bin year after year. I'm pleased to note that over the course of the last 10 years, our grain companies and, indeed, the Canadian Wheat Board have responded with more aggressive sales policies than they had in the late 1960s and early '70s, when we had the last glut of grain in western Canada. That response can't be adequate, Mr. Speaker, without us having the ability to move that grain by rail. That's what the change is to the Crow rate. That's what the debate is all about in my view: how best we can create, move, and change the existing system so we have the ability to move our crops to market.

Then we get into the specific areas of concern that have been raised by farm organizations across Alberta, by our Minister of Agriculture in his comments in the House last Friday with respect to the government's position on this matter. Certainly it's important to the Peace River country and Smoky River constituency that new lands brought into production over the coming years should share in any Crow shortfall subsidy payment by the federal government. I can't imagine a situation where down the road 10 years from now the advertisements in the newspapers will say: one quarter-section of land for sale, contains Crow benefit rights; one quarter-section for sale, doesn't contain Crow benefit rights. Surely we can work out a system where the small amount of additional acreage that is involved across the prairies could become part of the Crow shortfall payment that may exist for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, the same comments exactly need to be made with respect to the maximum level of 31 million tonnes a year that the federal government is proposing to assist upon. As our Minister of Agriculture said on Friday, surely one aspect of this important debate is to provide incentives for production.

to encourage the growth in production, to assist in a variety of ways, including the most important aspect of Canada's balance of payments.

I want to add, as well, that there are some things that are important to specific areas of this province that haven't been talked about a great deal, and one of them is alfalfa pellets. It is extremely important to the future of the alfalfa pelletizing industry that exists both in southern Alberta and in the north, that alfalfa pellets be included under the statutory rate. It doesn't take very long to understand that if other competing products, such as rapeseed meal and grains, go on a statutory rate and alfalfa pellets are required to go to a higher rate over the course of the next five to 10 years while the payment method is being sorted out, those plants will lose a great deal.

I want to conclude on the matter of statutory rates by saying some positive things. Canola oil and meal, which are an important part of the agricultural economy of our region of the province, have been proposed to be included under the statutory rate provisions. We have some serious concerns that we hope we can work out about what the freight rate might be east of Thunder Bay in that regard.

I want, as well, to make a brief comment about the method of payment to farmers. The important thing to farmers I represent is that we know as soon as possible what kind of proposals Ottawa has in mind with regard to how a payment to farmers might be made. Surely it is not reasonable to expect all of those people growing grain in Alberta to agree to a system of paying the Crow shortfall when they don't even know what the system is. So I would encourage our ministers of Agriculture and Economic Development, at the earliest opportunity, to insist to Ottawa that that method of payment be made known, so we can have that public debate that's so necessary on how that payment is made.

In addition, I want to say this about the growing of grain in western Canada, Mr. Speaker. It is a fact that we're a landlocked province, and we're a long way from the ocean. We do need an effective and competitive system of getting our grain to ocean ports in order that we can compete in the world markets. In western Canada or in the prairie region, we don't need any other protection with respect to competing in that free market if a free market indeed does exist. I suggest that in most of Europe and Japan a lot of times it doesn't exist, but we do need an effective transportation system. I would encourage everyone concerned to work hard to sort out the problems we see with the proposed solution to the Crow rate and not to simply bury it and forget about the issue until we don't have any way to transport our grain to market.

If I could move from there to a couple of other constituency concerns, Mr. Speaker. The major concern we have in Smoky River is really jobs for people. We've been working hard over the course of the last five or six years to get a fertilizer plant in the Peace River country. Since the last election, the cabinet has approved, on recommendation from the Energy Resources Conservation Board, a permit for the use of natural gas in the construction of a fertilizer plant in the McLennan area. We're hopeful that the economics of fertilizer production will soon see that plant under construction.

In addition, I want to say that I'm pleased that the Canadian National Railway, who was considering the removal of some personnel from their major divisional point in McLennan, has very recently decided against any move that would reduce jobs there. In fact, I have a letter dated March 10 from the vice-president of CN rail that says, in part:

Our study has now been completed and we have concluded that there will be no significant impact on our operations at McLennan.

It's nice to know that there are some very responsible corporate citizens out there yet, Mr. Speaker, who don't believe that everything needs to be centralized into the larger communities or cities.

In the area of the lumber industry, we don't have any processing plants, so to speak — pulp mills or major sawmills — in Smoky River constituency, but we have a very large forest industry. Fully 25 to 30 per cent of the constituents I represent work — when times are good, at least — in the lumber industry. We're pleased that the efforts made by this province, and by other provinces and the federal government, in Washington, resulted in no countervailing duties being levied against Canadian lumber producers in shipping into the U.S. market. With the improvement in that market, we're hopeful that 1983 will see a return to normal in that industry.

I want to talk briefly about Highway 40, Mr. Speaker, which is a highway between the Peace River region and the Grande Cache area that's been in dispute for some time in terms of its route. I recently had the opportunity to outline three options to the communities involved, and we are hopeful that a decision on this matter can be concluded by the end of this month. I personally believe that under these circumstances it's necessary to look at the aspirations of all the communities involved. Certainly members of the Legislature who represent areas nearby must give a great deal of thought to the concerns expressed by the residents of Grande Cache and their aspirations for the future. I for one will be making representations to a caucus committee that's involved in that decision, with respect to the wishes of my constituents. I trust, as well, that at least one of the options that have been outlined will provide an opportunity for them to gain significantly in terms of economic activity.

If I could move, Mr. Speaker, to discuss some important matters in the Department of Transportation before concluding. First of all, I want to publicly thank the former chief Deputy Minister of the Department of Transportation, Mr. Rowly McFarlane, who recently retired after a long and distinguished career spanning some 42 years in the public service, serving both the government of Canada and the government of Alberta. Mr. McFarlane provided dedicated service to this government and the previous government in this province for a period of more than 10 years, and we were pleased indeed with the kind of work that he did.

I want, as well, to mention the retirement from the Department of Transportation of Mr. Cronkhite, the Deputy Minister of Construction, who has accepted a request from the hon. Member for Chinook to be head of the water resources organization that is involved there. Mr. Cronkhite served us as well for many, many years as a very able and distinguished engineer. Mr. Speaker, I want to express, as well, my confidence in the team that now heads Alberta Transportation: Mr. Harvey Alton, a former deputy minister on the regional side, now the deputy head of the department, and his four assistant deputy ministers, all of whom have been with the department for some time. I look forward to working with that team over the next four years in a number of important areas. I'd like to outline just a few this afternoon.

I believe there necessarily has to be, from time to time, a change in emphasis, a change in thinking. As the former director of Disaster Services said at a retirement luncheon I was at today — and I'm referring to Mr. Tyler. He said to his staff on leaving them: there's one thing I hope you will always remember; it's this, there is always a better way. I believe whether you're dealing with the departments of Transportation, Agriculture, Economic Development, or Culture, one should always approach every morning by saying: there may be, indeed,

a better way. So, Mr. Speaker, we're looking at some better ways in Transportation.

