

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Thursday, November 17, 1983 2:30 p.m.**

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

**PRAYERS**

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, today it's a great pleasure for me to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly Mr. Dave Harding, the general manager of British Petroleum group operations in the People's Republic of China. That group also has two Canadian companies involved in drilling in the offshore exploration area of the South China Sea. In fact, yesterday Mr. Harding gave a lecture — or conference, one could say — in Calgary, which was attended by 400 companies from across Canada. The subject was how Canadian companies can get into the Chinese market. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Harding very much for coming to Alberta to inform us as to how we can get into this market. As he said, it's a long and hard road to take to do business in that country but also, of course, eventually a very profitable one.

Mr. Harding is leaving this afternoon for Canton, or Guangzhou, via San Francisco and Hong Kong. I would like to take this opportunity to wish Mr. Harding every success and good health in his very difficult task. He is accompanied by Mr. Nawata, from the Department of Economic Development. I would like to ask both of them to stand and be recognized by this Assembly.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, some 45 grade 8 students from the Ian Bazalgette junior high school in the constituency of Calgary Forest Lawn. They are joined today by their group leader, Barbara Will, as well as Michael McCauley and Brian Benoit. I would ask them all to rise at this time and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to hon. members of this Assembly a group of senior citizens from the town of Spruce Grove. Many of them are pioneers of the Spruce Grove and Stony Plain areas. They're accompanied today by their leader, Clarence Brox. Also accompanying the 12 participants is Margaret Bosse, who is the president of the Golden Age Club in Spruce Grove. It's interesting to note that I found out today that Margaret's father worked on the dome of the building here when it was built in the early 1900s and was also one of the carpenters that hung the doors on many of the offices in this building. I would ask the group, which is in the members gallery, to stand and receive a warm and cordial welcome from the members.

MR. WOO: Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I take some considerable pride and pleasure in introducing to you and to members

of the Assembly a group of nine exceptional children from various schools throughout Sherwood Park. These children are grade 5 students and are enrolled in the program for gifted children at Our Lady of Perpetual Help school. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Ruth Hayden, and parent Mrs. Agnes Rossel. They are seated in the members gallery, and I would ask them to rise now and receive the warm welcome of all members.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, I also have the pleasure of introducing a group of school children this afternoon. They're from the Robert Rundle elementary school in the city of St. Albert. They are grade 6 students, and there are 30 of them in the public gallery. They are accompanied by their vice-principal, Tony Sware, and also by Mrs. Galliford. I would ask if they would stand and the members would recognize these students.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members, five members of the council of the county of Vulcan: first of all, Barry McFarland, the reeve; and councillors Dave Clark, Wendy Williams, Wayne Ericksen, and Robert Dow. This is a new group of councillors in the province, elected and re-elected. I'd certainly like them to stand and be recognized by this Assembly.

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and to the Assembly two special guests, Dorothy Keates, a constituent, and Sylvia McKinlay. I understand both were recently elected to the executive of the provincial committee advocating the formation of a council on women's affairs. They may have a particular interest this afternoon in the private member's motion proposed by the Member for Calgary McKnight. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask them to rise to receive the traditional welcome.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Legislature, three representatives from the Committee of the Unemployed: Mr. Jerri Ross, from Edmonton Mill Woods; and John O'Reilly and Richard Jacob, from Edmonton Centre. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask them to stand and be recognized by members of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: May I draw the attention of hon. members to the presence in the Speaker's gallery of the former Member for Drayton Valley, who most of us will recall put in two periods of distinguished service in this Assembly. I would like to ask our friend Rusty Zander to stand and receive the welcome of all the members.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Hospitality Expenditures**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. It's with respect to the August 31 *Alberta Gazette* — some \$32,000 in hospitality and entertainment expenses for a conference of public works ministers in September 1982. My question with respect to that particular conference is, could the minister advise the Assembly what follow-up meetings have been held subsequent to that conference?

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, maybe for the interest of members, public works ministers, deputies, and officials from

across the country meet annually. It has been the habit to alternate this; provinces vary it from year to year. Last year, for the first time in many years, it was Alberta's turn. Alberta hosted it.

There is a significant follow-up on specific items at the officials' level. If the Leader of the Opposition has any specific area he'd like me to inform him on, I'd be happy to explore that and get back to him. But there is follow-up. For example, the meeting at the ministers' level this year was hosted by Ontario, and ministers followed up on a couple of items that had been discussed the previous year. So there is follow-up in a number of areas. But if I could find out the specific area, I'd be happy to respond.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, and ask whether any report which summarized the work done was published as a result of this august conference.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge there has never been ...

MR. CRAWFORD: You said September the first time; this time it's "august". [laughter]

MR. CHAMBERS: I don't know how I follow that act, Mr. Speaker.

No, it's never been the practice to summarize the entire conference in a report and publish that. The conferences incorporate workshops which are in a number of different areas, whether it be procurement, purchasing, construction, or whatever. The people with a particular interest in those areas will be involved in those workshops. As well as interprovincial communication between officials, if you like, often there may be some follow-up material back and forth in that specific area, but there's no overall report of each conference.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask a further supplementary question of the hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, and ask whether there has been any follow-up or specific review conducted of the effectiveness of the helicopter tour of Kananaskis Country, the golf tournament at Banff Springs, the barbecue and dance at the Rafter Six Guest Ranch, and the wind-up dinner/dance at the Alhambra Room in the Banff Springs Hotel.

MR. CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker, as in the case of any conference — for example, the first one I attended, I guess it must have been five years ago, in New Brunswick by-the-sea — the host province tends to and wishes to make sure the conference is an enjoyable one. People work hard in long sessions during the day and in the evening, and they also like to participate socially. That obviously has benefits in terms of ministers and deputy ministers and officials getting to know each other. That's common practice and well understood, I think, and very beneficial.

In Alberta we like to think we are doing the equivalent thing that is done in other provinces when they're the hosts. Overall, I think the feedback I've had from my counterparts in other provinces is that it was an excellent conference and certainly on a par, at least, with other conferences of the past and that the ministers, deputies, and officials got a lot out of it. Hopefully we can all learn from this sort of thing, and therefore be better able to perform our tasks on behalf of the citizens of our respective provinces.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I review the agenda, there should be no problem in the various people getting to know one another.

A further supplementary question. I would ask the hon. minister to advise the Assembly: who in fact determines the balance between the working part of the agenda and the hospitality part? Was that determined by the government of Alberta, as the host province?

MR. CHAMBERS: I think how it has traditionally worked, Mr. Speaker, is that the host province has a leadership role, of course, and the officials confer in terms of agenda with their counterparts in other provinces and ask: what issues would you like to have discussed at this conference and how do we follow up on last year's, on a particular item that might have been ongoing? Then the officials, in effect, work out an agenda for the conference. I could say that traditionally, in the five years I've been involved, the format has been essentially the same in terms of work time — and I think the work time is significant and productive — and off time, whether it be golfing or fishing, as some people elected when we were in New Brunswick, and so forth. But I can quite sincerely say that I think the conferences are hardworking and productive, and the agenda over the days of the conference is appropriately laid out.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put a supplementary question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer, and ask if it is part of the government's restraint policy that perhaps a directive will be sent to ministers hosting conferences, with respect to those conferences which one might categorize as being light on work and taxing on hospitality. Will any overall guidelines be developed by the government of Alberta with respect to conferences of this nature in the future?

MR. HYNDMAN: That is in effect now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NOTLEY: Well, it's certainly in effect now; there's no question about that.

#### **Timber Harvesting — Oldman River Basin**

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question, if I may, to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. In making a decision to allow primary timber harvesting and construction of a logging road in the Hidden Creek drainage of the upper Oldman River watershed, what studies were done on the impact of clear-cutting on the water supply from these creeks to farmers and ranchers downstream?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, the area the hon. member's question is in respect of was allocated to the Revelstoke organization as early as 1966. Subsequent to that time, of course, the area was the subject of some discussion and assessment as the Eastern Slopes policy evolved and was determined to fall in the zone five category — namely multiple-use — which would very much include the opportunity to include the economic activity of logging. As part and parcel of that, of course, there would be an assessment with representatives of the Alberta Forest Service, working in consultation with the fish and wildlife organizations, to ensure that logging in that area would be an appropriate use, and it is so.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. In making the decision to allow 1.6 years of timber harvesting in the area, was any specific assessment made of similar clear-cutting that had

been allowed in the Gladstone valley in the southern Oldman area as a result of the pine bark beetle? Has that harvesting affected summertime water supply?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, in the same fashion, to some extent, as existed in the Gladstone valley, there is a concern about a beetle infestation. The lumber in that area is some 300 years old and is really very ripe for harvesting on overmature timber. The investigations that have been pursued with respect to the water basin areas have led us to the conclusion that there will not be any significant adverse impact as a result of the logging operation, which I should mention constitutes only some 6 per cent of the entire watershed area.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment. Have any studies been conducted by the minister or the Department of the Environment with respect to the Oldman watershed area and the impact of the cumulative effect of the Gladstone ridge plus this other development?

MR. BRADLEY: With regard to the Gladstone area, the officials of the department have had ongoing discussions with the Department of Energy and Natural Resources. I'm not aware of any studies with regard to the Hidden Creek area.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Have there been any discussions with people in the Gladstone ridge area, particularly ranchers who have expressed public concern about the impact of clear-cutting on the watershed for the Oldman basin? Has the minister met with any of the people representing concerned Alberta citizens?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Gladstone logging operation, yes, I have personally met with individuals from the area. As a result of that particular meeting in my office, we undertook to do some follow-up work which has occurred. Additionally, I can say that representatives of the Alberta Forest Service have been involved in a series of meetings with interested persons with respect to the Gladstone operations and the Hidden Creek logging. We have met on more than one occasion, through the department, with representatives of the Alberta Wilderness Association and the Great Divide Trail Association, as well as working with the fish and wildlife sector, to ensure that we are approaching this in as reasonable a way as possible.

I should add that when the logging is undertaken, we are going to be utilizing the services of a landscape architect. We have already brought in Mr. Pern Van Heek, a landscape architect specialist from British Columbia who has provided an assessment of the proposed logging operations on the specific cuts. As well, a representative of the timber management branch of the department will be working and on-site, to ensure that the logging operation is conducted in a way that preserves the aesthetics of the area to the maximum extent possible.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has Revelstoke made any representation to the minister which indicates that there is currently a firm market for any timber from the Hidden Creek area?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, we have no reason to doubt that the lumber cannot be marketed. As the hon. member would be aware, there has been an upturn in the lumber market, particularly in the United States, during the course of 1983.

As a matter of fact, I am glad the hon. member raised the matter of the Revelstoke operation, because in order to meet our 20-year quota commitment to the Revelstoke operation, it is essential that this logging occur. As I said, the area was allocated back in 1966. If in fact the area were not available, it could well mean the sawmill in the Revelstoke operation being shut down for a period of a year and many, many people involved in that industry being put out of work, which I am sure the hon. member would not want to see.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. What weight did the minister put on the commitment to Revelstoke, in comparison to the concerns expressed by people in the Gladstone valley area — the ranchers in particular — about the impact on the watershed? In the course of determining the relative weights of those two conflicting positions, what assessment, if any, was obtained from the Department of the Environment about the impact on the watershed?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, in matters of this nature there is ongoing communication involving the department for which I am responsible and the Department of the Environment. In terms of weighting, we don't approach it in quite that fashion. There were concerns raised by a few people in the area. Of course, there were many people who felt very strongly that the operation should go ahead. In terms of those who expressed some concerns, we investigated those concerns and have satisfied ourselves that there will not be any substantial negative impact on the watershed. Moreover, we have satisfied ourselves that the logging operation will be conducted in a way that is aesthetically pleasing and satisfying, and ensures the multiple use of the area for both recreation and logging.

#### Provincial Borrowing

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Provincial Treasurer. The Premier went to New York last week. Was one of the purposes of the Premier's visit to New York to borrow money on the American market for the operation or any capital funding of the government of Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN: No it was not, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Has the Provincial Treasurer any trips planned to either the United States or the European market, to explore the possibility of borrowing funds for the government of Alberta operations or capital, or for any of the Crown corporations the ministry is responsible for?

MR. HYNDMAN: Not in the immediate future, Mr. Speaker, although that is certainly possible in 1984. As members know, both Alberta Government Telephones and the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation have been in the private market this year, and will continue to be, seeking borrowings for their capital needs.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, for clarification from the Provincial Treasurer. In terms of 1984, are we looking at the months of January, February, or March for those trips? Would the minister specify whether the Alberta government has preference for private funds from the American market or the European market?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can't be precise as to whether there would be any trips and, if so, when. There would be a

number of considerations taken into account as to where the borrowings take place: the cost of the money, the extent to which they could be facilitated more easily or with difficulty, and the state of currency, the Euro-dollar market and the American market. So at this time we would simply seek to minimize the borrowings the province would require on its own account. Those figures would change from time to time, as the member can appreciate, depending on month by month predictions of revenue and expenditure.

#### **Sugar Beet Marketing**

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture a question related to a vote that was taken by the Sugar Beet Growers of southern Alberta. I wonder if the minister could inform the Assembly if that vote has been completed and, if it is completed, the results of that vote toward a marketing board.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the member is correct; there was a plebiscite held. I believe the balance had to be in by last October 31. The vote was nearly 70 per cent in favor. Since it just takes a simple majority for the marketing plan to pass, the marketing board will in fact become a reality.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Mr. Minister, what will be the next step for the association?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the marketing council from the department will now have to appoint a provisional board of directors until elections can be held. I believe it will likely take until the spring of '84 before that board of directors will be in place.

#### **Public Service Labor Legislation**

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Government House Leader. In light of a recent Ontario court decision, which would appear to cast some doubts on the government's ability to legislate against strikes in the public service, is the Government House Leader, or the government in general, planning any legislation that would clarify this situation?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, when a case like that is decided, it may indeed have impact in other provincial jurisdictions. But that depends upon the way in which the legislation in each case — the Ontario legislation as compared with the Alberta legislation — is drafted, as well as upon the result of any appeals in the Ontario case.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Specifically, is the hon. Government House Leader considering any legislation under section 33 of the Canada Act, 1982, which would utilize the rights of the provinces to opt out of interpretations of the Charter of Rights?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in answer to the first question, that would depend on whether or not an existing decision would stand up, upon appeal. Subject to that, the answer would be yes.

#### **Courthouse Security**

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney General. In view of the tragic shooting which took place yesterday in the Edmonton provincial courthouse, could the minister indicate what steps are being taken to increase security in provincial courthouses?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think it's too soon, perhaps, in light of that tragic incident, to respond with specifics for provincial courthouses across the province as a whole. An internal inquiry in full detail is being undertaken into all the circumstances. I would think it likely that that inquiry, when it's reduced to a report on what happened, may include recommendations.

MR. SZWENDER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate when the inquiry results will be made public?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, depending upon the content of the report, it's a question of whether or not it would be made public; security matters are usually not. But I expect the report will be available within about a three- to four-week time frame.

#### **Highway Overpass Project**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Transportation. Has the minister launched any special review of the possibility that there may be considerable waste of taxpayers' funds on construction of an overpass and access routes at the junction of highways 2 and 22X, just south of Calgary?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of the particular project the hon. member is referring to. I am not aware of his accusations that there is some considerable excess, waste, or extra construction there. If the member has some evidence to suggest that, I'd be pleased to have a look at it.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister outline for the Assembly why access roads to this new overpass were not completed before or during construction of the overpass itself, which now sits completed but useless?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the general approved and accepted method of constructing many of these types of structures that engineers have devised over the years entails up to a three-year period for construction. The first year generally sees what are called "approach fills" constructed, so the material has time to settle; then in following years, such things as access roads are constructed. I'd be pleased to go over the entire procedure of constructing with the hon. member. But perhaps it would be better if he outlined his concerns in some detail, and I could get him a full engineering report on the method of constructing highways in Alberta. It might be very useful for him.

MR. MARTIN: I very much appreciate the offer from the Minister of Transportation. But the question I was asking about construction — I'm well aware of that, having worked with the department of highways — is specifically, why did you build an overpass and not have access roads? It seems clear to me, and that's the question: why were the access roads not there at the same time as the overpass? I know that's not a common way to do construction, and he knows it too.

MR. M. MOORE: There are some cases, Mr. Speaker, in which we build overpasses that in fact don't have access roads onto and off them at the junction the hon. member might be referring to. They're simply to separate the traffic at an intersection and not provide the opportunity for turning in any particular direction. But I say again that I believe the particular matter the hon. member is referring to is a two- to three-year construction process that's well recognized in the engineering field and, as

far as I'm concerned, appropriate. I'd be happy to check further into that particular matter. As a matter of fact I'll be looking at that particular site near the end of this month, when I'm on a road and highway inspection tour of southern Alberta.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. Does he have an estimate at this moment as to when the access roads to the new overpass will be finished?

MR. M. MOORE: I don't have those now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: One final supplementary. While the minister is checking, will he also check to see if extra money — and how much extra money — is involved by not having the access roads there. We were told by some construction people that it could be as much as half a million dollars.

MR. M. MOORE: I'd be pleased to, as long as the hon. member can explain to me: extra over what?

MR. MARTIN: [Inaudible] to and as the minister is checking . . .

MR. SPEAKER: This would seem to be eminently a matter that might be dealt with far more effectively without tying up the whole House between the minister and the hon. member. It may not get the same publicity, but I think the information could be just as effective.

#### Teacher Evaluation

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Education has to do with teacher evaluation. Can the minister indicate what policy is in place at this time to give some direction to school boards so that they will be involved in the evaluation of teachers? What directive has gone out from the minister's department?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, there is no policy in place at the moment. We have circulated to all boards in the province, as well as to other interested organizations, a copy of a discussion paper in which the outline of the pertinent features of a teacher evaluation policy are contained. Having released the discussion paper, we have invited school boards, the Teachers' Association, and others, to make response to the department. On the basis of that response, we will be formulating a policy statement. I expect that that policy statement, based on the reaction of interested public groups, will be available early in the new year.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what role the school superintendents will play in the evaluation process?

MR. KING: Not in any specific fashion, Mr. Speaker, because clearly that's one of the questions about which we would expect to hear public reaction. I can say, repeating something that I think I said earlier in this House, that it is not feasible to consider a teacher evaluation policy operated by the provincial government or the Department of Education. We simply couldn't hire sufficient staff to operate a provincially directed teacher evaluation program. Clearly, whatever teacher evaluation program is put in place is going to rely very, very heavily on the skills, the experience, the expertise of the local administration, including but not necessarily limited to, the superintendent.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In this evaluation process, can the minister indicate if he or the Department of Education are now looking at merit pay? Will this be part of the evaluation process?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, I cannot say that there has been any consideration of merit pay within the Department of Education, in the context of the development of a teacher evaluation policy. The hon. member having raised it, however, I think it has considerable merit. He can be assured that we will give it some consideration. I thank him for the suggestion.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the minister also indicate if the department or local school boards have been looking at the master teacher program for the people who seem to be more enthusiastic, more qualified, or doing a better job? Will this be part of the entire evaluation process as well?

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, again it's very difficult to anticipate what will be in this policy, given my earlier description of how we are going about the formulation of this policy. Since we are still receiving advice from interested groups, school boards, the Alberta Teachers' Association, and others, I'm at some risk, commenting about what might be contained in a new policy.

I will make the comment, however, that I believe it is important that in some way, we find the means of recognizing and giving public recognition to the exceptional teachers who are at work in the province's school system. One of the ways in which it has been suggested this might be done is by the designation of master teachers. Another of the ways in which it has been suggested this might be done is by offering merit pay. In either of those ways, or in any other way that is practical, it seems to me that it would be in the best interests of the educational system to give public recognition to the exceptional teachers who are doing a terrific job in the schools throughout Alberta.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the minister on this topic. What role does the department's paper give to the teachers, those who are probably most competent and most affected by such a policy?

MR. SPEAKER: I have a little problem with that. I understand, from the minister's remarks, that the paper is being widely circulated. I don't suppose anyone would discriminate in that respect against the hon. Member for Ponoka.

#### Water Quality

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. Minister of the Environment relates to a concern that has been raised about the water quality in the Red Deer River, emanating from a discharge of sewage by a local trailer court. Apparently there is a high discharge of raw sewage into the Red Deer River. The number that comes to my mind is 6,800 litres twice a year. Can the minister indicate if he is aware of the situation and, if he is, if any steps are being taken to remedy this?

