

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, March 21, 1984 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to introduce to you and to members of this Assembly a truly distinguished Canadian: Calgary Citizen of the Year, 1960; recipient of the Prime Minister's Medal for the State of Israel; recipient of the Alberta Achievement Award, 1974; recipient of the John Diefenbaker Memorial Award; and above all, a Member of the Order of Canada. I might say that there is soon to be an announcement that this gentleman's family will have received a total of five awards for Member of the Order of Canada, a significant achievement indeed.

I particularly want to draw to the attention of yourself and the Minister of Culture that to date this Canadian has raised \$11 million for the Calgary Centre for the Performing Arts. I ask members of the House to give a special, warm, and affectionate welcome to a great Albertan and, I'm proud to say, a great Calgarian, Dr. Harry Cohen.

head: **READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I move that the petition presented to this Assembly yesterday be read and received.

MR. SPEAKER: I haven't received a report on the petitions as yet. Perhaps I can advert to it again tomorrow.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 5**Young Offenders Act**

MR. HIEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being the Young Offenders Act.

This Bill was introduced last fall and allowed to stand over on the Order Paper. In the intervening three months, a number of seminars with respect to the Bill were held in Lethbridge, Calgary, and Edmonton. Various people from police agencies, the Solicitor General's department, social services people, court staff, and prosecution staff were allowed to participate in the seminar, where the legislation was explained and was open to queries. The Bill is essentially the same as introduced last fall, with some minor modifications.

[Leave granted; Bill 5 read a first time]

Bill 14**Pipeline Amendment Act, 1984**

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill No. 14, the Pipeline Amendment Act, 1984.

[Leave granted; Bill 14 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bills 5 and 14 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

Bill 202**Teaching Practice Institute Act**

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 202, the Teaching Practice Institute Act.

The purpose of the Bill will be to establish an institute of teaching practice, associated with the university, which would have as its objective the improvement and development of effective practice in teaching.

[Leave granted; Bill 202 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the first triennial report of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. Members who were in this Legislature at the time the research trust was established by a special Act will recall that this first triennial report is required to be referred to our Standing select committee on the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Frankly, the report is full of very good news, and I'm sure hon. members will be very pleased to see the work and progress of the trust during the past three years.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file with the Legislative Assembly copies of correspondence sent to the mayor of Edmonton by me, dated February 20, February 21, March 5, and March 7, and a copy of correspondence from the MLA for Edmonton Gold Bar, as chairman of the Edmonton government caucus committee, to city of Edmonton aldermen, dated February 21. All the correspondence I referred to pertains to matters between Alberta Government Telephones and Edmonton Telephones.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Public Contributions Act 32nd annual report, which is for 1983.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. STILES: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly a group of 30 ladies, the Jackson Women's Institute. The Jackson district is situated in the west-central part of the constituency of Olds-Didsbury, probably one of the best mixed-farming districts in Alberta. It's an area, sir, that is known for the development of the family farm, and I think it would be safe to say that the women's institutes across the province have had a great deal to do with the maintenance and development of the family farm.

They are led by Mrs. Alma Bird and are accompanied by Harold and Leona Schielke, their bus driver and his wife, from

Carstairs. They're seated in the public gallery, and I ask them to rise now and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the privilege of introducing to you and to members of the Assembly 95 students from Cochrane. Today we have with us 78 students from the grade 8 classes at Manachaban school in Cochrane. They're accompanied by their teachers Catherine Buchanan, Gaye Bonnett, John Holstein, and Vera Frieze, and by their bus driver Alf Prozny. Would they please rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly some 25 students from Chimo school, which is an alternate school for young adults in the Edmonton Norwood riding. They're accompanied by their teachers Jane Gateman, Duane Steil, Ross Armour, and Steve Rossall. They are seated in the public gallery. I ask them to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to members of the House, 50 grade 6 students from the Greenfield school in the constituency of Edmonton Whitemud. They're here today under the direction of their teachers Mrs. Joan Williams and Mr. Steve L'Heureux. They're in the public gallery. I'd like them to stand and receive the welcome of the House.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of Manpower

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the \$20 million I announced on Monday, which has been allocated for this year's summer temporary employment program, the government of Alberta is pleased to announce three one-year employment and training programs totalling \$26 million. These programs will start April 1, 1984, and will end March 31, 1985. Together they are expected to provide approximately 10,000 employment and training opportunities for Albertans.

This government has said many times before that the private sector is the engine that drives our economy. As such, all three programs are directed at the private sector, and they are designed to stimulate Alberta's job market. The government believes that the year-round nature of these programs will provide employers with the flexibility they need to fully utilize available employment and training funds. I am confident that today's \$26 million initiative will be welcomed by all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, I would like briefly to describe the three programs to which I have been referring. Job opportunities for unemployed Albertans will be provided through the wage subsidy program. This program will assist Alberta businesses and farms to create employment openings, retain employees who face potential layoffs, and enhance the career development of Albertans through meaningful work experience. Approximately 4,000 Albertans will benefit from this program. The government will reimburse employers on an equal cost-shared basis up to \$2.50 per hour, to a maximum of a six-month period.

Training opportunities will be provided through the Alberta training program and the private vocational schools program. The Alberta training program will provide funding assistance to private-sector employers to train, retrain, and upgrade the skills of existing and newly hired employees. This program,

which is expected to benefit approximately 5,000 Albertans, will also help postsecondary graduates obtain on-the-job work experience and training. The government will reimburse employers on an equal cost-shared basis, up to a maximum of \$300 per week.

The private vocational schools program will assist licensed private vocational schools to provide vocational training for Albertans who need to upgrade or acquire new skills in order to improve their employment prospects. Funding will be provided to cover course tuition fees, books, and supplies in areas of critical skill shortages. This program will benefit an estimated 1,000 Albertans.

Application forms for the three programs and other related information will be available in early April.

On a final note, Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize that no consideration has been given at this time to continuing these programs beyond their termination date of March 31, 1985.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Fisheries Act Violations

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my first question to the hon. Associate Minister of Public Lands and Wildlife. It's with respect to the Canada Fisheries Act. Given the government's view of the regulatory nature of this legislation with respect to the Luscar Sterco prosecution, could the minister advise the Assembly of the reason the government decided to proceed with laying charges for fish and game poaching against some 71 individuals, mainly native individuals, at least some of these charges coming under the Alberta fisheries regulation pursuant to the Canada Fisheries Act?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, ever since I took office, there have been numerous complaints with reference to the illegal marketing of fish and wildlife. A special investigation crew was set up last fall and worked over the winter months. The charges that were laid were an accumulation of that total study that had been demanded by commercial fishermen and fish and game associations. We know there was a lot of illegal trafficking going on, and the charges were the result of that.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Given the minister's management approach with respect to the Fisheries Act, what meeting was held between the minister and the Indian Association of Alberta and/or with the individuals concerned, to see if some special arrangement could be worked out to end the violations?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I did not ask for and did not have the names of any of the individuals involved. And in the case of the Luscar aspect, I personally did not at any time talk to any of the officials.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, could the minister advise the Assembly whether, in his responsibility as minister, he gave any consideration to other options such as perhaps withholding renewal of fishing licences from these individuals, rather than laying charges — in the same way, for example, as withholding royalty relief was set out with respect to Luscar Sterco.

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, we found from the investigation that there was a very massive amount of illegal trafficking going on. The department highly recommended that

they follow through and lay those charges. I did not try to stop them.

At the same time, learning from that, we have found that there are other problems. One is that the marketing of fresh fish is not being done in a very orderly way, which allows this black market to take place. A lot of work is now being done with the fresh fish marketing board to increase the markets for commercial fishermen in this province, and we're working hard with them to improve those markets on a legal base.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. minister. Given the assertion of the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources that, in terms of legal process, money was saved by not moving ahead with charges against Luscar Sterco, could the minister advise the Assembly whether he has any general estimate as to the costs of acquiring the information necessary to lay the charges, and any anticipated cost to the taxpayers of Alberta of proceeding with these charges against the individuals concerned?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I do not have them here with me today. I'm sure the department has them.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister advise the Assembly whether this government has any overall policy with respect to dealing with charges against individuals, as opposed to companies, when we examine so-called regulatory statutes?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, if every rule and regulation under the Fisheries Act and the Wildlife Act were to be rigidly upheld — I would like the hon. member of the opposition to volunteer his constituency; we would have the officers uphold each and every regulation for one month, and you'd find out what would happen.

Every officer has to use discretion, as does every police officer. They use discretion continuously, with every individual case, and only lay charges when they feel they have to.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, when they feel they have to.

Unemployment

MR. NOTLEY: My second question is to the hon. Provincial Treasurer. It deals with the forecast of a private firm, the Manpower Temporary Services concern of Toronto, indicating that in the last quarter of 1984, two cities of the 33 surveyed, Edmonton and Calgary, will have no growth in employment. Indeed, Edmonton will have a 5.9 percent decrease in hiring. This is a survey of employers. Bearing this survey of management in mind, will there be any special initiatives to deal with the particular problems of unemployment in the city of Edmonton?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. leader should listen to the announcement just made by my colleague behind me, the Minister of Manpower, which is one of now nine or 10 initiatives by this government.

There's no question that there is unemployment in the province, and we're all concerned about that. But let's remember that there have been problem sectors. There has been overbuilding, particularly in the construction industry in 1980 and 1981; there was an overmigration situation, which is now sorting itself out. We do have to remember that the unemployment levels in this province are in line with the national average;

they're not significantly higher than the national average. Let's also remember a very basic strength; that is, the highest level of employment as a percentage of the population in Alberta of any province in Canada, so a greater residual strength in terms of employment — over a million people working in Alberta — than other provinces. Those should be borne in mind when we're talking about unemployment.

MR. MARTIN: Sounds like Marc Lalonde.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, could the Provincial Treasurer reconcile this prestigious management survey report for Edmonton with his statement last Friday, that the economy is expected to strengthen considerably in 1984? Will that strengthening be outside Edmonton, or does the minister take issue with this survey of hiring intentions by companies in Edmonton and Calgary?

MR. SPEAKER: I have some concern about the survey. I know it was introduced by the hon. leader by way of giving information with which he wanted to perhaps develop some inconsistency or perceived inconsistency. However, the question having been asked in that form, it would be less than fair if it were not answered.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether the survey reports that there is probably the highest level of employment in Edmonton as opposed to other cities in Canada. That's probably within the statistics, if he looks at that.

As we indicated in the throne speech — and it's a fact — 1984 will see the economy strengthen considerably. There's no question that generally in Alberta, in 1984 we again have the strongest economy in Canada, because we again have the highest level of employment. The unemployment is there, but it's at the national average. Month after month, the highest per capita retail sales and expenditures are in the province of Alberta; the highest take-home pay of a family, for example, with an income of \$30,000. So those are facts. They're there. Certainly there will be individual variances. If the hon. member wants to pick out one or two, I'd be happy to discuss them further in the budget speech.

MR. MARTIN: Lou, your nose is growing.

MR. NOTLEY: Yes, one or two differences — like the 5.9 percent drop in hiring.

Electric Power Generation

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the hon. Provincial Treasurer whether, in view of this not optimistic outlook for Edmonton, the government is giving any consideration to guaranteeing that power could be brought on stream from the Genesee project so that the project could in fact proceed on target, as one method of generating some economic activity in the Edmonton area?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications to respond to that.

MR. BOGLE: Very clearly, Mr. Speaker, in the decision reached by government, the ability is there for the owner of both the Genesee and Sheerness projects to proceed at their own discretion, as long as there's a clear recognition that it's also at their own risk. The power plants would not be commissioned until such time as the electricity is in fact needed.

In its decision, cabinet further indicated that the companies are encouraged to examine whether or not there is a potential for the export of surplus power from the province, which in turn would help the proponents of the project come to a positive decision.