One of those areas involves the tourist industry and whether or not it's possible in a province like ours to develop a system where people who spend a lot of money in the tourist industry can actually somehow or other find a way to put up a sign on a highway identifying that they exist. You know, we've been building highways in this province to move people from point A to point B, and we've done a heck of a good job. But the Minister of Tourism and Small Business recently said to me, wouldn't it be nice if we could use just a little wee bit of that system to let our tourists know that they don't have to drive from Coutts to Dawson Creek in one day, and that there's a place or two to stop and a fishing hole and a golf course along the way. So in spite of all the people who sometimes suggest it's not possible, we're going to find a way to put up that sign that says that Cosy Cove Campground is three kilometres to the north, and there are fishing licences and overnight camping.

We're going to be looking at some new things we think can be done with respect to safety on our highway system. Mr. Speaker, I know that driver attitude and responsibility play a large role, but there are some engineering things we can do too. This fiscal year — by the time we were done — we spent close to a billion dollars in Alberta Transportation. I think we could have spent quite a bit more in the area of intersection control, especially on lighting intersections. It's not a big dollar cost, but I recognize that within that area, there are some things we can do that would really improve our accident rate.

I want to spend some time over the course of the next few months, Mr. Speaker, looking at several different ways that our department and other governments and agencies across Canada have in terms of controlling the number of crashes that occur at level railway crossings. Mr. Speaker, Alberta leads the way in that area in terms of crashes, and it's not a record to be very proud of. We want to look very closely at things like rumble strips that have been used effectively in areas where individuals have been driving, particularly for long periods of time, and need something to wake them up a little.

We want to look as well, Mr. Speaker, at whether or not there's some system that might be developed in this province for driver incentives, rewards for good driving. You know the old adage that the only thing you can do is punish bad drivers has to be rethought too. It may be useful for us to look at some system that could operate right across the province, providing incentives for good drivers.

Before concluding, Mr. Speaker, I want to move from there to a couple of other matters in Transportation. Rest stops in campgrounds: I believe we need to embark upon a program of improving our maintenance and operation of highway campsites operated by the Department of Transportation. I believe we can do that very effectively by making one pretty simple change; that is, contracting out the caretaking of every single highway campsite we have to some couple that's really proud of the kind of work they can do in keeping it clean and presentable to the public. I think what we've been doing in the past perhaps is sending the guy on the bottom of the totem pole, in terms of the truck drivers that might be in the department, out to clean the campground. That really wasn't his job, and he really didn't want to do it. If we could just get that couple down the road that maybe has part of an income doing something else but wants to take on a contract for us for the summer months, I think we could go a long way in improving that.

I want to see if we can't do something to improve the rest stops along the highways by enlarging them a bit. I really think we could build more rest stops and improve our highway safety as well. They don't need to be awfully expensive. They need

to be places where people can adequately get off the road, where we can have some rest rooms and that sort of thing. And they don't have to be expensive either.

I might add that it's my intention, Mr. Speaker, to remove the signs from the highways that say, litter, one kilometre, and replace them with signs that say, rest stop, one kilometre, purely on the assumption that most Albertans and most Canadians know that where there's a rest stop, there's probably a place to deposit litter. I really believe that our tourists would appreciate that kind of a sign more because that's in fact what they're used for.

Mr. Speaker, many members of the Assembly have talked to me about the operations of the motor transport branch and the Motor Transport Board. That's a tough area of responsibility, and I know we'll never have all the answers to the problems with regulations and control in the trucking and bus industry. But to make sure that we try to have all of them, I'm going to embark shortly upon a three-stage review of the Motor Transport Board and the branch. The first will involve an internal review by the board members themselves of the regulations they are presently administering. That's already begun by my asking them to look at each one and say: why is it necessary; how did it get there; can you do without it? The second part of that review will be undertaken by an independent group that will have the challenge of looking at the structure of the board and the branch to see if, in fact, the right responsibilities are assigned to the right people, and whether or not the relationships between the Motor Transport Board, its truckers, and the branch are appropriate. Finally, I intend to embark upon the establishment of a committee of the users, if you like, of the Motor Transport Board and the branch, the bus/trucking industry, and all those who interface to, again, establish a committee and do a public review of the regulatory control that exists there.

Finally in the area of transportation, I want to talk about one thing, Mr. Speaker. That is speed limits. It has to do with the comments I made a little earlier, maybe there's a better way. I asked staff in my department why we had speed limits of 90 kilometres per hour in the day time on our highways for trucks and 100 kilometres for cars, when we had 5,000 vehicles a day on a two-lane road. I said, it seems to me that all the cars, if they're travelling the maximum speed limit, have to pass all the trucks. At any rate, the answer I got from my present deputy minister, who wasn't familiar with all this background, was that he didn't know; he supposed it was because we've always had speed limits of that nature.

So then I inquired as to what happened across the rest of Canada. He and I were both surprised to learn that we're the only jurisdiction left that has this differential in speed limits between trucks and cars and nighttime and daytime on two-lane roads. Then we began to inquire into whether or not that sort of concept was appropriate in terms of today's standards and so on. I reached this conclusion, Mr. Speaker. That is, it would be appropriate in this province for us to remove the truck differential on two-lane roads and the nighttime speed limit on two-lane roads; maintain, however, the differential that exists on four-lane highways where we have a speed limit of 110 [kilometres] an hour for automobiles. I wanted to raise that here today, Mr. Speaker, because it is my intention to move in that direction and, over the course of the next short while, I would certainly like the thoughts of my colleagues in the Legislature in that regard. I would be prepared as well to provide additional material to members in support of such a change.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude with these comments. I'd like to express my appreciation to the almost 1 million voters who returned to this Legislature on November 2 the calibre of men and women who now represent 79 constituencies in this

20th Alberta Legislature. My own personal support in Smoky River was a reflection of the high regard which all the people of Alberta held for our colleagues in the 19th Alberta Legislature and, in particular, a reflection of the high regard in which people hold the leader of our government, the hon. Member for Calgary West, and the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta. That leadership, Mr. Speaker, continues to foster a mood of optimism and confidence that is the very foundation of our success in this province and, in my view, will serve us well in the difficult years ahead.

Thank you.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to cover two purposes in my remarks this afternoon. The first is to highlight what I feel are some of the major pitfalls of the Speech from the Throne that was given to us on March 10, 1983. Secondly, I would like to enunciate to the Assembly some of my philosophical objectives as an Independent and to support that position by some, what I call, selective but not inclusive policy statements.

Let's look at the throne speech first of all. There are three major shortfalls, as I examine this speech, that I think are to the detriment of Albertans when not mentioned in a document such as this. First of all, as I examine it, the speech does not recognize the seriousness of our current economic situation. In Alberta, we have 135,000 people unemployed. Does the document even pay recognition to that? Mr. Speaker, it doesn't. Does the document talk about some type of a plan by which we are going to, first of all, help some people in obtaining jobs, that we are going to put some free-enterprise back into the system in Alberta, that we are going to build confidence? Does it talk about a plan of confidence for the private sector? Does it talk about a tax plan for the private sector? Well, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't; no indication, not by sentence or by intent, that it would do something for those that are losing their jobs. Certainly there are some government handout-type programs that are a rather socialist approach, but nothing in terms of a free enterprise approach to solving the needs, meeting the needs, and showing compassion to many of those 135,000 that are either walking the streets, are on welfare, or are on employment insurance at the present time.

