

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Friday, May 11, 1984 10:00 a.m.**

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to file five copies of the Mighty Peace Tourism Destination Area Study.

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation annual report for the year 1983.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me this morning to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly 55 grade 5 students from E.G. Wahlstrom school in Slave Lake in the Lesser Slave Lake constituency. With the students today are teachers Mr. Schmidt and Mrs. Johnson, and parents Mrs. Olson, Mrs. Bjornson, Mrs. Ghostkeeper, Mrs. Vercholak, and Mrs. Cuthbert. The students are seated in both galleries, and I'd like them to stand and receive the recognition of the Assembly.

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, at the conclusion of Education Week in the province, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and to hon. members of the Assembly 26 students from Brookwood elementary school, located in the town of Spruce Grove. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Ray Shapka and by parent Mrs. Roberts. They're in the public gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the recognition of the House.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce two people to you and to members of the Assembly: Keith Rimstad, provincial co-ordinator of the unemployment action centres, and Tamara Riabov, who is the Edmonton area co-ordinator. They are seated in the members gallery. I ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the House.

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and to hon. members. Dr. Jean-Michael Turk, who is the director of transfusion services for the Red Cross, along with his father, who is visiting Alberta from France. They're seated in the members gallery, and I ask that the doctor and his father rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly 16 special guests. They are students whose work has received special recognition in the provincewide student art exhibition held in conjunction with Education Week.

Education Week, of course, is being celebrated across Alberta. There has been a great deal of activity in schools and communities this week to highlight the importance of education

to each and every Albertan through this year's theme, Education: It's for Me! Mr. Speaker, the artwork done by our special guests is on display at the Provincial Museum until Sunday of this week.

It therefore gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce the following: Greg Buchanan, from Dr. Carl Safran school in Calgary Buffalo, and his teacher Allan Kimmel; Michael McCrindle, representing the early childhood services of the Bentley school in Lacombe constituency, and his teacher Welma Scott; Chantell Shank, representing the grade 1 project from Westlock elementary school in Athabasca constituency, and her teacher Nola Aitken; Angela Johnston, who comes all the way from Oyen to represent the grade 2 class of the Oyen public school in Chinook constituency, and two of her teachers, Verla Girletz and Regina Wiechnik.

Brenda Volker represents the grade 3 class that submitted an exhibit from the Delburne school in the Innisfail constituency, and her teacher is Roberta Volker, who also happens to be her mother. Trent Rix receives special recognition for his submission. Trent is in grade 4 at the Centennial elementary school in the Wetaskiwin-Leduc constituency, and his teacher is Pat Pettifor. Charlene Bracey, from the Grace Shepard school in Hines Creek in Spirit River-Fairview, made the most outstanding exhibit from grade 5, and the principal of the school is Taher Rampuri. Alleen McLean was chosen for her work in grade 7. She is from the Ardmore school in the Bonnyville constituency, and her teacher is Vivian Leswk.

Three students worked on the art entry which was submitted from H.J. Cody school in the Rocky Mountain House constituency. Selected as the most outstanding grade 7 entry, meet the students responsible: Lisa Cox, Liza Wawk, and Rhonda Parrott, and their teacher Ann Smith. The grade 8 recipient of special recognition is Lori Johnston, from the Sundre school in the Olds-Didsbury constituency. Her teacher is Debbie Leslie. The grade 9 recipient of special recognition is Somnuck Meksavanh, from Taber junior high school in the Taber-Warner constituency. The teacher is Ken Konoff. Douglas Skolrood comes from the south of the province. Doug is a grade 10 student at Lethbridge Collegiate in the Lethbridge West constituency, and his teacher is Larry Baker. Darcy Muewchrath, of the Samuel Crowther school in the Drumheller constituency, created the most outstanding exhibit in grade 11, and his teacher is Charlotte Cummings. Finally, Helen Siwak is the grade 12 recipient of special recognition. Helen attends the Olds high school in the Olds-Didsbury constituency, and her teacher is Mahara Matthew.

They appear to be standing in the members gallery, Mr. Speaker. I ask them to accept the warm recognition of the members of the Assembly. [applause]

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, I notice Mr. Ed Kilpatrick, the retiring manager of radio station CKUA, in the members gallery. The reason I would like to recommend thanking Mr. Kilpatrick very much for his service at CKUA is that I had the privilege of working with him for 10 years in putting on the program, music from the German-speaking countries of Europe, every Sunday afternoon. But in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, over a number of years many cultural groups were at times brought on radio CKUA with the strong support of Mr. Kilpatrick. In fact, some of them are going to enter the Guinness book of records because of the length of time they have run. So I think all Albertans owe Ed Kilpatrick a very great vote of thanks for the fine work he did and for the patience he had.

I have to say that during his farewell reception last week, a great number of people, old-timers who had in fact retired, came to wish him farewell as well, showing the great appre-

ciation his staff has for him, as well as all the others. Mr. Kilpatrick, will you please rise and receive the welcome and thank you of this Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Stays of Court Proceedings

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the hon. Attorney General. It's with respect to the administration of justice in general and, in particular, the government's handling of the criminal case of Bond Street International Securities Ltd., a Vancouver-based broker/dealer. Is the minister in a position to explain the department's position in entering a stay of proceedings after having gained a committal at the preliminary level and just shortly before an eight-week trial was to begin?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice in order to answer it in the way the hon. leader would like. I'd be glad to do that. I have some incidental recollections of the case and the way in which the decision to take that particular step was arrived at by senior officials, who felt it was the way in which that case had to be brought to conclusion at the time. But my briefing on that matter was some time ago. Mr. Speaker, and for that reason I'd like to take it as notice.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister, dealing with the general policy area in question. Is it normal practice to continuously review a decision to go ahead with cases that have been extensively investigated and have successfully proceeded through the preliminary stages? What would be the policy judgment that would lead to a last-minute decision after this process, with an eye to backing off proceeding to trial.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, there could be a number of reasons. I should say first that it would be unusual, in any case, to gain the committal for trial and then not proceed to trial. But as a general matter — and without reference, as the hon. leader has also noted, to the specific case — very often the stay would be entered at that time, the decision taken not to proceed further, based on very practical difficulties such as the unavailability of certain evidence. That would be the most obvious one. Some particular circumstances, perhaps the disappearance not of the witness but of an accused in a way that the accused could not be brought before the court, might be another reason. There are perhaps more. But there is no doubt that the policy — where the evidence is available and it appears that the charge is one that should proceed, then the vast majority of cases, virtually all in fact, do then proceed to trial.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. What is the general policy with respect to stays, but in this particular case, stays which weren't moved on and the net result is that the statute of limitations, section 508(2) of the Criminal Code, came into play? With respect to the question the minister has taken as notice, could the minister advise whether there was any deliberation by the department after March 22, 1982, during that year in which the department could recommence proceedings? But in general, beyond that specific question, what is the government's policy in terms of not allowing stays to interfere with the proper prosecution because of the one-year period?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the use of a stay is like the use of any other step in a process. It's only done when that is considered to be either the unavoidable development in the case at the time or, in the judgment of senior counsel, the best way in which the criminal justice process can be served.

