

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, November 16, 1983 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **PRESENTING PETITIONS**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition drawn up by my constituents and bearing the signatures of 946 concerned Albertans. The petition makes clear to the members of this Legislature that the signees strongly oppose the personal income tax increase proposed for January 1, 1984.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 107**Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1983**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce Bill No. 107, the Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1983.

Since the passing of the new Legislative Assembly Act earlier this year, a number of changes which can basically be described as editorial or for purposes of clarification are being proposed by way of this amendment.

[Leave granted; Bill 107 read a first time]

Bill 108**Summary Convictions Amendment Act, 1983**

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to introduce Bill No. 108, the Summary Convictions Amendment Act, 1983.

There is one specific proposal in the principle of this Bill, and that is that the opportunity to deal with matters as a peace officer is being extended to federal parks wardens.

[Leave granted; Bill 108 read a first time]

Bill 105**Child Welfare Act**

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 105, the Child Welfare Act.

This is a complete rewrite of the existing legislation. Highlights include clear definitions of a child in need of protective services, of abuse, and of injury; a focus on the pre-eminence of the family and family responsibility; provision for the protection of children in the least intrusive way, including alternatives to children having to be taken from their families; new initiatives, such as delegation of some authority to foster parents and prescribing certain rights to foster parents, such as the possibility of private guardianship; a focus on permanency planning for children; and reform of adoption laws, including a passive post-adoptive registry.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill is being introduced at this time to allow public consultation over the winter about the government's

intentions in this regard and to allow the government to review the public's reaction to this Bill in conjunction with the important work of the Cavanagh Board of Review. It would be our intention to reintroduce a redrafted Child Welfare Act in the spring.

[Leave granted; Bill 105 read a first time]

Bill 104**Treasury Branches Amendment Act, 1983**

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill No. 104, the Treasury Branches Amendment Act, 1983.

The proposed amendment to the Treasury Branches Act recognizes the current requirements of administering the Treasury Branches Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 104 read a first time]

Bill 246**Right to Clean Water Act**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to request leave to introduce a Bill, being the Right to Clean Water Act.

This Bill establishes that Albertans have a right to the continued use of the traditional drinking water source in their area. It's a very important Bill, because it establishes a right to clean drinking water for Albertans. As well, it provides that any Albertan who has his traditional source of clean drinking water contaminated may bring action to have the contamination stopped and have the right to damages for cleaning it up and providing interim clean water.

[Leave granted; Bill 246 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 104, the Treasury Branches Amendment Act, 1983, be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Wheat Board Money Trust Account financial statements for the year ended March 31, 1983.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 1984 Farmers Safety Almanac. This publication was made possible through a grant from Farm Safety, Alberta Agriculture, to the Farm Equipment Dealers Association of Alberta and British Columbia. Voluntary assistance was also provided by the Alberta Women's Institutes, Women of Unifarm, and the Flying Farmers. This year's edition is dedicated to the farm women of our province, for their previous and continuing efforts to promote agricultural health and safety in Alberta.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table annual reports, all for the year 1981-82, of the five pension boards: the Public Service Pension Board, the Public Service Management Pension Board, the Local Authorities Pension Board, the Universities Academic Pension Board, and the Special Forces Pension Board.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we have in the public gallery 30 grade 6 students from Hay Lakes, and I'd like to point out that Hay Lakes is in my constituency. Along with the students are their teacher Mr. Dunlop, the bus driver, a number of parents, and two grandmothers. It was last year that the Hay Lakes school officially opened their new library. I would ask them now to rise and be welcomed by this Assembly.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, in light of the remarks made by my colleague the hon. Minister of Agriculture with respect to women's institutes and the role played by Alberta rural women in our lives, I'm especially proud today to introduce a group from my constituency. They are members of a women's institute. They are my friends and neighbors from east of Carstairs and east of Didsbury. The tour has been arranged by Ruth Good, who as a matter of fact had a great deal of difficulty in terms of finally getting a time when we'd be sitting. They're also accompanied by a number of friends, spouses and, in particular, Gerry Neumiller, who is the bus driver. Gerry notably drives a school bus. I'm not sure whether he has the same chore of keeping these people in line, in terms of their trip to Edmonton, but I don't think so. I'd like very much for them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to introduce to you and to other members of the Legislative Assembly 38 grade 6 students from Chinook Park elementary in my constituency of Calgary Glenmore. They're in a French immersion course, and they came to Edmonton today by train. They're accompanied by teachers Mrs. Owchar, Mrs. Fortin, and Mrs. Tabor; and three parents, Mrs. McKinnon, Mrs. Bradley, and Mrs. Harton, who I understand is John Batiuk's niece. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, some constituents and guests: first of all, Martha and Charles Andrews — Martha is a councillor for the county of Newell; Mildred and Russell Honess; Ford Workes; and Elna and Rawson Hall. I would like them to stand and be recognized by the Assembly.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, two of my constituents who were responsible for gathering the petition I presented, Doug Stolte and Carlo Fornari. They are in the public gallery, and I would like them to rise and receive the recognition of the Legislature.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 23 members from the committee of the unemployed. They are in the members gallery, and I would ask them to stand and be welcomed by the members of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Hog Plant Closure**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture, and it's with respect to the decision on October 21 by Canada Packers to close down their hog slaughter operations in Edmonton. Could the minister

advise the Assembly whether the government was aware that Canada Packers was considering the option of closing down either their Winnipeg or Edmonton plants?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, there was some indication within the industry that considering the overcapacity, they were looking at both plants, the one in Winnipeg and the one in Edmonton.

MR. NOTLEY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister advise the Assembly what specific meetings he held with officials of Canada Packers concerning closure of the plant, before the announcement was made on October 21?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I recall meeting with the vice-president of Canada Packers, Mr. Fred Ladly, the day prior to the announced closure.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the minister in a position to confirm, then, that the only meeting that took place prior to the closure was the meeting the minister indicated, or were there other meetings by either the Minister of Agriculture or perhaps the Minister of Economic Development?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we meet on a continual basis with the packing plant industry, not only in the hog and cattle sectors but in the poultry sector, and certainly we have meetings with them at other times. But on the issue raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition with respect to the Canada Packers plant closure, the meeting did take place the day prior to that announcement.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Acting Premier, who I gather is the Attorney General — the Provincial Treasurer, or whoever it is. I see they're doing a double shuffle back and forth. I don't know. The Provincial Treasurer put his hand up, so I guess he's the Acting Premier today.

Could the Provincial Treasurer advise the Assembly why no interdepartmental committee of ministers or both the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Economic Development, as well as the Provincial Treasurer, met with Canada Packers before the decision was made, particularly in view of the fact that this was done in the province of Manitoba, where the Winnipeg plant ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. HYNDMAN: I shall take the question as notice, Mr. Speaker. I think the Minister of Agriculture has adequately answered the question with respect to representations that had been made and how he received them.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the Minister of Economic Development outline to the Assembly whether he met with officials of Canada Packers, or whether any discussions took place with that firm concerning the option of whether the Edmonton plant or the Winnipeg plant should be closed down?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture answered on my behalf. We did meet with them and discussed it at some length. It's important to note that Canada Packers has 1,200 employees in new plants in the province and that the

hog kill in Alberta, as a percentage of Canada's total, has dropped substantially. It then became a business decision.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the minister telling the House that he also attended the meeting with the Minister of Agriculture, or was this left up to the Minister of Agriculture?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I thought that was clear from the minister's answer. The Minister of Agriculture and I met with Canada Packers people before the closing was announced. As a courtesy to us, they indicated they would be closing the plant.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Did the government make any proposal to Canada Packers, or lobby Canada Packers, as did the government of Manitoba with respect to the closure of the Winnipeg plant? Or was it simply a matter of leaving it up to the corporate body and accepting their judgment?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, we were hopeful that the plant would stay open. It was clear that one was going to close. The killing overcapacity in Edmonton dictated their economic decision. It doesn't mean that they won't be back. They simply have that plant closed. It's a very old plant, and it was no longer economic and competitive.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this.

MR. NOTLEY: Did the minister get any undertaking from Canada Packers that there would be further investment, in view of the layoff of 350 employees at the Edmonton plant?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, it's difficult to get a commitment in advance of an economic fact. As I indicated, there are some 1,200 employees of Canada Packers in the province now. Canada Packers sees Alberta as a very attractive and appropriate place to invest, and they need the back-up of an economic facility. This was not that kind of facility.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, but the Winnipeg plant's still open and Edmonton's has closed down.

Oil Refinery Closure

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the hon. Minister of Economic Development, and ask whether he has held any discussions with officials of Texaco Canada Limited regarding the upcoming closure of the Strathcona refinery and, if discussions were held, when they were held.

MR. PLANCHE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did. My colleague the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources may want to supplement my answer. Again it was a matter of a very old plant, representing only some 7 per cent of Alberta's refining capacity. They will be tolling their production through another refinery, so it won't affect the nominations for oil. The thing was old and simply uncompetitive.

On that issue, they've closed plants across the country. There is a rationalization of refining going on in Montreal East, on the east coast, and in Ontario, and I think we can expect more

of it. Again, this particular plant was old, was incapable of expansion, and was competitively redundant.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the minister in a position to confirm that Texaco's closure has shifted their refining capacity out of Alberta to Ontario?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, they are going to toll a number of barrels required through another refinery here, improving their economics. They have a refinery that's reasonably new in Nanticoke, Ontario, and another one in Nova Scotia. They've closed the one in Montreal, and there will be more closures coming. It's an industry-wide rationalization.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to either the minister or the Minister of Labour. Were any meetings regarding the closure held with the Energy and Chemical Workers Union before the meeting took place, or subsequent to the meeting, and the announcement made today concerning Texaco's closure?

MR. PLANCHE: I would defer that question to the Minister of Labour. There was none with me, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I held no meetings with the Energy and Chemical Workers Union. I do understand, though, that generally the Energy and Chemical Workers Union has a very good rapport with the companies in question, and I would have assumed that there had been meetings.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Economic Development, who I gather did discuss with Texaco their decision. During the course of that discussion, was there any discussion, on the part of the minister, with respect to reviewing the options for the 225 employees who will be laid off next spring and summer? Was that matter discussed specifically by the minister with officials of Texaco?

MR. PLANCHE: Yes it was, Mr. Speaker. The concern we have for the employees and Texaco's concern was shared. We spent some time talking about how they might transfer, upgrade, and provide employment-seeking services for these employees. It's a matter of some considerable concern.

The unfortunate part is that when the announcement is made subsequent to a financial decision by a corporation, it's done in such a way that it's not our option to widely discuss it, simply because the company itself has to make those announcements to its employees in its planning process. We encourage corporations who, for whatever reason, are going to close down facilities here to notify us as soon as possible, so we can discuss alternatives with them. But that would of course be subject to secrecy, which is a responsibility we have in those kinds of discussions.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Gulf Oil announced the closure of the Clarkson, Ontario, refinery two days ago. Has the government had an opportunity to assess the concerns, at least of some members of the union involved, that there may have been a tacit agreement between Gulf and Texaco to close their refineries at the same time?

MR. SPEAKER: I don't see the official duty involved in monitoring discussions between two third parties.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, just on a point of order, so there's no misunderstanding the purpose of the question. The question

is to elicit from the government a matter of fact; that is, whether there has been any review of possible breach of anti-combines legislation. I had to point out the basis of the concern that had been expressed to me. I put it to any of the hon. gentlemen on the front bench who feel they are in a position to answer.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, as I recall, there was an ongoing federal anti-combines investigation of the major oil companies, and I'm not sure if it's concluded.