Secondly, a concern for small business. Business after business is facing deteriorating income and bankruptcy, and many businesses are in bankruptcy. One of the most recent reports with regard to Alberta bankruptcies is the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department of the federal government, indicating just what the circumstances are across Canada. The increase in bankruptcies in Alberta is twice the Canadian average when you compare January 1983 with January 1982. Mr. Speaker, that is a serious problem.

... 220 personal bankruptcies in the province last month, up 69 per cent from February, 1982, and up one per cent from January of this year.

Businesses fared worse, with 104 Alberta firms obliterated in February [1982], up 82 per cent from a year ago and up 24 per cent from [last] January. That's a much poorer record than Canada as a whole, where 2,712 individuals declared bankruptcies last month — a 13 per cent increase over a year ago.

The circumstances are serious. But did the throne speech of a government that received 75 out of 79 seats even mention it or show care or show any plan? Mr. Speaker, it didn't. We see no evidence of that kind of concern, nor a plan in place, nor the intention of putting a sophisticated, comprehensive, co-ordinated plan in place to deal with the immediate problem and

the problems in the year ahead. That is complete and total neglect of government responsibilities.

What else do we see as a shortfall? Well, we see in there a promise of an increased cost of living. We see the potential of increased taxes because the programs are so unco-ordinated — there are no priorities being established — increased cost of fuel, increased cost of government. Mr. Speaker, that certainly is a major shortfall. So first of all, the speech does not recognize the current seriousness of our economic condition.

What's the second shortfall? The speech shows complete disregard for the plight of local governments, municipalities, school boards, and hospital boards. Let's look at the first part: municipalities and school boards. For over a decade in Alberta there have been serious problems in school districts and municipalities because both have had to share the local property tax to finance their expenditures. That problem just continues to increase in difficulty. We have had countless studies and commissions that have stated that the property tax is regressive and weighs most heavily on those that are on fixed incomes and that the financing of social programs, including education, should be based largely on provincial revenues.

In this Legislature in 1971, the Minister of Education at that time, the Hon. Lou Hyndman, promised to remove the education tax from the property tax. The Premier and the Education Minister promised that by 1971, 1972, or early 1973 we would be rid of that commitment as local property tax payers. We look at what's happened 10 years later; we look at today. Has it changed? It has not. The problem has only grown in proportion. We know that the promise was never carried out and, at the present time, some 40 per cent of the approximately \$1.5 billion in public school costs is raised through local property tax. Mr. Speaker, that's just total irresponsibility on behalf of this provincial government. It made a commitment to Albertans to do that, and the situation has only grown worse and more difficult. I think this factor alone explains the current crunch in municipal finance and the resulting massive layoffs of people in Calgary and Edmonton at the present time. The unemployment rate, as we know, is high, and that's only one of the factors continuing to increase the unemployment rate.

We hear at this time that the province is only going to increase grants to municipalities and school boards by 5 per cent and that the local governments must pick up the shortfall. Well, it's very obvious to all of us what that is going to do to municipal taxation and the property tax in this province. There will be great difficulties.

At this time, why shouldn't we look at this in terms of its priority? Education is a top priority. But can the local governments afford to pay for the services that the people are requesting in this province at this time? Why don't we look at the foundation program to local school boards and adjust it? That means that that will have to take away from other areas of expenditure, a change in priorities. But let's get the percentage of education costs on property tax changed so that municipal governments have a little more flexibility to build some of their local roads, to gravel them, to build some of the local facilities that are needed in the communities.

Under the present system and the present direction that this government is taking us, local municipalities will have no flexible income and are lucky that they are able to afford the present operations. Most likely they will be called on to bring about limited municipal operations in the coming year, all because of the financial plan that is supposedly in place by this government but is not a thinking in terms of the needs of local municipal governments or local school boards.

I feel sorry for those local municipal councillors as they sit in their council and say, what do we do? I had one of the

councils from outside my constituency in the other day. They said: we don't know how to handle the situation anymore; we're in difficulty. They said to me: in 1975, 82 per cent of the total requisition for county and school budget came through by grants from the department. In 1982, under the present circumstances, they're down to 68.5 per cent. This, in turn, means their local towns, villages, and hamlets will have significant increases in their property tax — 30 to 40 to 50 per cent. And that directly affects many people on fixed incomes, many people who are trying to run a business or earn an adequate living. That shouldn't be happening at the present time in this province of Alberta. It's not right.

What about hospital boards? Did the throne speech talk about how we are going to deal with the problem facing hospital boards? In question period, I raised the approach of the minister. The minister indicates that the moneys received this year will be comparable in the coming fiscal year. Hopefully that meets the needs of the hospital boards, but it's doubtful. When we had an increase in hospital costs of 25 per cent over the 1981-82 budget. In 1982-83 with the increased cost of living, the increased cost of administration, the increased demand on services that are going on at the present time, how can the hospital boards live within the limits we're putting on them in the current fiscal year?

I think it's incumbent upon the government to make some remarks about that, to show a higher priority in their government plan. And that's what this is: the throne speech is their government plan. What are they asking the hospital boards to do at the present time? In the coming year, are they going to ask them to cut staff, cut services, run a deficit, abandon the ship or quit, turn the administration of hospital boards totally over to the department of hospitals, or introduce new taxes? Those are questions this government will have to answer in light of the approach they are taking.

I think — and I want to say this to the government — that the present operation whereby the minister puts the fault on the back of the hospital boards is unacceptable. Over the years, because the government of Alberta pays last-dollar costs, the operating expenses of every hospital are reviewed annually. Their administrative procedures are reviewed annually by the government of Alberta through the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. That means they are a partner in what is happening in that hospital and are a partner to the level of expenditures. So it should be very clear that the responsibility for what is happening in our hospitals lies not at the door of local hospital boards but at the door of the provincial government and, specifically, the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. But the speech doesn't deal with those matters, Mr. Speaker, and that's what I think is totally unfair and irresponsible.

The third shortfall I see in this speech, Mr. Speaker, is that it neglects to establish clear priorities of government in terms of the economic downturn. I'd like to just mention some symptoms of that attitude. I believe that at this point in time, a greater priority must be placed on the basic services; that is, health care and education in this province. Those are essential needs of the people in Alberta.

I think other things should be examined. We look in the throne speech and see that the government is going to continue — and this is just a symptom, a typical example — to build Athabasca University. If we examine that, Athabasca University is operating at the present time. There is staff in place. There are students obtaining and fulfilling certain goals of education. The facility is operating, meeting the needs of education. But what is this government doing? It has just allocated some \$13 million to a contract to move and start building the

facility out in Athabasca. Maybe there's nothing wrong with building, but in terms of the economic times, it doesn't fit the pattern. We could take that same \$13 million, put it into nursing home facilities, extendicare facilities, and serve some people that have no facilities at the present time.

The hon. member from Lethbridge can well confirm that there is a waiting list for nursing home facilities in Lethbridge. I think it's between 60 and 80 persons who need nursing home care and cannot get into a facility. Why don't we divert some of the money there? We have people in Vulcan waiting for nursing home facilities the very same way. I'm sure there are people in Calgary and other places in this province waiting for nursing home facilities. But where do we put our priorities in this throne speech? And this is a symptom of this government: it worries about its own political needs rather than managing the government like a business. That's what isn't happening. But we are going to continue building Athabasca University to the neglect of services that are not in place at the present time.