I could add that the hon. leader would appreciate that the more complex and difficult cases are indeed determined at a high level in the department. I think the ease the hon. leader is asking about is one that would have been in the special prosecutions branch. In those cases, a stay would not occur without the concurrence of the assistant deputy minister for criminal justice.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister has indicated he was briefed on this case. Is he in a position to confirm in the House whether or not there was consultation between the Vancouver Stock Exchange and the Alberta Securities Commission, in which the Alberta agency was warned of possible market manipulations by Bond Street International?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. leader, I have some difficulty with that question. It seems to deal directly with the first question and the answer to the first question, wherein the minister indicated that he would take the question as notice and inform himself. It would seem to me that we shouldn't now be taking up the time of the House as if we were assuming he had already informed himself.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, then perhaps I can rephrase that question, leaving it as a specific question for the minister to take as notice, and ask the minister what the policy is, with respect to the Attorney General's department, concerning warnings by any other body in the country — in this case the Vancouver Stock Exchange, but it could be the Toronto Stock Exchange or the Winnipeg exchange — with respect to operations of a questionable nature that have moved into this province. What is the general policy with respect to investigation of those warnings?

MR. CRAWFORD: Very clearly, Mr. Speaker, when any indication is given, whether it be by way of complaint or whether it be by way of information from a credible agency, wherever that agency might be located, or whether it be the result of some investigation which is then either conducted by the police or available to them — in all such cases, the matter is taken seriously and made a subject for further inquiry.

Lodgepole Blowout Inquiry

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in the first instance, and it's with respect to the Energy Resources Conservation Board Lodgepole blowout inquiry. Could the minister advise the Assembly what the government proposes to do with respect to the inquiry report, which was the phase two report, and in particular whether there are any plans to include possible compensation to people affected by gas blowouts as part of the jurisdiction of the blowout prevention review committee, as recommended by the ERCB?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, the report has of course just recently been provided by the Energy Resources Conservation Board and is limited to the phase two aspects of the hearing, which focussed principally on what measures can and ought

be taken to minimize the prospects for further blowouts of the nature that occurred at Lodgepole.

I think the game plan that will result from the hearing and the phase two recommendations has been well mapped out in that document by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. They have already moved with an interim directive in terms of imposing particularly strong and stringent requirements in potential sour gas areas, and that work is moving ...

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. minister, as I perceived the question, it related to arrangements for compensation of victims.

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We were getting there with more haste than was perhaps apparent.

At the present time, we are still awaiting the results of the phase one portion of that hearing. That, of course, will focus specifically on the Lodgepole situation itself and any recommendations that might arise from that.

In terms of any resultant government action, I certainly think that would be addressed once we have the full results of the hearings, both phase one and phase two. The direct answer is that at present no decisions have been taken with respect to those matters, and I think that's entirely in order.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. What steps have been taken with respect to increasing the frequency of inspection of drilling rigs from the level of 33 percent of all wells drilled during 1979 to 1983, but in particular in those areas where we're dealing with sour gas?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Again, Mr. Speaker, while I don't have the document right in front of me this morning, the Energy Resources Conservation Board has indicated that it is going to be looking toward what might be an appropriate inspection level. It has established a review committee, which has membership drawn from industry as well as other public interest groups, that is going to work with the ERCB. These are the very kinds of questions that are being assessed and dealt with by the Energy Resources Conservation Board. It would certainly not be our intention to interfere with that process.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The phase two report raises the issue of blowout insurance, to ensure that the public would not have to pick up the costs of the economic dislocation and the problems flowing from a blowout. In view of the concern of some of the smaller operators about the cost of blowout insurance, has any consideration been given to an industrywide scheme that would share some of the costs and make it less burdensome for the smaller operators but, at the same time, provide protection for the public as a whole?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, my recollection is that that is one of the matters the ERCB felt it was necessary to do some additional work on, and in fact it is going to be addressed in that fashion. We look forward to receiving some further recommendations from the board.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Has the government been advised when phase one of the report will be complete?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, it is our expectation that we should be receiving some advice from the Energy Resources

Conservation Board on that matter, probably within the next 60 to 90 days.

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health. Apart from the Pincher Creek health study, are any other studies to evaluate the effect of sour gas wells on public health being considered at this time?

DR. WEBBER: No, Mr. Speaker. As the hon. member knows, we are proceeding with a medical diagnostic review in the Twin Butte area of southwestern Alberta, and we are awaiting the results of the Lodgepole report before giving consideration to any other studies as it may affect health.

University Graduates — Employment

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is a continuation of the one I started yesterday on unemployment amongst professional graduates at university. I'd like to direct the question to four different portfolios for a quick answer. I'd like to know if the respective ministers of Manpower, Tourism and Small Business, Agriculture, and Hospitals and Medical Care have met with the respective professional graduates to look at their employment opportunities and employment future.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have not met directly with any of the professional graduate groups. I would say, though, that our announcement of the year-round private sector wage subsidy and on-the-job program was a direct effort to encourage the private sector to create jobs for people in that age category.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I directed that to four ministers, and I understand each has a very quick answer to the question.

MR. FIORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, mine will be very quick. I'd just like to add to the response of the Minister of Manpower, in that I have not met directly with the group in question.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I have not met directly with any of the groups referred to in the question.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member is aware that there is, and has been for several years, an advisory committee, a standing committee, on the question of health occupations and manpower. It has been chaired very effectively by Mr. Elvin Christenson, and they meet regularly throughout the year and report to several ministers in government who are affected by the health occupations groups.

One of their duties is to keep a very close monitoring role on the specific issue of numbers, shortages, surpluses, availability, et cetera. As such, they do keep in close communication with the faculties of the various institutions that are involved in producing those graduates. Needless to say, I don't get involved in direct communications with the student bodies.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Manpower, with regard to the loss of professional people from the province of Alberta after graduation. Has the minister been monitoring that particular situation, and are any steps being taken to prevent the loss from Alberta of brainpower that we graduate from our universities?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would say there is ongoing monitoring of the situation and, as I have already stated, one specific initiative. There are others that have been ongoing and are being analyzed to try to build the bridge for that first work experience in the labour force. Having said that, I think the hon. member would have to agree that there may be certain segments of the work force where it's unrealistic to build bridges if there isn't going to be something long term and meaningful at the end of it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the Minister of Manpower undertake to place a special priority of concern on this whole area of unemployment for professional graduates of our universities? From the minister's comment, I understand he is referring to ongoing departmental responsibilities. But at this critical time of the year, I think a special emphasis would certainly help. Could the minister undertake that for members of the Legislature at this time?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, we do place special emphasis on youth employment opportunities. I view the select groups the hon. member is referring to as part and parcel of the youth group.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister of social services with regard to these professional graduates who are unemployed. Very adequate studies indicate that with each 1 percent increase in unemployment, mental and emotional problems rise significantly. I am wondering if the minister has done any studies with regard to that and if, at this time, he would place a priority on this subject and, through his department facilities, study the matter and report back to the Legislature.