There was a period in the late 1970s when it was clear to the oil companies that an additional investment in refineries would have to be made. These are very large refineries, with economies of scale. As demands taper off or level off, the smaller units that are older are simply non-economic in the market place, and they will be closed. There have been many, many closures across the country, and there has been no suspicion of collusion at all in any of the conversations I've had.

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

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put to the hon. Provincial Treasurer, in light of the closure of Canada Packers and the closure today of the Texaco refinery, whether there has been any effort on the part of the government of Alberta to develop some kind of overall monitoring system to ensure that there is modernization of plants on an ongoing basis, so we don't find out at the last minute that they're going to close down and Albertans will be laid off.

MR. HYNDMAN: Those are decisions to be taken by the private sector, Mr. Speaker — the extent to which there is modernization of plants, based on the profits for shareholders and others who are interested.

Public Service Reduction

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Provincial Treasurer is with regard to the 2 per cent reduction in the provincial public service. Could the minister outline specifically where those cuts will occur, and possibly clarify the government's policy with regard to a fair, balanced, and most equitable way to bring about those cuts?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, at this time I'm not able to indicate where those will occur. As I indicated about 10 days ago, that is the guideline target that we are looking for over the coming months. With respect to some departments, boards, or agencies, or parts of various boards, agencies, or departments, they may be higher than 2 per cent or they may be less than 2 per cent. As indicated, they will be done, and the procedure will be to reduce positions in areas where anticipated services or sustained growth is no longer required. That will be the general approach that will be used.

Every possible way that is fair and equitable, from a management point of view, will be looked into. That would of course include such approaches as abolishing positions and taking efforts at retraining or redeployment. If that is not possible, then there would be layoffs. My colleague the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration may want to expand on the mechanism as to how that would take place.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate whether the target would be the low-income positions in the public service, or would the targets be the higher income categories as well?

MR. HYNDMAN: We're looking across the board, through all areas, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister has indicated that there will be some transfer of government or public functions now performed to the private sector. Could the minister indicate whether there are certain areas being contemplated at the present time? Can some examples be given?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, that's a general approach which we're using, that of privatizing, if you wish, various areas of government where that could take place. In the past, of course, that has taken place with regard to the printing of the throne speech and the budget speech, from the Queen's Printer to the private sector; and provision of food services and laundry services in Red Deer, which I understand is working very well. There are other examples which are taking place; the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services could offer a few. But that is a general, ongoing approach, and I'd welcome suggestions from the hon. member as to where it could be done.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question — and certainly we will give suggestions.

MR. MARTIN: First-class flights.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Could the hon. Provincial Treasurer indicate whether any of the social service areas or health care areas are being considered as possible options to be contracted out to the private sector?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the ministers have been asked to look at all feasible and realistic options, so more detail will be available to the Assembly when the forthcoming spring budget is brought to the attention of the Assembly.

Michener Centre Staffing

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, my questions could almost be supplementals, directed to a different minister. I'd like to direct these questions to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Considering that Michener Centre in Red Deer is the largest single service point of the provincial government in providing services, some 2,000 employees in total, including casual employees, servicing and assisting some 1,483 residents, could the minister describe the mechanics involved in the current hiring freeze at Michener Centre?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, a short time ago notice went out to all institutions and departments of the Department of Social Services and Community Health, indicating that there was to be a hiring freeze and that before any people were hired to fill any vacancies, they would have to be cleared through my office.

MR. McPHERSON: A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Specifically dealing with Michener Centre, could the minister advise the position of the government with respect to casual or wage employees who have completed what is known as their six-month service break? Are these people being rehired, or are they being terminated after their six-month service break?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to clear up some confusion in that regard. There was a misinterpretation of the directions that were sent out to some of the

institutions. The misinterpretation read "hiring freeze" to mean that whenever one of the six-month service agreements came to an end, that person was no longer an employee and that therefore they couldn't hire him unless there was clearance through my office. The intention of the hiring freeze was that there not be any additional employees hired into the department without clearance from my office. It was not the intention to dismiss the casual or wage employees that are providing a valuable service at Michener Centre, and action has been taken to correct that misinterpretation.

MR. McPHERSON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, along the same lines as the previous question. Can the minister give any indication as to what may be happening in the future in relation to permanent positions, with respect to the hiring freeze that's forthcoming? On those permanent positions, can the minister advise whether or not there's going to be any kind of breakdown between people who are involved in front-line care to residents, as opposed to administrative abilities?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Provincial Treasurer has indicated the directions that have been given to the different departments. Certainly in my responsibilities, we will be looking at all ways in which we can reduce the manpower picture in those areas where there are redundant positions, positions that are not needed.

Social Services and Community Health is of course a department that provides services to people. During a time of recessionary restraint, many of these people need these services badly. Therefore there would be no intention to cut back services at the levels where services are being provided to the public. The concentration will be in looking at redundant positions, whether they be in the regions or in the central office.

Child Welfare Legislation

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health regards the introduction today of the Child Welfare Act. Can the minister explain the public consultation process he expects to follow, to ensure input on the redraft of the Act?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, we certainly hope to get a lot of public response to the Bill, as well as to the Cavanagh Board of Review report. It will not be our intention to hold public hearings in this regard. The public hearing process occurred over the last three and a half years, with the Cavanagh Board of Review. I intend to send out approximately 1,500 copies of the Bill to different groups, agencies, and individuals across the province, inviting them to provide their input to me over the next few months.

MR. JONSON: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, perhaps to follow up on that answer. What assurances can the minister give that input with respect to this particular Bill will be sought from a broad range of interest groups and individuals?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, those groups who are concerned, as I am, with Alberta's children haven't been shy in the past with regard to giving their input to me. I don't anticipate that they'll be shy in the next few months. However, as well, I would invite hon. members to talk to their constituents and provide input to me.

MR. JONSON: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In the process of consultation with concerned groups, will there be

the opportunity for them to make presentations to the minister, or will it all be in brief form?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I will try to be as open as possible in terms of meeting with the different groups that have concerns; however, I expect there would be too many submissions to meet with each group individually. I will try to meet with those I can accommodate. Also, I expect many of the written submissions will be well prepared and written so that any follow-up meetings may not be necessary.

Hospital Accreditation

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has to do with the minister's answer to a question about hospital accreditation. In light of the fact that he didn't seem to be concerned about some of the rural hospitals losing their accreditation, can the minister indicate what effect this would have on some of the intern programs, where people must go to accredited hospitals? Has the minister given any consideration to, or looked into, that factor?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I believe too much was read into my comments in the House the day I answered that question. The point I was trying to get across was that achieving or maintaining accreditation should not necessarily be the prime objective of the hospital board in all cases. There are many hospital boards that come to me for more money, their main concern being that they're afraid of losing or not achieving accreditation. Under certain circumstances, in some locations, their prime purpose is to deliver good health care, of course, and they're doing that. So I've responded to those boards in those situations not to worry if they lose accreditation for a year or two, and I believe that was good advice. The point that the hon. member is alluding to today is that in some hospitals, where there are in place training programs or interns who are achieving certain goals, it's necessary that that be carried out in accredited hospitals.

DR. BUCK: Can the minister indicate if he has any information available at this time to indicate how many of the rural hospitals have lost their accreditation in, say, the last year?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate or assure the Assembly and the people of this province that in hospitals that have lost their accreditation, the safety of the patient will not be jeopardized?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, there's a great variety of conditions in the various hospitals across the province, which makes it very difficult to give a blanket answer to that question. For example, when last visiting the Ponoka provincial mental hospital, the accreditation committee was concerned about some aspects of the conditions of some of the buildings. The board is making efforts to rectify that, and the accreditation committee is taking that into consideration. We have a multi-year program of about \$65 million under way with respect to fire code upgrading, the prime purpose of which is to guarantee patient safety. That's always a prime consideration, and I think the accreditation committee recognizes that.

MR. LYSONS: A supplemental to the minister. Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could tell us who this accreditation committee

are, who appoints them, where they are from, and why they are there?

MR. SPEAKER: May I respectfully suggest that that's perhaps outside the scope of the question period, and I'm sure it's publicly available information. It might even be in the library.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. In light of the fact that some of the work experience programs — the student nurse program, the student RNAs, physiotherapists, et cetera — must take place in an accredited hospital, what difficulties are the people who require work experience having, or may they have, in going to rural hospitals that have lost their accreditation? Has this become a problem?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has a specific hospital in mind, I'd be glad to research that and get the answer for him. But this is a continually changing thing; accreditation goes on all the time. It's generally given for a three-year period, sometimes for a lesser period on a conditional basis. The information I have is that at any one time, approximately one-third of the smaller rural hospitals throughout Alberta may not be accredited. That's a number that could change very dramatically in a very short time. So it's very hard to give a specific or definite answer to that question, the way it was posed.

Health Care Premium Arrears

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. Given the minister's response to Written Question 202, which indicates that his department can expect to reclaim \$29.5 million, at the very best, of the outstanding premium arrears, will he now reverse the cutoff procedures implemented by the blue card system?

MR. RUSSELL: Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. In 12 years in government, I've never met with such positive response to any government announcement. The people that have maintained their premiums absolutely want us to go after those freeloaders.

MR. MARTIN: Well, I love the rigor.

Doctors' Billing Practices

MR. MARTIN: We'll go into the second question. Is the minister prepared to request that provisions be made to apply a surtax on doctors' income which is generated by the practice of extra billing so that, at the very least, another \$14 million could be collected by the province?

MR. SPEAKER: That would appear to be a representation. Maybe it could even be a subject for a motion to be debated by the House.

MR. MARTIN: I'm just trying to give him a chance to make another speech and show us his rigor again. Let me go on to the next question, Mr. Speaker.

[Disturbance in the public gallery]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order in the galleries! Those people sit down or they shall be removed from the gallery. . . . Remove them.

MR. MARTIN: I've never had quite that reaction to my questions before.

My question is: will the minister use the same rigor he employs in collecting health care premium arrears, to collect moneys owed to the system by doctors who have billed the health care system for services never rendered?

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that process is under way.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. It is from a question I asked on October 20, 1983:

In view of the fact that the College of Physicians and Surgeons says there are roughly five suspensions a year for improper billing practices, what measures has the minister taken to recover these moneys obtained by physicians over the past 14 years?

The minister said he would take that as notice. I ask the question again.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I think that question is more properly directed to the Attorney General. You can recall the case of Dr. Talibi and the lawsuit launched against him some time ago. Each case has to be judged on the conditions which are attached to it, but that's an example of one action that was taken. There are ongoing checks, as I've indicated and outlined in the House before, whereby doctors' billing practices are watched and vetted. It's our intention to take steps to increase that practice.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Specifically, has the minister met with the Attorney General to discuss the possibility of charging Dr. Andrew Goldstein with having improperly obtained funds from health care?

MR. RUSSELL: That matter is under consideration, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the Attorney General, in view of the fact that I asked the question and the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care was going to take it. There are roughly five suspensions a year for improper billing practices. What measures has the government taken to recover these moneys obtained by physicians over the past 14 years?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the suspensions would of course be decisions of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, based on what they consider to be the unprofessional aspect of billing practices which are in respect of services not rendered or some other way in which the billing practice might be either dishonest or illegal. The way in which we approach them is that each case is separate, and they are all reviewed.