MR. BRADLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Concerns with regard to the effect this sewage discharge has upon their water treatment have been expressed by the city of Red Deer. The city is of course advised prior to the discharge.

There has been an ongoing problem with this particular trailer court, which is approximately four kilometres upstream of the

city of Red Deer. Prior to 1980, the trailer court discharged into an ill-defined drainage course and was causing a number of problems with regard to downstream property owners. In 1980, they constructed a pipeline which permitted them to discharge on a twice-yearly basis into the Red Deer River, but at that time it was only to be an interim method of disposal. This August, this particular trailer court was informed that this method was no longer acceptable, and they would have to find a different method in terms of disposal of their sewage. Unfortunately, they were not able to find an alternative method prior to the necessity to discharge over a five-day period this fall.

I've been advised that the particular trailer court has found a solution, is finalizing purchasing land, and will be looking at an irrigation scheme to dispose of their sewage effluent in the future.

MR. McPHERSON: Just one supplemental, Mr. Speaker. From the comments of the minister, can we have some assurance that the purchase of this land will alleviate the problem, and this won't occur again?

MR. BRADLEY: As I'm advised, the particular trailer court owner is finalizing purchase of land which would provide for an irrigation disposal system which would preclude any further problems.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the Minister of the Environment advise what precautions are taken during that three- to five-day period when the sewage is discharged into the Red Deer River?

MR. BRADLEY: Specifically in terms of its water treatment, the city would ensure that the proper chlorination was being done, and perhaps an extra-strength chlorination to ensure disinfection.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Is the minister saying that the discharge is upstream from the water intake of the city of Red Deer and that the only precaution that is taken is chlorination?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe that is the process the city uses.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, and I think this is more of a general concern across the province. Do the department or the minister direct that the river be posted with regard to the pollution being dumped directly into the river? Innocent persons who may use that water could be affected.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, with regard to that particular question, usually the local health authority would be in a position to advise local people of that matter if they felt it was necessary to do so, in terms of health effects.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate to the Legislative Assembly, here today, that that precaution was taken by the local health unit and that there was no threat to the health of innocent individuals who might have used the water of the Red Deer River?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd have to check into that matter.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate whether there is clear communi-

cation and a directive between the Department of the Environment and local health officials with regard to any kind of incidents such as this, so all precautions are taken and the health care of Albertans is taken care of as well?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, with regard to that matter, I'd have to check and see if those specific lines of communication are in place.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate whether there have been other incidents such as this, and what kind of actions were taken with regard to situations such as that?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, that's a very broad question. With regard to sewage treatment generally, downstream users are usually notified in terms of releases.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. To be more specific, the city of Calgary has dumped various kinds of things into the river and the minister indicated, to earlier questions in the Assembly, that the river would not be posted and that people could use the river as they saw fit. Posting was not done. The minister indicated there would be a review by the department. Has that review been done and, from the review, is there a real policy in place?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm unclear as to the exact question the hon. member is asking.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the hon. minister: is there a clear policy from the department with regard to posting rivers when sewage is dumped in any respective river; in this specific case the Red Deer River, and in an earlier case discussed in this Legislature, the Bow River?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think it's generally well known throughout the province that in terms of the use of a river — and it depends on the nature and usage of a river resource — it is not suggested that downstream of a discharge, particularly a municipal sewage discharge, one would undertake body contact types of sports in particular. That is a generally known fact in the province.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary, followed by a supplementary by the hon. Member for Red Deer.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I can understand that there shouldn't be any kind of body contact with a river in those cases. Could the minister indicate what policy is in place to provide to the general public information that a river is polluted at a point in time and should not be used.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think the real concern the hon. member is addressing is particularly with regard to the effect of drinking surface water in our river systems in the province of Alberta. Generally it is not recommended that anyone would wish to drink surface water in a river system in the province. That is well known throughout the province. For example, the constituency in which I reside has its water supply from the supposedly pristine headwaters of the Crowsnest rivers and the adjacent streams. In fact, it's necessary to treat that water prior to consumption, even though it comes off the head-

waters. We are well aware of giardiasis, which can be caused from so-called pristine streams.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could come back to this. I recognized the hon. Member for Red Deer, and the hon. Member for Little Bow has already had eight supplementaries on this.

MR. R. SPEAKER: There is no river in this province that has drinkable water.

MR. McPHERSON: Getting back to the Red Deer situation, Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware of the communication, if there was any communication, between the private operator in this case and the new Red Deer regional sewage treatment plant, in order that on the twice-per-year occasions when this dumpage occurred, there were precautions taken to avoid any unnecessary sewage into the Red Deer River?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, to the best of my knowledge, the procedure with regard to a discharge of this type is that the downstream municipal water treatment operator would be notified.

#### **Surface Rights — Entry Fees**

MR. FISCHER: Mr. Speaker, this question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Under the new Surface Rights Act, what was the intention regarding payment of the entry fee when there is more than one right of entry or surface agreement per titled unit; for instance, two wells per titled unit?

MR. SPEAKER: I have a little difficulty with that. It seems the hon. member is asking for the interpretation of a statute. If I'm mistaken in that regard, and the question relates to government policy under a statute, the question would be in order. But if he's asking to have the statute interpreted to him, then of course the question period is not the place for that.

MR. FJORDBOTTON: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is . . . As part of the policy that was in the new Surface Rights Act pertaining to entry fees, and under section 19 of that Act, it was very clear that there was an entry fee payable for each exercising of a right of entry on each titled unit. In other words, if there are multiple entries, multiple entry fees would be paid.

#### **Gaming Regulations**

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Speaker, could the Attorney General please tell me if his department monitors the profits from gaming in this province? In this case, I'm referring to the commercial bingo halls in the city of Calgary, who are making many thousands of dollars from bingo by getting non-profit organizations to get the bingo licence to hold the bingos in their halls.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, any organization that's licensed to carry on a gaming event must provide information asked for by the Alberta Gaming Commission, and those include reports of receipts and disbursements.

MR. SHRAKE: A supplementary question. Does this mean that any private commercial entrepreneur could run a bingo, as long as he gets the non-profit groups to get this licence? Maybe to phrase it slightly differently, are there no rules or

regulations governing what portion or per cent of this profit must go to the non-profit or charitable organization?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. member, if he's asking for the existence of rules or regulations, other means than to take the time of the whole House should be found to find that out. If his question relates to ministerial or government policy, then of course it would be in order.

MR. NOTLEY: Are there any rules?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think it relates to government policy. The policy given the Gaming Commission to apply is that, in accordance with the necessary requirements of the law of the land, only charitable or religious organizations can be involved in gaming events. What happens when it appears that a private operator is also gaining from it, in light of what the hon. member raised in his question, is the payment of rentals for premises or things used in connection with the gaming event. I would be glad to check further to see what there may be in respect of excessive charges in any of those areas, with special reference to the bingo palaces.

#### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

MR. SPEAKER: If the House will give leave, I have a request from an hon. member to revert to Introduction of Special Guests.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### **head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)**

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and to members of this Assembly, members of the Quality of Life Council who are in both the members gallery and the Speaker's gallery. I would like them to stand and be welcomed by the Legislative Assembly at this time.

#### **head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, on the subject of motions for returns, I can advise the Assembly that the government is prepared to accept motions for returns 209 and 210, but I move that Motion for a Return No. 214 stand and retain its place on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Deputy Government House Leader with regard to Motion 214, does the Assembly agree?

[Motion carried]

209. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing the number of provincial student loans and Canada student loans applied for between April 1, 1983, and September 30, 1983, the number granted for that period, and the total amount loaned.

[Motion carried]

210. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
- (a) the number and total amount of all provincial student loans which should have been consolidated and on which payments should have been commenced but on which no payments have been received;
  - (b) the number and total amount of all provincial student loans which were consolidated and on which payments commenced but subsequently went into default
- in each of the fiscal years 1979-80, 1980-81, and 1981-82.

[Motion carried]

#### head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

222. Moved by Mr. Martin:  
Be it resolved that Bill 240, Retail Business Holidays Act, be moved to first position on the Order Paper, under Public Bills and Orders other than Government Bills and Orders.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I take this welcome opportunity to try to bring forward a good Bill that was presented by a government member. The reason we're doing this is that the whole idea of Sunday shopping has caused a great deal of concern throughout the province of Alberta and, I might say, throughout Canada. Many people, as we can see by the number in the galleries, are concerned; they want the issue settled. It's not good enough for the government to say: well, we're considering it, we're considering it, we're considering it.

People at this point are tired of consideration. They think the government has had enough time to settle this matter. One of the things that we as the Official Opposition could do is to try to bring it forward to the government. Because it is on the Order Paper, the only way we can do this is to ask the Legislative Assembly to deal with this today. I know there are members of caucus that want to deal with this — my friend over there from Edmonton Whitemud; I think we agree on one — and I'm hoping for the support of people here in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I think the point we're trying to make at this specific time is that it is clearly time the study is over. It is time now to move on and bring this up. By moving it up on the Order Paper — let's be clear about it — this could be voted on. The way it was before, it was 17th on the Order Paper and, as a result, would have died on the Order Paper. So I think we in the Official Opposition are trying to help out — as the helpful people we always are — and bring it up so that it could at least be discussed in this Legislature and, if this Legislature wants, it can vote it in today.

The other point that I think we have to make to the government — and I'd say this to the Attorney General and other people like the Member for Edmonton Whitemud, who I think tend to agree with us on this issue — is that it is time to screw up a little bit of political courage and deal with a controversial issue. Now I know that people in the government caucus — I don't often get to the government caucus, Mr. Speaker, but I'm told there are people on both sides of the issue. I think it's time we bring it here to the Legislature and debate it.

I'm not going to speak long on this Bill, because it's very clear where my colleagues and I stand, but I think we want to see where the government members stand on this. The point we're trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is that governments are elected to make difficult decisions. They can't always hide behind Order Papers. They can't always hide behind: well, we

sort of agree with you, but there are other people who don't, and we'll study it. This particular issue has been studied to death.

I know certain people are going to say that in Ontario there has been a Supreme Court decision. Well, I would say to members that they're quick with the notwithstanding clauses when it comes to labor rights, as we found out in question period in my conversation with the Minister of Labour. I'm saying to this government that if they want to bring in Bill 240, they know they can do it, so let's not hide behind that. I would say to the Attorney General and House leader that I've heard him on television and I've read what he said in the paper. I agree with him. But he is the House leader, and now is a golden opportunity to bring this Bill up. Let's discuss it; let's vote on it today.

Mr. Speaker, I think the arguments on both sides of the issue have been made time and time again. We in the Official Opposition tend to agree with the contents of Bill 240. Like any other Bill, it's not perfect. But I think the intent is the correct way to go. We in the Official Opposition are not for open Sundays, where it's business as usual. There are arguments on both sides, but one that is important to me is that it still is the day for most people — I know there are others, but it still is a religious day to a large number of people in Alberta. We also know it would add to costs to small business, because there's no way they wouldn't have their overhead costs go up. That's another reason.

The other reason, frankly, is from a CAC survey. While it was small, it still showed — if you read in the paper today — that 53 per cent of Albertans are not for open Sundays. I expect that if it were explained to them better, it would be much higher than that. Sure, we all like the convenience, but if people cannot shop in six days, I do not see the point of seven. We say to people, there's only so many dollars. If everybody has to open up seven days, I suggest that we're not all going to be richer; it's just that we're spreading six days' business over seven days, because there are only so many dollars there.

I think the main reason is that surely in this society, as we bounce ahead into 1984, there has to be one day — and that traditional day has been Sunday — that we can all get together with our families when we're not working, and we can say that's our day. Mr. Speaker, we know what's happening in this society. We hear about divorce rates. We hear about all sorts of social factors breaking down. I suggest to you that we're adding one more tack if we open up another day. For religious reasons and even for economic reasons, but above all for family reasons, I'm suggesting that it's important that this Legislature take a stand on this issue and take it now.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make just three or four more comments. I say to the government honestly, and especially to the people who agree with Bill 240: screw up your political courage and take a stand once in a while; we're giving you the opportunity to do this. We know what happens if Bill 240 is left on the Order Paper. It may or may not come up in the spring session. It's a whole new area. We will lose Sunday, because in those three or four months more businesses will open. They will feel the necessity. I've talked to small business people who say: I have to do it now — if there's no laws we're unsure — because I'll lose competition. So by not making a stand, we are saying something political to those people. I suggest that it's been studied enough. The time to move on this is now. Again I say to the Members of the Legislative Assembly that they now have the opportunity to do this.

I think it was said well by the CAC president, Mrs. Hall, who said, talking about the government:



We want them to quit stalling. How long can they afford to have our laws on hold? We are the only province in Canada that is still governed by a 1906 law — it's long overdue that we had something in place.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the majority of the members of this House agree with the Official Opposition on this specific Bill, and I hope it will come to a vote, because I believe they could support Bill 240. But if I'm misreading and the majority of the government members do not, they still should bring this up now and take the political consequences. If they think it should be open Sundays, let us know now. Let us know, let the people in the galleries know, and let the people of Alberta know, because they're looking for leadership from here.

Mr. Speaker, as a courtesy to the people of Alberta, to the people sitting in the galleries, I hope the government will allow this motion to come to a vote. I think this would be the thing to do. Because it is such an urgent matter — I believe it's urgent because we're making the law by not doing anything; we're falling into open Sundays — I am going to have my colleague ask for unanimous consent of this House to continue this debate until 5:30. We want to hear. I know they've hidden from the income tax and many other Acts, as the Member for Clover Bar will say, but we want to give ample opportunity to every government member to talk on this Bill.

Again I say to you that I think it's one of the more important Bills. If people are worried about cutting into other private members' Bills, the next two are mine. I'd be glad to relinquish them — Bill 204 — and we can debate them at another time. We're going to ask for unanimous consent to keep this going until 5:30, and I hope members will give us that courtesy. As I said, I also hope they will screw up their political courage. Let's vote on this now, not next spring; that's not good enough. I'm afraid that if we go beyond the fall, it won't be next spring. Then there'll still be people disagreeing about it, and we still won't have our political courage up. Now is the time to do it, Mr. Speaker, and I hope the government members recognize that they have a responsibility here.

This can be a free vote. It doesn't have to go by party lines, because I know members disagree on it. Wouldn't it be nice, Mr. Speaker, to see the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud and the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood voting in this House in the same way on one Bill? That would be a nice change. But I think he would have to support me on this Bill.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I wait with interest to see what the rest of the hon. members will do with this Bill. Thank you very much.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, addressing very briefly on behalf of the government the motion which is now before the Assembly, I have observed with some considerable interest the procedure that has been adopted by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood today. While interesting, the procedure is of course quite inappropriate for dealing with a matter of public policy of this magnitude.

The hon. member is quite correct in saying that there is a good deal of concern in the province of Alberta, obviously shared by a very large number of people who are here today to listen to a debate on this subject. Speaking as the Member for Medicine Hat, I have been in correspondence with a number of the members who are perhaps present today in the galleries. However, I do think it unfortunate if anyone came here today expecting to have a conclusion of this matter in the manner proposed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood and that it is going to happen; it is just not going to happen. The reason for that, of course, is that in the way government policy is established in this province, it is quite clear that the government

caucus will in due course consider which measures shall become government measures and which measures shall become government policy. I thought it was clearly understood, even by the Member for Edmonton Norwood, that that is the way legislation is brought forward as government legislation, and that is the way legislation dealing with this very important matter will be brought forward in due course.

The hon. member may want to try to score political points — and that's fair — here in the Assembly, outside the Assembly, at conventions of the New Democratic Party, or wherever anyone will listen to him. But the fact of the matter is that it is not an appropriate motion by which to have a private member's public Bill turned into a matter of government legislation. That will come about only after appropriate and due consideration by the government caucus. It is of course evident to all Albertans, and has been made perfectly clear by me and many other members of the government caucus who have been in receipt of representations on this subject, that the matter is under consideration at this time.

Several matters relative to the implications of the Charter of Rights on the subject of Sunday observance are now before the courts of Alberta and the courts of other provinces. It is very important that in approaching a determination on this issue, we only take measures which are appropriate in such a way that we will not find ourselves in conflict with the Charter of Rights. That, Mr. Speaker, is of considerable importance. I'm sure all the people in Alberta are as interested as I am and as members of the government are in seeing what determination there will be by the Supreme Court of Canada on this issue. I would mention as well the court challenges which are under way in the province of Ontario, relative to the subject of legislation of a similar nature to that proposed by the hon. Member for Stony Plain, a Bill which I suspect would have the approval of large numbers of members in the gallery today.

The government has to take these matters under consideration before moving in a definitive way to bring about new legislation relative to the question of the observance of Sunday. Without going into the details on the subject of the decision which has taken place in this province at the level of the court of appeal, perhaps we will have to bring in legislation which doesn't mention Sunday observance in such a way that it could be interpreted as being a violation of freedom of religion under the Charter of Rights.

It's very well and good to say today: let us bring this Bill forward, let us pass it, let us have a free vote on the subject. But, Mr. Speaker, it would be irresponsible foolishness on the part of this Assembly to move in such a way today before it becomes a government piece of legislation, until such time as proper consideration has been given in caucus on the implications on the legislation of the court actions which are now under way in this country. I may say — and this is speaking not on behalf of the government as much as on my own behalf as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Medicine Hat — that I have been surprised and quite frankly distressed by the judicial interpretations which have taken place so far. They have without any question created an aura of uncertainty in this whole area, which of course is of great interest to all Albertans.

While the motion before the Assembly today may have been motivated by good intent, I rather suspect it has been brought forward without very much consideration about the actual and realistic approach that has to be taken by any government in dealing with a matter of such considerable complexity and importance to the lives and feelings of Albertans as expressed to members of the Assembly. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we cannot support this motion, and I regret to say that the debate which will take place in due course on the merits of the legislation, or similar legislation, will have to await a further date.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I must confess that I am astonished. When we look at the Order Paper, we see Motions Other Than Government Motions. This is an opportunity for members of the Legislature to stand up and speak out on motions which have been presented to the members of the Assembly. Surely the iron law of caucus decision doesn't have to apply all the time. What we've heard this afternoon is the Deputy Government House Leader stand up and say: no way is this government going to consider it at the moment; that's that. And all the members of the government caucus, instead of taking this opportunity to enter the debate and register their positions on the matter, are silent Sams.

Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with the arguments for proceeding with this particular Bill. I might point out that this is a Bill introduced by a government member. What we're saying today in the motion designated No. 1 is that we move ahead with Bill 240. It isn't good enough for the government caucus to work both sides of the political street on this issue, to have one of the members of the government caucus introduce a Bill, then have it so far down on the Order Paper that it never has a chance to come to a vote or even be discussed.

AN HON. MEMBER: It will.

MR. NOTLEY: Someone says it will. It's certainly not going to this fall, unless hon. members vote in favor of this motion. It's so far down the Order Paper that it has no chance of being dealt with this fall. Mr. Speaker, for members of the government caucus to say, oh, we're in favor of legislation which would prohibit open Sundays — it isn't good enough for them to say that when there is a Bill on the Order Paper and a motion today which will allow us to debate that Bill, and all of a sudden all the members of the government say, no, no, the Government House Leader has told us we can't vote for it, so that's that. With great respect, while it's an effort to work both sides of the political street, it just isn't supportable.

When he spoke in this debate, hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs made a couple of points that in my view have to be answered. One is that it's not possible for the government to proceed, because it takes a lot of deliberation. No one argues that it doesn't take deliberation, Mr. Speaker, but this is not a new issue. It is an issue which has been before the people of Alberta for some time. As a matter of fact, before the last election we as members of the former Legislature were approached on this particular issue. So it's not as if suddenly, miraculously, an issue has developed that requires all kinds of additional deliberation that wouldn't otherwise be necessary. This has been an ongoing issue which has developed, and it just isn't adequate as a response on the part of government to say we need more time. What do we need? Do we need another six months, two years, 10 years? Or are we going to wait until West Edmonton Mall has so expanded that virtually every small business man in this city is out of business, and we have a situation where in fact we have legislation by inaction, where we have open Sundays by inaction. That's the point my colleague made.