MRS. CRIPPS: Supplementary. Has the minister had any information from or correspondence with other people interested in the Genesee power plant proceeding, indicating that they are willing to compromise in order to get that project under way?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, the only query, if I might put it in that way, was from the mayor of Edmonton, inquiring as to whether or not the city of Edmonton could withdraw from the Electric Energy Marketing Agency. In his view, that would in some way enhance the options available to the city of Edmonton as the owner of Edmonton Power. We have responded to the city of Edmonton by stating that while we caution the city — we believe they should move very, very carefully in analyzing the advantages and disadvantages in such a request and looking at the facts, which clearly indicate that Edmonton was a net beneficiary of in excess of \$12.5 million in 1982 — clearly the decision rests with the city of Edmonton in that regard.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Has the minister any information or can the minister provide any information as to the impact to increase costs of electricity to other areas of the province, should the proposed plants start up ahead of the express need for electricity in the province?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, it's important to separate the decisions which have been made. The decision as to whether or not construction proceeds rests solely with the owners of the plants. Therefore, as has been argued by at least the city of Edmonton and several building trades contractors and union representatives, that because of current economic conditions the plant could in fact be built at a more favourable cost today, clearly the opportunity is there for the construction to proceed.

In answer to the second part of the hon. member's question, Mr. Speaker, it's important to recognize that the Energy Resources Conservation Board order re the scheduling of commissioning of the plants was upheld by the cabinet, which means in essence that the plants ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. minister, but it seems to me that we're getting farther and farther away from the question, which was whether the minister had information concerning some additional costs which might arise from these plants coming on stream before the power was needed.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar indicated his intention a moment ago, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I have two short questions to the hon. minister. Before the last election, it seemed quite appropriate to be discussing the Slave River project, which was quite active. Can the minister indicate what stage that project is at, at this time? What are the studies? Also, could the minister give the Assembly a ballpark figure of how much money we've spent on that study?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated in the Assembly on a number of occasions, we are currently in what is

commonly referred to as the pre-investment phase of Slave River. By that I mean that the two utility companies that, in a feasibility sense, are actively pursuing the options available on Slave River — TransAlta Utilities and Alberta Power — along with the government of Alberta, are examining the various options we have. Those studies are under way.

Mr. Speaker, the second part of the question, as to the approximate costs, might best be dealt with on the Order Paper, as it does have some detail and I don't have that at my fingertips.

MR. HIEBERT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the mayor is the one that raised the question about getting out of the energy marketing agency, has the minister received anything specifically from the mayor as to their final determination on that question?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, late last week, I believe, we received two letters from the mayor of Edmonton, requesting some further explanation of options the city may have. I'll be responding to the mayor on that matter within a day or so, to assist the city in coming to a conclusion.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, one supplementary to the minister, because I'm not sure what he said. Would the minister indicate to the Assembly whether he favours Edmonton being allowed to drop out of the energy marketing agency? Is that his stand? I'm not clear on that.

MR. BOGLE: Clearly, Mr. Speaker, it's a not a matter I should be voicing an opinion on. I have tried very hard to indicate — and I'll be pleased to file with the Assembly correspondence to the city, where we've indicated that if the city chooses by a resolution of city council to withdraw from the Electric Energy Marketing Agency, I'm certainly prepared to make that recommendation to cabinet. But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, we've cautioned city council to weigh very carefully what is at stake, when recognizing that in the last calendar year the city benefited, through cross-subsidization, in excess of \$12.5 million from the TransAlta franchise area of the province.

Mortgage Company Investigation

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney General and is with regard to the Dial concern. Why was the prosecution in consideration of George de Rappard and other Dial officials halted, when it was known that Mr. de Rappard had signed a prospectus on November 29, 1979, claiming there was a full, true, and plain disclosure of all material facts when it was known that a damaging financial report of September 10, 1979, was not included? Mr. Speaker, I'd appreciate the minister clarifying that matter.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is raising a couple of documents out of the mass of documents that was considered by the police and by Crown attorneys over a period of many months. In the result of that consideration, the opinion that was arrived at, based on all available evidence, was that there would be no basis for any charges being laid in respect of any of the incidents or activities relative to the documents or any of the other material the hon. leader referred to just now.

I should add that that opinion, based on information provided following police investigation, was provided to three senior Crown counsel, each of whom independently arrived at his own opinion. Those three independent opinions were then provided to the Deputy Attorney General, who concurred in them and

advised me of the result of the deliberations of those four law officers.

Mr. Speaker, the part of this that I think I would like to emphasize, beyond the fact of the independent operation in arriving at this conclusion by the Crown counsel, is the fact that it is part of a customary, normal procedure which is very familiar to the police and to Crown counsel that the police, whichever police force in the province it may be, present their information and know at the time they present it that the legal opinion is not something they're in a position to deal with. They must look to the Crown attorneys for that, and that was done.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary with regard to the time of four hours for briefing by the RCMP and one weekend to read and digest a one-foot thick file and mass of papers, as the minister indicated. Could the minister indicate why that limited time was made available for that consideration?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like respond to the hon. member in this way: I don't know if he has ever heard any criticism of me for purporting to interfere with what people do in respect of their duties as Crown attorneys, but I want to assure him that my custom is to take the advice of senior officials. My concern in respect of this matter was precisely the same as the one raised by the hon. leader of the Independents, and that was that all normal procedures be followed. When I asked the senior officers of the Crown whether or not the matter could be concluded within a certain time frame, which was just under a month, and all normal procedures could be followed in the process of concluding it, the answer to me was, yes, that could be done.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, prior to his leaving the province and the Minister of Municipal Affairs becoming the acting minister, did the Attorney General inform the acting minister that the firing of Crown prosecutor John Faulkner was a decision that was made internally and that it was not made by the Attorney General, as has been reported?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. As a former member of the Executive Council, the hon. leader will know that communications among ministers with regard to matters involving the public concerns of the province and communications within cabinet generally are not subjects for the question period.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Attorney General, the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Could the minister indicate whether he was aware of the position of the Attorney General? Why did the Acting Attorney General, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, deny that the Attorney General was involved in the firing? Why did the minister take that position?

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, in the process of ministers and acting ministers, the acting minister normally responds when the minister is not present. In this particular case, the minister is present. So in that set of circumstances, I do not act. [interjections]

MR. CRAWFORD: I wonder if I might do two things. One is that I would like to correct a portion of an answer just given. I've just done one of my almost infallible calculations. I indicated to the hon. leader of the Independents that the time frame allotted was probably just under a month. In fact, it was almost

exactly three weeks, and I didn't want to leave the impression that it was longer than three weeks.

If I may volunteer information, Mr. Speaker, in respect of the termination of the contract of Mr. Faulkner — I think I may have earlier mentioned to hon. members what the circumstances of that were, but perhaps not with the final detail or so that the hon. leader has now asked for. The circumstances are that this was a three-year contract of employment which had run over two years of its course. From that contract of employment, it is clear that a dismissal — it's an effective dismissal; it's really a termination of a contract — can take place any time, for cause. I said earlier that in order to avoid controversy, I didn't proceed under that part of the contract. I proceeded under another part of the contract, which was in the same section — a different subsection — that provided that either party might terminate the contract on six months' notice. That is how it was done, Mr. Speaker, in order that, as I've indicated, controversy would be avoided.

DR. BUCK: That's not the question, Neil.

MR. CRAWFORD: The other aspect of it is that that was my decision. The discussion I had with officials extended over some period of time. They and I viewed as a grave matter that a Crown counsel would publicly discuss a case and allow himself to be involved in a situation where the name of any citizen was being used in respect of an investigation, where the investigation was in process and there was no indication, at that point, as to whether or not any charge would be justified.

In the result, the Deputy Attorney General recommended to me that in those circumstances the termination clause should be used rather than some other form of discipline. I asked for some time to consider that, because I knew that to be the maximum penalty.

MR. SPEAKER: I have some difficulty connecting the hon. Attorney General's remarks with the question. In the first part of his remarks, I did follow that he was amplifying and refining some previously given information in regard to that question. But it now seems to me that we're going into a general review of facts which, as far as I know, are generally known to the public.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs: on January 19, 1984, why did you as a minister deny that the Attorney General was involved in the firing? That's your responsibility.

MR. NOTLEY: Because he didn't know what he was talking about.

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, without assuming that I have a responsibility to answer the question, because of the fact that I know what the rules of the House are with respect to a minister's responsibility relative to a previous portfolio, I'll respond in a personal way, without suggesting that there is in any way a precedent to my response. That is strictly this: the event happened after the Attorney General was out of the province. I was asked a question on my way to cabinet. I merely presumed that because the event happened while he was absent, it was an internal management matter, and made that remark in answer to a question.

Temporary Staff Services

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Personnel Administration. Now that the government has a new code word, privatization, can the minister outline if privatization is being pursued primarily in order to cut back government expenses or for some other reason?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, the throne speech clearly indicated a number of objectives for our government and is now subject to debate in the Assembly. If the member wishes to ask a specific question regarding the portfolio for which I have responsibility, I'd be pleased to answer. But I think basically the question he has asked is now the subject of debate, and it's one of the objectives of our government.

MR. MARTIN: Supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. In deciding to proceed with the elimination of the temporary staff services program, what review did the government undertake of the fact that the average wage paid to these people was \$8 per hour, while the going rate charged by those who contract private secretarial firms is between \$13 and \$16 per hour?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I have no ability to predict or understand where the Member for Edmonton Norwood has figures of this nature. I would indicate that the decision to disband the temporary staff services function effective June 1 was made for a number of reasons, the first being primarily to ensure that Albertans continue to receive good and efficient public service in an economical manner. The second factor was to do with the concern that all of us as ministers, and our government, have about the size of our government. By disbanding this service and utilizing the ability of the private sector — encouraging the private sector to replace that service — six positions and the employees in those positions could be effectively utilized elsewhere in the Personnel Administration office.

MR. MARTIN: Supplementary question to the minister. As he said: "continue to receive good ... service". Does the government have an estimate of how much extra — surely they have this — it will cost to eliminate the temporary staff services program?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, the member continually refers to some figures or some comments or conjecture. Basically the decision to disband the service was made in order to ensure that we could encourage that service to be provided by the private sector. A number of companies have given bids in response to a call for proposals; I believe it's in the order of over 30. Those companies' proposals to conduct the service for the government are now being evaluated. I have every confidence that we will find that the service costs will be, if not the same, in fact less.

MR. MARTIN: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. It's clear the government didn't assess the cost.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. And might this be the last supplementary on this.

MR. MARTIN: Well, there's a lot of questions to ask. We'll go into this question, then, and say it very clearly: has the government assessed the possible increasing cost of privati-

zation if boom times recur, or are they confident that their policies will keep Alberta in a recession forever?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I think perhaps that little bit of debate could be just passed over.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'll ask if he assessed the increase in costs of privatizing the services if boom times recur?

MR. STEVENS: Again, Mr. Speaker, I believe that's a hypothetical question. I am very confident that, as the Treasurer indicated and as was indicated in the throne speech, our economy in Alberta is in a very good and strong position. The best estimate I can currently give the members is that we expect this service, which will be done by the private sector effective June 1, will provide the people of Alberta with an economical service and meet the needs of the departments. No jobs are lost. In fact, the placements will continue to be provided to the government by use of the private sector.

AOC Loans

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Tourism and Small Business. In view of the high unemployment rate in Edmonton, I would like to ask the minister to comment as to why no Alberta Opportunity Company funds were provided to Edmontonians during the month of January?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, my answer is that the number of applications made by the private sector to AOC may have been either nil or few or not acceptable to the Alberta Opportunity Company at that particular level.

I should point out that the funds are provided based on applications from the private sector — from the business community at large, whether in northern Alberta, central Alberta, southern Alberta, Calgary, or Edmonton. On the basis of that application and its ability to be viable and make the payments, it would then be judged as being eligible for AOC funds, after having been turned down by the private-sector lending institutions.