Kananaskis: that's in the heritage fund of course; but it's a symptom, and it's an example of how this government thinks — \$28 million. That expenditure becomes more important than some of the hospitals in this province and, as I say, beds for health care facilities. We could use every one of those dollars for that purpose. Does the government think in terms of that? Does it think in terms of the school building facilities in this province? No, Mr. Speaker, it's not one of their political priorities. But it certainly should be a priority of a government that wants to manage well the financial plan of this province.

Office space: we're asking this question of the government at the present time, and hopefully the answer will come a little faster than the office that was supposedly going to be established in Mundare. I understand there are thousands of square feet of office space around the various centres of this province that are vacant, that are being rented to the government and not being used. I think the management of this government had better pull up its socks. The Department of Agriculture moves into a new building; right across the street we've got empty offices. The question back three years ago when they decided that: why did they have to move? Those are the symptoms of this government that indicate its mismanagement and lack of concern about the priorities and spending. The hon. Premier, who is away today at a conference, started talking about setting priorities in government back in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Well, he didn't know what the word meant then, and he still doesn't know what the word means today. He has had over 10 years to practise what he said from this chair in this Legislature. He has not fulfilled that commitment either to the people of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech did not do its job. The government has not got a plan. We find here just a summary of statements and political offerings that went into the last election for the purpose of the government being re-elected, not for solving some of the economic problems that face us today and meeting some of the social needs that are prevalent throughout the province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to cover the second subject of my remarks and talk in terms of some of the philosophic objectives that I would like accomplish as an Independent member of this Legislature, working with my colleague, and some of the policies that we see should be put in place for a better government for the people of Alberta.

Let's talk about free enterprise first of all. I've found in this Legislature, and I'm sure it's like other Legislatures, that many a member has laid claim to free enterprise in the province of Alberta. In the name of free enterprise, many a policy has been proposed, certainly criticized, and even rejected. Mr. Speaker,

it's safe to say that few if any members have ever come out on the floor of this Legislature and clearly stated their opposition to free enterprise, which is rather interesting. In my best recollection, I don't ever remember even the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview condemning the concept of free enterprise. But when we look at it that way, I think the only judge as to whether free enterprise flourishes in this Legislature and this province is by judging the actions of ourselves and all of us in this Legislature that mouth the belief in the discipline of the free market or the competitive, free-enterprise system. Possibly we must pay less attention to the words that often flow so well. In this and following sessions of the Legislature, I intend to do just that.

When we examine the Lougheed Progressive Conservative government before us, we would expect that it would be that pursuer of free enterprise and the holder of those principles.

As I observe the actions of government, I often think the Liberal government in Ottawa isn't much different from the government here in Alberta. Why do I say that? Well, we just have to look at the tremendous growth in government in this province since the Conservative government came into office. We have a civil service and a bureaucracy that has tripled in size since 1971. We've had enormous budget deficits in a province that's so wealthy. We have bureaucrats — and a very good example was demonstrated here in this Legislature today — who shock Albertans by their encroachments upon private concerns in both business and the family home. We have a rapid and enormous growth of legislation and regulations that control the initiative of Albertans. What's a good example? The Planning Act that was implemented a few years ago by this government.

Mr. Speaker, there is but one way to explain these things in Alberta, and that is that they came about under the direction, either by intent or default, of the Progressive Conservative government led by Mr. Lougheed. We've seen in the past few years, and we're suffering over this at the present time, a government that's been rather drunk with over spending and the power that goes with it. We have a situation now, and I hope that it's proved differently, where cabinet ministers are unable to control not only their staff but the spending. Now that's a very unhealthy situation.

Underneath all of this is a continuous erosion of free enterprise. Mr. Speaker, my aim as part of the Independent opposition is to hopefully provide direction with regard to free enterprise. In this Legislature I hope to be a continuous voice for free enterprise. My colleague the hon. Member for Clover Bar will speak, I'm sure, equally as forcefully. We will call for the free market, call forth enterprising Albertans to turn their labor into prosperity, and call down a government that is afraid to promote the free market, afraid of the results Albertans can achieve in their endeavours. Mr. Speaker, we hope that we can remove any barriers or economic breaks that are clamped down in this province that prevent free enterprise or the free market from moving ahead. Mr. Speaker, that's quite a challenge. We hope that in our responsibilities we can meet that challenge.

As an Independent opposition, our criticism will not be limited only to economic matters. We are, as well, social conservatives. Our proposals and criticisms will embody the traditional virtues that have made Alberta proud and strong. A successful free-market society in this province should be, and can be, built on individuals who live what we consider the chief virtue, that of individual self-reliance by which men and women are expected to live their lives as independent of government as possible. As a consequence, individual Albertans ought to expect to reap

the rewards of their legitimate labors and suffer the relative consequences when they lack diligence.

This is the self-reliant attitude that I hope to support, Mr. Speaker. We expect a free-enterprise government to promote self-reliance in its citizens in this province of Alberta through all its aspects of policy, not a sort of pick and choose a favorite approach to policy making. We will let the government know when it is destroying the will of Albertans to live independent of government. As I said earlier, basic education, health care, and necessary social services will receive our support.

Mr. Speaker, with that philosophic direction in mind, I would like to very quickly enumerate 10 issue areas that at this time should be primary in the minds and on the agenda of a free-enterprise government in Alberta. I hope that I can show that these issues ought to be resolved in favor of a free-market philosophy and of social conservatism. What are those ten subjects?

Firstly, a balanced budget, a very necessary item at this time in our history. The government of Alberta should work towards a balanced budget for the 1984-85 fiscal year. We recognize that the heated budget of the Lougheed government cannot be completely turned around in one fiscal year. But we stress that that budget ought to be balanced as the economy improves and the government bureaucracy reduced accordingly. As well, government ought to introduce and support free market measures to increase the production of the oil and gas industry, agriculture, and small business.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, taxes. Taxes extracted by the government of Alberta ought to be maintained at their current, relatively low levels. The budget must not be balanced through increased tax contributions by individuals and businesses. Such an attempt is inconsistent with a free-market government and would hobble economic recovery in this province. The government should not even consider, at present, any attempt to increase revenues through a sales tax. One of the advantages of living in this province has always been its lack of a sales tax. To impose one would be to deprive individual Albertans of a further part of the rewards for their efforts in the free market and, as well, their ability to recover or hold position in this time of an economic downturn.

Number three, reduced bureaucracy. Since the Lougheed administration took power in 1971, the bureaucracy of this government has grown at a rate generally in excess of the free-market growth rate in the province. As a consequence, government has taken a larger share of the Alberta economy than ever, to the detriment of everyone but the bureaucrats. The government must conduct a public inquiry into government growth in the province with a view to tying all future government growth to the growth rate of the private sector in the province of Alberta. As a first act of faith in such an inquiry, I would encourage this government to enforce a genuine hiring freeze on the bureaucracy and let attrition do its work.

Number four, reduced government regulations. Once again, the province needs an inquiry into government regulations and deregulations. We had one of those inquiries in an earlier Legislature by Mr. Zander, a member of the Legislature. A number of recommendations were made but not followed. I think it would be good to take that under consideration at the present time.

Number five, a rejection of government ownership. Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta ought to commit itself to free-market industrial development incentives, thereby rejecting government ownership of the engines of economic diversification in Alberta's future. I believe that the present moneys that are being placed in competition to industry should stop. The role of the heritage fund in the economic diversification

of Alberta must be emphasized. I would suggest that money in investment should go toward roads, dam construction, hospitals, schools, and for the people of Alberta.