Mr. Speaker, the second argument that the Deputy Government House Leader advanced is that somehow we can't move because there's some uncertainty vis-à-vis the Charter of Rights. Members in this Chamber and people in the gallery should not be under any misinformation on that item. Virtually no type of legislation is free from legal challenge with respect to jurisdiction. We have legislation now — the Attorney General today indicated that if the labor legislation passed by this Legislature was not held to be *intra vires*, if it offended the Charter of Rights, there would be a notwithstanding clause

inserted and the government would go ahead with their restrictive labor legislation. The fact of the matter is that if this Legislature chooses to say that in Alberta we're going to protect Sunday for the family and it requires a notwithstanding provision, we have every right under the new Canada Act to proceed accordingly. What it requires is the government to screw up its courage and do just precisely that. The hon. Member for Stony Plain, whom I note isn't here today, has introduced a private member's Bill. During committee stage of this Bill, the Government House Leader could very easily introduce an amendment that would deal with the notwithstanding provision — perfectly in order, no difficulty at all.

To suggest that we have to wait another four or five years, or heaven knows how long, because this government can't make up its mind on the issue is just not adequate at all. I say to members of the House that this afternoon we have an opportunity to deal with the issue. I would challenge government members to stand up and tell us what kind of importance they place on this issue. If they say that we cannot move because of a Charter of Rights, let them then tell us why it's possible to move on labor legislation, even though they may have to insert a notwithstanding clause, because we already have a clear and definitive judgment from the Ontario Supreme Court on that issue. No, it isn't good enough to say that's a different matter. Even though a court says the Charter of Rights may nullify our labor legislation, we'll move in that area, but we're not prepared to move to protect Sunday for the family in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the final point I want to make is to re-emphasize one of the arguments my colleague presented. It is wrong for members of this House to say that we are waiting and deliberating, and that's it. The fact of the matter is that by inaction we see a situation developing in this province which, without any shadow of a doubt, is destroying Sunday by the back door. It's destroying that one day of rest, that one day for the family. I think there are deficiencies in Bill 240; no question about that. Nevertheless, I think it is an effort to deal with this problem in a reasonably sensitive way. What is required now is for members of this government to buck up their courage, deal with the issue, stand and be counted so their constituents know where they are, and not hide behind the closed door of the government caucus.

It's interesting that the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs — and I give him full credit for being blunt and to the point — a few moments ago told us precisely how things are done in this province. They're done behind the closed doors of government caucus. A decision is made, and that's it. Members who are in the House and people in the galleries should know that the fact that we are not proceeding with Bill 240 has nothing to do with the need for more study. It has nothing to do with the Charter of Rights, because we have the provision to insert a notwithstanding provision. The fact of the matter is that what it has to do with is that this government has not been able to buck up the courage to say to some of the large developers of this province: we're going to protect Sunday for the family; we're going to protect one day.

I say to members of the Assembly, this is your opportunity to demonstrate just a little independence in this House. It isn't good enough to have the Deputy Government House Leader say, this is where the government stands. It would be a rather shocking situation indeed if we had all kinds of people on the government benches call "Question" and had not a single one of them stand up and be counted on the issue.

When we get to 4:30, it will be my intention to ask for unanimous consent so hon. members, through the deliberations

in this House, will be able to give both themselves and the people of Alberta some indication as to where we stand on this issue. I say especially to those observing us today, that it is a well-established practice in this House, which has occurred on a number of occasions, that unanimous consent is given to extend debate. It can't be extended unless there is unanimous consent, but there have been many occasions in this House before, on items not nearly as important, when unanimous consent has been given. Rather than quickly rushing to vote down the motion before the House this afternoon, we in the Official Opposition challenge the government backbenchers to tell us where they stand on this issue and urge that they support moving ahead with an important Bill which should be given the time of the House at this juncture in our history.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, it's fairly obvious where I stand because of one of my professional training backgrounds as a clergyman, but I must also make a few comments with respect to some of the comments that have already been made this afternoon. First, I hesitate to comment to my fellow Anglican, the Member for Spirit River-Fairview, that in the last few minutes I've perceived a demonstration of more sanctimoniousness than I have seen within the Anglican church in my 25 years of being a clergyman.

Having said that, I realize we are still friends and still members of the Assembly. He has been here considerably longer than I have, and he realizes full well, as his seatmate from Edmonton Norwood should, that in actual fact the motion which we have before us is a procedural motion. We're not here to debate the merits or demerits of Bill 240. This motion is procedural, as the Deputy Government House Leader pointed out. In a sense, I believe that the Member for Edmonton Norwood and others who have invited people to the gallery today — in effect there should be some form of explanation, if not apology, as to how the normal parliamentary procedure does in fact work. If some of them are here believing that there is going to be this wide-open debate on the merits of the Bill, whether it be till 4:30 or 5:30, then it's inappropriate in that way.

MR. MARTIN: They're not stupid.

DR. CARTER: To the Member for Edmonton Norwood: no one has said they are stupid, Mr. Speaker.

The comments were made by the Member for Spirit River-Fairview that one's entitled to at least one day of rest per week. I would hope that would be true, because after 25 years I still don't get Sundays off, nor does the member from one of the other Calgary ridings because of his professional background.

I'm very interested that when one looks at the Order Paper, Bill No. 240 is a long way down the list; there's no doubt about that. In terms of the normal workings of the Legislature, that means another five government private member's Bills there. There are nine Bills from members of the Official Opposition party, and one Bill has been sponsored by the Member for Clover Bar. I assume that both members of the Official Opposition who have spoken today have entered into some negotiation with the Member for Clover Bar and that he's quite willing to withdraw from the sequence as well. But I know that in the normal space of events, there might have been some discussion with other members of the Assembly as to whether or not they, or in this case we, would be prepared to have the place taken in terms of the Order Paper today.

Being a sponsor of Bill No. 210, I find it rather critical and important that persons who are awaiting trial in the penal or detention facilities of the province should indeed be given the right to cast their vote. That may be a minor thing in the

assessment of the sponsor of the motion today, but in actual fact I think that if you go down the whole list, all of us do have important points we would like to make with respect to these various Bills.

I would also make the comment that I am interested — or perhaps I am wrong in making this assumption — that the sponsor of the motion today is also the sponsor of Bill No. 207. He has oftentimes spoken quite vehemently within this Assembly; he regards this as being a very important issue to him: to provide for universal, financially accessible health care in Alberta. Am I wrong in making the assumption, then, that he regards the matter of retail business on Sundays as a more important issue? I am sure that's probably a false assumption on my part.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing of course is that if this procedural motion were to pass this afternoon, in actual fact the sponsor of Bill 240, the Member for Stony Plain, should have had sufficient time to be able to immediately launch into full-scale debate and use all of his allocated time. It is quite obvious that he is absent from the Assembly today, and therefore that is also inappropriate.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to get into the debate on Motion 222 for a minute. I don't want to debate the merits of the Bill, although I know there have been a number of points made on the merits of Bill 240. As the Member for Calgary Egmont said, we are talking about a procedural motion here.

Mr. Speaker, while I am also very interested in the outcome of Bill 240, I really can't feel that it is more important — it's as important, but I don't think it's more important — than Bill 201 which I have on the Order Paper, which couldn't possibly be debated if we went to this procedure today. Personally I will not shop on Sundays. I repeat that. I will not go to West Edmonton Mall on Sunday. In fact, I don't think I will go there any day of the week because of the Sunday opening. But that is a decision I make, and it is a judgmental decision. I can't make that same judgmental decision when I am involved in an accident with a drunken driver.

On the other hand, as far as Sunday shopping goes, I go to the Canadian finals every year on Sunday afternoon, and I have for some time. Mr. Speaker, I do however recall a Sunday rodeo that I attended 24 years ago in Ponoka. They had been totally rained out on Friday and Saturday. If they were going to have any kind of result at all, they had to hold it on Sunday. They took up a silver collection that time at the gate. If I remember correctly, the Attorney General's Department prosecuted the Ponoka rodeo association for its Sunday rodeo.

To get back to Motion 222, which requests this House to debate Bill 240 over and above all others, I have been, and I am still, receiving mail concerning the continuation of second reading of Bill 201. In fact, this morning I received a call from PAID, People Against Impaired Drivers, and yesterday, a note from a former alderman which says: good luck, I have sent a note to Julian Koziak, my MLA, in support of your Bill. Even the Alberta Medical Association has decided that it is time for a concerted campaign against impaired drivers.

Mr. Speaker, in my opening remarks on Bill 201, I indicated that I don't believe the problem of drinking and driving can be solved until it is publicly unacceptable to drink and drive. I believe the public now wants the government to act in a manner which will remove that hazard from the road. For the above reasons, I hope to have a chance to conclude second reading of Bill 201. If that is not possible, I hope that the government will bring in a Bill which they feel will solve the problem or

that I can bring in a Bill which is acceptable to the many concerned groups that I have had contact with and hopefully to the government.

My main point is that I believe there are other Bills on the Order Paper which merit discussion. I note that the Member for Edmonton Norwood doesn't mind if his Bills aren't debated. Quite frankly, I don't put a Bill on the Order Paper unless I figure it is important enough to be debated.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate briefly in this debate. I do so because, to be generous, I think there has been some inaccurate information portrayed to the House this afternoon. A number of the issues raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood have indeed been legitimate. There is no question that in the minds of Albertans this issue is an important one among many Albertans. There is no question in the minds of members of this Legislature that the issue is an important one. There is also no doubt that there is an increasing degree of Sunday opening taking place and that that situation is perpetuated as long as there is no decision made.

However, from the perspective of the constituents of Calgary Currie, may I say that not all constituents would say that's a bad thing. There are those who indeed would, but there are a good number who feel that they as well have a right to make a decision as to when and how they will shop. So I have a responsibility to speak on their behalf in that regard as well.

May I also say that it was implied that we have been sitting on an Ontario court decision for some time and have had the ability to assess it and determine what's going to happen. In fact, that paper has only arrived in the last few days. The assessment of that and the continuing difficulties caused by the interpretations of the Charter of Rights, I think, are important if you want a Bill that will indeed stick, that will mean something, and that will be of importance. So regardless of how I will vote on such a Bill myself, there is a need for some assessment there.

Mr. Speaker, the most specious part of the arguments made today was an implication that the government or government members have been holding down the position of the topic on the Order Paper. All members realize that topics on the Order Paper on private member's days are there in the order that they were brought into the Clerk's office. Indeed on the day of the opening of the Assembly, that draw takes place and there is an equal opportunity for Bills. If the opposition so badly wanted this or some similar Bill debated early in the session, in fact last spring, they should have put a Bill on the Order Paper at that time. If they felt this issue was so crucial that they have to try to supersede the Bills of members who feel that their issues are crucial and important — and indeed there are now a number of those topics on the Order Paper in front of Bill 240 — then those hon. members had that opportunity, that right, and the ability to present that, and we would have debated that issue long ago. However, for whatever reasons — some would suggest political — they chose to dramatically present this motion to the Assembly today to try to jump over the order of business that all members, opposition and government, have determined, certainly with equal opportunity for the opposition; in fact more opportunity, because they can designate a motion in the Assembly for any Thursday to bring this to the top of the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker, for me to vote for this motion would be very inappropriate. As chairman of the House strategy committee of government members, we indeed have a number of Bills on the Order Paper that are of importance and concern to constituents of these hon. members throughout the province. To

say that an issue that by the admission of the hon. member just to my right has been going on for some time, should all of a sudden supersede the interests and concerns of those constituents — I have no choice but to call for defeat of this motion and ask that we move on with the Order Paper as has been determined by members of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. member conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I am rather surprised at the spacious arguments for not dealing with a controversial subject. I have heard it all in this ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Specious arguments.

MR. NOTLEY: No, spacious.

MR. MARTIN: That's right. Spacious is absolutely correct.

The point that we want to make — I remember in the November 2 election, over a year ago, it had been a major issue for at least two years before that. As a member I was lobbied very heavily during that election about my stand on Sunday shopping. I expect a lot of other members were too. To say that we're still studying it one year later really makes a farce of the whole legislative process.

Sure they're studying it. But make it clear why we're studying it, Mr. Speaker. It's because this government does not want to make a stand at this specific time. We hear about the notwithstanding clause. I knew that they'd bring that up today and the other day. It's clear that when we take away collective bargaining rights in this province, we'll use the notwithstanding clause; that's clear. But now there are two recent Ontario decisions, and we treat each of those matters separately. We're quite prepared to say we're going to use the notwithstanding clause if it goes that far, but here we have to study it. I think it shows clearly; you can be consistent in both of those.

The red herrings about the private member's Bills: the one thing they forget to tell you is that private member's Bills can be made government Bills at any time if the government thinks it's important. We had an example of that last session, when the Member for Edmonton Belmont had a private member's Bill made into a government Bill. The House leader knows that that is in fact the case.

They say we're misleading people; we don't understand how the Legislative Assembly works. There are two things to remember here. They're seeing clearly how the Legislative Assembly works: a few people call the shots, and the backbenchers follow along because they don't have any political courage to say, even when they believe something is wrong. That's the bottom line. The other bottom line is that they know full well that from this debate today we could vote on it. We as a Legislative Assembly have the right to do that. It could be voted on today; make no mistake about that. But somehow it's a private member's Bill and it can't be done. Under the rules of this Legislature it can, so let us just forget about that.

The other one that was told to me: the Member for Stony Plain isn't here. That's rather interesting. Did he not know the Legislature was sitting today? Did he not know his Bill was coming up? Could he not have made arrangements? What absolute nonsense. He's not here because he doesn't want to be here for this debate.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not fair.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Withdraw.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I was a little bit concerned a while ago when I heard the word "sanctimonious"; I let it go by. A moment ago I was more concerned when I heard the hon. member who has just been debating refer to members not having political courage. That may be his private assessment; he may wish to make it publicly outside the House. But as he knows from our own *Standing Orders*, we are here to debate issues, not the characteristics of the members. Consequently, it's not in order in this House to accuse a member of lacking courage. It takes away from the respect which all of us must have for each other in order to operate as a civilized parliament.

In other words, we are here to debate motions such as the one before us this afternoon, Bills, and issues of various kinds, but we're not here to second guess the voters as to what we think about the people they chose to send to this parliament. I would therefore, respectfully and in the most kindly way, ask the Member for Edmonton Norwood if he might deal further with those two expressions: the one referring to political courage and the more recent one which he just used.

MR. MARTIN: I didn't know they were so touchy, Mr. Speaker, but I will say it in a different way. The government as a whole is lacking political courage. That's what I...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That was not what the hon. member said. Had he said that about the government I would not have intervened, because the government, of course, is not a member of this Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: All right then, I will say it. I apologize to each individual member. What I mean, Mr. Speaker, is that the government as a whole lacks political courage. Individual members are afraid to make decisions — and I think that's quite parliamentary.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would question that. I believe I'm entitled to make decisions and would appreciate the member withdrawing that remark.

MR. SPEAKER: It's borderline. It's certainly not the sort of withdrawal that I thought the hon. member might give. He seems to want to withdraw and yet to save as much as he can of what he said before.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will come to the end of it. I didn't realize that they'd be so sensitive over the issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. It's not a question of sensibility. The hon. government members didn't raise this; I raised it. I'm sensitive about it, because I'm always sensitive if any member insults another one.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I was not insulting individual members. We went through a long time before with the Member for Clover Bar. What I said is clearly parliamentary, and I'd like to get on with my speech.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That is quite beside the point. The simple situation is that we do not cast aspersions on the characteristics of other members in the House. It's totally irrelevant to the debate. What is being debated here is a motion, not the characteristics of the elected members. I respectfully suggest to the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood that we

leave this topic. If he has further statements to make with regard to the motion under debate, I'm sure that everyone will be prepared to listen.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to say to the government that I agree with some of the other arguments used. The Member for Calgary Currie basically said that by not making a decision at this specific time, we are in fact making a decision. That was exactly my point to begin with. It's clearly correct that after we know that it's been studied to death for two or three years, by not making a decision this fall we are making a decision. The longer we wait, the more Sunday shopping we are going to have.

To say that it's good enough just to wait, and we'll have to study it some more ... At the very minimum, if it doesn't come up this fall, it's going to be at least over Christmas. That's going to be added pressure in terms of Sunday shopping. It's probably going to be at least until next spring. We have no guarantee that it'll even come up next spring to solve the issue one way or the other. By having it sit there, it's clear that we are making a political decision. That's why we wanted to bring it up.

To say that we couldn't bring up a private member's Bill — we understood very much. How many Bills have you seen passed by the opposition here? When the government was going to bring in a private member's Bill, we were glad because they'd have a better chance of getting it passed through this House. When it was clear that they weren't going to do anything this fall, we had groups approach us because they were getting frustrated. The only thing we could do was move it up so it could be debated, and that is clearly our prerogative as the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. To say that that is somehow devious is absolutely not correct.

I know it's not going to happen; I can see it now. The Deputy Government House Leader has laid down the law; they're not going to vote on it. But I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to members of the Legislative Assembly, that by not allowing this vote today, regardless of all the things they talked about, we are in fact making a decision. That is very clear. I say to the hon. members, if you didn't want to deal with it, it should not have been brought up. But to say somehow that we're misleading people, that they don't understand the House — it's clear that they understand that a private member's Bill doesn't necessarily mean government business. We were very clear what could happen. We were hoping against hope that people would stand up and bring this to a vote, but it's obviously not going to happen.

In closing, I would say again that the government should get their political courage and take on some of these issues. They could have done it today, but we're again seeing an example of a government that will not do it. I am frankly disappointed that we as elected members are not making major decisions here in the Legislature. As I said, until we can get it through the government caucus, get everybody on board, then we're not going to do anything. If we look at what's happening in the province on this issue, more people favor Sunday closing than don't, but we know it's controversial. I expect that it's controversial within the government caucus, but that's not a reason for not bringing it forward at this time.

Surely there is a time that a government has to take the lead and take some responsibility. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to members of the Assembly: you still have an opportunity to vote and get on with it. If we have problems, as we were told, with the other Bills in terms of the Charter of Rights — we were told the same thing; we could have used exactly the same argument for not bringing in the police Bill the other day.

because it's in the Ontario Supreme Court. If that's true for that Bill, it could be true for this one too. As the Minister of Labour told us the other day, the notwithstanding clause could be used. To be fair to him, he didn't say it would, but it could be used, so it was obviously considered. Exactly the same thing could be said for this Bill today.

With those few calm remarks, Mr. Speaker, I close debate and hope the members look at this in a more serious way than they have.

MR. SPEAKER: May I now equally calmly put the motion to a vote?

[Motion lost]

206. Moved by Mr. Musgreave:

Be it resolved that the Assembly urge the government to consider establishing a task force composed of representative citizens concerned with the role of women in Alberta's society. Part of the task force's mandate would be a review of the achievements of the Alberta Women's Bureau. They would also examine and evaluate the progress of women toward full and equal participation in social, educational, and economic activities; and identify those areas which are most in need of more attention, with specific suggestions for improvements if required.

[Adjourned debate April 14: Mrs. Embury]

MRS. EMBURY: Upon reviewing the length of my remarks on April 14, 1983, when this motion was first debated, I realized my allotted time was used. Therefore I look forward to the comments of other members of the Legislature at this time.

MR. PAPROSKI: As I rise, Mr. Speaker, I want to stress my whole-hearted support for Motion No. 206, the establishment of a task force concerned with the role of women in Alberta society. First of all, I want to congratulate the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight for bringing this motion to this Assembly. I look with optimism to the establishment of this task force to deal with many, many issues related to women in Alberta society. I know that with the establishment of this task force, and through their deliberations, Canadians across this land will benefit.

There are a number of issues pertaining to women in Alberta that have been discussed and will continue to be discussed and debated. Issues of equality, opportunity, day care, pensions, sexism, political involvement, and many, many more. These are very important, Mr. Speaker, and I feel confident that the task force will indeed deal with all of these issues.

I want to share with members of the Assembly today my major concerns, specifically in the area of the world of work and women associated with the world of work. I would like to begin with a quotation from a publication entitled *Working Woman*, where an in-depth study was done on the women in the world of work in the United States:

I see more and more women moving into science, technology, engineering, but not enough. My concern is that women are moving into fields that men have decided to move out of, fields such as law. They are moving into civil and mechanical engineering, which is good, but not as good as the male-dominated electrical engineering, where the jobs will be opening up. I feel pessimistic.

Mr. Speaker, I think that particular quote typifies the dilemma that women are in and will continue to be in, in 1983. Whether the future for women gaining employment in various

occupations is pessimistic or optimistic is, I think, a moot point. However, statistics do show that women are entering the labor force like never before, and the trend that was established in the 1970s is continuing today.