DR. WEBBER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice and follow up.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Tourism and Small Business, again with regard to the unemployed professional persons coming out of our universities. These people graduate as engineers, dentists, geologists, and so on, but one of the experiences they don't have is business experience. Would the minister consider placing special emphasis on business training for some of these persons who would like to go into private business and possibly make that transition into some other form of employment, or certainly into their respective professions?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I should point out that there is already a service available in the Department of Tourism and Small Business, where our business development representatives and business analysts are available at the request of individuals who may want to get into business. We have already had quite a number of university graduates who have talked to them about the possibility of getting into their own businesses. That certainly is a priority of ours and will continue to be.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate whether the department's facility has been made known to these respective graduates? Is there any special kind of communication that proceeds to the university community that would make the respective people aware of the available facility as such?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that as notice and check to ensure that my answer, that we do have the

interaction with the university community to let them know that it is available, is right.

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the question having been addressed to four ministers, hon. members know that just about anything we do for the first time tends to become a precedent. The number four could increase to six, and maybe eventually include the whole cabinet. I'm sure that's a precedent the House would wish to consider before it were adopted.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, speaking on that point of order, and for our consideration with regard to that. The reason I did that was the matter of saving time. I felt the answer with regard to it was a yes or no, and repeating the question four times would take a lot more time to do it. Certainly on the basis of yes and no answers, the question was better put that way.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, to supplement my hon. colleague's answer, there has been a student venture thrust in encouraging students into their own business enterprises through our summer temporary employment program. The hire-a-student office counselling programs are also working at encouraging students into their own business ventures. So there certainly is some movement in that direction.

I would add, Mr. Speaker, that we must be very careful before society accepts a responsibility that a person must immediately find employment in the occupation they have trained for, especially when they have the freedom of choice to select their occupation. I hope we are not thrusting on government a responsibility that would eventually interfere with that freedom of choice.

Airline Deregulation

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Economic Development pertains to the announcement by the federal Minister of Transport regarding a change in air regulation. Could the minister indicate if he was consulted with respect to these changes? What impact is anticipated upon travelers in Alberta, particularly on Alberta-based airlines?

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the second part of the question, that would certainly be a matter of opinion and research, unless there just happened to be some special study of it done within the minister's official capacity.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, there was an invitation from the federal Minister of Transport for our officials to attend a press conference and announcement on the 10th, and a further invitation for a ministerial gathering on the issue toward the end of May. Over time we have made constant representations about modifying the issue of rates, routes, and right of entry. I hope these are partly in response to those representations we've made.

MR. LEE: A supplementary. Could the minister indicate if he proposed, advocated, or expects an additional air carrier on the Calgary-Edmonton airbus route? Would that carrier be the CP airline?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not in a position to forecast who might undertake that route, other than to say that an initial examination would indicate that anything is possible in this regard.

MR. LEE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate if this decision will in fact result in an airbus connection between the cities of Calgary and Vancouver?

MR. PLANCHE: Again, Mr. Speaker, as I understand the modification of rules, anything is possible.

Youth Development Centre — Strathmore

MR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Solicitor General is with regard to the youth development centre still under construction in Strathmore. Could the minister inform the Assembly when we can expect this project to reach completion of the building stage and when we can expect the start-up of operations in that facility?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that the construction phase is almost complete. We're anticipating the first transfers to Strathmore to occur early in July and that all four of the residential units will be occupied by the end of July this year. In the main building, which is essentially for schooling and administration, the schooling use will start with the beginning of the school year in September, under the contract with local school authorities.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Since changing the responsibility from the social services department to the Solicitor General's department, could the minister inform the Assembly if there has also been a reclassification of the type of young people who will be housed within this facility and whether the facility itself has been reclassified?

DR. REID: The facility has been reclassified with the transfer from the department of social services to the Solicitor General. It's anticipated that most of the youths in the centre will be in the 14 to 15 age group, because they were still in the school system prior to their conviction. There may be some older offenders if they are still in the school system in the academic stream. If they are in need of academic upgrading, then there may indeed be some 16- or 17-year-olds at Strathmore. However, most of them will be 14- or 15-year-olds. That's the anticipation.

MR. CLARK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I understand the facility has a very good gymnasium and other recreational facilities. I am wondering if the minister could inform us whether the community could make use of these facilities under certain conditions, with the co-operation of the director, of course?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the gymnasium in particular, the director has been appointed and is on site and, I understand, has been having some preliminary discussions with the community leaders about the use of the gymnasium. Of course, the gymnasium will be primarily for the offenders who are in the institution, and it will be on a scheduled basis. When it's not required for the offenders, it will certainly be available for community use. I anticipate that the community will appreciate the use of that gymnasium.

MR. CLARK: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I also understand that the facility will have its own school, but it will be run by the local school board. Could the minister inform the Assembly if this is the only area in which there will be community co-operation between the facility and the local people?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, under the Young Offenders Act, which is now in place, Strathmore will be what we are classifying as an open-custody facility. Therefore, it will have offenders who are in that category. When it will not interfere with the schooling function and their rehabilitation, they will be available for community service for either the community of Strathmore, through its municipal government, or nonprofit groups. Usually we find that the type of groups are the senior citizens. If there's a lodge or anything like that, they will be available for the upkeep of the surroundings and that type of thing.

They will not be as available as adult offenders in a similar institution, because the main purpose of the Young Offenders Act is that we are looking at a group of offenders who hopefully are going to continue with their education after their release back into the general population. For that reason, they will be available for a community function mostly in the evenings and on Saturdays.

Unemployment

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Manpower. The April unemployment figures are out, and they are again shameful. My question is: can the minister give us an assessment of why the unemployment rate in Calgary has increased to 13.1 percent and is still a shocking over 14 percent in Edmonton and over 12 percent in Alberta as a whole?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has clearly made a representation. Unless there happens to be ...

MR. MARTIN: I asked for his assessment.

MR. SPEAKER: That's a matter of opinion and of research, which the hon. member is equipped to pursue himself. If there were some specific studies within the department, perhaps they could be asked about in the question period. Otherwise they might be sought by a motion for a return.

MR. MARTIN: Fine, Mr. Speaker. I think Albertans are interested. It's not semantics that are important.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I respectfully suggest that the hon. member is out of order in dealing with, I think, a proper point of order by simply dismissing it as an exercise in semantics. I suggest that is not the kind of exercise that either the hon. member or the Chair ought to engage in.

MR. MARTIN: My question then: has the minister asked his officials for any report on why this is happening in Alberta today?