MR. PAPROSKI: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I sincerely believe a city that has one-third of the population of the province surely warrants more than 5 percent of AOC funding. Could the minister please advise the House if it is government policy to provide only 5 percent funding to the city of Edmonton through AOC funds?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, government policy is to allow the private sector to make applications if they deem it necessary to receive funds.

I was just attempting to look through my notes to see what may have occurred in other months. In the month of December the city of Edmonton received more funding for loans than any other area in the province. Northern Alberta received roughly \$1 million; central Alberta, \$867,000; southern Alberta, \$472,000; Calgary, \$1 million; and Edmonton, \$1.2 million. So I assume only that the applications made by the companies, by the individual applicants to AOC, are based on what their need is, not on what we think should be the amount of money going to an area.

I should also go back to point out that the original idea of the Alberta Opportunity Company was to assist as a lender of last resort primarily in those areas where the private-sector lending institutions were not interested in going, and that was

primarily rural Alberta. In the two metropolitan centres, the funding and the servicing capacity was there for the private sector to respond, and generally they had responded. So it's not to say there should be any set percentage of money assigned to an area.

The historical distribution of funds between rural Alberta or the various districts is roughly 25 to 27 percent in northern, central, and southern, and between 10 and 13 per cent in Edmonton and Calgary — 10 or 11 percent in each of them or 11 to 12 percent in each of them — based, though, on the applications of the private sector, not a distribution or a direct search for places to place money. That must come voluntarily from the community and private-sector businesses.

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

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I suppose I am requesting the minister's response, in wondering whether he could advise AOC officials or communicate with them that when you have a population of 12 per cent of a city unemployed, there could be any type of shift in the emphasis to more funds to a city like Edmonton.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I guess I have to reiterate that unless the private-sector companies request assistance, AOC won't be searching for it; in other words, they're there as a lender of last resort to assist that private-sector community and companies anywhere in the province of Alberta. But primarily it has been the case in rural Alberta to fund them as a lender of last resort if the private-sector lending institutions are not providing it. If they are providing it, I would then assume there's no need to request money from the Alberta Opportunity Company.

Red Meat Stabilization

MRS. CRIPPS: My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Agriculture. Could the minister advise the Assembly as to the present status of the red meat stabilization program?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the program is coming along very well. Within the province there seems to be general support toward a national plan. In the last meeting of ministers, there seemed to be general support right across the country toward a national red meat stabilization plan.

MRS. CRIPPS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister has indicated in a number of speeches that he will not sign an agreement without the support of the producers. How do you propose to assess that support?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I have said on a number of occasions that I would not sign any agreement on behalf of the province of Alberta without general support from the industry. I have been meeting with the producers, both individually and collectively in the groups within the province, to assess on an ongoing basis whether or not there was that support. I would remind the hon. member that the program is voluntary. It's voluntary on behalf of the producer, on whether he joins. Also, a part of the plan will be that if a producer does join and wants to opt out at a later date, he is able to do that. So the program is indeed voluntary, but I am closely assessing the general support there is for the plan.

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

MRS. CRIPPS: A supplementary, Mr. Minister. At this time the Alberta Cattle Commission has been selected as the primary spokesman. On what basis was this selection made?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, during the negotiations at the national level, the groups that were chosen to be participants in the ongoing negotiations were the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the Canadian Pork Council, and the Canadian Sheep Council, as well as the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. These groups are responsible for co-ordinating and distributing all relative material throughout the provinces. The Alberta Cattle Commission is a provincial body of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association; therefore they were the natural one to choose to work with me on it.

I might add that the Alberta Cattle Commission is now working within their zones to assess very closely the support for the program.

Social Allowance

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health. The minister has indicated that he expects his department to save \$50 million this year from the social allowance budget. Could he explain how this has occurred?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, members will recall that last spring in the Legislature, a number of changes were made to the social allowance program, including a 5 percent increase in allowances for food, as well as increases in the amounts that social allowance recipients could receive before any benefits were reduced. But an important aspect of those changes was the reduced shelter ceilings, the amount of money that would be paid out for rent and accommodation costs. Those were reduced because of an increasing vacancy rate in the province. As it has turned out, the vacancy increased beyond what might have been expected at that time. We predicted that we might be able to save up to some \$50 million in the process, and it looks as though that will be achieved.

I think this response is in line with our objective of fiscal responsibility to the people of Alberta, while at the same time I am proud of the system we have. In terms of social allowance, that is the best system in Canada.

MR. SZWENDER: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. With that answer, what evidence has the minister that there was no general hardship to social allowance recipients over the past winter months because of the policy changes announced a year ago, particularly with relation to the shelter allowance?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, we made provision for the regional directors in the province to look at special considerations for cases brought to their attention either by social workers in the department or those people outside the department that encountered people with hardship cases. We did respond in a number of ways, by dealing with the issue of arrears in utilities during the winter months, plus additional winter clothing allowance and other changes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that this whole area is not just the responsibility of government; it's the responsibility of the community, church, and government. I am pleased with the response we've had from the other agencies, the food banks in the inner city areas of Edmonton and Calgary primarily, and other parts of the province as well. I think we've established a good liaison with these agencies. Over the period of time, I also met with the leaders of the different groups and

agencies that were offering these services and indicated to them that I would address specific concerns, should they be brought to my attention.

In one particular case, I met with the president and executive director of the Canadian Mental Health Association. They had raised what they initially considered to be some grave concerns and subsequently wrote to me, on January 4 this year, and indicated they were writing to confirm the fact that their initial concerns were apparently unfounded. They go on to indicate in the letter that they are "not aware of a single situation, province wide, where the reductions have created exceptional hardship". Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file copies of that letter with the Legislature.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, just to clarify what the minister is saying, to make sure I'm not misunderstanding him. Is the minister saying that the protection of the poor is not the responsibility of the government but is the responsibility of the community and the private sector?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the member sitting opposite obviously doesn't listen very carefully. If he had paid attention — and he could also read *Hansard* — he would have noticed the fact that I consider social issues to be the responsibility of not just government but of the family, the church, the community, and government.

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

MR. MARTIN: So is the minister clearly saying that he is very proud of food banks in Alberta?

DR. WEBBER: In my view, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is again twisting what I said. I am saying that I am proud of the response of the community groups and the churches to the need that existed in various parts of the province. I think they should be commended for the work they have done.

Gifted and Talented Students

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Education and is in reference to his recent announcement to provide additional support for instruction of gifted students. Could the minister advise whether he anticipates that these programs will be incorporated in the same classroom as programs that are in existence for regular and weaker or slower learners?

DR. BUCK: The budget will be coming down Tuesday. That's what he tells us.

MR. KING: I would like to thank the hon. Member for Little Bow for keeping such good track of my calendar for me.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's Clover Bar.

DR. BUCK: You can't even count to four. King. One, two, three, four.

MR. KING: Not all the good news is in the budget. It sometimes comes out in advance of the budget, although unfortunately hon. members opposite don't often read it. The financial assistance that was promised in the news release of January 12 will be available to boards for programs that might be provided in a variety of settings. In some cases we expect that they will

take gifted and talented children out of the classroom for short periods of time, perhaps half a day, one day a week. In some cases we expect that it will be special projects within the child's regular classroom, in which case the gifted or talented pupil would be working in the same classroom, as the hon. member described just a moment ago. In some cases it may involve grouping gifted and talented children together in a classroom of common interest. We expect the boards to make that kind of decision depending upon what is appropriate in the local school or local jurisdiction.

MR. BATIUK: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Decentralization is well accepted by Albertans, and the school boards' policy is to make better utilization of classrooms. I am wondering whether programs such as this are going to create a tendency to centralize.

MR. SPEAKER: It would seem to me that that is really a matter of opinion. It is even asking for a prediction. Perhaps the hon. member could discuss that directly with the Minister of Education, and they could speculate as to what the effect of the program might be.

MR. KING: Mr. Speaker, without giving an opinion, I can say that as a result of a study of the model by which we had previously provided special education support for students such as the hearing or visually impaired, it was our conclusion that there was indeed some tendency to centralization. Because of that conclusion, resulting on study, the financial program is modelled in a new way as of January 1 this year. It is our expectation that this new financial program will not have the same tendency towards centralization that was in the pre-existing program.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Might we revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. ALEXANDER: Earlier I inadvertently introduced a group of phantom students who have now materialized. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the House, the real 49 grade 6 students from Greenfield school in the constituency of Edmonton Whitemud, who are accompanied by their teachers Joan Williams and Steve L'Heureux. They really are seated in the public gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

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

Moved by Mr. McPherson:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta as follows:

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

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the

gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate March 19: Mr. Kowalski]

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the annual debate on the Speech from the Throne affords all members with an opportunity to talk about a document of some significance and importance to all the people of Alberta. Of course it is one of two that is issued each year by this government of which I am a very, very proud member: the Speech from the Throne and the annual budget document, which traditionally comes down a number of days after the Speech from the Throne.

In taking the opportunity to spend a few minutes in brief comments with respect to the document, one could of course view it from a number of different perspectives. The document this year is one that I am extremely proud of, because it is a document which I think really reflects the concerns of the people of Alberta. It has been written basically by a lot of individuals who are very much in touch with what the people of Alberta are talking about. There are essentially two themes that I would like to make mention of in the brief minutes allocated to me this afternoon.

The first is the theme dealing with the enormity of the specifics contained in the Speech from the Throne. As I go through it in the remaining minutes afforded me, I want to make mention of the large number of projects that we have under way, have committed to, or have highlighted as objectives we want to aim for in the future.

The second theme that I think needs to be exercised again and again is the acute modesty shown by the government which I am a member of. There is one thing that we perhaps do not do quite as well as we might; that is, putting out our chests just a little farther in allowing ourselves to convey to the people of Alberta the large number of programs we have under way for them. We very, very seldom do that to the degree we should. As we proceed in the continuing part of this Speech from the Throne, I want to make mention of that modesty by way of a number of examples.

Mr. Speaker, at the outset it is important to let all members know that life goes on in the constituency that I represent. Perhaps it is important once again to allow members to sit back and reflect on life within the constituency of Barrhead. I certainly want to do that by a brief travelogue.

The constituency I represent begins just a few miles from the spot we are standing in today. It essentially begins within about 25 miles of the city of Edmonton, and the most southeasterly quadrant of the constituency contains a small village called Onoway. Onoway has only about 665 people, and in 1983 it celebrated its 60th anniversary. Of course its history goes back much beyond the 60 years, but it was 61 years ago that it was incorporated as a municipality. It first came to the attention of the early pioneers in this province because it was directly in the path that our early Christian missionaries, who opened much of the territory of this province, used in making their way to such historic place names as Lac Ste. Anne and Lac La Nonne. Those missionaries of course were of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches, and others followed thereafter. They made early comments and met with the native people in the area.

I am extremely proud that we have the Alexis Indian Reserve within the constituency that I represent, a reserve that is very close to me and that I have a multitude of opportunities to visit each year.

When you go approximately 100 miles north of Onoway, you have to go north of a rather progressive town that is not

within the constituency of Barrhead, and that's the town of Westlock. We skirt it — there's a constituency boundary a bit to the west of that — and keep going north to some more historic areas in the province of Alberta, and finally end up at a place called Jarvie. Two rivers come together near Jarvie, the Athabasca River, one of the magnanimous waterways in our country, and the Pembina River. At a little place where the two rivers meet, we have a locale known as Athabina, an acronym, I guess, taken from both Athabasca and Pembina. From there we go about 100, 110, 120 miles straight west to a point about 10 to 15 miles north of the now rediscovered town of Swan Hills; from Swan Hills, south and a bit east down to a spot between two small communities, Sangudo and Cherrill; and then south and east again, straight back to that point south of Onoway.