To use an example, in the Dr. Talibi case that my colleague has referred to, there was a very considerable question on the interpretation of one of the regulations relative to what he was entitled to bill. The reading of the tariff and of the regulations led legal counsel on both sides to enter into a dispute over the interpretation, an issue that might properly be tried in the courts. In that case it was not necessary to do so, because a settlement was arrived at.

But it is surely one thing to say that in a straightforward way of sending out accounts for moneys owing in the sense of premiums, a relatively straightforward situation; it's quite a different matter if what you're looking at is an entire billing practice of a medical practitioner, in which situations he may well have provided a service but not necessarily one precisely on point with the one in the billing code. All of those cases have to be looked at from the point of view of sorting out the facts in the individual case.

MR. MARTIN: One final supplementary. Is the Attorney General saying there is no general policy to follow up the suspensions dealing specifically with billing practices?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding from officials of the department is that in cases where it comes to the attention of the department, from the point of view of a civil law process as distinct from a criminal law process, those are reviewed in order to see if there are proceedings that should be taken against a person, in effect an action for an accounting and return of moneys perhaps improperly obtained. Those are handled in a similar way. Sometimes the cases take a considerable length of time but are handled in a similar way to the case I earlier referred to.

Alternative Schools

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Education concerns the issue of alternative schools as they exist throughout the province. Could the minister please inform the Legislature on the policy of his department regarding the existence of alternative schools in the province?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, to begin with, the government favors the operation of alternative programs within the public school system. Those have a very long and honorable tradition. Good examples would include the composite high school found throughout this province, which provides one kind of programming for the general student, another type of program for the university-bound student, and a third type of program for the student interested in postsecondary vocational preparation. We also have alternative programs providing special education or providing language opportunities in either a bilingual or an immersion program. So to repeat, the province supports and, for many years under this and previous governments, has supported the idea of alternative programs.

At some point a decision is made that an alternative program is of a nature that requires it to be operated in a school apart from other schools. You then come to the idea of the alternative school, which may be an alternative on the basis of a religious belief or on the basis of language or on the basis of requirements for special physical facilities. We are hesitant about alternative schools within the public school system because of the concern that they may provide the means for ghettoizing our students. But while we have that concern, we do not believe that it overrides the general advantage that is available by providing alternative programs. So we have supported and continue to support alternative schools operated under the umbrella of public school systems.

MRS. KOPER: A supplementary to the minister. Then in view of the recent events in the Calgary public school system, is there any means whereby closure of such alternatives can be promoted by a local board?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, the establishment, the operation, and in some cases the determination of alternative programs lies within the exclusive jurisdiction of the local school board. There is a requirement in the School Act — and the hon. member may have been alluding to it in her question — that school closures must receive the approval of the Minister of Education. But that has never been interpreted to mean that the termination of any program has to receive the approval of the Minister of Education. So the answer to the question is that the Department of Education is not directly involved in any decision by a school

board either to establish a program or, in their judgment, to terminate it.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Education. In light of the action of the Calgary public school board, would it be the intention of the minister and his department to help facilitate such alternative schools as the Hebrew schools and the Logos school if they choose to enter into negotiation with the Calgary separate board?

MR. SPEAKER: The question is rather hypothetical. The event hasn't happened.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, leaving off the last subordinate clause of the sentence, which made it hypothetical, if we treat the question as asking whether or not I am prepared to act as a facilitator, then the answer is at all times and in all circumstances, yes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

[On motion, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of the Whole]

head: GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (Committee of the Whole)

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Would the committee please come to order.

Bill 75

Government House Amendment Act, 1983

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 75 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 80

Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Special Appropriation Act, 1984-85

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 82

Provincial General Hospitals Amendment Act, 1983

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 82 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 83
Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation
Amendment Act, 1983

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill No. 83 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 84
Vencap Equities Alberta Act

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could bring us up to date with regard to what has happened. I understand there was an oversubscription with regard to the shares that were purchased and that there was a lot of concern with regard to that. Has the board established some type of priority by which those people who have subscribed will be looked after? Has that problem been solved at this point in time?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Chairman, I think it has. As I understand it, the confusion came in terms of the slow refunding of the money that was put in for units that weren't subsequently offered to those who requested them. It was done through the private sector by the lead underwriter, through the National Trust Company, I believe, and it was outside the purview of the government. There was some mix-up. My understanding is that it is all corrected now, though.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up and get clarification from the minister. I am sure he is aware that some brokers were critical, and I wonder if he could allude to what the problem was there. The other criticism — and there is nothing much we can do about it at this point — had to do with the interest. People's money was taken, and they are not getting interest. I wonder if the minister has any feelings about this, whether it could have been done differently, or if we looked at something in the future. Maybe just allude to at least some of the problems that were brought up. Thank you.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Chairman, it's an unusual circumstance. I guess there was a presumption in the public's mind that because it had some relation to the track record of Alberta Energy and, before that, Great Canadian Oil Sands, there would be a lot of speculative purchasing without any cash coming up. So the money went in before the allocation was decided, and it was then a matter of getting the money back to those who weren't successful. There was some delay there. If the question is very precise, I would need to respond to it in writing in a very precise way.

In general terms, as I understand it, the money was available at an appropriately early time to the brokers who took the orders, and some of them did not respond to their clients, as they should have, with the refunds. It was around that paperwork, plus the fact that the offering was held open some days

longer so that rural folk would have an opportunity to subscribe by mail and would not be missed. Finally, there was some considerable tracking down to be certain the same people hadn't applied at several places and upset the proration as the units were given to the public. So there were those factors to consider. I think it was generally agreed that it could have been handled better than it was. Again, it was an involvement by Richardson's as the prime underwriter and National Trust as the custodian of the funds.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any further questions or comments?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 84 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 89
Appropriation (Alberta Heritage
Savings Trust Fund, Capital
Projects Division) Act, 1984-85

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, to the minister. The funding with regard to these programs certainly will take place in the fiscal year 1984-85. In terms of the moneys required for capital projects, is it still the policy of the government to divert the 15 per cent into the fund? Is there any consideration, concern, or possibility — that would be a better word — that some of the present earnings of the fund will be required to meet these capital expenditures?

MR. HYNDMAN: Not at the moment, Mr. Chairman. All the earnings will be diverted in order to cover part of the deficit. So it's anticipated that for the next fiscal year the 15 per cent diversion will continue which, after taking inflation into account, will keep the fund basically at its present level.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. HYNDMAN: I move that the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 90
Health Occupations
Amendment Act, 1983 (No. 2)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

MR. MARTIN: Just one question to the minister. It refers back to second reading. When I asked the question, he said there were some other health occupations but the board had not reported to him at this point. Could he just fill me in on the time frame when he expects to get the next report from the board?

MR. KING: I can't really be specific, Mr. Chairman. I don't receive anything in the way of a schedule from the chairman of the Health Occupations Board. I know they met in November

and are very close to finalizing reports on one, two, or three health occupations, but none of those have crossed my desk since I spoke at second reading. Without making an inquiry of the chairman, which has not been my practice, I can't tell him when I might expect to receive them.

MR. MARTIN: Could the minister indicate to the House what occupations — I know the one we discussed, but you say there are two or three — are being considered at this time?

MR. KING: I don't have that information with me, Mr. Chairman. I can get it this afternoon and provide it to the hon. member.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 94

Election Amendment Act, 1983

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is an amendment to this Act, which I understand has been circulated to all members. Are there any questions or comments regarding the amendment?

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of Bill 94 as amended?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to ask . . . Mr. Chairman, the minister is not here. I'll just wait and see if we can round him up. There are just one or two questions I want to ask. So if you can go on to the next one, we can hold that if you wish.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just hold that then.

Bill 101

Alberta Corporate Income Tax Amendment Act, 1983 (No. 2)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments regarding the sections of this Act?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Bill be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 93

Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is an amendment, which I believe has also been circulated. Are there any questions or comments regarding the amendment to Bill 93?

MR. MARTIN: Just one. I think we had a fairly good discussion on this Bill, and I intend to let it go through. With regard to one thing that I think could be serious, and it ties into a lot of our Acts, the minister and I had a discussion about the possible

constitutionality or unconstitutionality. We were referring to the divisional court or Supreme Court of Ontario, the fact that they had ruled some of Ontario's laws *ultra vires* and this could have an affect on this specific Bill and other Bills. The minister indicated he was confident that it would be overturned at the next level. There may be some debate on that, but we'll wait and see. In studying the Ontario decision, does the minister have any idea when they are expecting a decision at the next level? It will probably go all the way to the Supreme Court, but at the next level . . .

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, we really can't usefully speculate on a decision. They have advanced the case and I have no idea what length of time, but presumably as it goes to a higher court it is going to line up with a batch of other cases. If we consider that it could be appealed even beyond that tribunal, it might be a year and a half or even two years before there is a conclusive decision. Even when we get the decision, however, one would have to examine the facts of the particular case compared to the facts as would apply in Alberta. That might be yet another uncertainty that could be introduced.

In any event, while I am confident, I want to indicate to hon. members that there is a fall-back position under the Charter of Rights, which is the notwithstanding provision, if one chose to go that direction.

MR. MARTIN: Of course I recognize that the notwithstanding provision is the out. Is the minister saying they would consider it, or it would in fact be the case that if this Bill specifically was proved *ultra vires* under the Charter of Rights, we would definitely follow with the notwithstanding clause? I'm not sure what the minister is saying.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I'm not saying that it would definitely follow, because we haven't really directed our minds to it. We believe our level of confidence is high enough. Mind you, that can always be upset. We think it's a very low probability or possibility, but it could occur. I think we get back to a pretty fundamental decision our society is going to have to take. That is, are certain services such as police and fire so important to the well-being of our population that a provision of the Charter of Rights, which I think was never contemplated to be read in the manner he is suggesting it now be read, should have dominance over this other right of our population? If we come down to that issue, I suspect it will be pretty hotly debated.

I guess the additional point I should make is that if the Charter of Rights is read in what I will call so rigorous a manner as to declare the capacity of the government not to be adequate to preclude strikes, then my judgment is that it will also declare it against the individual rights of a person to force him to belong to a union, in which case we suddenly will have a very different kind of union structure and labor relations in all of Canada. If one contemplated that, it would get us somewhat nearer to the European system, I would think, in a great rush. Apart from the disruptions which might be created in passing from one kind of system to another, that may very well take care of the problems contemplated here in any event.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up, not to belabor it, Mr. Chairman. In this specific Bill, I would doubt that the binding arbitration — because somebody would have to take them to court. I agree with the minister that the police officers are generally agreeable to that aspect of it, so it's certainly not in this Bill that one would face that problem. It would be perhaps in other Bills, Bill 44 and the rest of it.

The only one in this Bill that may be in some dispute is where we have to take the guidelines of the Provincial Treasurer in terms of bargaining. If there was going to be a challenge here in this Act, I would see it being under there, not under the binding arbitration aspect. As you pointed out correctly from the hearings, the police actually asked for this, so it's hardly likely they would attempt to overturn it in court.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, as a sort of final observation on the question of the guidelines to the arbitrators, and particularly the one dealing with the requirement that an interest arbitration board shall consider "any fiscal policies that may be declared from time to time in writing by the Provincial Treasurer for the purposes of this Act", that particular provision would not be adequate under any legislation that I know to have the legislation declared unconstitutional or even contrary to any charter of rights. Because that's a direction to consider; it isn't a direction absolute in itself. On a question of that nature, I think it's important to determine whether it is the only thing that can be considered, and therefore it overrides absolutely and very specifically, or whether it is just one of a number of factors which must be considered. This is one of a number of factors.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up, Mr. Chairman. I agree that it's very hazy at this point. As I understand it, the other part of that Ontario decision said it was all right to have guidelines for one or two years; they felt this was certainly the prerogative of the government. Where the problem may be is with anything that attempts to permanently put another condition on bargaining. I would agree with the minister; I don't think we know at this point. All I'm pointing out is that it could be one of the problems we face within this Bill.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I am reluctant to pursue this any further, but my understanding is that in the Ontario situation it wasn't a guideline; it was in fact an instruction. That is the law and that's what shall be. It was absolute, and I think that's very different.