What are some of the factors that contribute to the numbers of women working? Rising divorce rates is one, declining birth rates, later marriages, more education for women, a faltering economy, and, of course, the women's movement that has raised social consciousness. The evidence is clear that females have been entering, and are continuing to enter, the labor force in large numbers. This phenomenon of social change, especially in the last 20 years, has had a profound effect on our country. Women comprise a quarter to almost one-half of the labor force throughout the various world regions. For example, in Africa, women comprise 32 per cent of the labor force; in Asia, it's 34 per cent; in North America, 38 per cent; in Canada alone, 34 per cent; in Latin America, 23 per cent; in the USSR, 49 per cent; and in Europe, 37 per cent. Throughout the world, some 35 per cent of the labor force is women.

Predictive and extrapolation studies seem to agree that by 1990 at least, 50 per cent of the labor force in Canada will be female. Evidence shows that between 1953 and 1973, the female labor force grew at a rate of two and a half times that of the male rate. However, the most striking change in the labor force since World War II has been the impact of married women on the labor force. This group of the female population was scarcely evident prior to World War II. For example, in 1931 only 3.5 per cent of the labor force was female. Twenty years later, only 8 per cent was female. But by 1981, 48.9 per cent of all married women in Canada were in the labor force. Almost 40 per cent of the female labor force is widowed, separated, or divorced. These women are financially responsible for themselves, and anyone who says women work only for the love of work is definitely incorrect. Many are definitely supporting themselves.

Further studies illustrate that the more education a woman has, the more likely she is to be in the labor force, regardless of marital status or family size. For example, more than 70 per cent with university degrees were in the labor force in 1980, compared to only 50 per cent of women with high school certificates and only 20 per cent with a grade 9 education or less.

Mr. Speaker, there are serious problems facing women in the world of work in 1983. Women in Canada experience higher unemployment than men in every industry except construction — an overall unemployment rate of 46 per cent. The unemployment rate of married women in 1979 was 95 percent higher than the rate for married men. Additionally, there is hidden female unemployment. In 1979 nearly 25,000 women wanted jobs but did not believe that work was available. As well, women in Canada unfortunately continue to concentrate in a few occupations. I'm sure that these issues will be dealt with when the task force is established. For example, in 1981, Statistics Canada pointed out that 62.9 per cent of all female employees in this country worked in three occupational areas: clerical, sales, and service. Yet there is another interesting statistic: in the year 1900, 60 per cent of all women were also in three major areas of employment. Those areas of employment they are in today and where they dominate are of course social services, teaching, and medicine and health. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the statistics do not show that women are more teachers than administrators and more nurses than doctors.

Research continues to show that women dominate in the lower paying, lower status jobs as well, a phenomenon that exists in many, many countries. Although some females have entered non-traditional occupations, few in total have entered

management, technical, and generally male dominated occupations. Unfortunately women continue to be exceptions to the general rule. In 1964, for example, 3.8 per cent of employed women were in management occupations. In 1974 the figure had changed to only 4.2 per cent, while in 1975 the figure was only 5 per cent. One author commented succinctly: seemingly at this rate, equality will occur in the year 2054.

Mr. Speaker, apprenticeship training is another area where women are lagging far, far behind. They comprise a scant 3 per cent of all trainees, a figure that hasn't changed over the last 10 years. Few women are actually receiving training in these non-traditional career areas, and as of February 1983 statistics in Alberta, only 716 apprentices out of 28,000-plus were females. In the United States, however, a very interesting document entitled *A Woman's Guide to Apprenticeship* gives all hon. members a number of examples that where women are given the opportunity, given the chance, to participate in these particular areas, there indeed is tremendous success. I'd like to touch upon a couple of examples. The city of Seattle, Washington, instituted a 12 per cent hiring goal for women in city-financed construction projects in 1977. This goal was met the first year and raised to 15 per cent in 1978. To this date, this 15 per cent figure is still being met. At the Ingalls shipyard in Mississippi, the hiring goal of 20 per cent women in the ship-building trade was met the first year.

MR. SPEAKER: I regret interrupting the hon. member, but I must draw his attention to the clock, and that under the *Standing Orders* we are now obliged to move to deal with private members' public Bills.

head: **PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS  
OTHER THAN  
GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS  
(Second Reading)**

**Bill 204  
An Act to Amend the  
Legislative Assembly Act**

[Adjourned debate March 24: Mrs. Koper]

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that the person who introduced this Bill felt it could be dismissed this afternoon, I rise to speak on it. It's likely appropriate to briefly review the previous discussion on the Bill proposed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood, since there have been a few changes in the situation since the Bill was first introduced.

The Bill was intended to put into legislation the criteria on which the Official Opposition and the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in our House may be designated in future Assemblies. It proposes to dictate to the Speaker what should be done in case of a tie, in the number of seats of the opposition parties or groups, and in addition reduces to two the number of seats a party sitting in opposition to the government requires in order to be recognized.

This Bill has been introduced in order to make into law the criteria that you, the Speaker, used in your decision in determining the opposition at the opening of the 20th Legislature, and perhaps that may be part of the problem. Much as I respect you, Mr. Speaker — and your decision is very highly regarded by all members — I think there have been three instances in Alberta's political history when the designation of the Official Opposition has been controversial: the first time in 1944, when there were three Independent members; the second time in

1959, when there were four opposition members, two different parties and two Independents, giving equal numbers of all; and the present situation.

It's extremely interesting to me that when a similar situation happened in Saskatchewan, where there were 11 members elected from two different parties in 1977, they found no solution to their problem at all. The Speaker made a choice, however, and it was based on the principle that the leader of the largest party sitting in opposition should be the Leader of the Opposition. Since there was no tie situation, that meant there was no Leader of the Opposition, and I guess my concern for this Bill lies in this problem, Mr. Speaker. The decision in our Legislature as to what group should be the Official Opposition was based on several factors, and I think one statement you made was that the designation of the Official Opposition was of questionable status in parliaments, hence the determination should be based on the special circumstances within our Assembly.

Basically two factors were part of the decision: the number of seats held by the recognized party and the popular vote. Mr. Speaker, you took great care to explain just how narrow and limited you felt those arguments were. I believe this Bill therefore would codify criteria that is limited in application to the particular circumstances we found ourselves in as a result of the vote of the electorate last November, and perhaps putting it in legislation would not help future Assemblies.

It also appears to me to be extremely unsatisfactory to [base] the selection of an opposition on the popular vote. In Alberta we have a single member plurality electoral system, which elects members to represent constituents within a firmly defined electoral boundary. It seems that the use of the popular vote would not be at all consistent with this. By using the popular vote, it would appear that the electorate that voted for a candidate that did not win would not be represented, and it makes about as much sense as my trying to look after the Conservative candidates in Edmonton Norwood, or if the Member for Edmonton Norwood is not looking after the Conservative electors in his riding, I'm sure he would be negligent in his responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before at the opening of this Legislature — one day after in fact — you presented a very well documented decision on the issues addressed in this Bill. You mentioned, even with all the research done by yourself and others, that there were no directly applicable precedents. If I may quote from *Hansard* of March 11, there were

no directly applicable precedents or compelling answers [that were] found in the experience of any of the parliaments of the Commonwealth or in any of our rules or statutes.

With that in mind, if we were to follow the precedents that are there, there are more precedents for not recognizing an opposition at all.

Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for the time-honored role of the opposition in British parliamentary tradition. I believe that in Parliament there is a role for the opposition to persuade government, and as a balance to government, and because of the wide variance of situations that I have discussed resulting from the decisions of the electorate, I would urge the House to maintain the parliamentary tradition that gives the Speaker the task of naming the Official Opposition. Democracy includes respect for rights of minorities, and the legislative process day in and day out must always be subject to the sensitivity of the time and the public we serve. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge hon. members to defeat this Bill and carry on in the British parliamentary traditions we have grown used to over many years.

Thank you.

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, I also rise to participate in the debate on Bill 204. I'm glad that the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood is back from one of his press conferences so he can listen to the debate.

MR. MARTIN: Don't be jealous.

MR. SZWENDER: I do not have much good news for him, because I also rise to speak against the passage of Bill 204. I know the debate on this Bill has been rather extensive, if not exhaustive, and I don't wish to prolong it. However, I do want to make a couple of brief points to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to congratulate you on the extremely intelligent and thoughtful decision you produced for this Assembly on March 11, of 1983. As a new MLA, I was extremely impressed and amazed by the difficulty of your decision, and the conclusion you reached served us all so very well, although some of us may not be particularly pleased with it.

However, in the British parliamentary tradition, it is accepted that the Speaker is at the basis of decisions in the Assembly. The Speaker is the referee. As Bill 204 is worded, it works against this whole concept of the British parliamentary system, which is dependent upon a case-by-case basis and building a tradition of case law and precedents. This basis provides guidance in difficult and unusual circumstances, such as was the case after the last election of November 2.

Mr. Speaker, just two quick points regarding the Bill. If the Member for Edmonton Norwood had presented this Bill — certainly he couldn't have presented it because he was not elected prior to November 2 — or if other members had presented it in earlier sessions prior to the situation in which we found ourselves, then maybe I could have considered supporting this Bill. In fact he presented it after the case and almost modelled the Bill to suit the situation in which his party found itself and, as such, was trying to legitimize its position. So indeed, occurring after the fact, I wonder if this is not just a self-serving Bill.

The second point I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, is that the Leader of the Opposition said that if the rules were clearly outlined as to who the opposition would be, then their work could commence immediately. In this case, there was a time lapse from the election until the beginning of the spring session. But I find that argument rather weak, because if the Leader of the Opposition, whether he is Leader of the Opposition or not, is doing his job, then he should be preparing, and preparing adequately, the day immediately after the election for the role that he will be pursuing. He should be preparing his arguments, preparing his agendas, and preparing his business without knowing whether that would be in the role of the opposition leader or not.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can only offer one word of consolation to the Member for Edmonton Norwood: in the future, to solve the problem of these kinds of decisions, his party should go out and make sure they win enough seats so the decision is clear and it would not be left up to the Speaker to make it. In conclusion, I urge all members of the Assembly to defeat Bill 204.

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, as previous speakers have indicated, there has been a fairly thorough debate on Bill 204, but I would like to take this opportunity to express two or three concerns about the Bill.

First, I'd like to reflect on the fact that there has been a tremendous amount of material gathered over this particular

issue. The material, rather than falling into any particular pattern that would make a decision easy, instead has indicated that there are a tremendous number of variables involved here, a tremendous variety of circumstances that can arise in this kind of situation, and that there are no easy solutions. It is a situation which has to be dealt with on the circumstances of that particular time.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the role of the Speaker and how important the Speaker's participation in this particular type of decision is. I think of the role of the Speaker in this Assembly as being very near, if not more so than, that of a judge.

We might reflect on the difficulty presented by falling into a pattern of trying to legislate all things in precise terms. Our judicial and parliamentary systems function as well as they do because it has long been recognized that a certain amount of flexibility and discretion must be allowed. In a different context, Mr. Speaker, we would all agree that if we were being judged on a particular matter or set of circumstances on a very serious matter, we would want the person looking at the two sides of the question to have the opportunity and the power and not be tied by legislation, so that the various historical items, the circumstances of the case, the nature of the functioning of government at a particular time could all be taken into consideration. I think we would certainly want that to be a possibility as individuals and as far as operating in this Assembly is concerned.

While some might think that this Bill would apply for all time as far as history is concerned, it does not guarantee that at all. I think it is more suited to the particular circumstances of this time and of certain groups. Mr. Speaker, I would much rather see the role of the Speaker continue as one of judging on these particular questions.

The third item I would like to comment on is the overall concept of using the percentage of the popular vote to decide the Official Opposition. A number of weaknesses in what seems like a very, very simple solution were pointed out in the previous debate. I would like to add a couple of other reservations on this particular "solution".

First of all, one thing that did not appear in the previous debate and in the research is that you could perhaps get a fairly significant popular vote from one or two constituencies in the province. And you might have the vote of another party which is tied — in terms of seats in the House, but perhaps two or three percentage points below that of the first party — more representative of the total province, perhaps having a significance in 50 or 60 of the constituencies in the province. In that set of circumstances, one might very well question whether the more broadly representative vote would be more indicative of what really would show the best Official Opposition for the province at that time.

As westerners, Mr. Speaker, we have often been faced with the frustrations of coming from a region which does not have the highest population or popular vote or number of seats in the Dominion government, and we would like to see more recognition of the regional factors as far as that government is concerned. In a different kind of way perhaps, I think there are some parallels. The Speaker might very well want to consider that factor in deciding on an Official Opposition if the number of seats of two or three parties are equal in this Assembly.

The final point I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, once again under the heading of questioning this use of a percentage vote, is that it is only because of the nature of the present legislation that during this last set of circumstances we had to choose an Official Opposition and allow that to be only one



party. I note that in a previous Saskatchewan situation, it was possible for a decision to be made that the two opposition parties would split the resources — I suppose split the status — and split the responsibility of being opposition to the government. As far as I know, there is no evidence that the opposition interests of the province of Saskatchewan weren't well served during that period of time. Perhaps it would have been a better situation if that had been the case here.

I'd like to say in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that you have deliberated long on this particular topic in the role that I think it is very important for you to assume in this type of matter. Therefore I would urge the Assembly to vote against Bill 204.

MR. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, Bill 204 is certainly an interesting Bill, and I'm sure it was motivated by the unusual circumstances of November 2, 1982. There have been only two previous occasions in the political history of the province of Alberta when the designation of the Official Opposition was, let's say, slightly controversial. The first occurred in 1944, when three Independent members elected to the Legislature were recognized as the Official Opposition and the leader of that group was recognized as Leader of the Official Opposition. The second did not occur until 1959, when four opposition members were elected: one Progressive Conservative, one Liberal, one Independent, and one Coalition member. In this situation, no leader was recognized.

Under the precedent of the tradition of this House, the recognition of an Official Opposition falls to the Speaker. It's the duty of the president of the Assembly to choose the Official Opposition. Mr. Speaker, I believe it is imperative to ensure that the responsibilities, the role of the Speaker — that that office has full authority to assess such situations should they happen sometime in the future. In my opinion, the Speaker should be able to assess precedents from previous years or, if that's lacking, review judgments made in other parliaments in other circumstances.

You, the Speaker of this Assembly, delivered a decision on March 11, 1983, designating the Official Opposition for Alberta's 20th Legislature. The decision, in my opinion and obviously shared by other members of this Assembly, was a masterpiece that recognized the fine line between the arguments that had been presented to you. The decision considered precedent. It was thought out over a long period of time and will provide valuable input should this circumstance occur again. Since a solution to the opposition question could not be found within the Assembly, circumstances outside the House were taken into consideration. This is the type of flexibility that I believe it is important to ensure rests with the office of the Speaker.

I believe the Bill casts into stone a decision which should be based on circumstance, on precedent, on judgment of the office. The public, the supporters, the voters have the final responsibility in ensuring that the decisions made within this Assembly reflect the positions and feelings of the vast number of people within this province. To cast into stone something that is flexible, that has worked well in the past, and that I think should work well in the future would lead me to the conclusion that I do not support Bill 204. I would ask other members to follow that same position.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion lost]

**Bill 207**  
**An Act to Provide for**  
**Universal, Financially Accessible**  
**Health Care in Alberta**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I was not quite prepared for this Bill, but I think I know enough about it that I can probably wax eloquent. It's Bill 207, An Act to Provide for Universal, Financially Accessible Health Care in Alberta. If you recall, the time we brought this Bill in was when we just had higher medicare premiums and user fees. I suppose at this time it is still appropriate, although we have debated this in the House before. I'm almost positive that the members are going to rush up at this moment to support this Bill, bring it into law, and overturn what the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care has said. I wait with bated breath to see that happen. [interjection] The Member for Edmonton Belmont is trying to get in. We'll give you a chance in a minute.

I think it comes down to a difference in philosophy in terms of the universality of medicare. We are very concerned. I know the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care says that when we raise medicare premiums, as we did in the last budget, to where the average family is paying somewhat over \$300 now, where we bring in user fees that will come due on January 1, or at least hospitals will be able to charge them — that worries us. We see the minister talking about private management. We see example after example where we quite honestly and sincerely believe the whole concept of medicare is being threatened in this province. That's not only us, as members are well aware. It's not only in this province that this battle is going on; it's going on, as members are well aware, across the country.

The point we are trying to make here, Mr. Speaker, is that our party — going back to Saskatchewan, where we lost an election over the issue but brought in medicare — feels we have a very vested interest. We think there are problems with the medicare system. Time after time, we've tried to point out where we could save money. We do not see the government moving in that direction. The only direction we see them moving — and I would admit that it's not a total slapping down of medicare right away, but we see the government niggling away at it.

When we brought in this Bill in the spring, we wanted to make it clear, if you like — we just had that debate on a private member's Bill — that we have to make political statements with private members' Bills. After seeing user fees and higher medicare premiums, we knew our chances of this Bill becoming law were next to remote if not absolutely zero. But the point is that through a private member's Bill, Mr. Speaker, we have the right to say to the Legislature through you, and to other people of the community, what we believe in. Surely that's what the debate is all about, the major issues of the day.

To put it into perspective, we brought Bill 207 in after a 47 per cent increase in medicare premiums was introduced in the budget back in March. We introduced this very quickly — I think a day or two after that — to provide for universal, financially accessible health care in Alberta. We brought it in for first reading. Now I won't bore you, because we're probably going to have this debate when we deal with Bill 98, which legitimizes user fees. But we have to look at what the original intention of medicare was. Unquestionably the original intention of medicare was to provide basic health services to Canadians as a right. That's the whole purpose to medicare: to provide basic health services to Canadians as a right.

I say to Members of the Legislative Assembly that all but three Canadian provinces have recognized that principle and totally done away with premiums. The three provinces: unfor-

tunately this is one, as we're well aware, and B.C., which again is one of the richer provinces, and Ontario. In fairness to the government here, Ontario's premiums are much higher and much worse. But there are three provinces. All the other provinces have abolished premiums. [interjection] The Member for Edmonton Belmont needs a little lesson in economics. He knows where the money comes from. It comes from the general revenues of the province, which we're already taxed for to begin with. All we're doing by having premiums is being taxed twice.

There is a point I've made: that we say clearly that medicare premiums are a regressive tax. It's clear that when you have to pay premiums — if you make \$100,000 you pay the same premium as the person making \$10,000 who is working. I recognize that the very poor are protected if you're unfortunate enough to be on welfare, but the working poor pay the same as the Peter Pocklington of the world. So we end up paying our taxes. That's not the point. As somebody has said, there is no free lunch. We recognize that as well as anybody. But let us not kid ourselves. Medicare premiums are a tax. Very clearly we say to members of the government, it's time for Alberta to recognize that and follow what other provinces have done and abolish it. If they can do it in Newfoundland, surely they can do it in Alberta.

This particular Bill would accomplish this by the simple expedient of repealing the Health Insurance Premiums Act. Without going through all the details and boring you, this is done in the Bill simply by amending various sections of the Alberta Health Care Insurance Act. Mr. Speaker, the sum total of the effect of the amendments is to prohibit extra billing by any doctor wishing to collect agreed-upon fees for service from the Alberta health care insurance plan. A doctor could still extra bill but would have to opt out of the program completely before being able to do so.

Members may well ask: has that been done in other provinces? The answer is yes, it has. This is precisely the system that has been in effect in Quebec for the last few years, and we have not noticed — and figures will back us up — any great exodus of doctors from that province. [interjection] Mr. Speaker, the doctor over there is getting excited. He will get his chance.

The other point we would make is that there is another way to go that I've thought about since. It's not in the Bill. It would be to demand a surtax on that income — and I hope the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care is looking at this as he said he was — to put that back into the revenue of the province.

To be fair, then, that means we would have to negotiate fairly with our physicians. In this Bill we would change the system under which fees for service are set by providing for automatic indexing of fees on the basis of a formula to be negotiated with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and by providing in any event at least annual meetings between the minister and the college to review the agreement. Our point here is that if we're taking away double billing, we have to bargain fairly with the physicians.

But no other group in this society can you bargain collectively and be in, and then have the right to charge extra. We don't think that's reasonable. Again, we think that goes against the accessibility of medicare. If people don't believe in medicare, obviously it won't bother them. They would argue that's the way it should be. But for those of us who believe strongly in medicare, all these things in total take away the accessibility and universality of medicare, and that's unacceptable to us.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I present the Bill to debate in the Legislature. I think it is probably a major philosophical difference we have with the government. So be it; that's what

politics is all about. But for those of us — not only New Democrats but many, many people — that believe in medicare, I think these principles are inviolate to have a decent medicare system. As a member, I will continue to fight for them.