MR. ISLEY: I have in front of me a fairly complex analysis of the employment and unemployment situation. If it is your wish to give me the next 10 to 15 minutes to explain it to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to live with your decision.

MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. minister, as he probably intended, has answered his own question.

MR. MARTIN: Let me try to make it a little simpler for the minister, over a serious problem. Has the minister any emergency contingency plans in place that he could implement at this time, which would help make a serious dent in the tragic

unemployment problem that continues month after month in this province?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, just for the sake of clarity, might I point out that the labour stats the hon. member is referring to are the ones that were picked up by the survey approximately a month ago. Since that time, we have implemented the summer temporary employment program, to the tune of \$20 million, which is an \$8 million increase over 1983. We have announced a new initiative in the \$26 million private sector year-round wage subsidy and on-the-job training program. Might I also point out to the hon. member that it has been stated a number of times, within and outside this House, that certain sectors of our economy have to go through an adjustment period and that for some time we will be looking at unemployment rates comparable to the national average, keeping in mind, though, that our participation rate is substantially higher than the national average, which gives us an extra plus.

If you analyze today's labour stats, there are some positives and some negatives. On a year-to-year basis, taking a three-month interval, we see some positive growth in base industries such as agriculture, where employment opportunities are up over 16 per cent ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I recall the question having been directed toward eliciting from the minister a list of programs, and I think he has supplied that. He is now proceeding to give some opinions, which would seem to revert to the first question of the hon. member and would indicate some fairly basic disagreement between the hon. minister and the Chair.

MR. R. SPEAKER: That was what you did yesterday. We want to know what you're doing tomorrow.

MR. MARTIN: Yes. I know the answer to the question; the answer is nothing.

Let me ask this supplementary question directly of the minister: has the minister asked his officials for any report on whether there is a correlation between our continuing high unemployment in this province and the fact that Alberta had the largest drop in retail sales in the country in March?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, on that specific comparison, the answer would be no. If I'm going to go further into responding to the question, then I have to get back to analyzing what's happening in our work force.

MR. MARTIN: Just a point of clarification. Is the minister saying that the fact we had the largest drop in retail sales in the country had no impact on unemployment in the province?

AN HON. MEMBER: He didn't say that.

MR. HYNDMAN: To supplement the answer, Mr. Speaker, the largest and highest per capita retail sales in all of Canada are still in Alberta and have been for 15 continuous months, including March.

MR. MARTIN: The minister hasn't read the latest figures then. Maybe the Treasurer had better get his officials working on it. That just came out this morning, I might remind him.

I'd like the next question to go to the Minister of Manpower. If the Treasurer would like to keep trying to help him out, that's fine. I understand the minister has now received an application for funding assistance for the unemployed action centre program. Can the minister give us an estimate as to when a

decision will be made on that funding, in view of the fact that the current funding runs out at the end of June, and also in view of the fact that the latest unemployment figures indicate that this is going to be an ongoing problem?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member seems to be drawing some relationship between the two. I haven't reached the same conclusion at the moment. I confirm that as of yesterday afternoon, I received an application for funding from the unemployment action centres. That application will be analyzed and responded to in due course.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: Following our usual custom, perhaps we might recognize the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood for a reasonable number of supplementaries before other members get into the question.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Continuing the same line, has the minister commissioned any objective assessment of the unemployment action centre program over the last year, to determine whether or not they have duplicated provincial services, especially in view of the fact that the UACs have made a point of trying not to duplicate and in view of the fact that the minister's own department is referring people to the unemployment action centres?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the only analysis that I or the Alberta Department of Manpower made of the unemployment action centres proposal was when it was submitted for joint funding under the Canada/Alberta NEED program — that's the new employment expansion and development program — a little over a year ago. At that point in time, the objectives of the program in many areas overlapped services provided by either the federal or provincial government, and it was decided not to participate in the support of that program. I would not be able to respond as to whether those objectives were changed when they were eventually successful in getting federal funding, because the Alberta Department of Manpower and I as minister were not privy to the discussions between their group and the federal government.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Has the minister arranged any meetings or contact with the many Albertans who have written letters of support for the unemployment action centre program, ranging from city mayors to college presidents to clergymen, to determine if these services they are offering are duplications? They seem to have firsthand knowledge.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the letters of support the hon. member is referring to reached my attention at 5:30 yesterday afternoon. I have not at this point in time set up any meetings.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary by the hon. member, followed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, to come back to what the minister said. Did he say to one of the questions that there is no relationship between the need for unemployment action centres and the unemployment rate? I believe that was his statement. Would he clarify that?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall making that statement. I do recall responding to the hon. member's first question, where he implied that there was some relationship between the high unemployment rate and the funding of the unemployment action centre. I would have to do an analysis of what type of activities the unemployment action centre is participating in before I could reach his implied conclusion that they will reduce the unemployment rate.

MR. COOK: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood's original line of questioning related to the sector-by-sector approach on the health of the economy in retail sales. On another sectoral approach, could the hon. Minister of Manpower indicate if there are any studies being done now to determine how the employment levels are being reflected in the drilling industry, the forestry industry, and the electronics industry, which seem to be much healthier this year than last?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the first sector of the hon. member's question, the primary industries of oil and gas, the answer would be yes. Alberta Manpower is not involved in any specific studies that I'm aware of on the other two.

Premier's U.S. Visit

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is in terms of the trip proposed for this coming week. I wonder if the Premier could indicate who he will be meeting in the financial community of New York and some of the objectives the Premier hopes to accomplish during that visit.

MR. LOUGHEED: There are about four objectives, Mr. Speaker. The first one has to do with the trading relationships between Canada and the United States and the role of premiers of Canadian provinces in strengthening and improving those relationships. The second one has to do with an evaluation and an assessment of our natural gas marketing situation in the United States. The third one has to do with current, contemporary advice of financial and monetary and fiscal trends. And the fourth one has to do with current and contemporary advice with regard to energy trends, both worldwide and within North America.

During the course of it, through the Agent General in New York we have organized a special day by the Americas Society, which will feature western Canada in a series of panels that the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs and I are involved in and that have quite a cross section of representatives from various political philosophies and persuasions, as well as people in the private sector. In addition to that, I'll be meeting with some journalists and our advisers from Washington, D.C.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of finances for either the capital or the operation of the government of Alberta, will the Premier seek any type of financial arrangements or institutions that would possibly loan Alberta money for financing any of our provincial operations?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, no. As the hon. member is aware from the Budget Address, the only area in which we would perceive external financing is with regard to the Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation or Alberta Government Telephones, and that requires, both with the Provincial Treasurer and me, an ongoing relationship with financial organizations in the United States, particularly in New York. This would be

a matter of continuing dialogue and of strengthening that relationship. It would not involve any specific moves with regard to Alberta being involved in such external borrowing.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in light of the very necessary information the Premier is seeking in terms of financial and fiscal trends, I wonder if the Premier would take on the responsibility of bringing back and making available to members of the Legislature material that is presented, as well as making a ministerial or Premier's statement to the Assembly on his return from that trip, so that not only we as legislators here can have that current information, but certainly it is very necessary for the business community of Alberta.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'll consider that. But frankly, I think the better way to do it would be to handle it through the question period in the normal course. If there is some documentation that's useful, I'd like to give that consideration. Most of my discussions will be verbal dialogue rather than receiving documents. That's the reason for going there, to have direct conversation with the people involved.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the Premier, in terms of the visit. One, it seems to be information-seeking. Secondly, will the Premier be exploring the avenue of job opportunities in Alberta being created in terms of business opportunities? I know that relates to the question of gas, that the Premier related, but are there other areas as such?