[Motion on amendment carried]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions or comments on Bill 93 as amended?

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we'll go back to Bill 94. The amendment has been approved.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, would you wish me to move that Bill 93 be reported as amended?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sorry.

[Motion carried]

Bill 94
Election Amendment Act, 1983
(continued)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Clover Bar had a question.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to find out from the minister highlighting the Bill if he can give the committee some

indication as to how keeping up the permanent voters list is working. I know we made the recommendation that the permanent voters list be updated every X number of months after every election and so on and so forth, and that mechanism is in place. By now, I'm sure we've had sufficient experience to know how that system is working. I'd like to know if the minister can give us some indication how it is working.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I regret that I can't give a current report on that progress this afternoon. But I would be happy to contact the Chief Electoral Officer on behalf of the Member for Clover Bar, get a current report, and provide that on a later occasion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, one comment I'd like to make with regard to the Election Act, just to put on the record, comes from my experience in the last election as an Independent candidate. The Election Act was amended in the 1970s. I forget the date of it, but at that time only the term "Independent" could be used when you were running. Prior to that amendment, you could be Independent Conservative, Independent Liberal, Independent Social Credit, Independent free enterprise, or whatever.

I didn't realize the significance of the amendment brought in by the government until such time as I became an Independent candidate and wanted to identify myself from other Independent candidates that might have been what I considered rather communist or extreme in their approach. The Election Act is very clear: you cannot tag on any kind of word or description of the kind of Independent candidate you are. I felt that in a sense that was unfair to a individual running on his personal platform. I felt at the time — and I say this with all due respect to the government — that there were nominations where certain candidates lost as Conservatives and wanted to run as Independent Conservative candidates. That eliminated that possibility. I hope it wasn't the motivation of the government at that time to make that kind of amendment to the Act. But what it did was not only eliminate that possibility but also eliminate the possibility of other Independents showing how they were distinct from others.

As it turned out, there were some 35 or 40 Independents in the last election and people were grouping us all together as one group of Independents. In a sense we were like another political party in the province of Alberta. I just make the point at this time that that aspect of the Act should certainly be looked at. I don't know whether the minister has considered that or not, but I think there could be a little more room for individuality under the Election Act in terms of Independent candidates.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, before I respond to the question, would this be an appropriate time for me to speak to the three amendments that are in the House? [interjection] They've already been put through? Very good.

First of all, as to the question of motivation, it's difficult for me to comment on the motivation behind that amendment, of course, as it precedes my involvement with the legislation. But frankly I would be surprised, if not dismayed, that the motivation was in fact to discourage the activity of Independent Progressive Conservatives.

Putting that aside, I have listened to and understood the point the member has made with respect to his perceived value or benefit in being readily distinguished from other Independent candidates, and although I have not given that particular con-

cern any consideration during this sitting, on the assumption that I would be involved in any further changes to the Bill in subsequent sessions, I would reconsider the matter.

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 94 be reported as amended.

[Motion carried]

MR. KING: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise, report progress, and beg leave to sit again.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. APPLEBY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration and reports Bills 75, 80, 82, 83, 84, 89, 90, and 101. The committee also reports Bills 93 and 94 with some amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (Second Reading)

Bill 88 **Ombudsman Amendment Act, 1983**

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I am happy today to move second reading of Bill 88, the Ombudsman Amendment Act, 1983.

Just to refresh not only my own memory but perhaps the memories of other members, the purpose of this Bill is to extend the term of the office of the incumbent Ombudsman for a period of up to six months, thereby enabling members of the Legislative Offices Committee to conclude their deliberations on the question of a successor to the present Ombudsman.

If there are any questions, I'd be happy to take them.

[Motion carried; Bill 88 read a second time]

Bill 103 **Libraries Act**

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 103, the Libraries Act.

This Act has been reviewed with the Alberta Library Board, the Alberta libraries association, the Library Association of Alberta, plus the Department of Education, the Minister of Education, the Department of Municipal Affairs, and the minister.

The purpose of this Bill is to update and clarify library services, as it reflects the programs and services now offered by libraries. It places responsibilities for library services within the appropriate body, and council authority is clearly defined. Regional library boards, now referred to as library systems, are given specific duties, and municipal library boards are defined as a basic authority for library service. It removes penalties in the Act which have remained unchanged for over 50 years. It encourages co-operation between libraries by making better provision for such co-operation at local and regional

levels, and by ensuring that provincial services meet local needs. It also provides for a future network of libraries.

It gives the minister the authority to appoint the chairman of the Alberta Library Board, the term to be three years instead of two, and allows for the appointments to the Alberta Library Board to be fluctuated. It clarifies the situation when municipalities take financial responsibility for library services in areas served by community libraries, and makes all types of library materials and services available to the public on the same basis as books.

[Motion carried; Bill 103 read a second time]

Bill 100 **Alberta Income Tax** **Amendment Act, 1983 (No. 2)**

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill No. 100.

This Bill has a number of provisions, and in committee study I would be happy to answer questions with respect to the detail of any of them. However, I think it is appropriate to make a number of comments with respect to the portion of the Bill which would increase the Alberta personal income tax rate from 38.5 per cent to 43.5 per cent — up 5 per cent — of federal basic tax, effective January 1 of next year.

Very simply, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of that amendment and of this moderate tax increase is to help reduce the deficit and to enable us in this province to live within our means. The facts are very clear. They were set forth in the spring budget of this year, and the realities with respect to health care costs are becoming increasingly well known to the population of the province. The reality is that revenues to this government, particularly those in the area of oil and natural gas, have levelled off, and that is the first occasion that's happened in many years. Expenditures, though, have increased faster than revenues and, as hon. members know, for the second year in a row we face a high deficit, a deficit which is approaching \$1 billion for this fiscal year. Members will recall a deficit last year of close to \$2 billion and, remembering that we have a population of something over 2.3 million people, that situation obviously cannot continue.

As well, we have the highest per capita social expenditure in Canada, and that's worth noting and remembering. For example, that's what pays for the top-quality basic education we have, the unmatched health care system — and I'll offer a few more details in that regard in a moment — the very excellent advanced education system, and the unparalleled benefits for senior citizens and the like. We have those very high standards in all the social services. So clearly it's necessary to reduce the rate of growth of expenditures if we have these built-in, as it were, social expenditures as well as a levelling off in revenues.

Appropriate moves have to be taken not only on the expenditure side but in a balanced way on the revenue side. I'd note that this is the first personal income tax increase in 11 years. As well, members should note that personal income tax in this province went down by 28 per cent in 1975. It's also important to note that even with the increase that is part of this Bill, Alberta personal income taxes are still the lowest in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about here is deficits. I think most hon. members and thoughtful Albertans realize that huge deficits simply cannot be left unchecked, because there's too much danger, too much at risk, if that continues. A moderate tax increase is one way to help check that deficit.

If we ignore these deficits — and, as I've said, there are now two in two successive years — we are going to hurt the momentum of the economic recovery; we're going to adversely affect consumer confidence and investor confidence, because consumers and investors will look at what this government is doing with regard to its own internal finances. We will risk closing off lasting job opportunities unless the deficit is looked to. As well, there'll be upward pressure on interest rates and inflation, and we all know from recent years the corrosive effect of very high interest rates and inflation.

Unless that deficit is dealt with, partly through this tax increase, that upward pressure on interest rates and inflation will be there again. And of course we can't simply sweep the problem under the rug and leave it to the next generation. It would be irresponsible as well to simply ignore the deficit or say, let's just continue with lower revenues and with those expenditures. So from this point forward the sustained economic growth that we all want in this province will, in my view, be forestalled unless these deficits are reduced, unless we get them in hand, unless we balance increased revenues, and unless we decrease expenditures in a parallel way.

I mentioned health care costs, Mr. Speaker, and that is one of the major items, one of the big-ticket items, that is one of the very real problems that has caused the deficit. That is a huge element of expenditures. To be realistic, the big social program areas are the kinds of things we must look at if there are going to be any alternatives suggested. For example, health care costs in this province now exceed \$2 billion. It's important to remember that just 10 years ago the total budget of the entire province of Alberta was a little over \$1 billion. Now we find health care costs alone double that of 10 years ago, and that's simply for health care.

We note that there's a trend in that five years ago, in 1978-79, hospitals and medical care expenditures accounted for 19 per cent of all provincial spending in the province of Alberta. Five years later, in this fiscal year, it now accounts for 25 per cent of all provincial spending. So the trend is there; the trend is dangerous. We know that the premiums which are paid for by the citizens of Alberta are only a small part of the real cost: \$14 a month for individuals, \$28 a month for families, pays only about a third of the actual cost of services. And of course those premiums are less than in British Columbia and only one-half of premiums paid by citizens in the province of Ontario.

The average annual growth in health care expenditures over the past four years in three provinces is instructive, Mr. Speaker. In Ontario the average annual growth in health care expenditures has been about 14.7 per cent per year; in Saskatchewan, 19.2 per cent; and in Alberta, 24.8 per cent. That growth rate is nowhere near the growth rate in revenues which, as I mentioned, have levelled off. As well, members know that it costs an average of about \$300 for one day's stay in a typical hospital. It costs about \$560 for one day's stay in an intensive care unit in a specialized hospital in Alberta. I'm told that even an ambulance ride, there and back for tests, costs the city of Edmonton about \$234. So those are the costs we're facing. The Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has indicated that steps have been taken and more are being considered to ratchet down that rate of increase. But that is one of the reasons why we have this deficit and one of the reasons why the tax increase is necessary.

Some people might argue that the tax increase is not necessary because expenditures could be cut by, in this case, \$220 million per year, which is the approximate amount to be raised in the next calendar year. There's no question expenditures are being cut. We are continuing to reduce those expenditures through a number of programs. The fact is that with

governments the turnaround in expenditure cannot be accomplished as quickly as with, say, the private sector, small business area. It would probably take two to three years. We began last year by cutting government operating expenditure growth by close to 50 per cent. As I've indicated, the size of the public service is being reduced, starting this year with a relatively modest figure, continuing next year and into succeeding years on the fairest possible basis.

But we also have the realities and the problems of health care costs which, despite the lowering of revenue, despite the fact that the population is relatively static, are increasing tens of millions of dollars this year over last year. People in the private sector might be inclined to argue that when their business is down they immediately cut expenditures to solve the problem. But of course business in the area of health expenditures or those who are using hospital services is not down; it is up, even with a relatively static population.

The number of people in postsecondary educational institutions, for example, is increasing; it's not reducing. Of course I would welcome and have welcomed suggestions with regard to expenditure cuts. But I think we have to remember that if there are suggestions with regard to major expenditure cuts, remembering this tax increase will bring in approximately \$220 million per year, we have to be talking about recurring expenditures in the operating area of close to a quarter of a billion dollars every year. If there are suggestions for those kinds of cuts, then that's important to debate. Suggestions with regard to one-shot expenditures, non-recurring expenditures, capital expenditures, will not in any way substitute for the revenues which are being dealt with here.