Within that geography live some 11,500 voters and some 28,000 to 29,000 people. The constituency itself is a very, very diverse constituency in the sense that its topography is almost a mosaic of the province of Alberta. In the southeast quadrant we have prime agricultural land, a bit rolling. As we continue to go north and west, we get into a much, much richer agricultural plain. It includes such significantly historic communities as Neerlandia, which is located north of the town of Barrhead and was settled by people from Holland in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Of course after the devastation of World War II, they came in additional numbers and have turned what surely was nothing more than muskeg 40 and 50 years ago into one of the most productive agricultural areas in the province of Alberta.

As we continue west and north, we cross the Athabasca River, which I've already talked about. From that point on, when we leave a little village called Fort Assiniboine — Fort Assiniboine is the second oldest community in the province of Alberta; it was founded by traders with the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1832 — we move into forestry land. For approximately 50 miles we leave the agricultural part of the constituency I represent and go into enormous timberlands, until finally we reach the community of Swan Hills. We climb nearly 2,000 feet in elevation from when we leave the community of Barrhead till we finally arrive at Swan Hills. It's interesting to note that Swan Hills is higher above sea level than Banff is. There is a part, a small ecological reserve to the north of the town of Swan Hills, which is nearly 4,550 feet above sea level.

In addition to the Pembina River and Athabasca River, we have another river that all the men and women in this Assembly have heard talk about in recent years, amplified by some who've never visited or been close to it, but of course also talked about generously by those who are very familiar with it. That is the infamous Paddle River.

Mr. Speaker, the people who live in the constituency of Barrhead are almost as diverse as the topography itself and, of course, they have come because of this diversity. We have people who represent all nationalities of the world, and I'm extremely proud of that. In 1983 when our government, through one of its agencies, promoted the very important humanistic philosophy, Alberta is for All of Us, I can assure you, sir, and all members of this Assembly that I felt very much a part of it. With the multitude of people we have in our community, it is really significant. Each year in the major town in our constituency, we have a cultural days fair. In previous years, we've had the German people come forward and use their culture, traditions, and history as the theme for the fair. Last year it was the Dutch people.

Mr. Speaker, all the economic activities we have in the constituency I represent, be it agriculture, forestry, the gas and

oil industry, or simply a service industry, are important to me. They give us a diversity that is very, very rich and very, very important. I've talked to a number of people from all these sectors I've made mention of here in the last few minutes, and I've had a chance to talk to them since last Thursday when His Honour the Lieutenant Governor introduced his speech, a speech which in effect may become very historic in the sense that His Honour is now in the fifth year of his term. It is in the fifth year that changes are traditionally made in the appointments of Lieutenant Governors. The Speech from the Throne given last Thursday by Mr. Lynch-Staunton may very well be the last he will be reading to us in his capacity as Lieutenant Governor.

My constituents have basically said that they are pleased with the efforts of the government. They're extremely pleased with the initiatives that have been outlined in the speech. It's extremely important, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the priorities for action that were outlined for the fiscal year 1984-85, that we're looking at a government on the move. We're certainly looking at a government that's in touch with its citizens. When we look at priority number one, fiscal policy directions, it certainly indicates without any doubt whatsoever that the second major document that will be delivered to all the people of Alberta will be the budget document. That, of course, will come down next Tuesday.

When you look at the one-sentence statement with respect to fiscal policy directions outlined in the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, it's quite interesting that in essence we're talking about several major concerns. We're talking about "balancing fiscal responsibility with an economic climate that will stimulate growth and jobs in the private sector ...". When we look at the five points outlined on the first page of the Speech from the Throne, it's encouraging to me that in the five priorities listed, in only half a dozen sentences, the words "stimulate", "private", "competitive", and "privatization" are used more than half a dozen times. Those words are used more than half a dozen times in only six sentences.

I've never bothered to take the half hour that it would probably take me to go through this document and circle the words privatization, government commitment to private enterprise, deregulation, stimulation, competition, and the number of times those words are used in this particular speech, but it is significant. Without any doubt, in talking to the constituents I represent, they have expressed a desire to see our government move increasingly more in those directions. In many of the debates that were held in this Assembly in the last fiscal year, many hon. members stood up and said that this is where we should be going. This government listens and, because of that, we are on the move.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to make mention in a very, very simplistic way that while the budget speech will be the second most important document brought forward in this current fiscal year, in recent days at least one hon. member of this House has sort of speculated that a certain kind of tax is going to be introduced by the Provincial Treasurer next Tuesday. Of course I'm one of those who doesn't believe that, and I would just suggest to all hon. members that that's little more than balloons flying in the air. I'm pretty proud that not too long ago the constituency association that I'm a very, very proud member of passed a resolution that will be going to a very significant gathering of responsible citizens in the province of Alberta who are also builders, people committed to improving the quality of life in our society, and that is the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta. The constituency association I represent will be bringing forward a resolution, and I think it's important that all hon. members know what that

resolution is. Very simply: Be it resolved that the Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta opposes the introduction of a sales tax in the Province of Alberta. We expect to have that resolution endorsed by the convention delegates.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at all the priorities, there's no doubt at all that it is timely that we look at basic educational reform. All members will recall that following the election of 1979 — an election in which a large number of people in this province turned out at the polls and said, hey, we like your style, we're going to vote for you; and they did — the Premier announced that one of the real concerns he wanted to attack in that time frame after 1979 was the whole question of education.

Unfortunately, all of Canada was saddened on that dark and gloomy day of October 30, 1980, when a band of skulduggery, bandits, call them what you like, decided in Ottawa that they were going to inflict on all the innocent people of Canada a document called the National Energy Program. Thereafter, so much of the energy, time, and perspective of good, positive thought had to be directed in order to fight that infamous document. Shortly after that, we were involved in another debate, one dealing with the Constitution. In essence, both of those issues are now partially behind us. Now is the time to look at the whole question of education.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the commitment this government has made to education over the last number of years, I think it's extremely significant. I think it's also very important that we put the whole debate on education in the proper perspective that it deserves, from an historical point of view, from an economic point of view and, most of all, from a demographic point of view. It's interesting to note that in the year 1971, when our party formed the government, there were 424,000 students enrolled in classrooms in Alberta from grade 1 to grade 12. In 1975-76, that number reduced itself to 422,000. In the last fiscal year, 1983-84, there were 423,000 students in Alberta schools in grade 1 to grade 12. What is really significant is that in that time frame of 12 or 13 years, the population of Alberta increased nearly 50 percent, from just a little less than 1.6 million people to about 2.3 million to 2.4 million people. In essence, what we're having is a demographic transition in our society. The number of children we have in our schools has not increased over a 13 year period. The population of our province has increased nearly 50 percent.

The dollars that were allocated have increased enormously and significantly. No matter how one views inflation rates over the 12 or 13 year period from 1971 to 1984, they nowhere match the amount of increased spending that has been allocated to education in this province. I'm not sure what the figure is in the provincial budget that will come down next Tuesday, but I would imagine that as a percentage, the amount of dollars we will be asked to approve and vote on for the fiscal year 1984-85 will probably amount to something in the neighbourhood of 22 to 24 percent of the total provincial budget. Nearly one dollar in four will be asked to be conveyed to education once again.

We have to look not only at education in 1984; we have to look at where we as a society are going to be in the year 2010. It's my understanding that today one in 10 citizens of our country — and the same percentage basically applies to citizens in Alberta — are senior citizens. In the year 2010, that percentage will probably rise to two in five, or 40 percent of the population of our country. When we talk about education today, we have to be aware of what kind of society we're going to have 25 years from now. If one in four dollars today in this province is expended on education. I would quite humbly suggest that one of the great fights in the years to come is going to be the fight by the groups interested in education — and I

have two children, and it's very, very important to me — to retain the percentage factor of the provincial budget currently allocated to education.

When we talk about education, without any doubt we have to talk about the services we are providing to the universities, the technical schools, the trade schools, early childhood education, and adult education — increasingly important. I had a unique opportunity last Friday to bring greetings to the 10th anniversary of the further education council that was created in the community I currently live in. It's amazing to me that in a town of only 3,825 people that little volunteer group of people in the last 10 years has provided further education courses to over 5,000 adults. The interest is there, and that commitment will of course have to continue and be part of the whole debate for the future.

Mr. Speaker, as we stand here today, education and the debate on it is of crucial importance to all the people of Alberta. The throne speech outlines a series of commitments that are either under way or are going to be more fully amplified in the months to come. I doubt that there is one citizen in the province of Alberta who is critical of the initiative taken by our government to create the Committee on Tolerance and Understanding, to ask a series of well-respected citizens in this province to go out and listen to people on those two very important subjects. Alberta is for all of us, and in inviting groups, individuals, institutions to put forward their views on both tolerance and understanding, I think that committee has been extremely well received by the citizens of this province. I for one very much look forward to receiving a copy of the report, which I sincerely hope will be before the end of 1984.

The review of Alberta's junior and senior high school programs got under way in the last several weeks with the issuing of a document called Review to all citizens in the province of Alberta. I think it's extremely well written, extremely well done, and I sincerely hope that hundreds of thousands of people in this province are going to take the time to look at the 108 questions and provide the comments that our government wants to hear from people with respect to their concerns and their ideas about education.

Mr. Speaker, from time to time we're told that we don't talk to people; we're out of touch; we don't care what people are saying. There has to be a million of these hanging around in people's homes right now, and I sincerely hope that never in the history of Alberta have people been given a greater opportunity to forward their specific views on as crucial a matter, as crucial a subject, as education. It's an extremely easy document to read, extremely well written. I'm just fascinated by the first question, where somebody said: "Why can't students graduating from high school read and write well?" I'm not even sure that's proper usage of the English language, but I'm sure it will be an attention grabber. I expect that my constituents will be participating in that in a pretty dramatic way.

Following on the heels of this — we're not stopping there; we want to get some things done. In the next several weeks, Alberta Education, through the excellent direction provided by its current minister, will be following a similar procedure, a similar project: looking at the review of the School Act. A number of very fundamental questions will have to be dealt with, with respect to that. Mr. Speaker, it's going to be a very busy year for all those people in Alberta who believe a debate on education is not only timely but necessary. I for one look forward to it, because I intend to get very much involved in it.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the other three priorities that have been identified for action in this fiscal year, we have one

called deregulation. What's the basic purpose behind deregulation? It's to

reduce or eliminate unnecessary or obsolete regulations which frustrate or complicate the lives of our citizens as well as the operations of businesses.

Boy, I'm for that. I can't believe how many of my constituents have very politely said to me: you know, Ken, it's kind of nice what you're doing for us there in Edmonton, but we would like you to take a look at this or that rule. It's a commitment we have made, and it's a provincewide commitment. In the throne speech, we have a number of examples currently listed in that regard.

I'm also very pleased that we have a committee of our party which has dedicated itself, almost on a volunteer basis, to listening to all the people in Alberta, to receive views, submissions, and briefs from them on this whole question of deregulation.

I've already made mention of the fourth priority contained in the Speech from the Throne, expanded privatization. I said a little earlier, how modest we really are. Mr. Speaker, when you take a look at the word "privatization", the throne speech says: "Building on the successful privatization of Pacific Western Airlines ... It seems that enormous accomplishment and change in direction by our government last year almost went unnoticed. It's amazing to me. I guess it was because it was so successful. If in fact the people of Alberta had not bought up those shares, we might have seen headlines about it. We might have heard people criticize, and we might have heard some comments from those people who like to write doom and gloom stories about everything else. But because it was so successful, it's almost become a thing of the past.

It's also of quite considerable interest to me that in the last number of weeks, a very — again, overly — modest press release was put out by the Minister of Recreation and Parks. I really respect the man, and I know that he's a modest fellow. On February 17, 1984, he issued a press release, Mr. Speaker, and I think a lot of us have to help him tell everybody in Alberta what this is all about. Here's what it says:

Alberta Recreation and Parks is doubling the value of private sector contracts in the day-to-day operation of its 160 provincial parks and recreation areas.

More than 100 work projects in camping and recreation areas will go up for private sector bid this spring.