MR. LOUGHEED: Very much so, Mr. Speaker. It's the position of this government that the situation with regard to employment is going to be solved by the private sector and not by the public sector.

It's clear that we as a country simply can't continue developing a greater and greater debt situation. So jobs are going to come from the private sector. Jobs coming from the private sector only come from investors, both locally and in the rest of Canada, and internationally. As a result of the national energy program and the Foreign Investment Review Agency, there's not a good perception about Canada in the international investment field. It has steadily been my feeling that I and other premiers in Canada have to try to offset the negative influence of the policies I've just mentioned, of the current government in Ottawa, to try to offset the view of worldwide investors that Canada is no longer a good place to invest. That really is hurting us in terms of job creation. This is just another step in that constant program to change their perception about Canada as a good place to invest. Obviously, I'll give some prejudice and bias towards Alberta.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Might the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs revert to Introduction of Visitors and, after that, might we revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to introduce, in your gallery, to members of the Assembly His Excellency Per Martin Ølberg, the Ambassador from Norway to Canada, who is visiting Alberta for the first time. He is accompanied by the honorary Consul General from Norway, Arnie Johannessen, and by our Chief of Protocol, Mr. Pickering. I ask that they rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

(reversion)

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, some 14 grade 12 students who are with us today from the Forest Lawn high school in the constituency of Calgary Forest Lawn. They are accompanied by their teachers Lou Keresztes and Marlee Lovatt, and by bus driver Paul Hald. They're seated in the members gallery, and I ask them now to rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, through you, I would like to introduce to the Assembly a group of 23 grade 12 students accompanied by their teachers Mr. Edwards and Mr. Seaman, and by parents Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. McKenzie. The students have been in Edmonton for a couple of days during Education Week and have toured not only the Legislature Building but, I'm sure, some other interesting areas in the city. I'd like to have the Assembly welcome them at this time and give them the usual applause.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, and I probably should have done this yesterday. As Minister of Tourism and Small Business, and in light of the fact that the Edmonton Oilers are putting not only Edmonton but Alberta on the map, I would like to have the unanimous support of this Assembly in wishing them well in the Stanley Cup finals, particularly after winning game one, 1 to 0. [applause]

MR. SPEAKER: We'll have an appropriate message go from the Assembly to the proper recipient on behalf of the Oilers.

head: COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

[Mr. Appleby in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

Department of Labour

MR. NOTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the continuation of the Department of Labour estimates. I'm not sure if it will be as long running as *As the World Turns*, an afternoon soap opera, but I am sure there will be at least some continued discussion.

Mr. Chairman, might I just take a moment to advise members of the committee that one of the reasons my colleague and I are so concerned about unemployment is that the most recent statistics present an absolutely lamentable case as far as this government's performance is concerned. I know the Minister of Labour can't be totally responsible, but I think he is at least responsible in part for the kind of climate that exists between workers on one hand and business on the other. We can talk all we like about investment climate and investor confidence, Mr. Chairman, but if you don't have consumer confidence and you don't have a good working relationship between working people and management, you have problems. This government has taken what I would describe as the blunderbuss approach to labour legislation and has created the sort of two-worlds approach which can only contribute to lack of understanding, confrontation, and trouble. That has two by-products: it leads to less confidence on the part of the consumer in the marketplace and less investor confidence as well.

I think it's interesting to note — my colleague raised some questions today — that the most recent figures show that while the rest of the country seems to be recovering in retail sales, we have had a drop, the largest drop of any part of the country; as a matter of fact, joined only by British Columbia, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. On the other hand, our neighbouring province of Saskatchewan, with a Conservative government, saw retail sales rise by 10 percent; yet there was a 12 percent drop in Alberta.

Mr. Chairman, we find as well that while bankruptcies are down in Canada as a whole, there has been a 21 percent increase in bankruptcies in Alberta. We find as well that in housing prices the largest drop has been in Edmonton and Calgary, especially in the city of Calgary — all of which I think just confirms warnings which both the Official Opposition and the Independent opposition made last fall when we talked not only during the debate over the Income Tax Act but, more particularly and more relevant to the estimates of this department, to changes in labour legislation which we felt would break the bond between working people and management.

Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with four issues the minister responded to last night; first of all, the question of approach to public-sector bargaining. The minister is saying that we are not following the legislated right. He takes the example of British Columbia, which is an example that surely most people would not want to follow. I really doubt that any government in its right mind would want tens of thousands of people marching in the street. Simply because Bill Bennett has a record in labour legislation which is scandalously bad, we are hopefully not going to use him and his government as an example. We had the example cited of the province of Quebec. We all know where the province of Quebec sits now as far as not only their own employees but the people of that province. And he cited the Tory government in Ontario. The fact that all these governments he cited — British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec — have a poor record does not justify our bringing in legislation such as Bill 44 of last year or Bill 110 in the fall.

Mr. Chairman, the fact of the matter is that there are other examples. All governments in this province are facing difficult times; no question about that. For example, the negotiations in the province of Manitoba between their public employees union and the government, while difficult — my colleague and I are not suggesting that collective bargaining means you simply provide a blank cheque to those people representing workers. Obviously there has to be vigorous defence of the taxpayer's dollar on the part of negotiators for the government. No one is arguing otherwise. Not even people in the trade union movement are arguing otherwise. But where collective bargaining works in this country, it is preferable by far to the examples the minister cited.

I don't want the minister to get away with this suggestion that somehow we don't have legislated public-sector collective bargaining in this province, because collective bargaining can only operate if you have an "or else". The "or else" has to be the ability to withdraw one's labour. Take away that "or else" and what you have is a few words in a statute, but you don't have meaningful collective bargaining.

Mr. Chairman, what the government has done is that they've taken away from working people in this province. We all know the nurses were able to gain some effective awards in the late '70s and early '80s, because they outmanoeuvred and outsmarted this government. Fair enough. But the fact of the matter is that now they can no longer withdraw their labour. What do we have instead. Mr. Chairman? We don't have a fair system of arbitration. We have a system of compulsory arbitration in which the arbitrators must take into account fiscal policy as

defined by the Provincial Treasurer. Now what is that if it isn't the legislated route? Because it is not as archaic and confrontational as British Columbia does not mean it is an acceptable alternative. It's not an acceptable alternative, Mr. Chairman, at least to us in the Official Opposition.