The point we also make, recognizing as we talk about income tax Bills and all the rest of it, is that many members are saying it's medicare that's dragging us down. Of course we rejected that, and I won't bore you with that speech. But before we start taking apart and adding higher medicare premiums and talking about private hospitals and user fees, we should look at the real costs of medicare and cut back where we can. But we haven't done that. So I present this Bill to the Assembly for serious review. Again, I expect I know the answers, but I think it's important that we debate these things in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to participate this afternoon in the debate on Bill 207, An Act to Provide for Universal, Financially Accessible Health Care in Alberta. In his remarks, the hon. member made a number of references to perhaps a difference in philosophy, and yes, I think I will be coming to that in some of my comments.

I would like to mention at the outset, and not in a backhanded way, Mr. Speaker, that in my mind the hon. member who has sponsored this Bill is without any question sincere in his arguments and in the philosophy he advances. He is advancing a philosophy that he hopes would ensure that Alberta maintains — and I ask that that be underscored — the excellent health care system we currently enjoy.

His philosophic approach, however, embraces the funding of health care through direct taxation, fully through funding of an incremental tax system. This approach will no doubt leave many Albertans, many ordinary citizens in our province, with the extremely warm feeling that health care is free. Out of sight, out of mind, so to speak. Mr. Speaker, his philosophy was espoused many years ago by Karl Marx, who said: from those accorded the ability to pay, to those according to need. This socialistic dictum has been proven time and time again to be bankrupt, and it is bankrupt. It's bankrupt in health care financing and, indeed, in those nations that engage in state-run economies.

Witness the state of affairs in Britain, where the father of socialized medicine — the National Health Service — is being decimated by extensive line-ups for service, erosion of services, and overworked state physicians practising a turnstile type medicine. The British experience is finding a second tier of health care service emerging, where private hospitals are being constructed at a faster rate than public hospitals. Some of the most enthusiastic users of the private hospital system in Britain are the unions and their executives.

I won't go into detail, but one might also mention the bankrupt health care delivery systems in Sweden, where the national health plan did away with private hospital rooms, free choice of a doctor, the choice of a hospital by patients, and direct payment of the patient's doctor's fees. In Sweden, Mr. Speaker, all Swedish doctors are completely on salary. Their salary is based on a 40-hour week, and they are allowed a special allowance for overtime. I submit that if we in Canada ever conscript the medical profession into the civil service, our costs for health care will literally explode.

Health care practitioners provide their own overhead and their own equipment in Canada and in Alberta. They provide for their own retirement benefit programs and pensions, and most certainly very few health care practitioners work as little as 40 hours per week. They're motivated by professionalism

and in our system, by free-market forces. When are we going to learn from the experience of other free democracies like Britain, Sweden, France, and others that socialist, state-run health care systems just do not work. They are bankrupt.

Why hasn't it worked? The system does not provide for any breaks whatsoever in the system. There is no way to constrain the demand side of the equation. Utilization increases at a much greater pace than revenue, and the result is budgetary financing that simply can't be tolerated. I submit that the mechanics championed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood and placed very well to remove any personal responsibility whatsoever to one's personal health care costs will have the precise opposite effect that he wishes to accomplish. Mr. Speaker, history has proved it time and time again.

I find it rather interesting that in comments by the members of the New Democratic Party, we seem to get this feeling that they have this particularly unique role to protect the lame, the halt, and the disadvantaged. They certainly don't have that exclusive right. This government's record in providing important services to all members of our community can stand for many, many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, no one is suggesting the erosion of medicare. The question is: should we pay exclusively according to direct taxation? Should we pay exclusively according to the incremental tax base? Or should we require a mix, and pay through direct taxation and also according to the ability to pay. The vast majority of our medicare system in Alberta does in fact come from the general revenue of the province. The premiums charged for medicare represent less than one-third of the cost of the medicare program. Not one cent of medicare premiums goes towards the cost of hospital services in this province. The facts are that health care costs are escalating at an alarming rate and steps simply have to be taken to curb those increases. In my view, you don't curb increases by removing some of the aspects of personal responsibility. We must constrain the demands on the system.

In a practical sense, in order to offset the abolishment of premium payments as our member would have us do, for the resultant \$261,667,000 shortfall in revenues, the provincial government would have to increase taxes by an additional 13 per cent, very similar to the funds raised by the recent tax increase in this province. In a great many cases, the employer pays some or all of an employee's contribution to his health care premium. The tax increase which would result from abolishing medicare premiums would be felt entirely by many thousands of workers — a situation I don't think the NDP would advocate.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to direct some of my comments towards section 20(1) of this Bill. When I read through section 20(1) — and perhaps the member might correct me — my understanding is that it would totally obliterate the rights of physicians to balance bill their patients. It does not allow a physician to opt out of the government insurance program and deal directly with his patients. It says:

Any person who demands or accepts any remuneration for providing basic health services in addition to that provided for in subsection (1) is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction.

This simply amounts to the conscription of health care practitioners into the civil service — no negotiations, no discussions; simply conscription.

No one would suggest that health care is not an essential service. It is. But surely there are a few other essential services and a few other essentials to life. Would anyone suggest that food isn't an essential to life? Why don't we conscript the food industry into the civil service and control the costs of food.

Let's conscript Canada Safeway to ensure universal access to "free" food. What about clothing? Shall we conscript the clothing industry to guarantee universal access to free clothing? Should the government provide guaranteed accessibility to shelter for all Albertans through general taxation? Should we be taking over A. E. LePage Real Estate? Why not? Because that is exactly what Lech Walesa is fighting against. That, sir, is what Poland, the former breadbasket of southern Europe, is today.

Mr. Speaker, no one is talking about the erosion or dismantling of the medicare system. No one is suggesting that there are not those who are unable to provide for their own health care costs and that anyone who can't afford to pay their own health care costs should be faced with a major financial crisis. In 1969 the medical services insurance Act was passed by the federal government. Through a number of attempts, I have been unsuccessful in trying to find the exact quote. But in finally agreeing to participate in the Medical Act former Premier Manning said: individuals have a responsibility to provide for their health care in the same way that they are responsible for all other aspects of their livelihood; also, society has the responsibility to provide for those who cannot reasonably be expected to provide for themselves.

Over time this government has certainly complied with the five program conditions of the Medical Care Act. I would like to enumerate them. One, universality: we have a medicare premium in Alberta that represents one-third of the actual cost of medicare and exempts low-income people and seniors. Those who are reasonably able to pay are expected to pay. Comprehensiveness: last year Albertans received nearly \$43 million in benefits under the health care insurance plan that are not included in the proposed Canada health plan.

Accessibility: last year 91 per cent of the population in Alberta made use of at least some of their medical benefits. The great majority — 80 per cent — used benefits adding up to less than \$400 a year. That is utilization. The average Albertan saw a doctor 9.5 times last year. This doesn't include medicals for a driver's licence or insurance, and it doesn't include the 15- or 16-year-old kids who presumably do not all have to see a doctor every year. I think medical care can be considered accessible under any objective measurement.

Four, portability: benefits are continued to Albertans if they move to another province. Five, public administration: insured medical benefits are administered by the Alberta health care insurance plan, which of course is a public authority.

I just indicated that medicare is administered through the Alberta health care insurance plan. I would like to conclude my remarks on the subject of insurance, which I have dealt with in the private sector on a daily basis for over 15 years. I mentioned that the Alberta health care insurance plan exempts low [income] people and senior citizens and collects a moderate premium from those who have the ability to pay. Premiums represent one-third of the total cost of non-hospital related medical care. The other two-thirds comes from taxing people. This makes the Alberta health care insurance plan more of a social plan than an insurance plan. Certainly redistribution of income is involved. It implies that the welfare of the public is given special consideration in determining benefits and calculating premiums. This is fine; I have absolutely no argument.

But let's examine the cost. The cost is not just the \$336 yearly premium that is imposed upon a family for medicare; it also includes the two-thirds that is funded through the incremental tax system. Mr. Speaker, in my calculations this translates into a rough cost of about \$650 per year, assuming that non-hospital related medicare costs \$650 million and that there are roughly 1 million working Albertans. When we couple the

annual yearly premium along with the cost of the tax source, we find that a total of \$986 is a median for employed Albertans. Who says that medicare is free?

Moreover, people can see as many health practitioners as they want, as often as they want. There are no significant constraints to demand or to utilization.

In contrast, private insurance employs a number of devices to reduce unnecessary utilization and abuse. Included among such devices are exclusions, waiting periods, pre-existing conditions, co-insurance, and deductibles. These devices are established by private insurance companies to reduce what is known in the trade as moral hazard or anti-selection. Moral hazard is defined simply as the increased propensity to incur expenditures when covered by insurance. I submit that we in Alberta have an appropriate mix of social insurance with the ability to pay.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I've listened with great interest to both the proposer of the Bill and the very, very knowledgeable response by the Member for Red Deer who, I think it goes without saying, certainly knows a great deal about the subject as it relates to insurance. I don't necessarily agree with him, but that doesn't take away at all from the fact that he knows what he's talking about. It seems to me that the issue we're dealing with, somewhat camouflaged in Bill 207, is really the cost of supposedly staying well in Alberta, in a society which I understand to be one of the healthiest in the world. We get some 25 cents of every dollar going to try to retain it. That's the part that puzzles me. I think the question should really be: what is the problem?

I look at the estimates for this year and see some \$2.2 billion. People don't get excited about figures, but our memories aren't short. Most of us have been here for the last two years, and two years ago it was \$1.35 billion. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we're looking at this from the wrong point of view. We should not be trying to address how to provide free medicare or hospital care. I think the question should really be: are we going to have medicare or hospital care in this province?

When I look at the rapid progression of the cost, it would seem to me that it wouldn't be very difficult to calculate at which point there'll be nothing left for education — certainly prevention. We gave up talking about that years ago around here. We don't talk about prevention. We'd rather put you in a hospital, operate, and bury you than ever dream of preventing you going in in the first place. There are those amongst us who think a doctor is dangerous to your health. I know people who wouldn't dream of going to a doctor whose office plants have died. Surely there's proof positive there. I think that tells you something.

But without knocking the doctor, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to comment on a couple of things that have been said by both the Member for Edmonton Norwood and the Member for Red Deer. First of all, I don't perceive anybody dying in the streets of this province. I don't perceive any great lack of services now. Looking down the road just a few years, what I see is that when I get ill or my colleagues get ill, there'll be no place to go because it won't exist. Obviously we have to do something. In many ways, Bill 98 addresses that.

With regard to Bill 207, I am somewhat shaken by the view of the Member for Edmonton Norwood, who thinks that it's a God-given right to have access to some system whereby you have no personal responsibility in keeping well. I have difficulty with that. He seems to think, and he's probably very knowledgeable — he keeps quoting party policy, and I assume he is very knowledgeable about it on that basis. What he doesn't seem to address is how we're going to retain the system as we

have it. I submit that this government is at least attempting to address the question.

There's great criticism of the direction we're taking, but I would simply point out that in the U.S., the great protector of the world, some 15,000 to 20,000 people went bankrupt last year under their great system of insurance. No one in Canada goes bankrupt because of health care costs. I think we should be proud of that. Less than 8 per cent of our budget is committed to it. So I think we should start off from a very known position, that we have an excellent system and that what we're about, to try to do is preserve the existing system.

The Member for Edmonton Norwood makes reference to the college. I understood the college was related to standards of medicine, standards of practice, insuring that the quality of care through licensed practitioners was of a high standard and they didn't soil their hands with money. That's a new wrinkle brought in by the Member for Edmonton Norwood, who according to his Bill wants to take that away from the AMA and turn it over to a group that heretofore has been concerned with very high standards of medical practice. I have some difficulty with that.

I think the Member for Edmonton Norwood tends to say that whatever the doctor says is right, and he should be paid out of general revenue obtained only through an income tax system. Well I have some great difficulty with that, Mr. Speaker. First of all, we make certain assumptions. We now have in the province of Alberta, of some 2,800 to 2,900 doctors, about 250 who don't earn up to \$40,000, so we probably have 2,500 doctors. Most of the extra billing is taking place in our two major centres. It's probably no secret. That's where the high standards and the specialists are located. So with regard to the extra billing, I'll agree with the Member for Edmonton Norwood: it's something that should not be allowed in this province.

When you look at the estimates paid by this government this year, what was projected as \$600 million to be paid is probably going to \$700 million. Obviously there are substantial funds being paid out now to those people who are practitioners under the Act, which of course would include chiropractors, podiatrists, oral surgeons, and others.

Reference was made, Mr. Speaker, to people visiting physicians nine and a half times a year. I had no idea. I thought perhaps it was maybe nine and a half claims per person per year, which would include a lot of testing. There can't be any doubt in anybody's mind that if there are 85,000 claims arriving every day over at Groat Road and 118th Avenue, we obviously can't think for one minute that we're a healthy society. I would like to see the Member for Edmonton Norwood addressing his comments towards lowering that incident of those people visiting physicians.

Reference was made to the premiums, and I wouldn't really question ... You know, we spend \$11 million a year now collecting premiums in Alberta. Maybe that's \$11 million that could go toward care of people. But I don't think we should lose sight of the fact that many Albertans — and we've seen this recently with regard to typing up those in arrears — have a responsibility, or feel they have a responsibility, for paying their way. But we shouldn't be under the illusion, as the Member for Red Deer pointed out, that it's only \$1 a day. I think the latest figure is that it's some \$1,130 per person per year, including the 400,000 that never make a claim against the system. They're paying, consistent with insurance, for things they never receive. But the cost is extremely high.

I would suggest that we're not about to conscript doctors into civil servants — I don't know where that term comes from. I think they should be able to set their fee, whatever it is, and

then they should go and collect it. If they want an option to that, like everybody else in this province of great free enterprise, they had better get into medicare. And if they're in medicare, they should get what's agreed to by medicare and not be using a backdoor route, charging two, three, and four fees to different people for the same service.

Mr. Speaker, there's merit in what the member is proposing, but I think there are a lot of things wrong with it in that it doesn't attack the problem. The problem is that unless we do something seriously about health care in this province today, it's not going to exist tomorrow.

MRS. EMBURY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the time, I'd like to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the House agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, this evening it is proposed that we deal with second readings of Bills on the Order Paper, commencing with Bill 98 and, upon conclusion of same, Bill 100, and if it is concluded, perhaps go into committee study of other legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we call it 5:30.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the House agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The House recessed at 5:27 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

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

**Bill 98**  
**Hospitals and Medical Care Statutes**  
**Amendment Act, 1983**

[Debate adjourned November 4: Mr. Martin speaking]

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, it seems like I was here just a while ago, and I'm sure you've all been waiting. The Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care came over especially to ask me to repeat a lot of the same arguments I made two weeks ago, and I wouldn't want to disappoint the hon. minister. I will try to change it somewhat, though, because I know he would like to get some information. I know the minister is thinking of changing the Bill, and he's looking for new ideas here.

First of all, the thrust of what I have to say today in the remaining time is that I believe, quite frankly — and I know the minister and I will disagree on this — that there is a trend towards slowly dismantling medicare and moving it towards privatization. I think there's enough evidence, Mr. Speaker, to indicate that this is happening. This Bill is another step in that direction. I mentioned last time, I believe, that we brought in higher medicare premiums with the budget, and the fact of an announcement about user fees last spring and then what I call legitimizing it in Bill 98 at this specific time.

I believe the minister has said publicly, because he knows that medicare is relatively, if I could put it that way popular throughout Canada and certainly in Alberta, and the minister would not want to come out and say the reason I'm tinkering with these things here and making it more difficult, affecting accessibility and dealing with user fees for hospitalization — he would not say politically that it's because he does not believe in medicare and wants to dismantle it and move towards a private system similar to what they have in the United States. The minister is an intelligent man, and he knows that that would not wash at this specific time.

So there's a different way to do it. It's what we call slowly strangling it: bringing in income tax and at the same time blaming it on medicare. Of course the political line then is clearly that if we didn't have medicare, we wouldn't have to have higher premiums and a 13 per cent increase, and we could begin to blame medicare for most things.

The other indication we have before the Bill, about moving at least towards private management — and, I believe, towards privatization of the medicare system — the minister honestly admitted in the House that for the next two hospitals that were originally being talked about, one in Edmonton in Mill Woods, he was considering private management at that time. To be fair to the minister, Mr. Speaker, he did not say that it was accomplished or that he was going to do it for sure, but he said very clearly in the House that he was thinking about it. We have the Hawkesbury model in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that besides the legitimizing of user fees, which we consider the worst part of the Bill, I'm interested when we get into part 4, hospital foundations, which starts on page 9 and moves into page 10 — a new concept for sure in terms of Alberta; not a new concept in terms of the United States by any stretch of the imagination. I know the minister, putting a good face on things, will say, I'm trying to save medicare; I'm trying to save decent hospitalization; because it's so expensive, we're going to have the private sector donate; we'll set up foundations and allow people to donate to the foundation to help their community hospital or whatever hospital they want. And 72(a) makes that clear, Mr. Speaker. It says:

(a) to solicit and receive by gift, bequest, devise, transfer or otherwise, property of every nature and description,

It goes on to (b) to explain that a little bit further, and

(c) to further health care education in that community.

So it's clear what we're doing with the foundations, and of course the political line is:

(c) to further health care education in that community.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate that the minister wants to get more money in, but I think he should take a look at what has happened using private foundations in the United States of America. Many people that have gone to the States know that we have at least a two- or perhaps three-tiered system in the United States. If you are fortunate enough to live in a community that is relatively wealthy, then you'll have a lot of donors on a private foundation, and they will probably have very well run hospitals with highly qualified physicians. There's no doubt about that. There's no doubt that in certain areas we get better hospitals for the higher income people. What also happens in some areas, if you check into them, in those hospitals with these foundations — and in this Bill there is direction about how they're to be run; there's a board and all the rest of it — is that they start to press their influence in terms of running those hospitals also. There's absolutely no doubt that these

boards become very powerful and begin to tell the physicians, for example, how to run those hospitals. That has happened in the States.

The other thing that happens, though, is that what we might call the public hospitals are some of the worst hospitals in the world, because they have no private foundations to add to the money and they've been undercut. The private hospitals do very well, because they're meant for the well-to-do and they have powerful foundations that press their views on it. The public hospitals where the people are not well-to-do, especially in some of the poor areas in the major cities, are hospitals that not one of us would want to go to.

The other thing about the foundations, and one thing I haven't said, is that there becomes a push. I know some hon. members here may agree with this, but there becomes a push to make the hospital more profit-oriented. It sometimes has nothing to do with health care, but with the foundation they want to show a profit; they want to bring more money in. So you bring in certain types of physicians. In other words, what I'm saying is that the foundations can lead — it doesn't have to, I suppose, but if we follow the model of the United States it will lead to a two-tiered health system. I think that's going away from universality, which we said very clearly in this country — and we've had statesmen like Ted Kennedy come up and look at our system and tell us how good it is compared to what they have in the United States. I don't believe that most Albertans want to go this way. Indeed, I don't believe most Canadians want to go this way.

But, Mr. Speaker, if we admire the American system, if that's really the route we're going by the start of this Bill, with foundations and legitimizing user fees, if the minister really wants to take us down that road — and he says the high costs. The minister knows full well that the health care system in the United States is much more expensive than ours. When you take the gross national product, for health care they pay some 2 per cent more towards the gross national product than we do, and I know the minister is aware of this. So where is the saving when we get into these private things?

I'm saying too that with the trend that has happened — I'm not suggesting at this moment, but once this trend starts towards privatization. In the United States there is a trend, if you like, towards the chains. We have in the United States the chain hospitals. It's health care almost like McDonald's hamburgers. People say that they're making money, but if we look at some of the evidence from the American Medical Association — and we can show it to the minister; I don't have time — these chains are very expensive in the long run. They are not efficient. They're efficient in some ways — they're efficient at making money; there's absolutely no doubt about that. But they're not efficient, if you like, in the whole concept of health care.

Some people may say, Martin — and I'm sure the minister will say that — you're reading too much into this. Really, I still strongly believe in the health care system. I strongly believe in it. I've heard the minister say: shucks, I'm just trying to help out here because we're short of money, and I'm saving medicare. I do not believe this for one minute. I think all the trends are away from what we understood medicare to be: universality and the idea that in this country, a rich country and especially a rich province, one of the things that is sacrosanct is your health care.

An hon. member mentioned that we should be looking at other things too. No doubt the system is costly; no one has said it isn't. I made the point the last time that we really haven't tried to grapple with bringing down the cost. There are many things the government has not even looked at, at this particular time. Until they seriously start to look at cost-cutting measures

in the health care system — and some of them we and other health care professionals have mentioned — and look at different modes of delivery for the health care system, then I do not think that we need to niggle away.