Of course the heritage fund is a basic aspect and a pillar of the provincial finances, Mr. Speaker. It is being used to the maximum amount. It's fair for Albertans to have said: before there's to be a tax increase, are we using that heritage fund to the maximum extent that we can? As members know, every dime of the income of the heritage fund, approximately \$1.5 billion this year, is being used to try to reduce the deficit. But for that heritage fund application of dollars, the deficit would be closer to \$3 billion rather than \$1 billion.

One half of the traditional resource revenue is also being applied and diverted. As members know, the balance, the remaining 15 per cent, is totally committed. I believe Albertans would support it being used to pay for loans for farmers and for small businessmen through the AOC and the ADC, to complete the Prince Rupert terminal, to complete major hospitals, for irrigation, for the Alberta oil sands research authority and the like. In fact bearing in mind the existing inflation rate of, say, 4 to 5 per cent, when that is taken into account with the 15 per cent going into the fund, at the moment it is just holding its own. It's not growing, and the real growth of the fund therefore is going to be either very modest or zero this year with that 15 per cent. Now I don't think Albertans are suggesting that we should eat away at the capital of the fund. Without question there is support for maintaining the concept in principal, the basic asset, the basic capital of the heritage savings trust fund, and that is essentially all that is happening at the moment with the total diversion of income, all of which in the past was put into the fund, and with the cutting in half of the diversion.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to underline again an aspect of the Bill which deserves attention. That is the fact that the selective reduction for low-income earners is a part of what we're proposing in this Bill today. That means that 500,000 of the lowest income earners in the province of Alberta continue to receive the full benefit of the selective reduction. That means foregoing revenue in the amount of about \$70 million. Roughly

a third of all the taxpayers in the province of Alberta are receiving that benefit. They will continue, by an enrichment, to receive that benefit through the purposes of this Act.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, yes, we have an increase in personal income taxes, but they're still the lowest of all ten provinces in Canada. We have no retail sales tax in Alberta, whereas in other provinces it varies from 5 per cent to 12 per cent. We have no gasoline tax in the province of Alberta, whereas in other provinces, except Saskatchewan, it's from 19 per cent to 40 per cent. The health care premiums are the lowest, and half that of Ontario. The corporate income tax, overall, is the lowest in the country. As well, it's instructive to note that in terms of disposable income, in the province of Alberta a typical four member family with a \$30,000 gross income would pay total provincial taxes of about \$2,020, significantly less than that kind of family in any other province in Canada. As well, the net family income in this province, after subtracting provincial taxes, is about \$27,980, and that is higher than the available take-home family income in the other nine provinces in the country.

I'd conclude by saying that combined with expenditure reductions which have been announced and which will continue, this relatively moderate increase in personal income tax is necessary to keep that deficit down, to preserve jobs, and to ensure that we come out of the recovery and move into sustained growth in the years ahead.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to take part in the debate on this Bill. This afternoon I had the privilege of presenting to this Legislature a petition from concerned Albertans that reside in my constituency, a petition that expresses the views and concerns of the people of this province. The petition really begs that the Provincial Treasurer listen to their concerns. I will not read the entire preamble, because the petition has been tabled in this Assembly. But there are one or two parts of the petition that I think members should be aware of — the concerns that some of these people have shown. It says:

We, the undersigned people of Alberta, would like to express how we feel about the proposed 13% increase in personal income taxes.

The letter goes on to say:

... Mr. Hyndman has not as yet received a true picture on the progress of the Alberta economy. Before you make us dig deep into our pockets, allow us to pick up the pieces of shattered lives, allow us to get ahead and back on our feet. We are the ones being hurt by this unnecessary action.

The concluding part says:

You say you are working for the people of this province, now is the time to listen to our views.

Basically, Mr. Speaker, this government is not listening to the views of its people. We well know how this government told us how great things were in the fall of 1982; how this party, this government, told us how great things were in Alberta, that anybody that suggested we were heading into a recession was just talking about doom and gloom. Everything was rosy in good old Alberta. All you had to do was vote true-blue Tory and everything would be fine. If everything was so fine, so rosy, why didn't we wait until the spring of '83 to have an election? I would like to say that this government and this party really misled the people of this province in the fall of '82 when they said there will be no tax increases. By the letter of the law, that's true, because Scrooge will come at the stroke of midnight on the first day of 1984. That's a pretty shallow way to live up to an election promise. But Albertans are starting

to see through some of these Tory tricks. Trick or treat? They got the treat and the people got tricked.

Mr. Speaker, this 13 per cent increase that the government of this province is bestowing upon its servants is a tax that should not be levied at this time. We hear so much from this "pseudo" free-enterprise party across the way. They talk about the private sector being the engine that gets us on the road to recovery. Why throw gravel into the locomotive if that's going to be the means by which we come out of the recession? Never in my life have I seen a politician that knows how to spend my money better than I think I know how to spend my money. That's really what we're doing. We're taking 13 per cent out of the private sector and giving it to government, a government that does not know how to manage our dollars. That's what the problem is. The problem is that this government squanders too much money. It's just that simple, and the people out there are finding that out.

There has not been any issue in this province in the last decade that has gotten people more upset than this 13 per cent tax. The user-fee issue is not even as prominent an issue as the 13 per cent. Albertans realize that it costs us money for our hospitals, it costs us money for our medicare system, but they feel they're entitled to that level of service because we do have the funds in this province. But the government, trying to tell us they were going to move ahead to an increase in the economy by taking money out of the private sector, is certainly not the route to take.

We see this red herring about hospitalization and medicare costing us so much money, we've got to have more money out of your pockets. That's all it is: a red herring to cover up this government's mismanagement of the taxpayers' dollars. I know we go to our little Tory think tanks and conventions, and all the right wingers, led by the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud, say: we've got to get tough. They're ripping the taxpayer off too much. We've got to make sure that the right wingers are appeased, so we levy user fees because there are a few people who have abused the system. We know there are abuses to any system, but let's not make that the red herring of why we need more money.

What are the priorities of this government? Are the priorities white sand in the sand traps? Are the priorities \$300 million in Kananaskis? Even true-blue Tories who brought this government to power are starting to wonder how this government wastes our money. They're concerned about the Saddledome; they're concerned that the Olympics may be another boondoggle. Who's looking after it? I hope there's someone besides the Minister of Recreation and Parks, because you have to have more than one watchdog. The minister was certainly having trouble just watching over Kananaskis. If he's going to be watching over the entire Olympic program, we're in big trouble.

When you hear people in the media, who I know are card carrying Tories, or were card carrying Tories — and there's more of those now than there are the other kind — then we know that the people out there are concerned. What controls did we have over the Walter Mackenzie hospital? This morning at coffee we were talking about how the Socred government was thinking about replacing the University hospital. At that time, they didn't know where they could come up with the \$11 million or \$12 million to replace that hospital. Then this new government comes in, drunk with power, flooding with petrodollars as a result of a little skirmish in the Middle East. It wasn't the good management of this government that caused those prices to escalate.

We looked at \$80 million, which was an astronomical amount of money at the time we started the Walter Mackenzie building.

Is there no government that's ever going to have the jam to do it the way they do it in the private sector, to say: look we have \$X million; build us a building for that price. If the bids go higher than that, then back to the drawing board. That's how we do it in the private sector. We don't give them an open end and say, make something for me, construct something for me, money be damned.

Governments have got to change the way they handle their fiscal policies. The public bidding system sounds like it's a great idea but it doesn't work worth a toot, because you know that when you're going to do a job for the government, as an architect or a contractor, everybody's going to bid higher than if they were doing that job for a private individual. It's just about time we free-enterprisers started doing it like you do it in the private sector.

We know that Kananaskis was more money than we should have spent. Now we know that we're going to spend hundreds of millions on the Olympics. Is there anybody down in Los Angeles monitoring the situation there? Is anybody going to look at the Winter Olympics to find out how we can save money? Lets not make this another monument to this government, a monument of boondoggling, wasting taxpayers' dollars. Lets make sure there's somebody there so we don't have another Saddledome fiasco. How can we in this Legislature, when we've put public money at all three levels of government — it's all of our money coming out of all of our pockets; it doesn't matter which level of government it comes from — allow the Saddledome to go up to \$100 million? That is just not acceptable. And the people that are hurting out there, the people that are unemployed, the little businessmen hanging on by the skin of their teeth, when they see that kind of waste they wonder what we're doing up here under the dome.

What concerns me more and more, Mr. Speaker, is that this government is going to make the municipalities, the cities, the towns, the school boards, and the hospital boards the scapegoats for their lack of concern about how they spend the tax dollars. That's who's going to get it in the neck, because this is a smooth system this government operates under. They've got the big gambling machine that tells the people of this province how much money they give the municipalities, how much money they give the hospital boards, how much money they give the school boards, and then when the money runs out they say, look, it was the mismanagement of the municipalities, the towns and the villages, the school boards, and the hospital boards. Don't come blaming the good old provincial government, because they don't ever make any mistakes. Blame the local people.

That's a pretty good con game if you can run it. But you can't run it for ever, because the people wake up to the fact that this government is not managing the affairs of this province nearly as well as the local people are. At the local level you are responsible to the man on the street; you're responsible to the fellow that you drink coffee with every morning over a business meeting. That is the difference between the local level of government and the provincial or higher level of government.

You lose contact when you go to those good old Tory conventions and constituency meetings. They just pat you on the back and tell you what a great job you're doing. That's the worst thing that can happen to you, because pretty soon you start believing that nonsense. You become insulated from reality. That's what has happened to the Provincial Treasurer. And of course we know how much input backbenchers had in this — you know, caucus is everything. Caucus is nothing; caucus does what they're told to do.

There's a joke circulating around the building right now — it'll get around to you — about these people who got ship-

wrecked on an island. It ends up this way: the two MLA's didn't know what to do with this secretary because they hadn't received orders from the Premier yet. People that work for this government have the joke circulating. But it tells a story. It tells a story that this government that so-called listens to its caucus all the time — the caucus listened all right; the caucus was told by the Provincial Treasurer.

What we're really talking about here is a tax that we should not have in place at this time, because we're going to dampen the recovery this province so well needs. And of course this government is directly responsible, and I say that to the Provincial Treasurer as bluntly as I can say it. When we had the oil negotiations, when this government turned off the oil taps, when this government was directly responsible for Alsands not going ahead, when this government was directly responsible for Esso not going ahead, that's when they dampened the recovery of this province. This province would have gone through the recession in a lot better shape than it's going through it right now if those two major projects had gone ahead. So it's just about time we stopped blaming Ottawa and just about time we started telling the people in this province the way it really is. So that petition this afternoon was very appropriate to what we're discussing this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. They asked: we're just starting to get back on our feet; why hit us over the head with another 13 per cent?

Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid all the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund is going to do is remain a symbol. It's going to remain a symbol because this government does not dare let that fund collapse, because that symbolism is really the symbolism of this party. It said: we're piling up all this money because we know how to manage it for you; we will use it when it really needs to be used to diversify the economy; we will use it for a rainy day. Mr. Speaker, I think all they use it for is before an election.