We're now talking about the private sector supplying some \$6.7 million in contract work and materials for capital reconstruction in provincial parks. This is an increase of 18 percent over last year's contract volume. Rather modestly, in small type, the minister is quoted as saying:

The Alberta Government is committed to a strong healthy private sector. That's where these jobs belong.

And isn't he right? That's exactly where we belong. I admire the man, but sometimes I think he should really get up and pound his chest a little more, maybe yell a little more at the top of his lungs and say: hey, this is what we're doing; we're working with you; we're not working against you. If we don't do it, Mr. Speaker, you can be assured that there'll be some others out there who will be suggesting this just ain't the way it really is. That's only one example of overmodesty.

I've got to make a brief comment about priority number five which deals with legislative proposals. When we got re-elected in 1982, we said that we were going to do a number of things in 1983. It's amazing to me — no, it's not amazing to me; I knew it was going to happen. In 1983 we fulfilled every one of the campaign commitments we made prior to the election of 1982. We haven't stopped there, because we're a growing concern and a government in touch with the people.

In terms of the major legislative proposals outlined in the Speech from the Throne, there are a number that I intend to take a very active interest in the debate on and a very active interest in participation with respect to them.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many things in the Speech from the Throne that one can comment on. I simply want to amplify, by way of another example, a very, very modest statement. It occurs on page 9 and deals with energy and natural resources. We've heard a lot of debate about the manpower situation and the unemployment concern in the province of Alberta. On page 9 we have a statement that contains five words. It says: "Syncrude confirmed its expansion plans".

Syncrude's confirmation of its expansion plans relates to a \$1.2 billion expansion program that will provide over 24,000 man-years of employment between 1983 and 1987. The work provided will be for such diverse trades as pipe fitters, insulators, metalworkers, the trucking industry, general labourers, and engineering firms in the province of Alberta. Well over 75 percent of that \$1.2 billion capital outlay is expected to be spent in Alberta, which will increase the number of indirect jobs associated with that one interestingly modest, innocuous little statement. If I didn't know better, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure I could have read right over that and thought: what the heck, they're probably painting a few buildings up there or some dam thing; putting a little gravel down on one of the roads in the north forty or the tailing ponds; maybe putting another shotgun up to scare some bird that might rest on one of the ponds on its way south to Bonnyville and Wainwright and warmer climes in the southern United States. I'm continuously amazed — \$1.2 billion contained in the statement, "Syncrude confirmed its expansion plans".

Mr. Speaker, there's been some debate about rural hospitals in the last couple of months. I represent a constituency that has a town of some 2,600 or 2,700 people. The town is called Swan Hills and is some 65 miles away from the town of Barrhead. Barrhead has a very excellent 85-bed hospital. Because this government cares, we are building a hospital in the town of Swan Hills. I've heard the debate that it is really quite ludicrous for this government to waste money on small town hospitals in these isolated rural places. It's significant for me, as a rural member, to say that it's my understanding that some 80 percent of the dollars currently expended on hospital care and construction in this province goes to the 20 largest major hospitals in Alberta.

The people of Swan Hills have lived in that community since 1957. Swan Hills was the first oil patch north of Highway 16 to have been opened in the province of Alberta. Its 2,600 or so people are very unique in the sense that there's only one senior citizen living in the town of Swan Hills, and that person became a senior citizen only because they turned 65 last year. If I'd given this speech two years ago, I could have said there were zero senior citizens in the town of Swan Hills. What Swan Hills has is a demographic makeup that sees the average age of its population to be about 15 and a half years of age.

I have worked very hard for a hospital in Swan Hills, because I think mothers and fathers have the right to feel secure, that if there is a problem with one of their children, they do not have to pack that child up in the dead of a winter's night and travel some 60, 70, or 80 miles to go to a hospital in a community that may not necessarily be as warm to them as the community in which they themselves live. I'm proud of our record of accomplishment in improving medical facilities in rural Alberta. It's something that I will have no difficulty debating with anybody anywhere in this province. It will be a worthwhile venture, a worthwhile project. The people of Swan Hills will sleep much more comfortably one year from now when

that hospital is completed. Those who would argue that we should ignore rural Alberta are really the enemies of the people.

Mr. Speaker, when I was elected several years ago and had an opportunity to be in the Assembly to provide my opening remarks, I indicated that the new MLA for Barrhead was a positive person. He wasn't a negative person. He always viewed himself as a builder, rather than a whiner and a complainer. I indicated then, sir, that the MLA for Barrhead was a person who would work harmoniously with his colleagues in this Assembly and would be a proud member of this Assembly. My philosophy of life has not changed in the past five years. I look forward to working with all my colleagues in this very important Legislature in the province of Alberta.

Thank you very much.

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, it's a real pleasure for me to take part in the throne speech today. It will give me an opportunity to look at some of the priorities we have and how they relate to my constituency. I'm going to speak mainly on agriculture and oil, because those are the main economic parts of my community.

Before I do that, Mr. Speaker, with your permission of course, I would like to stray a little bit off the throne speech to say how much we as members appreciate the manner in which you conduct the business of this House. I've always been pleasantly surprised, as I'm sure many other members have been, at the businesslike manner in which, under your leadership, you run this House. I would also like you to know that in this regard you're supported not only by the members of the Assembly but by all Albertans.

While I'm here, I would also like to congratulate the members for Red Deer and Wainwright on the fine job they did in moving and seconding the throne speech. I thought the hon. Member for Red Deer said it very ably when he said that the average Albertan knows that you can't buy your way out of an economic downturn by simply increasing your deficit. The people of my constituency at least, and I'm sure all over Alberta, expect their government to follow the private sector in taking a realistic approach to the economic situation we now face. They are expecting the government to make better use of the funds they have available and, at the same time, ensure that Albertans receive the needed services that are second to none.

In my opinion, Alberta has started back to a stable economy with a slow and steady growth. We will probably never see the rapid growth we saw during the late '70s and early '80s. I see the future growth in Alberta as slow but steady, based not on speculation and expectation but on experience, hard work, and a lasting foundation. Mr. Speaker, I believe the lessons learned in the last few years, though hard, will in the long run be beneficial and well remembered by both government and the private sector of this province.

As the economy of the Drumheller constituency relies almost totally on agriculture and the oil and gas industry. I would like to touch very briefly on these two areas which make up the main part of our economy. During the late '70s and '80s, in the entire Drumheller constituency there was a major increase in oil and gas activity. Although oil was discovered in the area many years ago, it wasn't until the latter part of the '70s that it really became active. This was mainly due to the fact that thanks to some of the incentive programs this government put in, there was a lot of oil research done. They could increase the capacity of the low-producing wells, and raising the price made the wells in our area a viable proposition. There developed a real push to develop the known reserves within the area and to find new fields. As a result of this and the fact that it

was a shallow formation and cheap and easy to drill, you couldn't look across the country at night and not see two, three, or four oil wells lighting up the night sky. With the economic downturn and the national energy program, this activity slowed, and the result was felt in every community.

In driving through my constituency last week, I was pleased to see that those rigs are back. Granted, they're not back to the same extent they were. But there are some there, and there are a lot more than there were in the last two years. The landmen for the companies are going around to the farmers again. The industry seems to be on the move, not with the same sort of reckless abandon it had before but on the move, making jobs in our small communities, putting some of our truckers to work, and putting some of our service rigs back in the field.

I believe that the slowdown in the gas and oil industry will bring a realization to everybody in Alberta and Canada of just how important this industry is. As the industry makes its slow and steady recovery, I'm sure all Albertans will remember and encourage this industry within this province. It is certainly hoped that the federal government will do likewise, because I'm sure they've also learned a lesson the hard way. It is an industry that has an impact on the whole of Canada, not just Alberta. I believe the last couple of years will be well remembered. That lesson has been well learned and will be well remembered all through Canada.

Mr. Speaker, one cannot drive through the Drumheller constituency without seeing and feeling the importance of the agricultural industry in every community. We are fortunate in most areas in my constituency that in the last couple of years we have had average or better than average crops. We are also fortunate in having some of the most skilled and progressive-thinking farmers in Alberta. They use the most modern equipment, the best farming practices, and together with other farmers in Canada, make up the most efficient industry that Canada has today. Regardless of the fact that the input costs for fuel, fertilizer, and equipment have risen sharply and regardless of the fact that the price of their products has fallen, the farmers of this province have set record productions. Farm products have also made up the highest percentage of Canadian exports. No other industry in Canada that I know of can even come close to that performance record. I believe all Albertans and all Canadians should realize the importance of this industry not only to Alberta but to the nation as a whole.

But you have to ask yourself a question, Mr. Speaker. How long can the agricultural industry remain strong and competitive if what they sell continues to decrease while their input costs continue to rise? In the last couple of years, we have seen a pretty good example of what happens in other industries when this comes about. Many of the businesses are no longer with us. I believe we must realize that in the agricultural industry there is a point of no return, a point where even an efficient industry must stop and reassess its positions. Agribusiness in the areas that I represent is in serious trouble. The reason is simply that because of lack of cash flow, the farmers no longer have the money to buy the new equipment and farm machinery that they had at one time.

It may be more truthful to say that in the last few years in the farming industry the cash flow is still there, but it's kind of flowing in the wrong direction. When this happens in the farming community, the farmers quit buying and repercussions are felt right up into our major cities. This is why it is so very important that we do everything to ensure markets for our farm products. For every day that a farmer has to store his grain on the farm, his input costs rise in interest. For every time there's a strike at the coast, the input cost to the farmer rises in the form of storage and other costs. They can't sell their grain.

Even the little change we make in reassessing our farm lands puts another small cost on the farmer. The federal government came in with Bill C-155, and farmers are going to be forced to pay a larger share of the freight rates. This is another added input cost. We change the border price on natural gas; the input price increases. The list goes on, and at the same time, the price of the products the farmers are raising has been going down in the world market that they must compete in.

I guess one doesn't have to be overly smart to realize that if these conditions continue, we are going to see very serious implications in our farming communities that will have implications right into our two major cities. Mr. Speaker, many farmers in my district — I was at a meeting the other night where there were 30 or 40 of them. They're reassessing their position on whether they should be spending as much money on input costs such as fertilizers and sprays. Maybe they should go back to the older method of farming where they controlled their weeds by summer fallowing half every year. It certainly isn't as effective. They wouldn't grow as much, but they might end up with a little more money. That's what the game is all about out there — trying to stay alive. If we went back to the farming I used to do when I first started farming, this in turn would have a pretty serious effect on our petrochemical industry, especially our fertilizer industry. We didn't buy much fertilizer. That could come back again, and it would have a very serious effect on other industries such as the fertilizer industry and the chemical industries.

I guess what I'm saying is that what affects one industry in this country will eventually affect all other industries, be it the gas and oil industry, the petrochemical industry, the fertilizer industry, the agricultural industry, or the farm machinery industry. If we change the pricing formula in one, we then affect the cost and productivity of another. I would like to explain by example, if I may.

The other night I was in Drumheller visiting with a friend of mine who was a butcher at one time. He was one of these fellows that ran around with the poles that we don't like anymore. But he's now running the best restaurants in Drumheller, and he was telling me that he buys all the packaged meats for his restaurants from the United States. He buys it from the United States for one simple reason: survival. He gets it \$1.25 a pound cheaper. He gets beef tenderloin \$1.25 a pound cheaper.

Mr. Speaker, beef cattle in the United States are selling for approximately the same price as they are here in Canada, but because of the much more efficient packing industry in the States, they have lower input costs. They can underbid our local beef. What this means is that even though we have a very efficient cattle industry in this province, if we do not have an equally efficient packing industry, we are still going to lose our sales. We are losing them now to U.S. competition.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important that we ensure our basic industry, agriculture, is not put at a disadvantage because of its inability to pass on its high input costs to the consumer, as other industries do. We've had some success with this over the years, and this government has realized that. So we've come out with some programs to assist the farmers in this matter. We've got a starting farmer program that's second to none in Canada: 6 percent interest for the first five years. This is one of the ways we have taken this into account. The farm fuel discount program: the cheapest fuel for farmers in Canada. We have done that because we realize they are at a disadvantage. We have the rural gas rebate program, ADC farm financing, and the irrigation rehabilitation programs where we've spent up to \$300 million rehabilitating the irrigation districts in this province.