The minister himself, as he legitimizes user fees — I hear various estimates about how much this might bring in to the hospitals, when none of us knows, unless the minister does, how many are going to go in on January 1. By this Bill, it is clear that they can go in. I am sure some of the more responsible hospital boards will attempt to hang on. Inevitably, with not enough money coming from the government, they have two choices to make. I said this before; I do not see any other choices. One, you either cut back on services, and that means cutting back on beds or physicians or nurses or whatever, or secondly, you bring in user fees — neither one very popular with the people. I expect that the government feels the local people will take the blame for this, and that's been the usual way of doing it. But, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that inevitably, over a period of time, if they're undercut in funds all the hospital boards will have to bring in user fees, even if they don't want to. Even if they are philosophically against it, I suggest they will have to bring in user fees. There is absolutely no doubt about that, Mr. Speaker.

As I come to near the end of my first kick [interjection] — first instalment; thank you, hon. member. I am not sure how much time I have left. I'm sure hon. members have been timing it, though, and would not want me to go over my limit, because then they'd have to give me unanimous consent of the House. I might go on for another half hour, and I wouldn't want to do that. So to make sure that I'm in under the time limit, which I figure is about now, I have an amendment that I would like to give on Bill 98. The amendment I would like to bring in says:

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

"this Assembly declines to give a second reading to Bill 98, Hospitals and Medical Care Statutes Amendment Act, 1983 because the subject matter of the Bill is

- (1) inconsistent with the principles of medicare as enunciated in the original Hall Commission report, and
- (2) injurious and potentially injurious to the well-being of Albertans."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm going to reserve consideration of the validity or the admissibility of this amendment. It seems to me that if we're going to have a succession of so-called reasoned amendments, all we're really doing is repeating what's being said in debate. If it's continued indefinitely, that surely is going to be an abuse of the time of the House.

MR. MARTIN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It's clear under *Beauchesne* that reasoned amendments are acceptable. I don't see the problem. It's an acceptable way for the opposition to deal with a bad Bill, and that's one of the only ways we have.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask for a ruling. Am I to take your comment that, in fact, debate will continue or that we go back to the main? If we're going back to the main Bill I would argue, sir, that the reasoned amendment that is before the House at the moment focusses debate on the principle, completely consistent with *Beauchesne*, as I see it. When we're dealing with the principle of the Bill, we are dealing

with a whole series of principles contained in the omnibus Bill before us. We are focussing that debate on two or three very important principles which, in our judgment, relate to the issue of health care in this country and our federal/provincial obligations thereunder. As you've read over the Bill, sir, you know there are many other aspects contained in Bill 98 that have nothing whatsoever to do with this reasoned amendment.

So one can deal with the overall principle of Bill 98. But in order to focus the debate on the matter that we are concerned about, my colleague has presented a reasoned amendment, which I believe is totally consistent with *Beauchesne* and focusses the debate on the issue of the principles of medicare as enunciated by the Hall commission report. I would therefore submit that the reasoned amendment is in order and is consistent with narrowing the confines of the debate at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not suggesting that it's not in order; I'm only indicating concern. It may not be in order, but I would never want to interfere with debate on a point where I wasn't sure that the debate was out of order. However, I do have concerns about it. I think it's the first time since I've been in the Chair that two reasoned amendments have been proposed on second reading, and my concern is that one piece of the Bill after the other could be taken to bring in an endless series of reasoned amendments. That's my concern. Sitting in this Chair, I do have to have some regard and some conscience about the time of the House.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't quarrel with that. However, it seems to me as I look at *Beauchesne*, the reasoned amendment which is before the House meets all the conditions set out in both Citation 744 and Citation 745. I think you would be perfectly within your rights to say that if we had a reasoned amendment which essentially just repeated the entire thrust of Bill 98 — I would certainly share with you the concern. But I think a reasoned amendment that focusses the debate on the principle of a many-faceted omnibus Bill is surely consistent with Citation 744 and Citation 745.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some comments with regard to the amendment, and certainly at a later moment with regard to the main principle of the Bill on second reading. The amendment is calling for a decline to give second reading to Bill 98 because it's inconsistent with the principles of medicare as enunciated by the Hall report and, I would have to say as well, most likely as enunciated by the government of the day when medicare was implemented in Canada.

I recall very clearly that period of time when the negotiations occurred between Alberta and Ottawa. We in Alberta wanted to implement the MSI system, that we had used for a number of years and was successful in delivering services and meeting the health care needs of Albertans. But Ottawa said that that was not satisfactory, that the principle of universality was necessary, that they had hoped at that time that the payment for health care would be made through a taxing policy. The government of the day negotiated and worked with the Canadian government at that time, and the principle of premiums was maintained and established even as it is today.

I also remember the \$14 million that would have been lost by the Alberta government at that time if it had not become involved in the Canadian medicare program. I would have to say personally that at that point in time, I think as Albertans we lost some independence with regard to our medicare program. We sold out the rights to determine our own destiny with regard to medicare for that \$14 million in federal funds. Based

on that, I certainly would have to say that I didn't agree with all of the original Hall commission report and finding.

Even in light of that, I certainly have some concerns with regard to the Bill that is before us. The Bill is attempting in some way to work toward better administration of the health care program. I'm not so sure about that. I'm not so sure that the Hall commission made some of the recommendations that are being implemented with regard to this Bill. The change from some of the original ground rules of the medicare Act — the use of user fees and other techniques which have created a conflict between the federal and provincial ministers of health — certainly highlight the differences between two levels of government.

We find our Alberta government saying that the cost of hospitalization and medical care is one of the reasons for our budgeting in the province going out of control, that we must do something with the hospital boards and with the Alberta health care program to bring costs back in line, or we must look at other ways of bringing in revenue. For that reason we have this Bill, we have changes in policy by the Alberta government.

But I think it's unfair, even in attempting to do that and change some of the directions of the medicare Bill, that we blame the health care system and the hospital boards in this system and reason that a 13 per cent increase in personal income tax is necessary because of those very costs. Mr. Speaker, I don't think I can buy that at this point in time. I don't think that is mainly the reason.

I look at the amendments that are before us in this particular Bill, how they've changed some of the policies of government, how they've changed the health care delivery system. I find something else in the Bill that concerns me very, very much, and that is the principle whereby the minister gains greater authority to appoint, direct, or establish certain kinds of rules and regulations. I note that through pages 1, 3, 7, and 15, where the minister takes away certain powers from the Lieutenant-Governor and is able to make singular decisions on his own. There are certain Acts of the Legislature where that does happen. But the present Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care can think back to the time when he was the Minister of the Environment. At that time we had a body called the Environmental Conservation Authority, that had certain types of independence and rights of its own. But after the minister took over, took control, it soon became a minister's advisory committee and lost its teeth. If that's part of the purpose in this Act, I don't think that would be acceptable at all.

The other principle is that when the Lieutenant Governor in Council must change the regulations or make appointments, a broader group of people are involved in the decision-making. I think that's a little closer to the democratic process. The cabinet of this government makes most of the decisions, and the backbenchers endorse those decisions. If we get it through that cabinet process, we are at least a little closer to the democratic process. If we just give more power to the minister, as this Act is doing, I don't think that is doing justice to our legislative responsibility and our elected responsibility in this Legislature. That concerns me very much. On that principle I think I would be a little more concerned and would certainly want to decline second reading of this particular Bill.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, I feel that this reasoned amendment would be even stronger if I added a subamendment indicating my concern, as I have just indicated and illustrated. At this time, I would like to move a subamendment to that amendment. I amend the motion for second reading of Bill 98 and the amendment that is before us by adding at the end of that amendment,

and,

- (4) conducive to the centralization of power in the hands of the Minister, contrary to the democratic norms accepted in our society.

Mr. Speaker, that illustrates my concern that the minister is taking too much authority upon himself, and on that basis we should be concerned about giving second reading to this Bill.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address several comments to the subamendment. I will have some observations with respect to the amendment in a few minutes, but I would like to deal with the issue of the subamendment. As I understand the subamendment, it deals with those sections of the Act that take away powers which were formerly exercised by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and, as a result of Bill 98, we now hand those over to the minister. As I read the Act, that is of particular importance with respect to agreements with the government of Canada pertaining to the Alberta health care insurance plans and appointments to the Hospitals and Medical Care Policy Advisory Committee, the Health Facilities Review Committee, the Committee of Inquiry. Also, with respect to the Hospitals Act, regarding board members, municipalities formerly nominated a person or persons to the hospital district board. Now the minister shall appoint members from among persons nominated.

Mr. Speaker, in assessing Bill 98, I think we have to reflect for a moment as to whether or not it's in the public interest to take a power which was formerly exercised by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and hand that over to an individual minister. It may be very convenient to do so. But I remind hon. members of the kinds of problems this government got into with respect to the disposition of grants some years ago, when ministerial awarding of grants caused all kinds of woe. We had the Auditor General undertaking an inquiry. The report came in, and one of the recommendations contained in the 1975 report — and members who weren't here at the time might reflect on this — was that it's a very dangerous precedent to get away from Executive Council making decisions and awarding the right to make decisions to a minister.

Mr. Speaker, I think the comments that the Auditor General made with respect to awarding grants — whether it be to cemeteries, libraries, or whatever the case may have been in 1975 — however important those observations were, they are rather small compared to the power which we are now consigning the minister in Bill 98. The hon. Member for Little Bow correctly makes the point that it should be the Executive Council that undertakes some of these major decisions.

Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the kind of power that Bill 98 is consigning the minister. We're talking about aspects of the agreement with the government of Canada. When we're talking about hundreds of millions of dollars, it isn't good enough to say: shucks, we'll let our friend Dave Russell look after that; we won't worry about Executive Council doing it; we've got total confidence in the minister; it's up to him. That is getting the government into the same kind of blind alley that they found themselves in, in 1974. It was great just before that election campaign in 1975; no question about that. It earned the Tories all kinds of Brownie points at the polls, but it got the government and minister into trouble because decisions that should have been made by Executive Council were made by the minister.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that I really think it's going to be interesting to see how Edmonton members in particular, and Calgary members as well, are going to be able to justify locally this new power that the minister is consigning to himself in Bill 98 with respect to the Hospitals Act. Where, formerly,

hospitals in a given area delegated members, now the minister is going to be able to choose from people who are nominated.

Why must this government pursue the policy of centralizing power, taking it away from locally-elected officials, from local government, turning hospital boards into rubber stamps, and then going the next step and not even providing that that centralized power is properly administered by Executive Council, which can be accountable to the Legislature. Now we find we've got to go the next step and give the minister this kind of undiluted power. Does every single minister in that front bench want to be his own Napoleon? Must there be this kind of mad grab for power, Mr. Speaker?

I say to the members of the government caucus that the amendment to the amendment we have before us today is simply reasserting what I think has to be one of the most important aspects of the whole agreement between the federal government and the province of Alberta; that is that there should be some element of democratic control at the local level. I don't see the amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Little Bow as being at all inconsistent with the original amendment, because the whole dream, if you like, of the Hall commission was to recognize that the delivery of health care is a basic right. But in the administration of that delivery system, one of the most important elements in that 1964 Hall commission report was the recognition of preventative health service and of local control, not the kind of control that is centralized in some minister's bureaucracy, not the kind of control that is so centralized that it undermines local decision-making, but the kind of representative control over the delivery system which, frankly — I hope I don't misinterpret the hon. Member for Lethbridge West. But today during private members' Bills he spoke on a Bill presented by my colleague, and he quite correctly identified one of the problems with our current health system; that is that we aren't focussing enough on preventive health. He's absolutely right, Mr. Speaker. He has been a person in this House who over and over again has identified that as a very significant flaw in the health delivery system.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind you and other members of this House that if we are going to emphasize preventive medicine, we have to underscore the importance of local, democratic control. The more we get away from decision-making at the local level, the more we drift into this comfortable pursuit of ministerial control and decision-making, the further we get from the dream that Mr. Justice Hall set out in 1964 of a health system which is health-oriented, not simply directed to curing disease after illness has become an affliction or a problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to members of the House that the amendment to the amendment, presented today by the hon. Member for Little Bow, strengthens my colleague's amendment.

I want to make one additional comment about this particular amendment to the amendment. We are facing some very difficult negotiations between the government of Canada and the government of Alberta — there's no question about that — largely, I suggest, as a result of the mismanagement of this provincial government. But setting that aside, the question is: who is going to be in a position to make decisions, to finalize agreements? Are we going to say that it will at least be Executive Council? We know that the government caucus has nothing to say. We know from the results of the Income Tax Act that is before the House that the government caucus really has virtually no input into this government. Mr. Speaker, if we're dealing with the hundreds of millions of dollars at stake between Madame Begin and the current minister, let's make sure that in this province, at least Executive Council is in a position to know what we're getting into.



I don't know if hon. members have had a chance to read between the lines, but when I read the details of Bill 98 I think there is a frightening centralization of power which is totally inconsistent not only with the principles of the Hall commission report but with good, common horse sense, and inconsistent, I would judge, from the standpoint of Conservative backbenchers as well, unless they have taken the position that the hon. minister across the way should be all-powerful and that whatever he says and whatever agreements he signs, that's the way it's going to be.

Mr. Speaker, that's not why our constituents sent us here, to pass legislation of this kind of scope and power. They want us to be accountable, and they want Executive Council to be accountable. They know that when you're dealing with a federal/provincial cost-shared program, there are going to be a lot of rough waters in any kind of federal/provincial scheme of this kind. At least they want to know that it's Executive Council that's in a position to make some of the major decisions, and not one minister acting on his own.

I say to members: just look back over the history of the last 12 years; look back at how this government has got itself into trouble. Over and over again it is creating no end of political woes, not only for the incumbent ministers but for the delivery of the program, which is what I'm a good deal more concerned about than whether or not the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care is comfortable. I'm much more concerned about the quality of the program. It seems to me that what we have here is a Bill which is going to strip away much of the power which would ordinarily be exercised by Executive Council and by hospital boards, and centralize that even further.

I have yet, Mr. Speaker, to hear anybody in the course of the debate so far explain to this House why the minister needs that kind of power, why it must be removed from Executive Council, why it must be removed from hospital boards, why it must be centralized in the hands of the minister. Since, during the course of this debate, it would appear that opposition members are the only ones taking part, we have to speculate in the absence of any kind of response from the government.

I say to this minister that if he's going to have a shred of credibility in dealing with the federal government, even a federal Tory government, he's going to have to have at least some understanding of where Executive Council sits. It can't just simply be the kinds of decisions he has the power in this Bill to make himself. That's why I think the amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Little Bow is one of good sense, consistent with the amendment itself and would, I believe, be of merit for hon. members of the government to consider as well as members of the opposition.

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would like some clarification on the subamendment. We have the amendment that says certain words with the numbers (1) and (2), and then the subamendment, by adding at the end of it: "and, (4)". How does that fit in?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, for the hon. member, I wanted to make sure that some of the members of the Legislature could count. I knew some could get to (4), so I put a (4) there rather than a (3).

MR. LYSONS: I believe that this subamendment is completely off the table with a remark like that and the fact that it's not accurate.

MR. SPEAKER: Apparently there's just a slip in the numbering. Surely we don't need another subamendment to get the arithmetic straight.

MR. MARTIN: I was sort of waiting with bated breath as the members from the government side jumped into the fray. I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, this caught me by total surprise. I thought that I had a perfect amendment. But I have to admit, with great surprise, that the Member for Little Bow has been able to strengthen my amendment. As a result, with that great work done by the Member for Little Bow, I'd like to jump into the fray here again.

He brought out, quite correctly, when you go through — as it is a large, encompassing Bill — another very important part. Of course it's a discussion we've had many times in this Legislature over other matters. That is the trend, if you like, towards centralization. For example, we find that often the Legislature doesn't make decisions. We certainly know that. We're told that the government caucus makes decisions, which is not the way it's supposed to be. But then we find out that on many Bills, they don't make the decision; we're told that the Lieutenant Governor in Council makes the decision. Now we find out that that seems to be too democratic, and that gets in the way. In this particular Bill — and I don't know if this is a trend, as my colleague talked about — we now want just the minister to make decisions, without the Executive Council being involved.

I know the minister is a very efficient person, and maybe it's for efficiency that we want this done. We used to hear that certain people used to make the trains run on time. That may be all very well and nice, but I again remind the people that this is the Legislature. There is a government caucus, that is supposed to make major decisions, and the cabinet, but now the minister . . . It's not just a housekeeping point, if you like, because there are two things in there that are extremely important. When you hand out a big Bill, I know that most of the backbenchers don't bother to read it. But when you go through a huge Bill like this, if you don't look at it carefully — we're told that we should read between the lines of any contract.

When I find out that the Bill sets various powers formerly given to the cabinet — I'm not sure they should be making all the decisions, but I expect there's enough of them. Thirty of them should come up with the odd good decision. Maybe there would be better ones if they'd cut down to 18 or so. But when they set various powers formerly given to the Lieutenant Governor in Council over to the minister, then I wonder why. Why is this a necessity? For example, is the cabinet not capable of understanding these complex arrangements? Are only ministers able to do it? It's really wide-sweeping. As my colleague talked about: agreements with the government of Canada pertaining to Alberta health care insurance plan. Literally, that is millions and millions of dollars that we're talking about. The old adage that in our parliamentary democracy, the Legislature controls the purse strings — it now is not only not the Legislature, not even government caucus, not even the Lieutenant Governor in Council, but the minister who controls the purse strings and a significant amount of money.

It goes on, Mr. Speaker: appointments to Hospitals and Medical Care Policy Advisory Committee, Health Facilities Review Committee, Committee of Enquiry, et cetera. If we take this logic of the power that we're centralizing in one minister throughout each one of the ministers, I would say, in a very serious manner, what do we need a Legislature for? What do we even need a government caucus for? We can maybe appoint the 30 of them for life, and they can run everything. It won't be messy, the trains will run on time, and all the rest of it. I don't understand.

Then we find out that in this Act even the board members — formerly, as I understand it, municipalities nominated a person or persons to the hospital district board, and now the

minister shall appoint members from among persons nominated. The minister has absolute power over this board. If the minister wants feed-in — as we talked about, there are many different modes and we should be looking at all different ways of cutting down in health care — all he's going to get on these boards are a bunch of "yes" people, because they're clearly under the direction of the minister. He's not going to get new advice; he's not going to get anybody disagreeing with him. Who's going to do that? They've already got a cushy board situation. The minister can hire and fire them. They can't even go to their local member. They can't even go to another cabinet minister to appeal it. The minister has that absolute power. I really do not understand that.

I guess the only answer I can expect from the minister is that maybe it's more efficient. I suppose it is efficient. It would be much more efficient tonight if the minister just walked in and said this is second reading, third reading, and go through the whole thing — very efficient. We'd be out of here in half an hour and we could go. Admittedly, democracy is inefficient. But surely that's what this is all about. To put that much power in one person in our society does not make sense to me. I say very clearly, Mr. Speaker: if this is the trend, in a major Bill in a major portfolio — and, as we're told by the government, one of the more expensive portfolios; then we're putting a lot of power in the hands of one minister — if we start that trend all the way down the line, then our role here is really not worth while. As I say, we might as well appoint a cabinet for life and let them do it because they're efficient.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, with some great surprise after thinking about it clearly, I thank the Member for Little Bow for doing this. What I thought was a perfect amendment is now a perfect amendment with a subamendment. If all hon. members think about it, they should really take a look at this. Is this really what they were elected to do? Is this what the people in the ridings said: please go there and centralize power under the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care; that's your mandate, that's what we want; we want to stop messing around with the Legislature and Executive Council; let the the minister make all the decisions when we're dealing with Canada.

As the minister is well aware, we're going to have some very dicey dealings after the new Act comes in, in the federal Parliament. There is going to be a lot of flak, and I think all members of the government, especially the Executive Council, would want to know what's going on. As the Provincial Treasurer is well aware, if we start to lose that money on the transfer payments, we're all in trouble. I think the Provincial Treasurer would want to be very much involved in that decision. Maybe he will be. Maybe he has an "in" with the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care, but not necessarily by this Act.

So. Mr. Speaker, I hope that all hon. members would see the wisdom and just slow down on some of these Bills and look at what we're doing, that we would vote on this subamendment and that government members for once would do their duty and make sure that this became a better piece of legislation. Thank you.