Number six, to eliminate direct and indirect government competition with the private sector. All direct and indirect government competition with private-sector interests should cease. The Altel Data case is a very good one. Alberta Government Telephones is competing with the private sector. That should stop. The Alberta Energy Company should change. The Department of Housing is just another example of that kind of unfair competition in the market place.

Number seven, a commitment to education. A high priority should be placed on education in this province at the elementary, secondary, technical, and university levels.

Number eight, social services should support self-reliance and community involvement. The government should re-evaluate the nature and purpose of its social services in light of the failure of Progressive Conservatism to prove anything more than an enormously expensive, overcentralized social services bureaucracy. Let two principles guide all social policy: number one, self-reliance of the individual and, number two, genuine decentralization of social services to bring them closer to real community needs and sentiments.

Number nine, Mr. Speaker, is with regard to reduced government involvement in housing. I believe the government of Alberta must commit itself to withdrawing from the housing field and let the free market place work in a healthy and competitive way. In 1976 the government created the Department of Housing and Public Works, the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation, to supplement the activities of the Alberta Housing Corporation and to deal with the problems of unprecedented growth. Since that time, government programs have mushroomed to over 34 different programs, capital spending, \$1.4 billion, and some 895 civil servants, which is four times as many as B.C., six times as many as Saskatchewan, and twice as many as Quebec. We have a different situation today. Vacancy rates are healthy. Interest rates are reasonable. The market place is saturated with a number of housing units. We can bring those departments together, co-ordinate and change priorities to bring about a better delivery of services for the people of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the role of government in housing through the Alberta Housing Corporation should be to address the needs of the physically and mentally handicapped, senior citizens, and special groups such as the hard to house. In the area of senior citizens, it should be noted that there are 14,000 seniors in apartments and lodges who are getting older all the time. Unfortunately this accommodation is not equipped to handle the needs of the frail and the elderly as they age. Mr. Speaker, we could provide housing in that area to those people in need.

Number ten, confronting the federal government when the federal Parliament erodes Albertans' rights and freedoms. Mr. Speaker, I feel there is no good reason for the government of Alberta to be shy in pressuring the federal government on all issues of concern to Albertans, whether in the provincial legislative sphere or not. To me that is an area that has been neglected by provincial governments in the past number of years in this Legislature. The provincial government should use every available opportunity to remind the federal government of the opinions of Albertans on such issues as capital punishment, bilingualism, metrickation, intervention, tax policy, and free enterprise. Also the government ought to make far more public fuss over the gross inequities suffered by Alberta and the west at the hands of the federal government. Studies ought to be commissioned by the government to buttress those grievances.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that my time is almost over, and I'd like to close very quickly. These are the 10 issues that we

as an Independent opposition put forth for a free-enterprise challenge to the government. We intend to press these issues, clarify, and elaborate on each of them. They are consistent with our belief and, we hope, consistent with the Conservative attitude that supposedly prevails in this Legislature.

I certainly hope we can remember that good public policy should be built on the basis of a philosophic attitude or some basic principles. That was my intent in the remarks I made with regard to the Speech from the Throne today, Mr. Speaker: to make comments or propose policies that I hope will lead to the betterment of Albertans and certainly to many individuals in need today.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure and a privilege to be able to participate in the discussion of the throne speech. I would add that it is indeed an honor to be able to participate in this most gracious House.

First, I would like to thank and congratulate His Honour for the deliverance of his speech on the opening of this Legislature. I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on the re-election to your position. I too would like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Speech from the Throne. They did a superb job, and those that preceded me also graced this House with their comments.

Mr. Speaker, I would certainly be remiss if I did not give particular attention and thanks to all those people who worked so hard on my behalf during our recent election campaign. To my friends and neighbors in McCall constituency, for their support and confidence in electing me as their representative in Edmonton, my sincere thanks. Their efforts certainly did show at the polls and gave me the largest numerical mandate in the province and some 77 per cent of the total votes cast, and it makes me feel extremely proud to be able to represent [them] and, I might add, to win by 15,000 votes over a socialist candidate.

As we know, Calgary McCall is the most populous constituency in the province. People from all walks of life and ethnic backgrounds enhance our very large community. Representing many of the professional areas of the community, we have nurses, teachers, lawyers, geologists, doctors, accountants, members of the police, fire, and ambulatory services, and many executives; as well, people from the many trades: carpentry, plumbing, electrical, and so on.

My communities bound a very wide and varied area of the city. They go east to the city limits, north to the city limits, to the south, Memorial Drive, and to the west, the Deerfoot Trail in part and the Barlow Trail in another part. The communities I represent are all relatively young: Saddle Ridge in the north, annexed some years ago with their small acreages; the annual all-girls' rodeo in July. And yes, like many other members here in the rural areas, I do have sour gas wells; concerns by residents of their quiet enjoyment of property and businesses threatened with "extension or move". Just east of the airport they get the brunt of the noise from aircraft. A challenge, to say the least.

Castleridge and Falconridge: new and exciting communities. Young people with families, many in their first home and some in their second or third. Access to the area is in the main by 52nd Street or McKnight Boulevard. This community has a new large community cultural facility, housing many activities. Thanks to the MCR grants of the provincial government, assistance was given to develop this cultural facility. The community is also near the airport and on the flight path of the east-west runway, but people here concern themselves mainly with their children, the education and the well-being of same. These are the newest of the communities in Calgary McCall.

The Properties, a very large development of four square miles, made of up Rundle, Pineridge, Temple and Whitehorn, are in the main extremely well planned by private enterprise. There are, of course, certain planning aspects that we don't all agree to, but overall, excellent communities.

All have elementary schools, in both the public and separate systems. Rundle has a junior high; Pineridge has one under construction, and Whitehorn will have one under construction soon that will facilitate both that community and Temple. We have our fire hall and ambulance service centrally located in the constituency at 52nd Street and Temple Drive. An abundance of shopping is available within walking distance or by a very short drive in the constituency. Mr. Speaker, we have the uniqueness of having three major regional shopping centres in the constituency, one of them the finest in the Canadian shopping scene.

We also have a leisure centre in The Properties, which I must give some note to. This centre, the first of its kind in North America, was developed on initiative by myself at the city council in Calgary, built mainly with city tax dollars but not to suggest help was not received from the province and was to the tune of some \$6 million of MCR grant moneys. This centre, being very unique, has a very large wave pool with three slides, including a 70-foot adult slide, two hot tubs, a diving pool, tanning cots, steam rooms, a large sports hall, a gymnasium with a climbing wall, gymnastic equipment, weight-lifting exercise areas, an arts and crafts room, a social service office, a clinic with nursing staff, a library which will have some 70,000 book titles, and two ice surfaces. Just a magnificent addition to a very large community.

We have a number of small community parks, both developed and underdeveloped, and of course LRT. I might add for the Minister of Transportation that in talking about rest stops, we think it should be LRT stops. But LRT is well under way in north-east Calgary and to the McCall constituency, and should be completed in 1985. This will be a welcome addition to the Calgary McCall constituency, especially for our large, dense population.