What I'm really concerned about is not so much what we're doing in this province. We're usually leading the way, with the Prince Rupert plant and many other things in the province. What I'm worried about is what are we doing federally? Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give you a little information about how efficient our federal government is.

The responsibility for handling our grain is, of course, with the Canadian Wheat Board, a Crown corporation of the federal government. So here we are. How efficient is this corporation in handling our grain? I'd like to put out a few facts. I'd like to start with an area I know, the Churchill area. I'm on that board. I'd like to compare a few statistics, if I may, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take the same amount of grain, approximately half a million tonnes, and deliver it to Churchill and to the St. Lawrence Seaway, and compare the difference.

If you deliver wheat to Churchill, the rail cost is \$4.78 per tonne, the terminal cost is \$5.45 a tonne, for a total of \$10.23. If you deliver the same amount of wheat to Montreal through the seaway, it's \$5.41 for the freight costs because it's a little more, but it's \$23.41 per tonne for the terminal charges, for a total of \$28.86 per tonne against \$10 to Churchill.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

If you take that over almost 400,000 tonnes, the saving to the producer by hauling to Churchill, from what they call the Hinterland of Churchill — it's easier to haul to Churchill than any other place, and they grow approximately 8 million bushels of grain per year. If you take 400,000 metric tonnes of that and haul it to Churchill, the saving to the producer is \$4,074,000 over the St. Lawrence Seaway. The saving to the government is \$1,700,000, for a total of \$10 million. The same holds true with barley, only it's more noticeable. So if you took the production for 1983 that went into Churchill, which is approximately half a million tonnes — and I have the exact figures here — the grand total would be \$14.3 million to haul it to Churchill against \$26.1 million to haul it to the St. Lawrence Seaway.

I admit that that is from one district, or one block as they call it. There are all the blocks in the Churchill area. If you averaged all those blocks together, you would come up with a saving of \$21.31 per tonne. That's getting somewhere in the neighbourhood of 70 cents a bushel. I know that when you spread that over the total grain, it's just a small amount. It doesn't hurt the farmers that badly; it is a small amount. When you look at the fact that the capacity of Churchill in a three-month period is 1.5 million tonnes, and they only ship half a million through it, you have to wonder at the efficiency of the Canadian Wheat Board.

I'd like to go into another area. The Canadian Wheat Board was in Rosetown, Saskatchewan, a high grain production area, explaining their situation. This is out of *The Western Producer* of February 23, 1984. The Wheat Board representative that was at the meeting made these remarks:

Wheat markets are tough, winter grain shipments are slow, and there are too many of the wrong kind of rail cars on various lines across the county.

But we have some good news.

The good news is that a three bushel quota on red spring wheat might open up when the Great Lakes thaw.

Well, they haven't thawed yet, and I would like to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that a three bushel quota is less than \$15 an acre, and you put \$30 an acre on in fertilizer. In fact the price of fertilizer jumped \$40 a tonne as of March 1, 1984. The reason it jumped was the reason it always jumps in the spring. The companies will sell it cheaper in the fall because

they don't have to pay interest on it. If they have to hold it and pay interest on their product, they put it on input costs to the farmer. Again, I guess it's not that much, but it's an increase in the input cost into the farming area.

Then we have another meeting. *The Western Producer* says the Wheat Board paid \$2.4 million for the rent of 2,000 hopper cars.

Last summer's hopper car lease was an unprecedented action by the board, which has purchased hopper cars with producer money but has never rented any.

CN rounded up 1600 hoppers from three U.S. companies and ... 400 from the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan

at a cost of \$2.4 million to the farmers; \$1.7 million of that was taken out of the pool for wheat, and the rest was taken out of other grain pools. Again, that's not much. You know, if you say it fast it's only about 79 cents a tonne for what was moved. But again, it adds to the input costs of farmers.

I happen to have another one here. The heading of this one is "Elevators bulge, but that's the way the arithmetic bounces" — Melfort, Saskatchewan.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. CLARK: Is that where you're from? Well, that's nice.

"The Canadian Wheat Board is warning prairie farmers they may have to get used to congested elevators." If the total elevator capacity continues to decrease and the production continues to increase, they will have to get used to a tight, congested elevator system.

There is almost bound to be more congestion in the future.

"It will happen unless people want to build more storage at country elevators ..."

I can see that that would put a smile on the pools and some of the other grain companies, where they could build more storage so they can sit on it. When we talk about storage and our competition that we have to meet, which is across the border, across the border they're paying the farmer 26 cents a year storage on their farms. That isn't much either, but it's a cost they get that we don't. We have to pay it, so you can pretty well double it. At least down there, the flow is kind of going the right way. Here, with our federal government, it's still going the wrong way.

The next headline is "Seaway may raise more than locks".

While proclaiming sensitivity to farmers' income problems, St. Lawrence Seaway Authority president W.A. O'Neil says he cannot promise tolls will not increase next year.

The tolls on the seaway are now \$26.57 per tonne, plus the fobbing charges. Fobbing charges are something we don't hear much about here, but that's loading it on and off the seaway and back into the elevator. The total is \$26.57 per tonne. That doesn't sound like much, but let's put it in something everybody understands. If I remember rightly, it works out to 79 cents a bushel. If they can't use the seaway and they have to use the wintertime railway track, then it goes up to \$31 per tonne and that's 82 cents a bushel. As the farmers are beginning to pay more and more of the freight, we can see that this is going to have quite an effect on us.

Mr. O'Neil is quoted again:

He told Conservative MPs Don Mazankowski [that's a familiar name] and Len Gustafson that he is aware higher transportation costs for grain moving east by rail ... could force farmers to look for alternative markets ...

How are they going to force the farmers to look for alternative markets? We're not the ones who tell us where our wheat goes;

it's the Wheat Board that tells us where our wheat goes. We only take it to the elevator, and the Wheat Board says they'll take it wherever they say. Although they have a plant that's running at one-third capacity, which could make them some money, it is sitting there idle. That's just one of the things that is happening out there.

The seaway, by the way, handles approximately 50 million tonnes of product each year. Out of that product, 25 million tonnes is grain. Out of the 25 million tonnes of grain that goes through the seaway, two-thirds is Canadian. It didn't used to be, but it is now. Again:

O'Neil told the committee that in recent years, the volume of American grain moving through the system has been [far] below historic levels.

Because they are shipping it through the Mississippi.

Here's something that will interest you:

as well as some grain movement in unit trains made economic by recent transportation rate deregulation in the United States ...

We've been talking about deregulation. It has diverted much of their grain to the west, away from the seaway. I wonder why. Are those Americans so stupid they don't know the advantage of that seaway? I think we'd better have a look at it. We are continually picking up the share they are not using. We are increasing our use of the seaway and leaving one of our own terminals, which would be cheaper, at a third capacity. I'm putting this out to see what the efficiency of our system is. Are there any changes we could make? The U.S. has made a lot of changes, and they are our competition. It makes us wonder where we're going in this.

I would like to go to the next headline, again in *The Western Producer*: "Rail rates brake export pattern". That's the headline. "The basic reason for the lower ... movement is one of dollars and cents". The Wheat Board commissioner attending the board district meeting here on February 21: "The railways are asking for an 11 percent increase". That's quite an increase. Judging from the next sentence, "The railways are charging \$31 a tonne to haul grain in unit trains from the Lakehead to Montreal" compared to the same length of haul on the Prairies at \$26.57 — something hits me a little wrong in that statement. We've always been told that unit trains are much more productive, that they can haul much cheaper than we can out here on the prairies because we can't put those unit trains together. But here, the only place in Canada where we can put the unit trains together, it's costing us money to do it. I just can't understand it.

He goes on to say:

Since we cannot recover these extra costs from the market, the winter rail program has been kept to a minimum.

Who suffers? It sure isn't the Wheat Board guys, who get their wages every month. It's the farmers; they can't haul their grain.

Mr. Speaker, I think the time is here when the western provinces must present a united front. We must present a united front to whatever party forms the government in the next election in the east. We must express our concerns to the federal government regardless of who forms that government. We must express them very clearly. Our competition is a long way ahead of us.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member, but the time has elapsed for his contribution.

MR. CLARK: I'm very sorry. Can I just make a few concluding remarks?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CLARK: Thank you. I didn't think I could ever talk that long, Mr. Speaker, but I really got kind of carried away.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Agriculture and the two chairmen of our caucus committee for trying to take the lead again in getting this co-operation with the provinces so we can put out a solid front. I just don't think it makes any difference that three parties make up the four western provinces. I have confidence that it can be done. I am sure that I will work with anybody who wishes to help it along.

Mr. Speaker, as I am out of time — I have quite a bit more to say. I haven't got back to my speech yet. Anyway, I'd like to say that I have confidence. I would like to see this government go ahead and issue a challenge to the rest of the provinces in western Canada. We will take the lead again, as we did in the Prince Rupert grain port and as we usually do. But let's challenge them to come along and help us and co-operate.

Thank you very much.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to be given the opportunity once more to represent the citizens of Edmonton Kingsway in responding to the Speech from the Throne. My thanks to Her Majesty's representative for continuing to provide to Albertans his time, his hard work, and indeed his dedication. As well, I once more provide the Speaker with my accolades for his strong, positive leadership in this Assembly. His advocacy role on behalf of all members — indeed, Mr. Speaker, I stress "on behalf of all members" — must be commended. I know that Edmonton Kingsway residents truly appreciate the decorum and positiveness that he injects into this House. I would also like to congratulate the members for Red Deer and Wainwright, two of my row mates, for moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne.

In responding to His Honour's speech last year, I indicated that this province offers Albertans the best location to work, to play, and to live. I still believe this wholeheartedly. I think we in this Assembly must all admit that the downturn in our economy has impacted on all of us. But we have to look at the strength. We have to look at the optimistic signs and remove the blinders of negative feelings and the doom and gloom psychology purported by those who want to cast a pall over this great province. Mr. Speaker, the speech by His Honour is one of strength, excitement, and foresight.

I want to touch upon some aspects of your government's initiatives to continue to aid Albertans in their work, their play, and their learning. First of all, Edmonton Kingsway residents want to see government off their backs. In my communication with them, and in responses to a questionnaire that covered a number of areas, a common theme was more privatization and less — yes, much less — government interference in their lives. Over and over again, my constituents underscored their disdain for government interference in their lives and asked for fewer regulations, less government involvement, and a trimmer and leaner government altogether. In addition, however, the paradox was underscored: give me less government, but keep up the good services you provide for the citizenry of Kingsway and for all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the speech did just that. It offers initiatives in deregulation and privatization. It gives the private sector more say and more opportunity to show their enthusiasm, their drive, and their know-how. This is the Progressive Conservative philosophy, and I am very pleased to be part of that philosophy.

On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, Kingsway residents are asking that their government give them hope to better them-

selves, to provide services to keep them healthy — socially, psychologically, emotionally, educationally, and vocationally. Residents also state that help should be there for those who are unable to help themselves. That, too, is the Progressive Conservative philosophy. As well, my constituents are asking for involvement in new areas such as high technology, scientific development, job and work analysis, and future studies. All of these areas will ultimately greatly help our province.

Mr. Speaker, the constituents of Edmonton Kingsway are concerned about the economy. They want to see improvement and I, with them, want to see positive initiatives in that particular direction. We must be encouraged by this speech and by recent initiatives in the private sector. One just has to look at some of the following examples to illustrate that our economy is beginning to perk again. A \$50 million oil sands recovery project near Elk Point, just 165 kilometres east of Edmonton: in the long-term life of this project, expenditures could reach as high as \$1.8 billion. A \$200 million oil sands recovery plant is under way at Wolf Lake. A \$300 million oil recovery project near Cold Lake has also commenced. A \$2 million expansion to Molson Brewery situated in Edmonton Kingsway will offer jobs in construction and in full-time employment. An \$18 million expansion to the Continental Can Company in Edmonton will offer the same.