[Mr. Speaker declared the motion on the subamendment lost. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

(Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided)

For the motion:

Martin                      Notley                      Speaker, R.

Against the motion:

Alexander	Koper	Payne
Batiuk	Koziak	Purdy
Bradley	Lee	Reid
Campbell	Lysons	Russell
Carter	McPherson	Shaben
Cripps	Miller	Shrake
Drobot	Moore, R.	Sparrow
Elliott	Musgreave	Stromberg
Embury	Musgrove	Thompson
Gogo	Nelson	Topolnisky
Hyndman	Osterman	Trynchy
Jonson	Pahl	Zip
Totals:	Ayes — 3	Noes — 36

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am certainly pleased today to have a word or two on the amendment, which suggests that Bill 98, Hospitals and Medical Care Statutes Amendment Act, is really inconsistent with the Hall commission report and injurious and potentially injurious to the well-being of Albertans.

In order to assess the merits of this amendment, I think it's important that we clearly have in our mind what the Hall commission report in fact said. Members may be aware that the first moves to hospital insurance took place a number of years ago. The CCF government of Saskatchewan brought in a hospitalization program. The old UFA had one in this province. It was developed and expanded by the Manning government. By the mid-1950s the federal government decided to get into the hospital business, as it were, and in 1957 we had passage of the first cost-sharing program on hospitalization.

Members are probably also aware of the fact that three years later, in 1960, the CCF government in Saskatchewan brought in the principle of medicare as an election issue. When the Douglas government was returned, the province decided to embark upon the road to medicare. During those years the Diefenbaker government, perhaps because of the Prime Minister's Saskatchewan background, decided that it would be in the public interest to commission a major study into the development of an integrated health system. Mr. Justice Emmett Hall was commissioned to undertake that study, and the study was completed in 1964.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of major points contained in the Hall commission study. I would say to members of the House that we have to assess how Bill 98 compares to the goals contained in the Hall commission study of 1964. I suppose it's fair to say that there were probably five major goals set out by Mr. Justice Hall in that landmark royal commission report of 1964.

The first was that there should be universality; in other words, that all Canadians should be covered by the health system. It was a principle that was somewhat different from what had been traditionally accepted as far as the practice of medicine was concerned. Medicine had always been a situation where the doctors had the Hippocratic oath, and they were obliged to provide service. But it was not the kind of system where there was a right to health care on the part of the patient. The Hall commission report envisaged equity between the doctor and the patient: the doctor would not have to provide charity and the patient would not have to ask for charity. So in 1964 we had the principle of universality enunciated by Mr. Justice Hall, that everyone should be covered by the health care system — not 60 per cent, not 80 per cent, but the overwhelming majority of Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, the second principle contained in the Hall commission report was accessibility. We had to develop a health system which would provide accessibility to the system for

Canadians wherever they lived, whether in rural Canada, urban Canada, the far north, or the south. There also had to be accessibility beyond geography; there had to be accessibility of the system quite apart from one's income. That was the second principle.

The third was that there should be a comprehensive system, a broad range of insurance services. Over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker, as you are undoubtedly aware, we have expanded the services that are covered by our health system.

The fourth was that there should be portability. Because not all Canadians live in one community all their lives and you may find people who travel from one part of the country to the other, there had to be portability. The coverage should be transferable from one province to another.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the observation that Mr. Justice Hall properly made in 1964, was that there should be public administration, that the program was to be publicly administered without the profit motive being a factor.

Mr. Speaker, regardless of where people sit now, from 1964 to 1966 there was a tremendous amount of debate in the country, rightly or wrongly. Quite rightly, I think, and I'm very proud of the moves that were made. In 1966 we had the passage of the medicare Act. The target date was July 1, 1969. I believe that as a consequence of the Hall commission report, we have not a perfect health care system but one of the best in the world.

Just a moment ago, my colleague indicated for those people who are continually decrying the costs of health care — we've certainly heard that from government members — the fact of the matter is that the percentage of gross national product which is directed to health care in this country is lower than in the United States. The fact of the matter is that in the United States you've got tens of millions of Americans who aren't covered by any kind of health insurance system at all, but here in Canada virtually every Canadian is covered under our health system. Of course the costs have been rising, but where have they not been rising? The fact of the matter is that if you look at health care as a percentage of the gross national product, our publicly administered health system is a good investment in the health of our people.

Those people who would argue that we go back to private-enterprise days would be best to look very carefully at what is happening south of the border. Rather than getting more for less, the Americans are getting less for more. All one has to do is go to American hospitals. My brother-in-law is an administrator in one of the major hospitals in Boston. When one looks at the kinds of facilities that we have even in some of our smaller hospitals in Alberta, the fact of the matter is that they compare, and more than compare, with some of the largest hospitals in one of the great cities of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, the point that I want to make is that the health system that was pioneered by Mr. Justice Hall and others who fought the battle for publicly administered medicare, is a fine system. In my view, any proposal that alters that system is inconsistent with the principle and potentially injurious to the well-being of Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, I note that the second principle contained in the Hall commission report in 1964 is the principle of accessibility. How does Bill 98 relate to the question of accessibility? Members have every right to say: fine, we're in favor of the Hall commission report too; so what? The fact of the matter is that this Bill enshrines the principle of user fees, and so we have to ask ourselves whether or not user fees act as a barrier to accessibility to the system. As one looks back over the years in this country, we will find examples here and there of user fees being introduced. In Saskatchewan the Thatcher

government brought in a system of deterrent fees. There was a study by R. G. Beck on user fees in Saskatchewan. I would like to quote very briefly from that study:

... [the] burden of reduced utilization fell disproportionately on the aged, large families and the poor.

That was the conclusion in 1968.

We have the Ontario Council of Health study in 1979. Its observations with respect to user fees were:

... the groups who are most affected (by user charges) are the socially disadvantaged, the poor, and the elderly.

We have the second Hall commission report, which says:

The Poor who are extra-billed are significantly more likely to report that they have reduced utilization ...

Mr. Speaker, we have the views of Dr. Snider. Dr. Snider should be particularly known to the hon. Minister of the Environment and the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. This is the same Dr. Snider who was commissioned by this government to undertake a major investigation into the pollution problems in Pincher Creek. This is what Dr. Snider says in his study, the Northcott and Snider study:

User fees in the form of direct charges to the patient limit accessibility to medical services and therefore violate the principle of universal and equal access to [health] care ...

We have the Consumers' Association of Canada, Mr. Speaker, in 1983:

Hospital utilization has been steadily decreasing in Alberta for five years from 1,525 patient days in 1976 to 1,390 patient days in 1980. No abuse ...

I say with that in mind, why user fees under those circumstances?

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the question really has to be addressed. By bringing in a system of user fees, will we make it more difficult for people to have accessibility to the system? Members of this government can parade around the province and say no, but they have no evidence to back that statement. In contrast, I have presented to the Assembly tonight quotes from reputable authorities, people who are knowledgeable — not just one but a whole spate of authorities, including people who have been commissioned by this government to do important work for the government of Alberta — who are telling us very clearly that user fees will reduce the accessibility of Albertans to the system. If we reduce accessibility to the system, we are violating one of the important tenets of the Hall commission report in 1964. Mr. Speaker, before we jump on that bandwagon, I think we have to know very clearly what we're getting into and why. We have to be convinced by this government that there is no other choice.

But there is an even more important immediate issue that we're going to have to tackle. That is the question that when one reads the Hall commission report and you look at the hospitalization Act that was passed in 1957, we have a system of cost sharing between the federal and provincial governments, based on certain central assumptions. If those assumptions are altered in any way, shape, or form, then there is a real danger that at least part of that money will not be forthcoming. Members of this government who are continually crying about the financial woes of the province of Alberta had better think twice about altering a system which is potentially going to cost us tens and tens of millions of dollars.

I don't know how the new Act will be worded, Mr. Speaker. We have certainly heard a good deal of speculation in the recent visit of a federal minister of health to this province. She made it clear that the government of Canada is considering legislation which will penalize provinces which have user fees and extra

billing, and that for every dollar of user fees we will have a dollar less from the federal government. No one knows what the wording of that Act will be at this stage, because it has not been introduced in the House of Commons, but there is little doubt that when the new session is called we're going to see as a major piece of legislation a proposal from the government of Canada on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I see that the hon. Minister of Education across the way is smiling. His federal leader smiles even more graciously, much more often and much more effectively, I might add, than the Minister of Education. I have a hunch that when push comes to shove, Mulroney and the boys in Ottawa are going to be saying: we don't want to even hear from this bunch in Alberta; we're fully in favor of universal health care. If it means bringing in rules that will force provincial governments to live within the confines of the Hall commission report, then I have a sneaking suspicion that that's where the federal Tories will land. This government can scream all it likes, and the front bench can be very exercised, although at this stage they will have delegated all the power to the minister and so it will be totally up to the minister to have to deal with a Parliament of Canada that will not, in my guess, be divided between one party and two parties but will be unified in saying to provincial governments that have user fees and extra billing that that's inconsistent with the principles of the Hall commission report, and that is going to be a loss of funds.

Then we have the Provincial Treasurer, Mr. Speaker, who has to justify — what's the increase going to be next year? Thirteen per cent on January 1. What does the minister, the financial wizard of this government, the Provincial Treasurer, have to do when the Parliament of Canada passes legislation that will cut back funding in health care? I suspect that in the budget in March, we're going to have to increase personal income taxes even more. We're going to have to consider all kinds of other tax increases, because this government will have got itself into a corner where we are losing funds from the government of Canada.

So I would say that unless hon. members of the House feel that there's a bonanza out there that someone hasn't discovered — although I gather that Petro-Canada, the publicly owned oil company, has discovered 140 million barrels of oil in the Peace River country. It shows that some things can be done well by publicly administered concerns. But in any event, unless there are a lot more bonanzas of that scale, I don't know where this government is going to find the money if we're going to tell Madame Begin, Mr. Mulroney, and all the other officials of the federal government ...

MR. BATIUK: Broadbent.

MR. NOTLEY: ... indeed Mr. Broadbent as well, the federal MPs, Mr. Mazankowski from Vegreville, and all the others: you know, we don't care; we're going to go our own route. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not only going to be lonely. We're going to have Richard Hatfield and the Tories in Alberta. That's going to be quite a new relationship, let me tell you; quite an axis: the New Brunswick Hatfield Tories and Dave Russell and the crew here in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I say to hon. members of the House that during the next federal election campaign, I rather suspect there will be a directive coming out from Mr. Mulroney saying that whatever happens, provincial Tories, stay away from the federal campaign, because we don't want to have to lug the albatross of this government's position on medicare before the voters of Canada in the next election.

So on the issue of cost sharing, it seems to me that it is reckless indeed to pursue a policy which is going to flaunt the basic rule for cost sharing under existing legislation not to mention probable legislation, in all likelihood endorsed by all three parties in the House of Commons.

While I think the amendment has a lot of merit, Mr. Speaker, I think there is one aspect it doesn't deal with quite strongly enough. That is the issue of cost-sharing arrangements. So I would like to propose a subamendment that would add at the end of the amendment proposed by my hon. colleague, the words "and (3)". This is in deference to the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking: a new "(3)"; not "(4)" but "(3)", which says:

inconsistent with the provisions of the federal/provincial cost-sharing agreement under which Alberta receives federal money for the maintenance of the medicare program in Alberta.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, sitting here and listening to the debate, I could not help but get involved in it. When we look back just before the adjournment of November 4, the members in the opposition really wanted to know why we were adjourning and what constituents had to say about some of these things. I took advantage of those few days while we adjourned to travel the constituency and try to get information and the liking of constituents, particularly in three areas, Bills 81, 98, and 100. I'm waiting till we get into debate on Bill 81. I have some good statistics.

However, I didn't go to ask the people just what they wanted when I was throughout the communities. A number asked, aren't you in session now? I told them we adjourned and for what reason and so forth, and I wanted to take this time to find out the feelings of the constituents. One was hospital user fees. True enough, just like myself or anybody else, you don't like any added costs. But, Mr. Speaker, there are three active hospitals in the constituency that I have been very close to for many, many years, one of them a private hospital in my home town, Mundare, where I served on the advisory board in the 1960s. It's a private hospital, it has done well, and I was surprised to hear the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood say today that the private sector provides better health services than the public. I can well agree.

However, I would like to mention some of the statements the hon. Member for Little Bow had. I was on the advisory board of the Mundare hospital at the time he was minister of health and social development. The hospital, which was built in 1928, needed many renovations, yet the department of hospitals under the hon. minister at that time would not give approval, because the hospital that was built in 1928 cost \$28,000, and in the late '60s it would have cost close to \$200,000 to renovate it with a new water system and new everything. It was suggested to the hospital board that they should be looking at a new hospital, but there was never any approval for that.

This was not the only one. There were many such hospitals across the province, and just because of the stagnated procedure of the previous government, this government has to spend so much to catch up what was lost before.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I am reluctant to interrupt the hon. member, but we have a subamendment before the House. I don't know whether, in the distribution that was made a few moments ago, the hon. member received a copy of it. The subamendment changes the amendment by the addition of a third paragraph. May I respectfully suggest that he look at that subamendment and consider the question of whether or not the

amendment should be changed by means of adding the subamendment. I would have a little difficulty in relating what the hon. member has said to provincial/federal cost sharing.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, on this point of order, I would have got up previously to the subamendment, but I can see that this is an amendment to the amendment. This is an addition, and that's what I'm trying to get at. I thought the hon. leader, when he spoke just a while ago on the subamendment, went as far as the federal government on that, which had nothing consistent with the subamendment.

MR. SPEAKER: There may be a misapprehension here. My understanding is that when there is a subamendment, the mover is in a situation parallel to that of someone moving an amendment. As hon. members know, when a member is moving an amendment he or she is entitled to speak to the motion and the amendment in one speech. Likewise, as I understand it, if a subamendment is being moved, the mover of the subamendment is entitled to speak to the amendment and the subamendment in one speech. But once that subamendment has been moved, all others who speak after that must speak on the subamendment. If they wish to deal with the main amendment, they may do so after the subamendment has been dealt with.

MR. BATIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll abide by your ruling. However, I see a big envelope of subamendments coming up this evening. The hon. members of the opposition always ask that somebody from the government side speak, but they don't give them a chance. But if this is your ruling, I can wait for later on.

MR. MARTIN: I have to say again, Mr. Speaker, that I'm utterly surprised, utterly shocked, that my colleague wouldn't let me know he was going to improve my perfect amendment. Looking at it for the second time — the Member for Little Bow was able to do it, and now my hon. leader is able to make my amendment stronger. Next time I will have to look at it and check it out much closer, because I obviously missed a lot.

I rise, as I said, in utter surprise and have to look at it. It says:

inconsistent with the provisions of the federal/provincial cost-sharing agreement under which Alberta receives federal money for the maintenance of the medicare program in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in putting some thought to it, it seems to me that one of the key principles we've talked about is accessibility. We also know, and I noticed just the other night on television when Madame Begin, the federal minister, was through. She's clearly going to bring in a new Act at the federal level. If we can take the minister on her word, and I recognize that she's done a lot of talk and not much action in the past, it's clear there's a new federal Act going to be introduced in Parliament this session.

I know the Conservatives may say, well, it's just a matter of time. It may well be, but remember that the federal Liberal government can go for another year and a half, so it's clear that they can get through an Act like this. As my colleague said, it's not sure what Mr. Mulroney will do. As the minister is well aware, he has been skating around the issue because he's slightly embarrassed by what's going on with Conservative provinces on this issue. So I'm sure the minister is aware that even if Mr. Mulroney were the Prime Minister, he probably would not appeal that Act.

What Madame Begin is very clearly saying in this cost sharing, is that she believes in medicare and accessibility and, as

I understand her, that any province that allows user fees or double billing is in jeopardy of losing money under the cost-sharing program. She's talking about dollar for dollar. In terms of double billing, I know that in 1982 that was \$14 million. I expect it's more now with the recession, the fact that we're talking about zero increase in terms of the doctors' income. I know that will be worked out with the minister. We don't know — I know the minister doesn't — how many user fees hospital boards across the province are going to bring in. But it seems clear to me that we are taking a chance with a lot of money. User fees are certainly not going to make up — let's say it's \$14 million. That's at least \$28 million to \$30 million that we'd be losing. I think that is — and I hate to use the term — a conservative estimate.

The point we're making is that because this Act is coming in, we are in danger of losing a lot of money. The Provincial Treasurer is saying: we're broke; we need to raise income tax. Why, Mr. Speaker, should we be taking a chance right now? The minister himself said that he doesn't expect a lot of money to come in from user fees, but it's like losing \$2 there if we lose that user fee money from the federal government. The minister may say — I know he has, and he may have a case; we don't know — that we can declare war on Ottawa again, as we've done in the past. Maybe he thinks that this is popular politically. Maybe it is popular politically. I think people were behind this government in terms of oil pricing, but I don't think they are in terms of the medicare battle. I don't think they will be when they see that we have a chance of losing millions of dollars with fighting Ottawa; that we have a chance of losing millions and millions of dollars at a time when we're in restraint and we are holding the line, cutting people and all the rest of it, and talking about restraint.

So, Mr. Speaker, even if we go to court — and obviously the minister is getting advice; he's told us that we are on good legal grounds. Before they bring in a health Act, Madame Begin, the minister of health, must be getting some legal advice that she's on good ground too. Obviously we don't know who is going to win a legal case.

I don't think we're morally right here, but let's say, for instance, that we're legally right, which I don't believe we are. But for the sake of argument, let's say we were legally right. The amount of money that we will have to spend in court cases over a number of years is going to be a significant amount. I would suggest court cases are going to be in the millions of dollars, if we have to fight Ottawa.

So in a time of restraint, at a time when we're scrambling to get money, why take the chance with this now? The only reason I can come to is that we believe in private medicare. But the thing that we specifically do in this Bill is that before, the minister said he had control over it, that hospitals could apply to the minister and they could use user fees. To begin with it was October 1, and now it's January 1. Under this Bill, where we legitimize user fees, he cannot stop them. If any board wants to go ahead with user fees after this Bill is passed, if and when it's passed, they can go ahead. So the minister wouldn't have control, after Bill 98, even if he wanted to say: slow down, because we're in this war with Ottawa; we could be losing some money. The hospital board could say: no, I'm going to go ahead. Even if a board did that, that could be costing the provincial Treasury money under this new Act. So I see no sense to it.

I should at least say, Mr. Speaker, that we wait and see what the new Act says. Maybe Madame Begin isn't going to do the things that she says. Why then are we in a hurry? Before we pass this Bill, couldn't we wait and at least see what she tables this fall? It has to come up fairly soon. It seems to me that

would ultimately make good sense when we're talking about millions and millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, it's not just the money, it's not just the millions and millions of dollars. But if we start to lose money from the federal government in the cost sharing — and who knows what that will end up at if we're into user fees and more double billing — it could be a lot of money, and I'm sure the minister is aware. So we're risking that. But in the process, at the same time the Provincial Treasurer is pleading poverty, we would be seriously risking the health of Albertans. We'd be putting the health of Albertans in jeopardy.

I just do not see the point of it, even if we're going to barge ahead, and if the minister believes, as I do, that privatization is the route to go. I know the minister is conscious enough and cares about Albertans' health. I know he's concerned about money. Why push ahead with this now, before the federal? Let them at least lay their Bill down, see what we're into, and have his lawyers take a look at it to see that we are in as good legal shape as the minister has told us in this House. I think that would make perfect sense. I fear that we're not going to do that, or we wouldn't be pushing ahead right now with Bill 98. But I would say to the minister: think about it. How much longer can they be? If we take her on her word — maybe the minister doesn't want to do that. I can sympathize with him there; I don't particularly trust Liberals either. But she has said clearly "this fall", and I think she would lose face right across Canada, because she's made so clear that she is bringing in a new health Act. Where are we now? We're into the middle of November; that's only a month. The minister could take a look at it, and if he still feels as strongly about it he could come back with this Bill next spring.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I don't see the relevance to an existing federal/provincial agreement of what the hon. member is saying, and that's the narrow ground on which the subamendment is based.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. It's clear that if they bring in a federal Act, it's going to cut us off a lot of money in medicare. That's what I'm talking about.

MR. SPEAKER: That really has no bearing on the amendment. The amendment doesn't deal with a prospective federal Act. It deals with an existing federal/provincial agreement.

MR. MARTIN: It's inconsistent with the provisions of the federal/provincial cost-share. This is precisely what the federal minister of health is saying. She said very clearly that in her opinion, that is inconsistent with the federal/provincial cost-sharing agreement. She said clearly that she has legal counsel that says this also and, as a result this is why she is bringing this Act to Parliament. I'm saying that if she is correct, we should at least wait and see what that Bill is, so that we can make a case here in Alberta.