I want to deal with the question of Bill 110. Last night we heard really quite an amazing argument by the minister. He said that we decided not to proclaim Bill 110 — and I agree; it was a good thing we didn't proclaim a bad piece of legislation — because we wanted to wait until we get the report from this blue ribbon committee that is going to examine labour legislation in the entire construction industry. Mr. Chairman, that was the point we argued last fall. We even had a motion during the debate — I believe it was a reasoned amendment on second reading — that the whole question of passing the legislation be withheld until we had the report of the committee investigating labour relations in the construction industry. Yet it didn't make any difference that we proposed that amendment from the opposition side, because the government went ahead anyway and passed the Act. And then we don't proclaim it.

What kind of ridiculous process is that? What is the point of dealing with the legislation, passing the legislation? Then we have the minister saying: but because we've got this blue ribbon committee and we expect their report to look in a much broader way, we aren't going to proclaim the Act. What was the point of the exercise last fall? I don't know, Mr. Chairman, but I sometimes wonder if the point of the exercise was that the minister, knowing perhaps a little more about the ins and outs of negotiations than his caucus colleagues, was not all that enthused but was pushed into it by the right wing of the caucus. We were going to have a tough anti-labour stand, because some of the caucus members thought this would be a way to shore up the government's flagging support.

I don't know if that was the reason or not, but I can't imagine any other reason that we would pass legislation, specifically vote down a hoist motion which would leave the thing until such time as we had the committee report. We ram the thing through, and then we don't proclaim it. One of the reasons we don't proclaim it is because we are expecting the very report we weren't prepared to acknowledge last fall. I can't understand the rational people in this Assembly — and I trust that from time to time they are — following that kind of procedure. It makes no sense at all.

Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with two or three other issues that came out of the minister's remarks responding to both me and my colleague when we last met as a committee. We dealt with the question of labour costs and the impact on our competitive position in the world. I simply reassert what I said last night. Over the weekend I had occasion to meet with a number of prominent leaders of the trade union movement. They advised me that in the most recent set of discussions with the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, that organization itself indicated that it was not labour costs, that labour was not pricing us out of the international market. The idea that somehow we've got to bring the labour costs down to some sort of Taiwan or South Korean level in order to be competitive is simply not true.

There is the larger problem of productivity. But when the minister talked about productivity and when Conservatives continually talk about productivity, they put it exclusively in the light of labour wage rates. Without getting into any economic analysis, Mr. Chairman, we all know that productivity is largely a factor of the efficient use of capital. The fact of the matter is that one of the problems in the Canadian economy over the last dozen years or so is that we have not had the retooling, which is a function of capital — not because they haven't had

enough money. Some of the companies that have done the least are companies that have made the most money.

We see what's happened to our own packing industry in this province, where they've closed down plant after plant. Yet if one looks at the profits that were made by the packing companies — Canada Packers is an example — in the 1960s and early 1970s, the fact of the matter is that they weren't putting their profits or a portion of those profits back into modernizing their facilities. The fact of the matter is that when we look industry by industry in this country, Mr. Minister, the problems we face from a productivity point of view have been in large measure the result of failing to retool, failing to modernize our capital component so we can make the best use of our workers. If that were true in the case of industries — just the textile industries, for example — where the profit margins have never been high, it might be one thing. But when you look at industry after industry after industry and see that during the good years profits were made and reinvestment was not made, then one has to ask in this committee why it is that too many people single out the working man as the villain of the piece when it comes to productivity. I don't think the evidence backs that up.

I want to say one other thing. One of the problems we have had with productivity and with the sluggishness of the Canadian economy has been our failure to invest in research and development. I remember pleading that case in this House, and having, as is normally the case when opposition members speak, an unreceptive audience. That's neither here nor there now, except to point out to the minister that if we're going to be looking at productivity, the failure to invest in research and development by companies that had excellent profit returns is a major contributing problem to the situation we face today.

I'm not suggesting, nor is, in my understanding of the position of modern labour leaders whoever they may be, public sector, private sector, CLC, CFL — the fact of the matter is that no one is suggesting that in the present economic climate, the sky is the limit. No one is suggesting there shouldn't be hard bargaining. There obviously has to be hard bargaining. The economic circumstances demand hard bargaining. But that doesn't mean that we alter the basic relationship between labour and capital that is most effectively resolved through the free collective bargaining system.

Last night the minister talked about a decentralized approach. If you're interested in a decentralized approach, Mr. Chairman, you embrace collective bargaining. You don't bring in an army of civil servants to run various kinds of regulated bargaining processes, whether it be the kind of arbitration process we set up through Bill 44 or — who knows what else is in store when one looks at other provinces in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I thought I would offer those constructive comments to the minister and say one other thing before moving to perhaps more detailed questions between myself and my colleague. As I mentioned last night, I'm concerned about the ILO issue. Some members may not be particularly concerned about it. Some members may say: so what, who cares: we're more interested in the *Reader's Digest* than we are in the International Labour Organisation. I for one am concerned. The minister indicated they would have to review whatever final decision is made, perhaps this fall, on the complaints that have been brought to the International Labour Organisation. But what does "review" mean? What are the contingency plans? We heard in the House last fall that if our labour legislation was questioned under the terms of the Charter of Rights, we were quite prepared — we had our Premier standing in his place and all the backbenchers thumping their desks with great enthusiasm — to bring in a notwithstanding provision of the

Constitution in order to evade any clear responsibility on that score.

No, Mr. Chairman. I think we need to have a very clear commitment from this government that in fact they are going to honour any decision made by the International Labour Organisation. If that means, Mr. Minister, that you have to come back to this Legislature and introduce repeal legislation, then I think this government should be prepared to do it. I don't want to see a situation where — perhaps some of this is hypothetical, but as a result of that Ontario court ruling, who knows? — we find ourselves in a position where we have to use the notwithstanding clause in the Charter of Rights and take a backdoor approach in order to maintain on the statute books legislation which is clearly indefensible. I just want to make the point crystal clear, Mr. Chairman, that in terms of the government's position and the opposition's, there are some very definite and obvious differences.

Mr. Chairman, since there will no doubt be a number of specific questions, I'd like to perhaps begin with the Human Rights Commission. Last night the minister indicated that the advertising campaign, which we seemed to agree was a good campaign, would have to be reviewed, that perhaps there was a saturation point. I'm wondering about that. As I look at advertising generally, it seems to me that that is not the theory of modern advertising. It doesn't mean you run the same ads, but I'm wondering to what extent we should be accepting that kind of argument. The minister also said last night that certain people had indicated that they questioned the use of public money in this way. I don't know whether they contacted him or some of the caucus members or contacted the government in a formal sense. I'd like to know whether that came from any organized groups, and who they were. It seems to me that this is troubling, in a sense, if we have to sort of go back. Ibsen once said that in every generation the truth has to be retold. I'm not sure, Mr. Minister, if we can just leave it every generation. When it comes to something like tolerance and racial understanding, it seems to me that this is an ongoing process that has to be continually reinforced.