The Alberta government very recently announced a \$10 million expenditure to build a sophisticated electronic testing laboratory here in the capital city, an expenditure that will contribute to Edmonton's and Alberta's leadership in these new technologies. One simply has to read the third annual report of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research to realize how this fund has resulted in an influx to this province of new pioneers in science. Yes, Mr. Speaker, Kingsway residents are encouraged by these developments.

There are others as well. Vencap Equities Alberta Ltd., recently formed, will continue to act as a catalyst for high technological development in Alberta. The new small business venture capital program announced in the speech will tremendously aid small businesses in my constituency and indeed throughout the province. The injection of \$20 million to the Edmonton Convention Centre is offering a facility *par excellence* to Edmonton citizens. In addition, it is increasing tourism and tourism dollars to the capital, helping Edmonton become better known throughout the world.

The Economic Development Department must be lauded for their continued efforts to market our goods and services throughout the world, and they are succeeding. During 1983 over 160 incoming missions from all over the world were co-ordinated. Over 400 export projects, covering North America, the Pacific, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, occurred. Why, Mr. Speaker? The answer is simple: to continue to market Alberta products; to make Alberta, its products, its hardworking people, better known throughout the world; and, ultimately, to assist our economy.

Mr. Speaker, our agricultural products are being marketed worldwide. Our leadership in petrochemicals, oil, and gas is being further developed, and they are being marketed worldwide. Our expertise in high technology and in research and development is becoming known worldwide. As the speech indicated, "the oil and gas industry in Alberta is the major factor in job stability and job creation". But we haven't cowered. We haven't backed away from hard work and initiative because of a downturn.

I think it's important to talk about the initiatives that were introduced in this House today. An injection of funds over the next year: three one-year employment and training programs totalling \$26 million, announced by the Minister of Manpower.

Just a couple of days ago, the government of Alberta recommended the allocation of \$20 million for the 1984 summer temporary employment program. No, Mr. Speaker. We are acting and will continue to act to make this a better place for all citizens of Alberta. Truly, Albertans should be optimistic about our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn my attention to the second basic tenet in the speech, that of basic education reforms. How exciting to be looking at the School Act, an Act that deals with the education of our children, our youth, and our young adults. No major review of this particular Act has occurred for over a decade. I would ask the constituents of Edmonton Kingsway to give this review their time and suggestions. Just as exciting and required is a review of secondary education programs in this province, of what is taught to secondary students, grades 7 to 12. Study upon study alludes to the need to take care in preparing our young people for the future.

Your government believes that this area is extremely crucial, but it also believes, very importantly, that parents must have a say in the future direction of education in this province. I must ask Kingsway residents if they are satisfied with present courses and course content in this province, whether they are satisfied with the emphases and the courses, and whether indeed we are doing enough to offer our students preparation for the future, a new and different Alberta. Is more course content the answer? Should we be concentrating more on the personal, social, and vocational development of our children? Can or should we make more use of the community resources and people available? In the classroom, how do we deal with what have been termed "closed areas", such as nuclear war, drugs, sex, abortion, unemployment, et cetera? How should these social issues be handled in the classroom?

I hope all citizens take the time to respond to the detailed questionnaire the Minister of Education is forwarding to residents throughout the province. However, I also hope that those without children will offer their time to provide input to this very important area.

Mr. Speaker, advanced education in our province is a concern to me and many constituents in 1984. The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, situated in Edmonton Kingsway, is bursting at the seams. For example, I have heard that only one in four students is being accepted into that technical institution in many technical areas. The University of Alberta is considering quotas; they're considering limiting enrollment in all faculties for the fall of 1984. My government has assisted with extensive supplementary funding, something that is very unique in Canada, so very unique that even the president of the University of Alberta indicated his thanks in this area. But the difficulties still persist. I appeal to the citizens of Kingsway, I appeal to members of this House, to provide suggestions to alleviate this difficulty. Creativity and new ideas must be found to assist students who are qualified to find their place on the educational continuum in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the establishment of the Women's Secretariat is a most positive step in addressing the vast array of women's concerns in this province. Over one-half of the population of Alberta will be given the opportunity to identify and assess government policies, programs, and legislation impacting on them. I know that extensive communication from Kingsway constituents will occur to help improve a myriad of situations for females, in an attempt to equalize opportunities for women in a vast array of areas.

Mr. Speaker, one initiative I must allude to that continues to benefit a number of my constituents is the Alberta widows' pension program, which provides benefits for widows and widowers aged 55 to 64, and provides them access to extensive

health benefits and other programs formerly available to senior citizens only. With respect to seniors, I continue to receive positive feedback from Kingsway pioneers who benefit tremendously from the multitude of programs available to them: assistance through the Alberta assured income plan, which is automatically paid to all Alberta pensioners who are receiving the federal income supplement, to the benefits obtained from the Alberta health care insurance program, to the extended health benefits program, and to the numerous housing, home care, and nursing care programs.

The citizens of Edmonton continue to receive extensive assistance from their government in grants provided to city hall. Mr. Speaker, I must underscore this area because recently some constituents and some Edmontonians have been saying that your government is not doing enough to help Edmontonians. Last year, in 1983, almost one-fifth of \$1 billion was provided for a number of services in Edmonton. I'd like to mention just a few of them: urban transportation assistance, \$28 million plus; interest stabilization, \$23 million plus; community health services, \$15 million plus; municipal policing, \$11 million plus; property tax reduction, \$14 million plus; courtroom security, \$9 million plus; grants in lieu of taxes, \$8 million plus; family and community support services, \$5 million plus. Last year \$183,000,453 was provided to the citizens of Edmonton from this government.

Mr. Speaker, turning to the environment, there have always been questions about the disposition of hazardous wastes in this province. I am sure my constituents are pleased with the establishment of the Special Waste Management Corporation and the approval for the special waste disposal plant in Swan Hills.

I was fortunate to be selected to sit on a very unique committee that my government believes to be crucial to Confederation, the Select Special Committee on Senate Reform. This committee is attempting to address itself to providing, through the input of all Albertans, an alternative to the sleepy hollow called the Canadian Senate. It is timely that Albertans present their concerns, to a new government in Canada, about an Upper Chamber that does little to reflect the views of western Canadians and Albertans specifically. Alberta is an equal partner in Confederation, but its views are muffled due to the disproportionate number of seats in the House of Commons and ultimately due to the archaic method of appointing senators. With a change in the Senate structure, with a change in the role, function, and priorities, Albertans could and should have a stronger voice in federal decision-making. I look forward to the views of Albertans this summer in the public hearings we will be holding throughout the province. As an equal partner in Confederation, we hope to have an equal say and an equal vote.

Mr. Speaker, an area that cannot be tolerated in our province is one of hatred, racism, and bigotry. I am so very pleased with the public awareness campaign and public hearings carried out by the Alberta Human Rights Commission. We are a unique country and province that offers freedom, opportunity, and democracy to all peoples of the world. My parents, who came from Poland, came here for these reasons. They contributed, they enjoyed life, and they raised their family in the best country and the best province in the world. Let us not forget that we as the human species are equal and are entitled to the same freedoms no matter what religion, race, or skin colour.

Mr. Speaker, I refer all members to a number of essays written by elementary, junior high, and senior high school students that underline our need for tolerance and understanding. I would especially like to congratulate a grade 9 student attending Ben Calf Robe school in Edmonton. Her name is

Holly Day Odale Blakis. She submitted a tremendous, award-winning essay entitled *Racism and Growing Up Indian*.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we as legislators have our work cut out for us. We must always be aware of the needs, wants, and desires of our constituents. We have to take risks; we have to act with humbleness. We have to admit that mistakes have been made and will continue to be made. We have to listen; we have to respond; we have to act. With the collective strengths of all Albertans, be they poor or rich, strong or weak, optimistic or pessimistic, Alberta will continue to be the best place in the world to work, to play, to live, and to learn.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ALGER: Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in the throne speech debate, I would like to first congratulate the hon. members for Red Deer and Wainwright for the eloquent jobs they did as mover and seconder of the throne speech.

With each new throne speech comes new expectations. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss a few items that are of particular interest to the people of a constituency that has everything. Yes, Mr. Speaker, when I open up on this note I want you to know that the beautiful constituency of Highwood is geographically located in the most desirable area of the whole province. Big, beautiful mountains border our western side, and our rivers and streams get their source right from those same mountains. These waters flow through some pretty wonderful foothills, and finally stretch their way to the prairies that comprise our eastern boundaries.

Our products down there are plentiful. We have coal, oil, bountiful crops, cattle, industry, and gas. I don't want to hear you snickering, Mr. Speaker, that we're losing a lot of that gas right now. But most of all, and most significant of all, is that we have people — good, solid, genuine, interested people, who share all the problems this province ever had and has now, and who work resolutely hard to help solve these problems, and not necessarily by leaning on the government for every little concern they have. These people come from a long line of pioneers, and "doing without" is not a new expression to them.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

My people of the Highwood are extremely interested in the good work that goes on up here, and their co-operation with me and my communication with them is a feature that I'm quite proud to brag about. We have an active constituency office, and I have two extremely fine secretaries in the persons of Lottie Germaniuk, in my southern office, and Debbie Hayman, in my northern office. Believe me, Mr. Speaker, without the two of them I hesitate to think of the mess I would probably be in at this point in time.

It goes without saying that the accolades that have been bestowed upon you and the Premier are certainly well deserved, but I'd like to add that probably nowhere in Canada do MLAs have the good fortune to work with such a formidable group of ministers as we do here in the province of Alberta. Adding to that, Mr. Speaker, if our constituents are determined to have opposition in the House, I'd say that they did a great job in electing the four members who presently serve with us.

In looking toward the future, I would have to say that the basic education reforms will probably have the greatest impact. The quality of education has, and always will have, a direct effect on the youth of our province. The new initiatives outlined in the throne speech will go a long way in ensuring that graduating students are prepared to address the new challenges of this rapidly changing province. I realize that anticipating tech-

nological and social change is a difficult task, but by revamping the curriculum I am confident that the education system will more than adequately adjust.

I am sure I speak for all constituents of the Highwood when I say that an effort to reduce unnecessary regulations is a welcome event. Far too often I receive enquiries as to why this rule exists or what the purpose of that regulation is, and I'm unable to supply an adequate answer. While it is frustrating for the citizens of the province, it is also frustrating for those of us who have to deal with the system every day. By eliminating some of these unnecessary regulations and rules, I hope it will become an easier and more effective system.

The oil and gas industry plays an integral role in the economy of the Highwood constituency. After the disastrous national energy program, the province has taken many positive steps to right the wrong. Consequently the industry has slowly turned around and is on the verge of absolute recovery. I am particularly pleased with the announcement that new measures will be taken to improve the competitive position of our natural gas and increase its sales. We are all well aware of the vast market potential of the United States, and a better marketing arrangement with them would greatly improve the health of the industry. Having worked in the oil and gas industry for so many years, I am certainly glad to see that land sales and drilling activity are improving, and that heavy oil, enhanced oil recovery, and oil sands activity have also picked up.

I would like to indicate to members today that I've just been in touch with the general manager of my former company. When we sold that company, we sold them 22 rigs. They quickly bought five more, which gave them a fleet of 27, and then went into the doldrum period. Sometimes there were as few as 10 rigs running at a time. After checking with him today, I discovered that they bought three more rigs, giving them a fleet of 30, and 29 of them are running. This increases a lot of work in the province.

The agricultural sector represents another area of profound interest in the Highwood. Now that the Western Grain Transportation Act has been passed by the federal government, I am pleased to see that its impact on Alberta farmers is being evaluated. A great deal of concern was expressed to me, and I look forward to the results of that evaluation.