So I don't think what I'm saying is out of order. I think it's precisely on the provisions, but I was near the end of what I was going to say anyhow. With that, I would just say to the minister, think about it, for two reasons: the health of Albertans and the possibility of losing millions and millions of dollars. I think that is a very real possibility. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm not going to belabor the point, but what the hon. member just described as being in order is not what he said previously that was out of order. However, that's a device that's been used on me before.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would like your direction on the whole debate, including the amendments and the subamendments that are being put forward. I've been listening very carefully, and my understanding, from my years in this House, is that debate on second reading is a debate on the principle of the Bill. Now it's rather difficult, I know, to establish a principle in an omnibus Bill that contains amendments to several Acts. But the one which has received all the attention is the one which refers to user fees.

The principle of the Bill is not, and I repeat not, whether or not user fees should be legalized. They are legal now. They are going to come in January 1, 1984, in Alberta. The principle of the Bill is whether or not they should be done through order in council, upon application, or whether the responsibility should be delegated to the autonomous hospital boards. That is the principle of the Bill that ought to be debated: whether or not that authority should be delegated directly to the hospital boards. With respect, sir, I believe that the debate has ranged way, way beyond that principle.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order that the hon. minister has raised, it may well be that the precise definition of who will administer user fees in this Act is stated, but this is the first time the Legislature, in the form of a Bill, has had the opportunity to assess user fees. It's the first time that user fees have been given statutory recognition.

That being the case, Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of whether user fees are good or bad must surely be debatable. If the issue of whether they are good or bad cannot be debated in a Bill which gives statutory affirmation to the principle of user fees, no matter who administers them, then I suggest that this Legislature has very little role to play. We are the supreme governing body of the province, and we are now dealing with a Bill which, for the first time, recognizes in statute form a type of fee. Whether or not we like that fee is surely part and parcel of the principle of whether it's in the interests of this Legislature and the people of Alberta to give second reading to the Bill.

There are all kinds of other facets of this Bill. I think I mentioned that earlier this evening when another point of order was raised; no question about that. When we get to my remarks on the Bill, I can assure the hon. minister, as I go the 90 minutes, we will be dealing with the other aspects of the Bill as well. I wouldn't want him to think that we're just going to focus on one part of it. But an important element is user fees.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that under the circumstances it would only be appropriate that when we're dealing with second reading, we should have the right to express our opinion not only on the administration of user fees but on the principle.

When we get into committee stage, the hon. minister would be quite correct. When we get into committee stage and we talk about whether it should be administered by local hospital boards or what the caveat should be, that's the sort of opportunity to deal in a very detailed way with the mechanics. But on second reading, surely it would be a monstrous twist of the whole legislative process. I'm not saying that with any bad reflection on anybody, but it would be a monstrous suggestion that we are not able to address the principle of user fees. Surely it would be ludicrous to Albertans and other Canadians if the very Bill that gives statutory authority to user fees is so construed by those of us debating it that in fact we cannot discuss the principle during second reading. I suggest we would be rewriting a thousand years of parliamentary history if we were to take that kind of narrow approach at this juncture.

MR. RUSSELL: Speaking further to the point raised by the hon. leader, I submit very respectfully that there has been ample

opportunity by all members in the House to debate the principle of user fees since the government first announced its intention very early in the spring session. There followed the throne speech debate, the budget debate, and many private members' days when members have had ample opportunity to bring the matter forward by way of resolutions or Bills. There's been ample opportunity to debate the principle of user fees.

I submit again, sir, that that is not the principle that is enshrined in this Bill. Legally, user fees have been a point of law ever since medicare came to Alberta. They are legal. The amendment we are referring to in this Bill is whether or not hospitals, as autonomous, self-governing bodies, should be delegated the direct responsibility for evoking them or whether they should do it by way of a request to the Lieutenant Governor in Council, thereby getting an order in council passed.

So I submit that the arguments put forward by the hon. leader are not valid and that you have been extremely lenient, as we all have, in letting the debate range as far as it has, because it's gone way beyond the principle of the Bill, sir.

MR. NOTLEY: On the point of order. I don't want to get into a long debate with the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. However, the question is not the legality; it's the wisdom. That's what the whole question of second reading is about when we're talking about a principle, Mr. Speaker: it's the wisdom. That is clearly part and parcel of a discussion of the principle.

However, I would remind government members — and I hesitate to bring this to their attention, but I think hon. members should recall it. We have a system of time allocation. Conservatives in Ottawa call that closure; I'll just call it time allocation. Hon. members may recall that we did not get through the full opportunity to discuss the Hospitals and Medical Care debate last spring. In fact, time allocation seemed to come along. So while there was an opportunity to discuss user fees, I can assure the hon. minister that there were probably members on both sides of the House — I hope on both sides of the House — who would have wanted to discuss the matter further.

But the issue — and I just close on this, Mr. Speaker — is that in second reading we cannot, we can never, deal with the principle of any Bill unless we deal with its wisdom. That surely is what is at stake when we assess user fees. It seems to me that to construe it otherwise would be to so limit the debate on this important piece of legislation that if we begin to use that as a precedent, frankly I don't know what we can debate in this House. I think you have been correctly allowing the kind of latitude that is necessary on second reading for the full and proper debate of the principle. I do not think our time as members of the House is other than properly directed to assessing the principle to the full, not only the principle we're dealing with now but the other principles contained in the Act.

MR. SPEAKER: I think members will agree the question is not without some difficulty. There is one argument put forward by the hon. Leader of the Opposition which perhaps I should deal with first. That is the lack of opportunity or alleged lack of opportunity to debate. I don't see the relevance of that argument to this situation. The opportunity to debate is of course the opportunity to debate what's before the House. There may be all sorts of topics for which this Bill does not provide a vehicle of debate. That surely doesn't mean that since these other topics may not have been debated, this Bill should be made an excuse or a reason for debating those other topics.

What concerns me more is the principle of the Bill in regard to user fees. As I understand it, it first of all doesn't establish user fees. If the Bill were establishing user fees, then obviously a debate on the advisability of establishing user fees would be

totally in order and there would be a number of spinoff subjects of the kind that we've had where we've discussed accessibility and what effect it may have with the federal government and so on. But this Bill as I understand it doesn't establish user fees. It takes an established principle of user fees and changes its application. In other words, it can be done in a different way. It would seem to me that under those circumstances, that is what we should be debating.

There's a citation in *Beauchesne* which I think was referred to some days ago when we were also on second reading of a Bill. I had intervened when we were debating an amendment to a Bill and I noticed that the debate was dealing with the Act which was being amended and going beyond the scope of the amendment proposed in the Bill. The citation — I didn't have it at that time — is 739 of *Beauchesne*, on page 225. It says:

On the second reading of an amending bill it is the principle of the amending bill, not the principle of the Act, which is the "business under consideration". Debate and proposed amendments must therefore relate exclusively to the principle of the amending bill.

I'd be interested in hearing what the hon. Leader of the Opposition or any other member might wish to say about the applicability of that, it seems to me, eminently sensible rule of relevance to this particular situation.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of things I would like to raise on the point of order. The minister, not the opposition leader, said there was ample opportunity to debate. I agree with you that that's irrelevant in terms of the Act, but that was his statement. The point is that this Bill says — it changes it: can establish user fees. User fees are not a principle yet. We were told that they were coming in October 1; now they're not till January 1. They are not here yet.

The other point we are trying to make here, Mr. Speaker, is that this Bill changes it significantly. The minister still had control over whether or not user fees could be brought in. Under this Bill, any hospital board can change it. Surely what we're talking about is whether user fees are legitimized in this Bill for the first time. Because the only time we had — he brought it in at the budget speech, when we had only two of us to talk to it, and it was passed through the budget without any debate. It was brought in one night — a major Bill Estimates — closure was brought in. That was the only time we had to debate it.

But it's clear that user fees are not involved in this province yet. They are not here until January 1. This Bill changes it significantly. Now any hospital board does not even have to apply to the minister before they bring it in. I suggest to you that that changes the whole thrust of what we were debating before, even what we were talking about in the spring. This is the first legitimate attempt we've had to talk about user fees.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. With great respect, I think that when one reads the Bill, there can be no doubt that that Citation 739 directly applies. I suggest, sir, that you look on page 8 of the Bill. Section 53 is amended by adding a clause which says

"user charges" means charges, other than authorized charges, that are assessed or assessable directly against patients, or others responsible for patients, for insured services.

That's taken directly from the amending Act. If we are not able to assess the merits of that clause, I really wonder. The fact that it may be government policy is quite irrelevant. What we're talking about is an Act. It wasn't in the former Act. We're now talking about inserting it in the Act. If the government chooses to insert something in the Act, then there is no question;

739 directly makes discussion of user fees relevant. There can be no other interpretation. One reads what this Act says, 739 means it is an amendment to a piece of legislation we already have. That amendment directly relates to user fees. With great respect, Mr. Speaker, there can be no question that it is in order. The government may not like it to be in order, but it's in order.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, speaking further to the point of order, again I submit very respectfully that the matter is not whether user fees are legal as of any given date in Alberta but that the authority to invoke user fees is to be done in such and such a way. The authority to invoke user fees in Alberta has existed as long as medicare has. It has always been there. It has been the prerogative of the minister and Executive Council to establish charges between the hospital and the patient. That has always been there. Reading from page 8, section 62 of the Bill refers to the clause in the existing Act which refers to the regulation-making authority of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The principle of the Bill is whether the responsibility shall be delegated to the hospital boards or whether it must remain with the minister through Executive Council.

It's rather ironic, sir, that not half an hour ago the hon. members were arguing that we were taking too much authority onto ourselves, and now they're debating the fact that we are releasing authority. So I really don't know where they stand on that principle, but that's another issue in the Act.

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect, I think the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood was reworking the argument about opportunity for debate, and I really don't think that's relevant to this situation at all.

MR. MARTIN: The minister brought it up.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, he brought it up because it had been brought up prior to when he spoke.

MR. MARTIN: No. He's the one who brought it up, Mr. Speaker. In all due respect, the hon. minister is the one who brought it up.

MR. SPEAKER: Be that as it may, I must say that the fact that the definition of user fees is introduced by means of this Bill does cause me some concern. But it would seem to me that just clarifying the concept is not the sort of thing that would provide a vehicle for saying whether or not it ought to be done, unless there were some really fundamental lack of meaning and you didn't have any idea of what it was at all. This may be a more precise concept than what was previously understood.

I should say this. I'm reluctant to take the time of the House in this way, but there are some parliaments in which amendments of this kind are not sprung on the Speaker. I'm not trying to be bitter about that at all but that is really in fact what happens. In some parliaments, proposed amendments to a Bill are submitted to a Speaker well in advance, and in some cases he has the authority to choose which amendments are going to be debated. I'm not suggesting that this House should change to adopt that custom: that's not something I'm going to promote. But I must say that it does explain why, when some of these novel situations arise where one doesn't wish to be rash in forming a quick judgment, it gives rise to a lack of instant wisdom.

Under the circumstances, it would be my respectful suggestion to the House that I might reserve on the point of order and that the debate might continue on the course on which it was.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in a way I rather hesitate to get involved in the debate at this time, because it has narrowed itself very significantly as I understand it. We'll accept that we're discussing the principle of the Bill, the fact as to who authorizes user fees, the cabinet or the local hospital board. In the subamendment we have before us, we're saying that that particular principle is inconsistent with the provisions of the federal/provincial cost-sharing agreement under which Alberta receives federal money for the maintenance of the medicare program in Alberta.

When you discuss the concept, that being the inconsistency, you must relate it to which body, in a sense, can make it consistent, the cabinet or the local hospital board, in terms of charging the user fee. I guess it doesn't matter, in terms of that very narrow definition we have established here in your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

I don't think we would be in the situation tonight of having to judge whether it's inconsistent or not if as a provincial government greater representation, greater pressure, would have been made to Ottawa, or the slogan that was used some years ago in 1969 and '70 by the now Provincial Treasurer — "on to Ottawa" to get the funds we deserve. I remember that coaxing and urging being spoken many times in this Legislature by the hon. Provincial Treasurer, urging the Sacred government to go down to Ottawa and get our share of what we should have.

We look at the budgets of the federal government in terms of what they're spending on the cost-shared programs.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm reluctant to interrupt the hon. member, but may I draw his attention also to the subamendment. It would seem to me that this subamendment is pure and simple a legal matter, as to whether or not a certain contract is being violated. May I respectfully suggest that that's the narrow topic which we should be debating.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, not having that contract in front of me, I understand that the contract allows the provincial government to gain a certain percentage of funds and, as I review some of the budgets here, somewhere in the vicinity of \$300 million toward the payment of health care, extended care, and hospital care services in the province of Alberta.

The point I was making with regard to that legal agreement and the inconsistency that exists between this Act and the cost-sharing agreement is that the federal government as well is not living up to the commitment of that agreement and is causing the inconsistency that's facing us at the present time. The Hall commission report that was the basis for the agreement between Alberta and Ottawa indicated that at that point in our history, in 1957 dollars the federal government should be contributing something like \$8 billion toward the medicare/hospital programs of Canada. As we examine the budgets, we see that they're only contributing something like \$5 billion.

So when we look at the different parts of this argument we're having, the two sides of the inconsistency, we find that the cost-sharing agreement is being broken by Ottawa in not fulfilling their commitments, then in turn we have a government in Alberta that is saying we're trying to decide who should authorize user charges. Maybe the question is, why are they here in the first place and what has brought us to this point in time, to bring us to that very decision? Not to try to make any excuses for the Alberta government, it is the federal government that has led us to a position of inconsistency in causing us to bring this Bill before this Legislature. Certainly on that basis, that's unacceptable. But as well, the weakness has occurred where the provincial government, through the Minister of Hos-



pitals and Medical Care, has not made the case to Ottawa that Ottawa must live up to the agreement and that we are only trying to take rear-guard action to try to protect our position in Alberta by bringing user charges on the people of Alberta. Now we're trying to decide who should implement them, the cabinet or the local hospital board. That's a very unfortunate situation.

So I would say, Mr. Speaker, that there is the inconsistency that exists in a very narrow way. On that basis how can we support second reading of this particular Bill?

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question on the subamendment?

[Mr. Speaker declared the subamendment lost. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Martin	Notley	Speaker R.
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Against the motion:

Alexander	King	Paproski
Batiuk	Koper	Purdy
Bradley	Koziak	Reid
Carter	Lee	Russell
Cook	Lysons	Shaben
Cripps	McPherson	Shrake
Drobot	Moore, R.	Sparrow
Elliott	Musgreave	Thompson
Embury	Nelson	Topolnisky
Gogo	Osterman	Trynchy
Hyndman	Pahl	Zip
Jonson		

Totals	Ayes - 3	Noes - 34
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MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question on the amendment?

[Mr. Speaker declared the amendment lost. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Martin	Notley	Speaker, R.
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Against the motion:

Alexander	King	Paproski
Batiuk	Koper	Purdy
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Hyndman	Pahl	Zip
Jonson		

Totals:	Ayes - 3	Noes - 34
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MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, I have to rise and support the

Bill. I started some of my comments earlier, and was brought up on a point of order. I don't want to repeat them, because I'm sure most of the members heard them. I know hearing repetition continuously from the opposition makes me think of a cracked record that always comes to that one point. So rather than do that, I hope I could bring some of my comments.

I mentioned earlier how the hospital system ran when the hon. Member for Little Bow was minister of health and social development. At that time, 4 mills were assessed against the property to help defray the costs. In 1971, very shortly after the Progressive Conservative government was elected, there was a task force called the municipal/provincial task force on finances. There were five members on it: the members of that day for Calgary North Hill, Ponoka, Innisfail, Drayton Valley, and Vegreville. One of the first recommendations we made was to remove the 4 mills of hospital tax and remove the school foundation program. We felt that if the province was in a position, it should be picking up these social services costs.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I served on the local hospital advisory board. This was a private hospital, and because it was a private hospital they were discriminated against. They were not able to assess the 4 mills against the property tax and had to work on whatever was possible. Charity helped and so forth. When we took off the 4 mills, that hospital has operated till today on a non-deficit. Maybe they learned how to control their budget and so forth. To this day there is no deficit, and this hospital has already announced that they are not going to implement user fees. That is the authority this Bill was to give them, I guess.

There were two other active hospitals which also had deficits continuously, one particularly in Two Hills. I spoke to the hospital board just a couple of days ago at the municipal convention. They had been having deficits for years and years, and when the announcement was made that they may be given the opportunity to implement user fees to cover those costs, for two months already the Two Hills hospital has operated on a surplus. I really feel that the implementation of this will give authority to hospitals to decide whether they want to administer within the money that's provided for them, or user fees. I particularly believe that all the hospitals in my constituency will not be taking advantage of user fees. They are going to be able to manage on what is appropriated.

It's very interesting to see the hon. members of the opposition, particularly the Leader of the Opposition, stand and continuously defend the federal government and Madame Begin. There is nothing wrong. If Madame Begin wants to put on the restrictions, she can, but I just can't see her trying to use the whip on other provinces. If there is an estimated cost of \$40 million, which she was predicting, I still think that should be attributed to the provinces. She may say, well, we're going to put on a lid; if you're going to have user fees, we won't provide you any more above that \$40 [million]. But to say that we're going to cut you off totally is still using that whip that probably is used in the Soviet Union. I can see why the hon. Leader of the Opposition stands so much behind the federal government. There have even been rumors in the constituency that should the Prime Minister resign, the hon. leader may seek the leadership. I think he'd do a very good job. I think he'd fit the shoes very well.

MR. NOTLEY: How about the swimming pool, John? Do I get the swimming pool?

MR. BATIUK: Very recently one of my constituents, who was always a strong supporter of the New Democratic Party, stated that at the last federal elections he supported the Liberal Party.

He said the reason for that was that the NDP didn't stand a hope in hell of a chance federally, and that the Liberals weren't so very much different.

Mr. Speaker, when I went throughout the constituency to get the feeling of the people on this issue, I took the *Hansard* of April 11 and showed the people in the constituency the statements the hon. leader made on April 11: there should be no hospital user fees; income tax — let those who can afford it pay.

MR. NOTLEY: We're getting both now.

MR. BATIUK: It's changed 180 degrees.

Mr. Speaker, this 13 per cent of income tax is not only for hospitals. Our education costs have soared. Our social services and other things have soared. I know that nobody likes income tax, regardless of whether it's for hospital use or anything else. But I tried to make it clear to the people that in 1975, when the income tax of this province was reduced by 28 per cent because the province didn't need it — the savings that people had for all those eight years. Now, with this increase of 13 per cent, the provincial income tax in Alberta is going to be lower by far than any other province.

True enough, maybe we do not need an income tax, but where are we going to get the money to cover these high costs for education, for hospitals, for anything else? Would they want a sales tax? The people told me no. Would they want to remove the natural price protection plan, a program for everybody? No. Should the senior citizens' supplement be taken away from them? Again, they didn't want that. Maybe the widows' allowance should be cancelled. That would provide more money for other areas. Or the home improvement program for senior citizens. What about the Ag. Development Corporation or the

Alberta Opportunity Company? Should we go back to the 4 mills the former Social Credit government had on hospitalization?

Putting all these together, Mr. Speaker, the people in my constituency realize — and I don't care who comes with petitions and so forth — it's well sold. They stand and make it loud and clear that this is one step to provide an incentive for hospital boards to try to manage within the approved costs and, secondly, for people to do away with abuse in hospital services.

Again, the Leader of the Opposition likes to talk about Saskatchewan, how things are good there. I just checked in. Saskatchewan is not going to put in user fees. I know they won't. But when you see that the present support for hospitals in Saskatchewan is only 60 per cent, 40 per cent has to be picked up locally for hospital costs. If this was in Alberta, Two Hills would not be preparing for a new hospital at present. They have approval for a \$10 million hospital. The local people would have had to raise \$4 million. They would never have seen a hospital there.

So, Mr. Speaker, all in all I think that this Bill is going to provide and give authority to some bodies to give them the opportunity. I favor the Bill. I think it's a necessity. It may not solve everything, but it's sure a step in the right direction.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I thought I would advise members that tomorrow morning we propose to deal with Bill No. 100, the Alberta Income Tax Amendment Act, 1983 (No. 2) and, if there is time, other Bills on the Order Paper that are available for second reading.

[At 10:37 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]