South of the Properties are Marlborough and Marlborough Park. These are the two older communities of our young constituency. Both have good elementary and junior high schools and have excellent participation from the community. The Trans-Canada Highway to the north and Memorial Drive to the south — using 36th Street, 52nd Street, and 68th Street — are the access points to these communities. Both have community centres, and both were assisted in their development by the provincial government's MCR grants. These communities are substantially completed in their development and concern themselves with transportation, education, and recreation, in addition to the many economic concerns we all have.

Abbeydale is a new community to the east of Marlborough Park, having access by the Trans-Canada Highway and Memorial Drive through 68th Street. As a developing community, education and transportation concerns are in the main of primary concern. A relatively new community facility has also been built with assistance of MCR grants. This is another young community, with young, hard-working, dedicated, community-spirited people. Many government dollars assisting home buyers have been used in this community, as in others in the area. And certainly government dollars have been expended well in assisting the needy, in assisting those people — young people — who could not normally afford their homes without the assistance of a sensitive Progressive Conservative government, which is also a government dealing with private enterprise to build those homes and only providing assistance by funds.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, we have the Martindale and Tardale communities coming on stream as new development. We have the Burlington phase one ready to go, Burlington phase two just annexed, and another small annexation recently approved to the north of McKnight Boulevard. One other annexation of some 4,800 acres is in the works. Mr. Speaker, we have a very large area of employment, which includes many large companies as well as many small businesses. All perform and perform well in the community, and add to our employment fulfilment.

The Austrian-Canadian and Croatian-Canadian cultural centres are in the area — again, assistance from our very sensitive Progressive Conservative free-enterprise government to assist new Canadians in their fulfilment of their heritage. Many hotels dot our constituency, surrounding the airport which brings many visitors to our province, and provide a much needed service to our community.

Mr. Speaker, our constituency, like many others in this province, is blessed with many dedicated, hard-working young people. They are the life-blood of our community, and they are our real heritage. Therefore education is a primary concern to all of us. Our government, over the past few years, has provided many elementary and junior high schools in the McCall constituency. In fact over the last number of years, we probably received more schools than any other constituency in the province. Mind you, they are certainly warranted with that high growth rate. These schools are managed and staffed by some very, very dedicated and positive-thinking people and, I must add, some extremely fine young teachers and principals.

Our parents are involved in our schools, helping to give them that real community spirit. At the present time we have three community schools in our constituency. The schools' staff, parents, and children think they are the greatest thing since the school system was evolved. It gives them a sense of belonging. Everyone feels proud to be part of this spirit, and we encourage the government to continue their designation of community schools, but at the same time they do, fund them.

We look forward to the continued development of good schools in our community. With over 80,000 people, and some 40,000 of them children, our needs can be demonstrated for capital expenditures in the field of education for our children. Much needed is a high school. It is hard to imagine a community, or a small city, if you will — and I add, what would happen if Lethbridge did not have a high school? We have no high school. Students learn discipline and pride when they can participate with their friends rather than being bused to three or four different locations outside their own community. We will encourage our government to allow Calgary McCall constituency to realize a high school in the near future.

We also look forward with great anticipation, Mr. Speaker, to the development of the hospital in northeast Calgary. As funding is available, we will certainly be pushing forward that option. Studies have shown the need, and certainly a shortage of health care facilities in our populous constituency prompts us to continue encouraging the government to follow through on promises made.

In our communities, we have many seniors who are appreciative of the many benefits given them by a sensitive free-enterprise government. Presently Gilchrist Manor is the only seniors' lodge in our community. We would certainly like to see more built, as seniors love to relate with and to the many young people in our young neighborhoods. The leisure centre I previously mentioned is across the street from Gill Crest Manor. Boy, do these seniors think that is something. They have the use of that facility as any young person might, and use it to its fullest extent. What an environment for seniors,

for dialogue and interaction. And brother, we certainly have need of this to keep our seniors young and active in our young communities.

Mr. Speaker, we have four churches of different denominations within easy walking distance of our senior citizens' home and our leisure centre and from many parts of our community. In all we have some nine churches, as well as land which has been set aside for some four or five more. All these churches are very active, well attended, and have excellent programs of religion and culture for all. As I previously mentioned, our constituency has many shopping facilities, including the three regional centres, operated and encouraged by a free-enterprise government to continue their growth and a positive attitude in our communities. These centres are giving Albertans many, many jobs and are being encouraged to continue doing that without government interference or assistance.

Our industrial base in our constituency is growing daily and employing, again, many thousands of people. For example, Northern Telecom is just now moving into their large factory and office building, creating up to some 800 jobs under one roof. That is what I call confidence in a free-enterprise government by a large international Canadian company. Here is an excellent sign of that confidence by a private sector company in our economy. Mr. Speaker, we also have the Calgary International Airport in our constituency, which is certainly a hub of activity and one of the busiest in Canada. Here is where many tourists and business people get their first glimpse of our Alberta and our Canada. The previous speaker talked about economics. Economic diversity is a policy of this government, and that diversity and tourism go hand in hand.

Mr. Speaker, transportation is a major concern in Calgary McCall as it is in all of Calgary. We feel that balanced transportation growth, both for the LRT and roads, must continue. The province, while supporting the initial start up of the LRT system, should continue to provide assistance to create an integrated transportation network rather than two legs carrying people to and from the main core. We in the constituency of Calgary McCall hope the province will re-examine its funding to assist in development of the urban transportation system. A formula consistent with other jurisdictions in Canada and the U.S. should be examined. Recognition of the financial needs of our urban centres must be given a further examination by our positive-thinking government.

Mr. Speaker, housing has been built at a rate unprecedented in any community in North America over the past five years. Up to one-third of all housing built in Calgary in a given year was completed in McCall. How many families have been given an opportunity to own and live in their own home because of our government's assistance through various Alberta Housing Corporation programs and, I might add, built by private enterprise. To assist people to continue living in those homes, the Alberta heritage fund mortgage interest reduction program was announced on September 7 last year. My constituency probably benefited as much as any in Alberta through this announcement. Without our rainy day savings fund, the government could not have financed a program of this nature — foresight and positive action by a concerned government.

Mr. Speaker, the development of a new liquor store in our constituency is of prime concern. Not that we wish to encourage the sale of liquor, we have one store which, I believe, is the highest volumed outlet in the province. It has created and continues to create a major negative impact on two communities. Mr. Speaker, development of a new outlet in an area outside the residential community is extremely important, and I do congratulate the Solicitor General's department for considering this when land was purchased. It is therefore necessary to

complete construction of the facility yesterday for humanistic reasons; that is to say, so people can have quiet enjoyment of their homes and community in the area surrounding the present overtraded facility.

Parks, recreation, and sports are a major component and concern in Calgary McCall. With our very large population, sports and recreation are very important to our youth. The development of the Nose Creek valley as a regional park is a priority. Although the land is city owned, we would look towards the province to assist in its development, to ensure that the many people in the northeast end of Calgary are given recreational opportunities similar to other areas which are provincially financed. To develop 1,000 acres is a mammoth task and requires co-operation of both the municipality and the province. Our youth and parents participate in very large and successful programs. The encouragement given by all is outstanding, and we are proud of their achievements.

Mr. Speaker, our large population of various ethnic groups gives our constituency an unmatched cultural flavor. They are proud people who have their culture to show us all. The development of cultural centres in my constituency shows that our government is indeed sensitive to our new friends from many parts of the world. It gives many of us a chance to learn something of another culture without having had the opportunity to visit their homelands. It is a credit to our government. We continue to recognize the needs and thoughts of our new friends.