The red meat industry is an important and growing segment of our economy. Attempts to arrive at a voluntary national stabilization program would be a significant development, although the details of this program must satisfy the needs of the livestock producer.

For the last few years, the costs of health care services have risen dramatically. While the option of hospital user fees made the public aware of this situation, health care costs continue to rise. It is nice to see that we have decided to meet the problem head on and develop some type of mutual co-operative arrangement with the medical profession. The excellent progress that has been made in hospital facilities and nursing homes bodes well for the future.

Social service programs are continually being upgraded and expanded. Contrary to the opinions of some hon. members, the effectiveness and efficiency of these programs cannot be questioned. The success of the Alberta widows' pension program is a prime example of this fact. Moreover, the implementation of a new Child Welfare Act shall be a highlight of this session. Using certain recommendations of the Cavanagh Board of Review, as well as public input, I am certain that an impressive bit of legislation will be put before us in this Assembly.

Small business is the backbone of Alberta's economy, and the success of the Alberta heritage fund small business and

farm interest shielding program helped bring renewed vigour to this most important industry. With this type of growth in the private sector, the ramifications are overwhelming: more jobs, more spending, and an overall improved economy.

I must say that housing programs have been exceptional. Whether it be the successful Alberta heritage fund interest reduction program or the equally successful senior citizens' home improvement program or the outstanding aid given by the Home Mortgage Corporation and the Alberta Housing Corporation, the fact remains that we're not doing too badly in this respect.

As I mentioned before, the Highwood constituency includes a large portion of the Rocky Mountains and the foothills. The introduction of a new Wildlife Act will have a definite effect on the constituency. The opportunity for private-sector involvement in the remote regions is an important consideration. Furthermore, an accelerated land sales program and a new range improvements project program on grazing lease lands will no doubt assist the agricultural sector.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents number over 14,000. They live in an area of 2,500 square miles that encompasses 10 towns and villages, hundreds of farms, and many ranches. Tourists on their way to the Kananaskis enjoy rattling through Longview, Black Diamond, Turner Valley, and Millarville on our west side, and De Winton, Okotoks, Aldersyde, Cayley, High River, and Nanton on our east side. On behalf of all my people, I would like to extend our eternal gratitude to the government of this province for its ability to fund us so well with features like good schools, libraries, hospitals, water treatment and sewage plants, reasonably good roads, senior citizens' homes and lodges, and a host of other good things too numerous to mention — including some marvelous parks that have been presented and helped by our minister in front of me here, who's defying me not to say that.

Finally, I would like to comment on the general emphasis of the throne speech. The five priorities outlined represent a continued focus on basic, sound government. Fiscal responsibility, legislative clarification, deregulation, privatization, and educational reform are all important components for good, solid government. As well, these priorities establish the ground rules for leadership, Mr. Speaker, and leadership is what this government has to offer the people of this province.

An imperial potentate, J. Worth Baker, of the Shriners of North America always received a standing ovation as he approached the podium at a given meeting. As quickly as he possibly could he would always say, won't you please sit down. Mr. Speaker, I believe I'll do that now.

DR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise in debate. Like the previous speaker, I would like to offer congratulations to the mover and the seconder of the motion for their contribution to the debate, but I would also like to make a favourable comment about the Member for Highwood. He mentioned that Nanton is located in his constituency. We all know that Nanton water is good for one's physical framework and full of effervescence. I think the Assembly has been fortunate in the last two members representing that constituency, that both of them are effervescent; both of them have been full of joyfulness. It's been a pleasure to have more time working with the present Member for Highwood on our joint membership on the Senate Reform Committee. He also has a very interesting impact upon members of the Senate, but I won't go into that in detail at the moment. He knows whereof I speak. That's sort of getting to the base of the issue.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to compliment you on the way that the House is ordered in this province. Having been

privileged in the last number of months to attend other assemblies in this country, as well as also having been present at the House of Representatives in the state of Alabama, I am only too happy to come back home to this Legislature and the way that the business of the Assembly is carried on. Of course that is due in large measure to your own careful guidance.

As a member of the Assembly, I have also been given the interesting challenge of being chairman of the Social Care Facilities Review Committee. In that regard, since the House last sat prior to Christmas, I have been able to do a fair amount of travelling throughout the province. I was able to get up to Fort McMurray in particular, as well as travelling down in the Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Brooks, Calgary, Edmonton areas, and earlier in the fall had gone up to the High Level country. It's a great province in terms of the natural beauty, the natural resources, but it's obviously a very great province in terms of the most important natural resource, the people of Alberta.

In terms of the role of my involvement with the Social Care Facilities Review Committee, it's great to be privileged to go into a great variety of those facilities: the day care operations in the province, the facilities for young offenders, sheltered workshops for the handicapped, the overnight facilities for alcohol and drug abuse, and a number of other areas as well; the larger facilities in the province, such as Michener Centre, Baker Centre, the facility at Claresholm, the facility at Raymond. I must express my appreciation for the challenge of that committee, for the ability to be able to go throughout the province, to be able to see some of these facilities, to go unannounced, to be able to meet with the people that run the facilities, to meet with the residents of the various facilities that are put there for these people throughout the province.

We're very fortunate in terms of the personnel who run these group homes and other types of workshops. We're very fortunate in the degree of training they have. We're very fortunate in terms of the dedication, the sensitivity with which they carry out their roles and functions. It's also very interesting to note that the facilities in the province really are first class. In other years I've had the opportunity to visit similar facilities in other provinces and in some portions of the United States. In fact last fall, in September, I was able to visit some of the similar spectrum of facility as located in the greater London, England, area. While there's always room for more improvement, nevertheless I know that the various group homes, the workshops, those types of situations within the province really are first class in terms of the physical plant. They are also first class in terms of the type of programming and the sensitivity of interpersonal reaction that takes place there.

I am very fortunate that the other people who work with me on the Social Care Facilities Review Committee are really very tremendous people. They're sensitive, they're knowledgeable, they're dedicated. In that regard, I would continue to praise the constituency of Highwood because the former member, George Wolstenholme, continues to serve on that committee as a citizen of the province. George brings a great deal of sensitivity and has his own expertise and his own background of having trained as a mental health nurse at one time.

In addition, I am pleased that the Member for Cypress has come onto that committee. Members of the House would perhaps raise their eyebrows in one sense as to the capabilities of Mr. Hyland, given his background as a member representing a rural constituency, but I'm here to say that he's an expert. He's certainly become an expert in day care, given the fact that he and his wife had twins some time ago; they have three children under the age of four. It's been interesting to watch Alan develop in terms of the sensitivity to day care. It's also been very interesting to see how the Member for Cypress has

developed, how his esteem has been enhanced with various members of the committee as they have travelled with him throughout all corners of the province. They've been at all different types of facilities. I would like to simply acknowledge that while I'm very appreciative of all members of the committee, I want to make very special mention of how my friend, the Member for Cypress, has really become highly sensitized and very knowledgeable with respect to the whole ambit of responsibility which comes within the jurisdiction of the Social Care Facilities Review Committee.

I would simply like to note that since the formation of the committee in 1980, the committee has made 1,844 visits. In 1983 the committee made 593 visits, and so far in 1984 has completed 123 visits. They continue to be a very hardworking group of people, citizens of Alberta working on behalf of the quality of life within the province of Alberta.

For a moment, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments with respect to the Ombudsman search committee, this special committee which has been set up. As of yesterday the committee had received 384 applications, and that represented the broad spectrum of the country from coast to coast. We've had 96 applicants from outside the boundaries of the province of Alberta, two applicants from outside Canada, and 50 female applicants. In terms of this whole process of searching for a new person to be the Ombudsman for the province of Alberta, the committee is very much aware of the importance of that role and has been working together with a great degree of consensus. Again, I would like to compliment the members of the committee for their hard work, because obviously the pile of material and biographies is quite sizable. The amount of time involved is tremendous, but as we've worked on our assessments consensus has been absolute. We've only varied one or two points in terms of our assessment process.

At the moment, Mr. Speaker, we have narrowed the field to 23. The committee has been meeting in sessions of about two hours in length, interviewing the 23 candidates we've narrowed it down to. I'm hopeful that by the middle of April at the latest, we will be able to bring in a report to the Assembly with regard to appointing a new Ombudsman for the province of Alberta. The effective date of the new appointment would be September 1, 1984.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the support staff to the committee. In particular, I'd like to compliment the support staff of the Assembly — Peggy Davidson in particular and Mr. Blain — and also David McNeil and Drew Johnston from the personnel department. All of us in the Assembly realize how fortunate we are to have the calibre of people who are helpful to us. When we have to rise to the challenge of a legislative committee, we are very much in need of good support staff. So I would like to formally pass on that thanks, through you, to the people affected in your area and how appreciative we all are not simply with respect to the Ombudsman search committee but other committees of the House as well.

The Member for Edmonton Kingsway made a few brief comments with respect to the legislative Committee on Senate Reform. I too would like to acknowledge membership on that committee. To date we have done extensive travel, but I think the committee has been most judicious with respect to the travel commitments. The total committee was to visit Ottawa. Not all members were able to make that visit, and it was a very important, very worthwhile visit. I'm sure the Member for Calgary Currie will comment in this area when it comes time for him to participate in debate. But with respect to travel to the other provinces, committee members have been almost parsimonious. We have decided that only half of the committee visit these other locations, and I think the process has worked very well.

I would also like to make a comment about the synergism, the development, the interpersonal relationship of the committee. I really believe that the members are all hardworking and are very seriously taking on the importance of the issue of Senate reform. There's a tremendous amount of reading that has already been required: a tremendous amount of reading will yet be required in terms of the members. In this respect, I would like to compliment the support staff. But I also would like to make comment with respect to the Member for Little Bow and how much we as a committee appreciate his participation in terms of our visits, particularly with respect to Ontario, Washington, and Victoria.

Mr. Speaker, the whole challenge of the Senate Reform Committee is that no doubt we need to heighten the profile across the country. I think the initial response the committee members received in Ottawa, Toronto, Victoria, as well as Saskatchewan, I understand, and in the Northwest Territories, has been one of heightened interest on behalf of members of all political parties in those various Houses. I think we do have reason to believe that given a certain amount of time, a consensus position could be developed not only within our own ranks in the committee and in this Assembly but with respect to other provinces, so that some real measure of legitimate Senate reform can take place within the next number of years.

I would like to comment briefly with respect to native issues, Mr. Speaker. In recent weeks there was a first ministers' conference with respect to aboriginal peoples. I know that the Member for Cardston was there, as well as our Minister responsible for Native Affairs, the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, and the Premier. In the brief time I was able to watch portions of the conference on television. I was disappointed. I was very much disappointed as to the final results of that conference.

Last fall there was a report presented to the House of Commons, the report of the special committee on Indian self-government in Canada, known as the Penner report. It's a surprising document in many ways, and I certainly was surprised with the prime effect of the document; that they came out so wholeheartedly in the direction of Indian self-government. I really feel that the document did not adequately

cover some of the issues with respect to native peoples in this country. One of the things about that document was that it has really given rise to overexpectations on behalf of native peoples, not necessarily in terms of the focus of the level of self-government but, I think, the speed with which they would be able to achieve it. Of course given the change of political events in this country immediately prior to that conference, with the announced resignation of the Prime Minister and now the kind of shuffling effect that will go on there until June, and then the matter of a general election — it raises a whole additional series of obstacles with respect to any kind of hope for progress on behalf of aboriginal peoples towards self-government.

But it's in that respect that I'm pleased that in this province we seem to be working towards a very positive approach to native self-government. That is to be seen in the new situation in northern Alberta, north-central Alberta, in the Northland School Division. So we are keeping a very close eye on that whole development, because it was last fall that treaty Indians in this province were able to vote for school boards for the first time. I know that the Minister of Education as well as the Minister responsible for Native Affairs are very much interested in that kind of development. I see that as being a very legitimate way forward towards the matter of workable solutions in terms of native self-government.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the hour, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:28 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]