Has this government been telling the people of this province — I haven't seen anything from the propaganda machine, the minister of propaganda — that one-third of the budget last year was a deficit? Has anyone been telling that story? Is the government not proud of that kind of bookkeeping system? Why don't they tell the people? One-third, and that's after . . . Mr. Treasurer, if you take that \$1 billion deficit and add it on to the \$1.2 billion that you took out of the fund to try to balance the books and make it look a little better, then you could tell the people of this province that in five years the heritage fund is gone. Why don't you tell that story? I know it would be unpleasant to tell that kind of story, but it's the true story and the people are finding out. So let's not drag the red herring up and down the floor of this Legislature and Main Street, Alberta, telling the people it's medicare, it's hospitalization that's causing all the problems. The problem is that this government doesn't know how to manage the taxpayers' money. That's what the problem is.

This afternoon my colleague and I were looking at the front bench and then the second and third benches of the government opposite. There are eight cabinet ministers in that second row that you could take out of there with the stroke of a pen. You would save the taxpayer a lot of money and would never miss them. You talk about a fat cat government. Well I know the Premier has a problem; he's going to have to do something with all those people to keep them from having a mutiny. But on the other hand, that's costing the taxpayer an awful lot of money. Not only would we save the taxpayer some money; we would have a more efficient cabinet. So maybe even the Provincial Treasurer or some of the people on the front bench would know he's going to bring in a 13 per cent tax increase. This way, they had to find it out in the press the same as the

backbenchers had to find it out in the press. What a way to run a government.

Mr. Speaker, the Treasurer can try to sweeten the bitter pill as much as he would like, but the people of this province are not going to accept the fact that this government, through its mismanagement, is going to dig deeper into their pockets starting January 1.

In conclusion I would like to say that if we as small "c" conservatives believe that the private sector is what really makes the economy go and that the private sector pays a great proportion of the taxes, then it's time this so-called free-enterprise government starting operating like a free-enterprise government. Provide some incentives for the private sector. Don't provide de-incentives by taking money out of their pockets and putting it into the provincial Treasury. My socialist friends to my left think you can control an economy, you can spend public funds, and the world is going to be rosy. I remember that Prime Minister Churchill said: socialism is a great system; there is only one thing wrong with it, it doesn't work.

What are we as a free-enterprise government trying to do? Basically what we are doing is taking money out of the private sector, putting it into the public sector, and then telling the public sector that we know how to manage their dollars better than they do. That's the philosophy of my learned friend to my left, but it is not supposed to be this government's philosophy. It is certainly not my philosophy.

Mr. Speaker, let's not drag the red herring across the Legislature and down Main Street, Alberta. Let's tell the people of this province: number one, we are the guardians of the dollars you have given us to spend; number two, we really want the private sector to function; number three, we are going to cut down on waste. The Provincial Treasurer well remembers his colleague the present Premier, sitting on this side of House and talking about cutting the fat from government. At this time we have more civil servants than we know what to do with, and I didn't hire them. Mr. Treasurer, you hired them; this government hired them.

I would say that the civil service in this province is probably as good a group of people as any government can have. I know there are some disillusioned civil servants, because some of the Tory friends are put in above career civil servants. I would be a little upset, especially if I were a long-time career civil servant and was there because I had earned my ranking, I had learned the system, and I had served the province well. I would be upset too when some of the Tory buddies came in above me. In spite of that the civil service of this province, the dedicated people who serve this province, do a good job for us. But when we get so many people, because this government doesn't know how to run a government efficiently, that people are redundant — as the English term is — or some of the jobs are redundant, then we have to trim the fat. There is a way to do it and a way not to do it. The way not to do it is the way the Premier of British Columbia handled it. You can do it through attrition; you don't have to do it through confrontation. I compliment the government in the approach it is taking. You can do it without confrontation. I know that the situation in British Columbia, because of its unionized sector, is different than it is here in Alberta. But 80 per cent of the people in this province are ready to start cutting out the fat.

I was proud of the 13,000 people in Fort St. John — one of the largest political gatherings they've ever had — when they said: we support the government. Of course that was at the bottom of the newspaper column. Our socialist friends who write for the press had as the top headline: big confrontation. At the bottom they told it like it was: 13,000 people supporting the government. So the time is right to cut out the fat.

Mr. Speaker, if this government has the jam to cut out a lot of the fat, if this government has the jam to re-establish some priorities and indicate to the people of this province that they are genuinely concerned about protecting the taxpayers' interest, then the Provincial Treasurer would find out that the economy would recover more quickly if he didn't implement the 13 per cent tax.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: I guess I will get into the debate. I see nobody else from the government side is jumping up to get into the debate. First of all, for my hon. friend from Clover Bar, there is a saying that I think is quite appropriate at this moment. It was by Chief Justice Douglas in the United States, who said very clearly: socialism is when the government does something for somebody else; it is called social progress when the government does something for me. I think that's appropriate in terms of the comments that the hon. Member for Clover Bar made.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that governments are going to make decisions. When governments make decisions, they are going to affect somebody. They are going to be good for perhaps one component of the economy and not good for others. I think that's what we're talking about. That is the crux of the matter here.

Why I am opposed to this Bill and why I think it is a very bad Bill at this time is very simple, Mr. Speaker. I think it is going to do much more harm than good for the economy and for the majority of Albertans. I cannot see how it can do anything but harm. I believe that the government wants to turn the economy around. As the Member for Clover Bar said, this government has been in power since 1971. They were taking all sorts of credit for the fact that OPEC had a cartel and we had money flowing in. As a result, they also have to take the blame when things are going wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I think back to the election. Some people may say that we're overly sensitive about this. I do not think so. In terms of the debate at the time of the election, clearly the majority of the people decided to take the conservative view of matters, that recovery was just around the corner. That's what they wanted to believe. I think many people swung over right at the end of that election because they believed that. As the Member for Clover Bar pointed out, technically we did not have a tax increase in 1983. But we will get it on January 1, 1984, at a time when the economy is much worse than it was even a year ago.

I will go into some specifics on the reasons I think it will not work. Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if you want to turn the economy around, you have to leave some purchasing power in the hands of the middle and lower income people. If you put money to the major corporations, as we have in the past — and I will get into that — they can make decisions. They do not have to invest that just in Alberta; they can take it. High-income people do not have to spend money right away. They are usually shrewd investors. They can save it, or they can invest it other places. In terms of corporations, they can invest it anywhere in the world. But when people in middle and lower incomes have a small amount of money, they will inevitably spend it, and they will spend it right here in this province. We do not understand a tax increase when we have thousands and thousands of unemployed in the cities of Edmonton, Calgary, and right across this province.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, the main priority of the government should be putting income into those hands so those people will go to the local store and buy groceries or extra appliances or whatever they may need at this time and so the local merchant

has some money, some profit margin. The local merchant will then buy from the manufacturer and so forth. It seems to me that we have how the economy works screwed up in this province, because we believe, quite frankly, that if you throw money at the top level it will trickle down somehow to the merchants and the unemployed. In the New Democratic Party, we believe clearly that it will work the other way. The trickle-up theory is what we believe in. If you ask Albertans right now, not many of them have been trickled down on lately, as we had many unemployed people sitting in the Legislature here today. Why I think an income tax hike at this specific time is wrong is that I think it's going to make it worse. It's going to hurt the economy in the winter very, very badly. Some people would say, well, it can't get much worse. With an income tax hike, I think it can.

The other point we have to remember very clearly, Mr. Speaker, is that the federal government is bringing in an income tax hike at the same time. What all Albertans are really getting at this time is a double whammy. Again, they're going to have less money to spend. One of the things I've heard various ministers of the Crown say as they have preached at people is that surely it is important that we get people to buy things. I've heard the minister say this — not this specific minister, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Over the Christmas holidays I saw last year that we had gotten into a negative point of view, that we want to encourage people to spend because that's important for the economy.

It seems clear to me. What message are we sending to people now? First of all, the economy is bad enough, but the message we're sending to them when we're going to take money out of the pockets of the lower and middle income is don't spend at this specific time. That's the message. Remember, the federal government is part of that also. That's the message we're clearly getting in our constituencies. We're getting calls — and for the members from Calgary, I'm getting angry calls from businessmen in Calgary. If the government isn't hearing what the people of Alberta are saying — as the Member for Clover Bar said, they're just not listening.

I believe these people are right. They're saying that we need consumer confidence at this specific time or it's going to be a very, very rough winter, rougher than it's been in the last year. To me, taking money out to put in government revenues at this time is wrong, wrong, wrong. I know we're going to regret this at some point down the line.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Treasurer says to us, well, it's not a great deal of money — and I recognize that there are people at lower incomes that are sheltered somewhat, but that was there before — it's only two thousand and some dollars for that average family making \$30,000. It's the same sort of logic we've heard before from the government — that it's not a lot of money. We heard that when we raised medicare premiums. We heard this about user fees — they can only go up to \$300. I say again, as I've said before in this House, that that's a lot of money for a lot of people. That is the added little bit of money with which they will go out and make that purchase of a television or whatever they're going to buy. If they don't have that money, they are not going to make that purchase. It is that simple, especially when they're not even sure that they're going to have a job four or five months from now, when they see foreclosures of small business right across this province at as high a rate as it has ever been and the highest in Canada. They know things aren't good. They know the recovery is not just around the corner as they're told. They're aware of that; they know that.

I remind the Treasurer that, sure, we talk about an income tax hike, and he says how nice it is that we still have the lowest

by a little bit in Alberta. But we suffered some of the pangs of inflation here during the time. There should be some advantage to owning a resource that was in demand all over the world in the '70s. As the Member for Clover Bar said, and I would remind the government, it was not their management that put that money there. It happened to be that OPEC had a cartel. At the time, we heard about diversification; now it's a dead issue. So again I go back. If they want to say they were responsible for good times, they can take the blame for the bad times also.

But to come back to my point, Mr. Speaker, we've taken a lot of other purchasing power away from the middle and lower income. Back in March when the Treasurer proudly proclaimed in the budget that, boy, there are no income taxes for this year — as we pointed out, we're going to get one January 1, 1984. But you recall that he did raise medicare premiums. If medicare premiums are not a tax, I don't know what is. But they are a regressive tax. The premium for that average family the Treasurer is talking about — there are provinces with a lot less money than we have that don't even have them — is over \$336, I believe. It's well over \$300. Make no mistake about it. That's a tax that people have to pay come January 1, along with the federal.

Some school boards, as we're debating another Bill about user fees — we're getting the worst of all worlds. We're getting user fees and also getting income tax hikes at the same time. If they are unfortunate enough to run into problems or the board doesn't have enough money — we don't know when that's going to occur — user fees could cost them extra money. What we're saying is that the middle and lower income in this province feel overwhelmed at this point, and they can't understand what the government is doing. There seems to be no compassion at all.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if we want to seriously look at the economy, there are some other things we could do. Surely the last thing we need at this point is an income tax hike. The other point, the things we could do, first of all — and the Member for Clover Bar talked about it. I know we have gotten caught in a lot of grandiose schemes with the heritage trust fund, and there will be operating costs in that later. The very minimum we could do, and I think there would be some support within the government, is that we could be borrowing. We still have a good credit rating, at least for the time being. Instead of throwing money into AGT revenues, we could be borrowing money on the open market. They could get their own money.

If we need money to balance our books, that's where it should come from because it was said to us that the heritage trust fund was set up for a rainy day. The people of Alberta are now saying very clearly to the government that it's not only raining, it's hailing. They do not understand that we have to keep a heritage trust fund as they're being nailed for user fees, higher medicare premiums, and now higher income tax. They do not understand that, and I think the government should take a look at that and look at their priorities.