Mr. Speaker, Calgarians, and especially those in the Calgary McCall constituency, are extremely proud of our city being nominated to host the 1988 Winter Olympic Games. I was fortunate enough to be one of the team that participated in the gathering of those games in Baden Baden, along with, I might add, Mr. Oman in this House and the hon. Premier. The support of the two senior governments is most important in ensuring the success of those games.

Our government has a major role to play, and I am confident that the everlasting impact of the investment of time and money will be rewarding to all Albertans and, for that matter, Canadians. The legacy we will develop through the efforts of CODA and our government will be appreciated for years after the games. With the past Commonwealth Games, the Universiade this year, and the 1988 Winter Olympics being held in our province, it should give us pride in knowing the world has confidence in our stable, free-enterprise government and recognizes the ability of Albertans to perform at an outstanding level. The Western Canada Games to be held in Calgary this summer will give Calgarians an opportunity for a dress rehearsal for the very important world winter games to be held in 1988. Our achievements in the past, present, and future in putting on first-class events are seen world-wide, ensuring our reputation will continue to grow in the field of world events.

We hear many comments, especially from hon. opposition members, that tend to identify all the many problems in our society. Mr. Speaker, I reject that term. Using negatives is very easy for some because they have no positive offerings. However, I am glad they at least have identified the fact that we the government do have an economic resurgence program. I am glad to see them question the program because it does show they too would like to answer their constituents' questions about the positive opportunities Alberta's Progressive Conservative government is offering to all Albertans, and that the opposition members are able to also ride on our government's positive initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, our government continues to show leadership in developing people programs. We can see by the throne speech and the many programs announced over the last number

of months that we can be thankful of a forward-thinking government concerned with the needs of people and the initiative of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. There are those whose desires of destroying our trust fund would have this province deficit-ridden as other socialist governments, including our present federal one. Destruction of our Heritage Savings Trust Fund, as professed by some, would not have allowed the many announced and positive programs of the last few months.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, our government's forward thinking of some years ago did create a rainy day fund, and it is working. As I've already indicated, it's providing homes for our young and younger. It's providing jobs through home improvement grants for seniors. It's providing educational grants, hospitals and medical care, and many social programs for the handicapped and the needy. As all hon. members know, many more initiatives have been taken and will continue to be taken as those needs arise. What we need are more governments, including the federal, that are also sensitive to the private sector — governments which are stable, governments that show leadership and offer confidence to the private sector to invest without the fear of government takeovers.

Some feel profit is a bad word, Mr. Speaker. Let me say to those who think that way: without profits, enterprise dies. Without investors reaping some benefit from their gamble, they would not invest. It's all right for some to criticize the well-to-do, but they gambled and worked hard for their result. At least they didn't spend their lives sponging off government purses and then criticizing the system of self-support.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of areas which will interest me during our 20th Legislature. They include education, health care, child care, and law and order. This does not discount other areas of interest, including transportation and recreation, specifically in the sports area, but identifies those areas of concern for my constituency. The concerns of the economy and jobs, which all here must continue to address, will of course be on top of the list.

Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues before me have stated, I am honored to place some of these views of Calgary McCall constituents to this House. The Speech from the Throne does give a message and is positive. I firmly believe that some here should remove their heads from the sand and erase the negative outlook they feel must be projected. We should look forward with optimism to the unparalleled opportunities we have in our province. I am sure that with a positive approach to what we have available in Alberta, we will all be better off.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again thank the people of my constituency for the honor to represent them in this House. I can assure them that I will represent them here with the same honest fire that I did as an alderman in the city of Calgary. They can be assured of that. I will, of course, respect our team approach here, to ensure we develop programs of benefit to all Albertans. Mr. Speaker, I thank you and the hon. members for their patience and attention to my remarks.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, as I rise for the first time in this time-honored Assembly. I would like to thank His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor for his fine presentation of the throne speech last Thursday, March 9. I would like to thank him most sincerely for the years he has given to our Alberta. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate mover Dr. Bob Elliott, the hon. Member for Grande Prairie, and seconder, the hon. Janet Koper, recently elected from the constituency of Calgary Foothills, for their wise, thoughtful, and clear presentations.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge and thank Premier Peter Lougheed for his leadership, his far-reaching

visions for this province, and his tremendous skill, ability, and aptitude as leader of my government. His example of positive leadership can best be exemplified in his dealings and deliberations over the last few years in two areas involving major implications for all Albertans: the constitutional debate and the federal government/Alberta government deliberations involving energy.

I would also like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your recent reappointment as Speaker of this Assembly. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with you outside this Legislature and look forward to a continued positive relationship in this House. I look forward to the knowledge and wisdom you in your position will bestow upon me.

I would also like to give special thanks to the constituents of Edmonton Kingsway who have sent me to this Legislature to be their spokesman in this Assembly, to be their liaison with their government, and to communicate their wishes, desires, suggestions, and concerns to members of their government. Through the votes of the citizens of Edmonton Kingsway, I have been given the most serious task of being their member of the Legislative Assembly. I ask for their patience. I ask for their assistance, their best wishes, and their prayers so that I may fulfil the many responsibilities before me.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take the opportunity to thank my family, my dear wife Vania, and my three beautiful young daughters, Anndrea, Melanie, and Tara, for their sacrifices, their time, their encouragement, and their love.

Mr. Speaker, as I participate in the throne speech debate, I want to acknowledge that it is truly an honor to be a part of the Progressive Conservative team that was so successful on November 2, 1982. The election victory is indeed a success story in that the Progressive Conservative Party has now been returned to this House on four consecutive occasions, a statistic that, in recent times, can only be bettered by the Edmonton Eskimo football club in the winning of their fifth consecutive Grey Cup.

I want to share with you, Mr. Speaker, some insight into the constituency of Edmonton Kingsway, and I want to acknowledge my support for the words and ideas put forth in the throne speech last week. Edmonton Kingsway was established in 1971 through the redistribution process and has been represented by the Progressive Conservative Party since its formation. I am pleased to acknowledge that my brother, Dr. Ken Paproski, was the M.L.A. for that constituency since 1971, and I am pleased and honored that the citizens of Edmonton Kingsway have given me the opportunity to serve them.

DR. BUCK: Hear, hear. Tell us about it.

MR. PAPROSKI: I will do my utmost not to let them down, by encouraging extensive communication. I am pleased to inform this Assembly that Edmonton Kingsway now has a constituency office, opened last week, at 10989A — 124th Street. I am sure that through this office, my office in Room 513 of the Legislature Building, and personal visitations to constituents, excellent sharing of ideas and concerns will occur.

Mr. Speaker, Edmonton Kingsway is a constituency located in the heart of Edmonton, Alberta, just five minutes north of Jasper Avenue. It is a constituency composed of approximately 25,000 people of every ethnic group, religious persuasion, age, and level of income. Of this population, over 2,000 are males over 55 years of age and almost 3,000 women over 55 reside here. So over 5,000, almost one in five, are over 55 years old. Approximately 1,500 are widowed. Over 18,000 have their mother tongue as English, 900 as French, and almost 5,000 indicate that their mother tongue is other than French or Eng-

lish, perhaps a clear indication why the many programs of the Minister of Culture are so readily accepted by many of my constituents. Five thousand five hundred single-attached and attached single-family dwellings, and just as many apartment units, exist in Kingsway. Needless to say, the legislation in the throne speech referring to the enrichment of the Alberta renter assistance tax credit has been warmly accepted by the renters. Needless to say, the Alberta heritage fund mortgage interest reduction program has been warmly received by the homeowners.