I'd like to pose those specific questions to the minister with respect to the tolerance and understanding campaign, and we can go from there.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, before we go from there, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has scattered more red herrings around here this morning than the NDP has members, and we should deal with a few of those red herrings. First of all, he alludes to an article in one of the Edmonton newspapers today, based theoretically upon the speech I gave yesterday. To assist the hon. member and his colleague, I arranged, as I indicated I would, to have delivered to their offices today, in brown paper envelopes marked only with their names so they'd have the exhilaration and titillation of reading them, the last two public speeches I made, including the one from which the newspaper comments came today.

Mr. Chairman, I have said many times to the media that it is my responsibility as a leader in government to try to communicate with the public, to help the public understand, and to engage in debate with the public in order that we can think through some very difficult issues. Clearly the direction of the economy, the appropriate level of wage rates, the equity considerations in wage rates and working conditions, and the relationship between employers and employees are very fundamental concerns. They deserve careful, considered attention. I have a responsibility. So does the media have a responsibility.

I make no further comment except to say that in this particular speech, which was released, my effort was to communicate that as a consequence of the recession, people today have changed their notions about what it is reasonable to expect from the economy, that in fact decisions will be based much more on the worksite basis, that those employees and employers will make their own decisions based on the realities that confront them, and that leaders in government, business, and trade unions have a responsibility to help with clear information relevant to those matters.

MR. NOTLEY: I don't argue that; that's fair enough.

MR. YOUNG: I know you didn't argue it, hon. leader. You simply, if I may put it, insinuated that my comments led to something else. I want to make very clear what I was endeavouring to do. Mr. Chairman, there are copies of the speech available if hon. members wish to have it. But I know those two hon. members have it, and I hope they'll read it.

With respect to the unemployment question, it had a fair bit of review in the question period this morning. But from looking at the statistics this morning, my recollection is that we still have 2 percentage points more of our population employed than any other portion of Canada. Hon. members should remember that.

With respect to public-sector bargaining, I want to make it clear that I was posing a concern from my point of view. I do not believe it is desirable to have wage controls. I do not believe it is preferred to have arbitration. I want to make that clear. What I also want to make very clear is that relative to the private sector, a very disproportionate number of employees of governments are involved in unions. I'm not saying that's good or bad. I'm just saying it is a fact of our economy and a fact of our institutional structures.

I also indicated that, clearly, the public view and the view of most governments is that what's been happening in public-sector bargaining is unacceptable. Surely we need no more evidence than that there were wage controls or legislated wage levels in four of the last eight years, and it didn't happen in Alberta. We have gone the umpteenth mile through our arbitration changes to try to ensure that we can have the main responsibility rest with the parties in Alberta and that we can achieve this on a decentralized basis. But that doesn't take away from the fact that in the public mind, and clearly as reflected by government actions, public-sector bargaining is at an important crossroads. That's the only point I was trying to make.

Mr. Chairman, I might indicate that there's been some discussion of the relationship between management's, labour's, and government's responsibility. In my address to the building trades, I complimented them on one very significant approach of theirs. In all the meetings I have had with them — there have been many, and some of them not in the easiest circumstances, either for them or for me — on no occasion have I found them to be unfair; on no occasion have I found them to be unwilling to listen. They have tried to be objective. They have tried very hard to understand, as have I. In the circumstances of the unemployment, which is higher in that sector than it is anywhere, I think it is a great credit to them that they do so. I might indicate that the number of persons in the construction occupations in Alberta is substantially greater as a proportion of our employment force than of any other portion of Canada, and that's as we should expect it to be, based on the economic development which we have observed.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to external competition, competitiveness, and productivity, I have indicated clearly — and

it's not, regrettably, the notion that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is trying to communicate with respect to my position — that we must be competitive. I don't think anybody has a problem there. I have never said that our wages will have to descend to the level of Korea, Japan, Taiwan, or whatever other place he wants to name. I've simply said that our total productivity approach must be competitive. I don't think there's any quarrel between us, although I wish he would not impute suggestions on my part where they don't exist.

With respect to the change in productivity, however, I would go back to a reference from the Economic Council of Canada, and again I'll go to their chief economist Cornell. A year ago the Economic Council of Canada said that we should generally expect a substantial increase in productivity following a recession. The council's earlier research has suggested that a quarter of Canada's decline in productivity in the recent time has been due to underutilization. I indicated last night that that's exactly what we should expect. When we have some recovery, we're going to get a blip on our productivity graph simply because we begin to get some capacity utilization. That's exactly what we've got, and we're sure a long way from being competitive. The other statement the council makes about our dismal productivity record stands. We should sort out the difference between the long term and the short term, the immediate objectives and the longer term objectives.

Some comments were made about companies not investing in new technology, et cetera. My plea yesterday with the Canadian Federation of Labour is the same one their president made, the same one Lalonde and Ouellet made: let's work together to increase our adoption of new technology. Let's not fear it. Let's accept; let's build on it. Let's treat it as something positive from which we can make progress in terms of our output.

In terms of the financial position of companies, the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood should remember that last spring when we held hearings before this Legislative Assembly, some research was tabled by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. I read the research; I don't know if he did. In it the researcher indicated — and it is their own research — that one of the problems in Canada is the fact that the balance sheets of the companies are in difficult circumstances. He clearly indicated that they have a very poor equity position and that has to be rebuilt — a major problem. All kinds of research has been done by management groups which points to the very same thing. It's a complex issue that we're into.

A specific question was asked about the Alberta Human Rights Commission and their program of promotion of tolerance and understanding. I want to make a point very clearly, Mr. Chairman. I think we should distinguish between advertising a hard product — bicycles or whatever product we want to name — and the promotion of a concept, of a moral position. I see those as substantially different items.

To illustrate how substantially different, surely all members of this Assembly remember the Canada goose, of which we're very proud. We were very proud of it until the Liberals ran them across our TV sets for so long that nobody wanted to see a Canada goose again. I put the goose as well as the Liberal Party in disrepute. That's the concern we have to be alert to with respect to the promotion of notions of a moral nature and the promotion by governments of concepts on a paid promotional basis. I indicated that there was a judgment decision to be made; a judgment decision had not been made. I further indicated that that promotional program was, in my view, more successful than our best expectations.

Mr. Chairman, there may be further questions.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I realize it was late last night, but I had asked some questions. I know that the hon. minister was trying to figure out when they were quitting and was talking to the Attorney General. So there are some things I'd like to go back over, plus come back to some of the things the minister has said. Believe it or not, I happen to agree with some of the things. I guess it's just the means in getting to that end that we disagree on.