When the government says they are going to cut back, obviously there are a lot of things we should cut back. In the '70s this government spent money like drunken sailors — there's absolutely no doubt about it — on all sorts of things we did not need, Mr. Speaker. I'll just give you one example: when we had our 75th birthday party. Certainly we're all proud, but did we have to spend \$75 million when the province to the east of us, Saskatchewan, spent \$3 million at the same time? No, we have to show the world what big shots we are and blow money. Now we're paying the responsibility for it. What we are clearly saying is let's cut back on the frivolous expenses

first. As a government, if we're serious in restraint, there are a lot of things we can do, but I see no action from this government yet on the frivolous and the silly.

I suggest that there are millions of dollars — before we start nipping away at income tax for people and cutting into programs people respect like their hospital care and their medical care. People are angry when they see, for example, the Provincial Treasurer justify spending \$1,900 for he and his aide to go to Calgary in one trip. Your actions speak louder than your words. People wonder about that when they see — we won't go into it — the Kananaskis schemozzle and the extra costs there, when they see the sand and the cedar-clad toilets, when they see the first-class travel the Premier is so proud of. At the same we're cutting back on essential services and raising income tax. When they see the problems with overruns at the Saddledome, when they see eight hundred and sixty-some thousand dollars for mood advertising for the heritage trust fund, they begin to wonder. What I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is that clearly those are the programs, the frivolous government spending, that we should be cutting back on first before we start getting into programs like medicare.

The other point we say very clearly is that they now like to blame health care for everything: the problem is the health care expenditures. This is the justification that the Treasurer gives us for an increase in income tax. Well, we've suggested ways even there that they could begin at looking at cutting costs. Nobody denies that we should try to get the best bang for the buck. But I don't see them rushing out — seat belts are too dicey a political issue. We know they save money; they know it. We have unnecessary surgery; we know that. We have doctors that are clearly bilking, and the Treasurer and the Attorney General know this. When we have one GP taking \$500,000 out of the general revenues of the province, out of medicare, we know we have expenses there. We know that ambulance service done properly would save lives. We know we should be looking at different modes of health care, i.e. community clinics, all these sorts of things that would save money — no reaction there at all. We know that these things would. I suggest that if we went department by department and tried to maximize and get the best bang for the buck, that would be the most sensible way to go. But I don't see this government doing that, Mr. Speaker.

I say clearly to this government: we get mad at the federal government, and most often correctly so, but we have a cabinet that's as big as the federal Liberals', and they're to run all of Canada. In British Columbia, with a bigger population, they have 18. You say, that's being chintzy. That's a lot of money for extra cabinet we do not need. It's not only them, their cars, and all the frills they have, but when you take all the bureaucrats that assemble around each minister, you would save a lot of money if you began there. That's where we should be starting if this government were really serious. In the last budget the Premier increased his staff by 25 per cent, but somehow that's okay. That's what people in Alberta are picking up. They're seeing the double standards. At the time we need shelter allowances and income tax hikes and user fees and all the rest of it, they're not seeing a serious attempt to come to the silly expenses that we have.

The other point I would make, Mr. Speaker, is that we have to be fair and honest in the income tax system. We can argue about it, but I want to give some figures here. The Alberta revenue generated by taxation right at this moment from individual taxpayers is \$1.7 billion, which is roughly 80.4 per cent. From corporations, it is \$415 million, which is 19.6 per cent. I don't have time to go into it, but surely if we really want to bring some more money in, we can begin to look at the cor-

porate sector rather than the small people. Outside of P.E.I., we have the lowest rate of corporate tax in the country. If we really need to get \$220 million out — and I question that to begin with — then I think we should begin looking at that sector.

As I draw to the end, Mr. Speaker, I feel so strongly about this Bill that I don't think we should be rushing it. As a result, I have an amendment that I would like to bring in. The amendment says:

by striking all the words after the word "That" and by substituting therefor the following:

"this Assembly decline to give a second reading to Bill 100, Alberta Income Tax Amendment Act, 1983 (No. 2) because

- (1) its provisions will cause Albertans to be deprived of a portion of their personal incomes at a time when most Albertans can least afford such a further cut,
- (2) in the absence of evidence of concerted government financial restraint in its own conduct, the programme of raising taxes to balance revenues and expenditures, as provided for in the Bill, is inequitable, and
- (3) the effect of the proposed tax increase will be further to depress consumer demand and thus further retard and perhaps terminate economic recovery in Alberta."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: I haven't had an opportunity to consider the amendment. I know it purports to be a reasoned amendment, but it would seem to me that unless the reasons are given very briefly, one could attach a speech to a reasoned amendment.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the amendment that's been placed before us, it indicates to this Assembly that we should decline to give second reading to Bill 100 because of three very specific reasons that are outlined. I certainly think those are good reasons. The fact that the government is so anxious to have this amendment voted on immediately, without consideration, without appropriate debate in the House, I think is a neglect of responsibility by the government itself. I would think that when the government feels strongly about taxing the people of Alberta, they should stand up and give reasons why they want to tax them.

In opening debate on second reading, we heard the minister indicate his own personal reasons why it should be increased and implemented. But in terms of representatives in this Legislature — backbenchers and ministers — that represent 75 out of 79 constituencies, we have had no reasons placed on the record as to why member after member on the Conservative side of this House supports second reading or the principle of the Bill. I think a government with 75 members that allows only one member to speak on its behalf is a very unfortunate situation. I would think members who want to send a message back to their constituencies as to why they're sitting quiet in their place or why they would like to support this Bill should stand up and indicate their position to the public. That hasn't happened, and I think that's an unfortunate situation.

The opportunity is still there, though, and members should be doing it. They don't have to, Mr. Speaker. I understand that once you're elected to the Legislature, if you want to come here and sit for four years without making a speech, without asking a question, without doing anything, you have that right to do so. In Alberta we don't have that recall system, and I'm

not sure I support that concept at all. But in the election system as we have it, that kind of behavior can occur in this Assembly. I wouldn't want to point any fingers at anybody that hasn't made speeches or hasn't asked questions. Every member who has acted in that way has to live with his own conscience.

When the record of history is taken into account, when the next time comes around when members again decide to run, hopefully that kind of information is transmitted to the electorate — that your member didn't stand up and put his name on the record that he was either in favor of or against that 13 per cent hike in personal income tax. The name should be on the record. The words should be on the record. There are many other matters in this House that get the same silent treatment by some 73 members. Seventy-three members sit quietly without saying anything. If they endorse what the Provincial Treasurer has said and endorse all his arguments, I think it would be appropriate to stand in the House and say: I endorse the Provincial Treasurer's arguments; I agree with him one hundred per cent. Maybe that's all the speech that's necessary. You go back to your constituents and say, look, I gave my presentation in the House; I endorsed the government's policy, and in the next election I'm going to stand on that particular point of view.

Even in Calgary this is going to affect many, many constituents. Between \$1 million and \$2 million is going to be paid by health care personnel. Members who represent those people in Calgary leave the House or aren't in their seat at the present time. That's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker.

What are some of the implications of this 13 per cent tax hike for Albertans? If we look at some of the various interest groups across the province and see what the actual cost is going to be to them — I chose only a few as some typical examples of what this tax will do. The first I have on my list are teachers and administrators. There are approximately 26,000 of those people across the province. Their average salary most likely is a little above the provincial average. In calculations we find that in the 1984 calendar year between \$6 million and \$7 million will be taken out of the pockets of teachers by this tax. That's between \$6 million and \$7 million.

Salary negotiations have gone up. We have different areas that are on strike. We have the Minister of Labour standing up in the MD and county meetings today, telling them — and endorsing and supporting the position — that the government is going to give a zero increase to school boards, that school boards have to live with that and have to negotiate tough, and if the only alternative is to go out on strike, then that's what it is. It was a great presentation for that type of crowd. The minister should have stood in his place in that assembly and said to the people: on January 1 we are implementing a new program that will cost the teachers of this province between \$6 million and \$7 million. Who's going to make them dig deeper in their pockets? We're going to cause greater conflict between the boards and teachers in this province, but the minister didn't stand in his place and say that. He never told them anything different with regard to that.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege.

MR. R. SPEAKER: So, Mr. Speaker, this government has got to come clean and always tell the full story.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister is raising a point of privilege.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I just want to indicate that I've been incorrectly quoted, inasmuch as I was there and know

what I said. In response to a question that was put to me, an illustration was used of plus one, zero, minus one, just by way of illustration of what could be the situation. There was no indication that I was indicating what the government is going to be expending by way of grants.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister will get up and endorse this suppressive policy of the Conservative government, and say: I am concerned about the workers of this province, about the teachers of this province, about the municipal administrators in this province, about those that are trying to run a small business, and the effects of the 13 per cent personal income tax increase. But has the minister got the courage to do that and put it on the record? Did the minister have the courage in the meeting today to say, look, we're going to add to the cost of local government by a 13 per cent increase? No, I've never heard that in the discussion. But here we have between \$6 million and \$7 million of added cost to a group of professionals in this province.

Whether they need more or don't need more is not the question. The question is that here is a tax they must pay for by law; there is no choice. Each month an amount of money is taken off their pay cheque by the edict of the Conservative government. This Act — if the members of this Legislature have read the Act, they will note very carefully that the Act strengthens the power of government to take the money away from the people. It places in place greater strength to prosecute anybody that doesn't take this tax away from the people of Alberta. It strengthens that position.

Mr. Speaker, it isn't only the 13 per cent, but other things in the Act that are the same. We're going to twist and pull it out of the people of Alberta. If they don't pay it, we'll take them to jail. If somebody doesn't collect it, we'll take them to jail or fine them. Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of action this government is taking.

There are other groups that are going to be affected as well. If we look at the civil servants across this province, by the Canadian statistics the number of public servants that are going to be paying this tax — and they all have incomes, and it's all deducted each month. Very few of those who work for the public service have any ways of dodging the tax, because they're usually required to have only a public service job and not do other things on the side. That's the general public service. Some other persons that retired from the active participation in the Legislature come under different categories, but these are the people in the bargaining unit of the public service. We see some 70,000 of those public service people. How many dollars will be taken out of their pockets in this coming year? Using the Provincial Treasurer's own figures, we estimate that that's going to be between \$13 million and \$14 million.

As I understand it, negotiations have just started with the public service, or will be starting fairly soon. I'm not sure what stage they're in. But whatever stage they're in, the government is going to say: you've got enough; we are going to give you a zero increase; we're going to sit tight; and that's it. But who will tell the story about the fact that already, before a new agreement is negotiated, by edict and law of this Legislature — by Conservative edict and law — the public servants of this province are going to be committed to contributing between \$13 million and \$14 million to a deficit and debt of this province that the government itself caused? They have no choice at all. They pay the bill.

There's some \$27 million. That's nearly 10 per cent. Just two interest groups in the province are going to pay 10 per cent of the misspending of this government to try to balance the budget in some way or other.

Let's look at some of the other groups in the province; for example, the registered nurses group. As of September 30, 1983, there were over 18,000 active members and over 3,000 associate members. What are they going to be paying? Again using the Provincial Treasurer's formula, they will be contributing somewhere around the \$5 million mark. We have legislation in the House which prevents nurses from taking certain actions in negotiations. We want to hold the line with these health group personnel who are working and contributing to the health care system in the province, but we're going to fine them for their good work. We're going to reduce their way of life in terms of their consumer capability by some \$5 million. I'm sure they'll be pleased to hear that and pleased to know about that kind of information.