Although Edmonton Kingsway has a lower proportion of young children than most constituencies, there has recently been an increase in young couples moving into the area, with an upwards shift in this particular population. A strong and historic community spirit exists — communities which have a history dating back to the late 1800s. They flourish in Edmonton Kingsway, Groat Estates, Westmount, Dovercourt, Prince Rupert, Inglewood, Queen Mary Park, Prince Charles, and Sherbrooke are communities with residents that have included such prominent Albertans as the hon. J. Percy Page, James MacDonald, Dr. Norman Terwilligar, pilot Matt Berry, Charles Grant, George Gorman, the hon. Charles W. Cross, and James Gibbons.

More recently Edmonton Kingsway has been honored to have the first recipient of the \$25,000 Sir Frederick Haultain prize in humanities: the Rev. Jesse Bigelow, an Edmonton minister. In addition to being involved in a number of interdenominational and community programs. Dr. Bigelow has undertaken an active leadership role in the Presbyterian church at national and international levels.

Although business men and women have established themselves throughout the constituency, most are clustered in three or four areas. The variety of occupations involved are numerous and include retail sales, small manufacturing, warehousing, repairs, restaurants, hotels, and a unique number of jobs related to aircraft. This sector of the business community exists in Edmonton Kingsway because of the location of the Edmonton industrial airport within its boundaries. Many of my constituents have benefited from the small business interest shielding program and from other programs in Mr. Adair's ministry.

I would be amiss in not alluding to the Charles Camsell general hospital and the positive addition it has become to Edmonton Kingsway. Since becoming one of three provincial general hospitals in 1980, its 365 beds are occupied almost continuously at an 80 per cent level. On a recent tour of the Camsell, I was very pleased to see a beautiful facility and meet with many health professionals who spoke very positively about their hospital. We are pleased to have this community hospital in Edmonton Kingsway, and supported by the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care.

Another unique feature of the constituency is the inclusion of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate NAIT on its 20th anniversary, which is to be held today and through the balance of this week. NAIT has been offering tremendous programs to the Alberta population and now is proud to offer 63 diploma and certificate programs and 27 apprenticeship programs. NAIT has made a significant contribution to career training in Alberta: more than 25,000 students have graduated from full-time programs, and more than 113,000 have been registered in apprenticeship programs. Another 250,000 — one quarter of a million people, Mr. Speaker — have taken continuing education courses at NAIT.

Your government has shown that it truly believes in free enterprise that cares. Even though there has been a decline in economic activity in every country and region of the world,

including Alberta, the throne speech illustrates that Albertans will continue to benefit from programs and initiatives that care about people.

In Edmonton Kingsway, hundreds of senior citizens' units have been constructed over the last few years, such as St. Andrew's centre, Alliance Villa, Central Manor, and Mountwood. I am pleased to inform this Assembly that an additional 80 units at Mountwood have been approved by the Minister of Housing. As you know, Mr. Speaker, seniors in this province have benefited since 1972 by not having to pay any premium for Alberta health care or Alberta Blue Cross, nor do they pay hospital admission charges. Alberta senior citizens now receive the broadest health coverage in Canada, with eyeglasses, dentures, health aids, surgical supplies, and medical equipment at minimal cost or free. Eighty per cent of prescription drugs are paid for.

Senior citizens do not have to pay education taxes on their property taxes. In the area of rental assistance, rents may not exceed 25 per cent of gross income in community housing or self-contained units. Even with all these benefits, Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne discusses new and even more beneficial programs for senior citizens. The basic tax reduction for senior citizen homeowners will be raised from \$600 to \$1,000. The senior citizens' renter assistance grants will be raised from \$1,000 to \$1,200 for non-subsidized accommodation and from \$500 to \$600 for government subsidized accommodation. The senior citizens' home heating program or heating protection plan provides an additional measure of protection against high home-heating costs to those seniors in Edmonton Kingsway who own and occupy their own houses. Of course the new senior citizens' home improvement plan provides up to a \$3,000 grant to seniors, and widows or widowers age 55 to 64.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking about widows or widowers, of course the citizens of Edmonton Kingsway are very pleased about the announcement of the Alberta widows' pension program, a program that acknowledges the difficulties faced by men or women whose spouse dies and leaves them with few funds to enjoy life in Alberta.

There are a number of schools in Edmonton Kingsway: St. Rita, St. Andrew's, St. Pius X, Inglewood, Dovercourt, Prince Charles, Prince Rupert, Westmount, Westglen, and Sherbrooke. Many of these schools, Mr. Speaker, have received renovation grants from our government to maintain their existence in our communities. The consideration of the adoption of mandatory comprehensive examinations and the new emphasis on computers and computer literacy have now been well received by many of my constituents. I would like to acknowledge and congratulate as well Alberta Education and the Native Affairs department for their assistance in establishing the Ben Calf Robe school, a unique school for native students situated at St. Pius X school and part of the Edmonton Separate School Board.

I would like to highlight some additional areas mentioned in the throne speech that will benefit Edmonton Kingsway residents now and in the future. The Heritage Scholarship Fund has given awards to many of my constituents. The Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research has, through its endeavors, established Alberta as a leader in medical research in Canada and has attracted some of the best medical minds in the world to our province. The Native Venture Capital Corporation will encourage native Albertans to develop their own enterprises. The establishment of a new Department of Manpower illustrates this government's commitment to tackle unemployment. One simply has to look at recent statistics from the 1982-83 priority employment program to see that 10,935

positions were assisted through this program with a provincial commitment of \$23 million.

The Department of the Environment, in conjunction with the newly formed Alberta Water Resources Commission, will emphasize the importance of this natural resource so crucial to our long-term needs and our survival. Instead of simply waiting for our federal government to sell our products, Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to play a very, very active role to market our goods, our services, and the beauty of our province throughout this world. The Alberta and Edmonton governments have entered into a joint agreement to review outstanding issues between Alberta Government Telephones and Edmonton Telephones, a review that should decide if inequities do exist between my city and my government.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to mention some personal goals of mine over the next few years. First, I will endeavor to enhance the opportunity for equality in this province for women, natives, and the disabled. Second, with the growing rate of family problems, family dissolution, suicides, and child abuse, it is time to pursue an in-depth look into the institution of the family in this province. Third, I believe there should be increased emphasis on the prevention of social problems. Fourth, I will strive for an enhanced hospitality industry in order to increase the tourism trade in Alberta. Five, I will attempt to encourage my government to play a greater role in assisting in the implementation of career education programs from kindergarten to grade 12 and throughout all postsecondary institutions.

Six, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is time in this province to establish a senior citizens' ministry.

The challenge to our government is to maintain clean air, clean water, balanced budgets, and to stimulate our economy, care for our population, and be cognizant of future trends. I am pleased to be part of this government to see these challenges tackled now and for future Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I indicated yesterday that the Assembly would not sit tomorrow night. I give that information again for the benefit of hon. members and move that we call it 5:30.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:26 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 5, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]