The CUPE employees in the province — we chose 6,400, as of May/June 1983, in the areas of dietary services, house-keeping services, unit clerks, lab aides, secretaries, clerks, service aides, porters, and trades. What are these employees, who are taking the responsibility and doing their job — and not all at very highly paid jobs, I must mention — going to contribute? They're going to contribute some \$1 million to this debt of the province. They're going to be fined for working hard and trying to meet their budgets to look after their families. On January 1, they'll be fined for their good work. The government must collect \$1 million from them to try to balance their budget. They've got to pay it on the backs of their labors because they have no choice. The employer has no choice; it must be deducted.

Well, that's unacceptable. This is a group of people that requires every dollar they have at the present time to try and balance their personal budgets: to try to meet their mortgage costs, their food costs, the school costs of their children, and hopefully maybe have a little bit left over for a holiday. Most likely that's what we're squeezing out of these people, that one, two, three, or four days they can take off and go somewhere and have a special holiday with their families. I'm sure that's most likely where the budget gets cut. It's always the extras that get cut, something that's a little extra for the family.

Our Provincial Treasurer says: we've all got to live within our means; we need a million bucks, and we'll take it away from these poor clerks and dietary officials; we'll take it away from them so that I can sit in my big grand chair with the royal purple colors and hardwood, and balance my budget.

The Provincial Treasurer should remember his remarks when he first took over as a minister in this government, when he got rid of his Black Maria and supposed chauffeur that the former Minister of Education had before 1971. I'd like to look at the car that sits around this Legislature Building that the hon. Provincial Treasurer drives now, if it isn't one of the more costly cars. It's not that little humble station wagon that he drove up to the Legislature Building at that time. If it is, I stand to be corrected. If the minister is still driving that car, I stand to be corrected. [interjections] A Chev station wagon; that's very good. I certainly hope so. I'm sure all of these clerks, lab aides, secretaries, porters, and tradespeople are driving some very old, second-hand cars as well, and trying to make do with them. They need all of the money maybe even to get to work on time and to be able to put some new tires on for the winter that's before us.

Mr. Speaker, this government doesn't see fit to consider those kinds of things. They're going to balance their budget and live within their means, which means taking something away from the poor innocent people in the province of Alberta. We have all argued already in this Legislature the concept of living within our means. It doesn't mean to go out and get some more money. As a farmer I can't do that. I only take what I'm paid in terms

of my production. If the income is down, I have to cut my expenditures down — very simple. As a wage earner, you only have so much income. To live within your means, you cut down your expenditures. That's what was expected here in this Legislature by the people of Alberta.

Let's look at some of these other groups — 4,300 persons working in the health sciences organizations. They include physiotherapists, X-ray technicians, pharmacy people, speech therapy, medical records, radiation, occupational therapy. What is it going to cost those 4,300 persons? Again, \$1 million from those 4,300 people. What's a million? But to those people it means an awful lot. As has already been mentioned in this Legislature, it takes away certain consumer capabilities, most likely their own consumer capability to have the basics of food, clothing, and shelter, and meet their health care payments in this province.

The construction industry — until this year, it averaged something like 105,000 workers. During a peak season when work was going well, it was around 115,000 people in the province of Alberta. In 1983, that's down to 80,000, which includes all the workers and all the tradesmen. What's it going to cost those 80,000 that still have jobs, some at reduced wages, at reduced incomes? What is this 13 per cent increase in personal income tax going to cost them? It's going to cost them some \$20 million — \$20 million taken out of the work force of this province. They have no option but to pay it. There are very few of them that have other ways of writing off the tax, of taking in a certain kind of expense that reduces their taxable income. They haven't got it. They have no defence at all against this type of imposition on them. Their employer takes it off before they get the cheque. They don't even get a chance to put it in the bank for a little while to gain some interest. It's just taken off at source and sent in to the government, and the government is happy and pleased and thankful that they get it.

I'm not so sure they are. I've never heard the Provincial Treasurer go out across the province and say to the taxpayers of Alberta: we're so thankful you pay your taxes so that we can pay our deficit, so that we don't run the government in debt. The minister made a comment earlier that I thought applied to that very well: sustaining the economic growth is forestalled unless the deficit is cut. That's most likely true. The deficit must be cut. But is the minister doing it? I can't find any way that the minister is really cutting the deficit of this government.

In question period today, I raised the question with regard to the 2 per cent cut across government. What does it mean? Who is it going to affect? The minister wasn't sure. He said that is sort of a policy, and generally we're going to try to do it; we'll take a little more here and a little less there, but it's going to average out to 2 per cent. That's quite a policy.

I've never heard a minister in this government, or the Premier, stand in his place and say: we believe there should be priorities; we believe there are functions of government more important than other functions. Now, I shouldn't say that. I did hear that. I've got to retract those words. Back on March 3, 1969, I did hear those remarks. I'm sorry I haven't got the quote in front of me, but I used it yesterday in some remarks. At that time, the indignant Leader of the Opposition stood in his place right over here and talked about the terrible Social Credit government that had no priorities, that had the highest per capita expenditure of any government of Canada, and he couldn't understand that. And he said, we've got to come to grips with that kind of a problem.

Oh, I remember that day: the arms and the chair back, and the movements around on this side of the House — terrific show, unbelievable, great dramatics. He went on to talk about

how a Conservative government would not allow that kind of thing to happen. This leader would not use funds to expand capital expenditures. But there were no priorities of the government. My colleague from Clover Bar expresses very well how Mr. Lougheed, the Leader of the Opposition at that time, made those remarks. But it was so funny.

As I read those remarks yesterday and as I was preparing my remarks for the rural counties and MDs' convention — to think that here was a Premier, here was a Leader of a Conservative Party that set out some goals in 1969, at a time when there was a slight depression, but there was a mentality at that time that we were going to have the Dirty Thirties all over again. I remember that, and I sat in a cabinet that had members that were part of those early '30s years and were concerned that in '71, '72 and '73, the Dirty Thirties were here again, so we'd better tighten our belts. We tried that, as cabinet ministers; we tried that. But here was the Leader of the Opposition, in that environment, giving directives for his party to set up priorities, to determine what's important and what isn't — that a government shouldn't be the highest per capita expenditure on government services, we shouldn't be the leader in that area.

Here today we have exactly the same circumstances, only worse. The deficit is larger, if we wouldn't have had the heritage fund to bail it out. We're in worse economic conditions. The people who attempt to predict what's going to happen in our economy are saying that maybe it might hold as is for two years. Some of the submissions to the Macdonald commission are saying that we are going to have a drastic drop in economic growth; there will be serious deterioration of our economy.

Here we have a government that doesn't know how to set priorities. A leader set that out as one of its goals, and we have had a binge in the 1970s by a Conservative government that created uncontrolled expenditures, uncontrolled growth of civil service, from some 17,000 to over 70,000 from 1971 to 1983. We've had a budget increase from some \$1 billion to near \$10 billion, plus what we add if we throw in what funds we had available for the heritage fund, which are committed and give us no capability of looking after a deficit. We have a disaster. Who is asked to bail it out? I've just listed a few of the people here. I point out where about \$47 million is going to come from. These are just a few of the people we selected. They're going to pay \$47 million towards the government to try to shore up their mismanagement. No other government in the history of Canada, most likely in the world, has had funds on a per capita basis to spend on public purposes as this government of Alberta.

What is the heritage we leave for the people in 1983? We leave them a debt. That's the record of this government in 1983: a debt. At a time when we could have been balancing budgets we leave them a debt, because it was great — every minister had an easy position with regard to any type of request. The people would say, can you do this? Is there a grant for that? Yes, there is. And the budget was expanded. I could go into hundreds of examples where there were no priorities, where the government took the easy way out and just gave money to the people.

Whether it worked or not, whether it was right or not, whether it was philosophically right — that's the thing that really upsets me. People who said that they were Conservatives, that they believed in the market place economy, totally destroyed and neglected to apply their own personal principles to the actions of their government. That's unacceptable, but that's why we're in the situation we are today.

Now all of a sudden we have the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud, and I didn't want to leave him out of my remarks today, heading up a committee on the economy of Alberta —

I believe that's the correct title of that committee — acting as chairman of the caucus committee. I think that's great. We maybe needed that committee of the backbenchers a long time ago. If they're afraid, as backbenchers, to express an attitude in this Legislature, let's hope that attitude is given in that committee, that at this point in time that economic caucus committee sets up some priorities and gives some direction to the Provincial Treasurer, the Premier, and the other ministers, because that's never happened. From 1971 until about 1980, it didn't happen, nor did it happen, I would say, even in the year 1982, when this government spent without reason and tried to buy the votes of this province by promising \$8 billion in various programs. That was cut to \$7 billion — I should correct that — because interest rates went down and mortgage rates went down. So it was closer to \$7 billion. That's why we're in this trouble today. It's very simple why we're in this trouble. They were so anxious to keep their jobs . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: From where I'm sitting, Mr. Speaker, the member has used up his time.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. Member for Drayton Valley would like to speak, I'd gladly sit down. If she would speak to this and say — she could make a very simple speech, and I'd certainly write it for her — I support a 13 per cent hike in personal income tax. Now if she can say that, fine; I'll sit down. But if the hon. member is just getting up to interrupt and take my time, then I don't accept that. I don't think that is even reasonable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Your time is up.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I support the amendment that has been placed before us by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood. I think there is no way we can ever support such a bill in its present form. It's really unacceptable.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that I am close to my half hour. At this time, I'll give the floor to another member and certainly encourage them to get up and debate this matter.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might have the leave of the Assembly to revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. CRAWFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure to me this afternoon to be able to introduce approximately 20 members of the Lansdowne Cub Pack No. 172. They've been looking forward to this visit for quite a while, and they're here with their cub leaders from the constituency of Edmonton Parkallen. They are well and effectively led by some of the leaders and parents. I am informed that the ones present with the cubs are Doug Straughan, Ross Pugh, Barry Snowden, and Terry Carson. I would like to have the Assembly welcome the cubs, their leaders, and their parents, in the traditional way and would ask them now to rise and receive the welcome.

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS**
(Second Reading)

Bill 100
Alberta Income Tax
Amendment Act, 1983 (No. 2)
(continued)

MR. SPEAKER: Would the members in favor of the amendment, please say aye. Those opposed, please say no.

[Motion on amendment lost]

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion for second reading of Bill No. 100, would ...

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, are we moving the motion on second reading? I can still speak on second reading of the Bill, and I intend to do so. I would like a ruling from you at this time if I should initiate my speech at this time or whether I have the capability within that time limit of adjourning the debate. I don't want to move an adjournment unless I have the opportunity of continuing the debate on another day. I'd like a ruling with regard to the meaning of that time.

MR. SPEAKER: I have no jurisdiction to say when the member may or may not start his speech. It's up to him. As far as an

adjournment motion is concerned, I find it outside my province to predict what the result might be.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, it's proposed that the Assembly sit tomorrow evening. We will be continuing with debate on the Bill that is before the Assembly at the present time. I might add that for tomorrow evening and Friday, if second readings do not occupy the full time of the Assembly we would hope that hon. members would recognize that in scheduling the business of the Assembly, we may want to switch to Committee of the Whole or third readings on occasion, in order to effectively use all of that time, and not call any other motions or any other business. We will be basically looking at items for second reading, and Committee of the Whole if there's time.

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