First of all, I'll just quickly go back over what I previously asked, so the minister can come back to it. The one statement he made last night was the fact that — I tried to show him figures dealing with unemployment insurance and about unemployment in the construction industry. I got the feeling, because of the minister's comment at that time, that he was saying it could be quite exaggerated because we were just dealing with the hiring hall and people could leave their name in the hiring hall and still be out working on a non-union job. I gather he was questioning the figures. My point to the minister, that I'd like him to come back to, is that I'm sure that's happened in the odd case, but I do not think it's to the degree the minister indicated.

When we look at the figures — and I won't go over them; I don't know if the minister referred — they were dealing with construction workers on unemployment insurance. Of course if they're on unemployment insurance, they can't be on a job at that particular time, unless they're breaking the law. I pointed out that it's worse. It varies within the trades. Every indication that we get, though, is that it will get worse in the fall. Boilermakers on unemployment have increased tenfold; plumbers, sixfold; ironworkers, fivefold. Union construction workers unemployment insurance in July 1983 was more than double the July 1982 figure.

The point I'm making, Mr. Minister, is simply that I do not think the explanation you gave was entirely the main reason we have an unemployment insurance. I'm sure the minister didn't mean to indicate that that was the reason, that people had two different jobs and left their names in the hiring hall, that that's the main reason it was that high. But that was the explanation given.

The other area I want to talk — maybe I'll come into a new area, because it falls into there. We haven't had any discussion at all about the construction industry and some people even predicting chaos and anarchy. These sorts of words have been used in the media. It's my understanding that a number — I believe 10, but I stand to be corrected on that — of unionized companies have applied for lockouts. I ask the minister for an updated assessment of where it stands and what he sees happening in the next few months. Of course the opposite thing can happen; some of the unionized workers can certainly go on strike. But neither is where we want to go. I'd basically ask the minister for an update on that situation, because it seems to me that it could be fairly serious, especially in the construction industry that's in some difficulty right now.

The other areas I asked the minister about had to do with the Labour Relations Board. I believe the minister indicated that only two unions had applied through section 133 about spin-offs. The question I was trying to point out and would like the minister to indicate to me — it is a perception of many people I've talked to in the building trades unions that the trend was clear, that it was a waste of their time and money, and that they knew this was in fact going to happen. What they are saying to me at least — and I'm sure it's an important perception to the Minister of Labour — is that they know why Bill 110 is no longer an issue with the government. The companies in fact had another way to go; that was through the spin-off, through section 133. Their perception is that the government

is not doing anything; if they go, they'll lose anyhow. I suggest to the minister that if there have been only two, that's probably one of the reasons. I would like him to come back and see what he sees happening in section 133 to prevent spin-offs. Or does he think that spin-offs should be allowed, and that's why we didn't need Bill 110?

The other area we discussed briefly and that I want to go back to had to do with overtime, if the minister was aware of that situation under the Employment Standards Act. I explained it: I don't think I have to go through the whole rigmarole again. I think the minister is well aware of what I was saying.

Just to clarify another area — the minister was a little vague. It had to do with the Individual's Rights Protection Act. I gather that the minister said that they're going to be reviewing it over the summer, and it is possible — if I can put it that way — that we will be dealing with some new legislation in the fall. That's just as a point of clarification, to make sure I understood what the minister was saying in that area.

Mr. Chairman, the other areas I would like to briefly come back to have to do with some of the comments of the minister. First of all, Mr. Minister, we all recognize that we have to be competitive. None of us disagrees with that point. I think where we disagree is perhaps that the minister does not have as much faith as I do in free collective bargaining in a free society. Maybe this is a philosophical difference. It seems to me that one of the natures of collective bargaining is that they have to take into consideration the economic climate of the day. When times were booming in Alberta and we had massive projects on stream, certainly the wages were going up to reflect that. We all recognize that we're now in a recession. I would suggest free collective bargaining on both sides, not just one side. Perhaps the minister doesn't mean that, but the impression we often get is that only one side has to tighten their belts. Free collective bargaining means that there is a partnership between labour and capital, and they will both have to work out their problems through the collective bargaining process. But one group cannot have all the advantages, saying: I'll form a spin-off company and have unorganized labour and take \$7 or \$8 less. That's not a fair system, Mr. Minister.

That's the point we're trying to make. Collective bargaining will work if it's allowed to work. But when you have spin-off companies, Mr. Chairman, that in fact prohibits free collective bargaining. That's the point members of the construction building trade unions are trying to make. At least that's the point they're making to me, and I'm sure they've made that point to the minister. That's the reality of what is going on. I guess the point I'm saying, Mr. Minister, is that the right to free collective bargaining should be inviolate in a free, democratic society. Whenever there are pressures put on or hindrances to the free collective bargaining process, then we begin to run into problems.

If we think we save, in the long run we don't, Mr. Minister. We create friction, and we'll see that there is a lack of trust on both sides. I suggest that's one of the reasons we're facing difficulties right now, with the possibility of lockouts and strikes in the construction trade industry. There is no longer any trust. Free collective bargaining is not working because of those spin-offs. I think most people on both sides can be reasonable. But they have to have the mechanisms to be reasonable. That's basically the point we're trying to make.

The other area the minister talks about, and I hear it from the government — he mentioned Marc Lalonde. I swear that he's been reincarnated in the Alberta Legislature when we talk about participation rates. When I see the Conservative opposition going after him, they're getting the same rhetoric there as we are here. The participation rate doesn't mean anything.

All it means is that the misery index is higher in this province. It means we have a younger population. It means we have fewer retired people than some of the other provinces. It means we have more people eligible for the labour market; that's all it means. So I suggest to the hon. minister that all it means to me is that the misery index is higher in this province than it is in others, because we have the high unemployment rate.

If the minister is not aware of the unemployment rate that was announced today, I remind him that it is serious. As my colleague mentioned yesterday, Mr. Chairman, of course it's not just this minister's fault, but he's certainly part of the collective decision-making of this government. The unemployment rate in the Edmonton area is still 14.3 percent. That's staggering. In Calgary it's actually risen to 13.1 percent, and it's at 12.1 percent right across this province of Alberta. I never ever believed that I would see unemployment rates like this, Mr. Chairman.

We talk in terms of figures. They indicate that 148,000 people in this province are unemployed today. That does not include what we call the hidden unemployed. We've talked about them. I know the government just shucks it off. But there are hidden unemployed, especially among young people who have actually given up. They do not even register at Manpower anymore. Nobody knows for sure what the numbers are. There are various speculations of anywhere from 3 to 5 percent extra. But they are there.

The point I'm trying to make is that rather than participation rates and all the rest of the excuse-making, I think Albertans would like some action in terms of job creation. It is a serious problem, and there doesn't seem to be any end to it. People could understand if it was high and then the government did something and it came down. They would accept it. But month after month there's no hope for many people, and many people are giving up.

I guess the point we're saying is that basically all we get from the government are excuses. They talk about participation rates, which mean absolutely nothing to people. It means absolutely nothing to the people who are unemployed and to the people who are afraid they're going to be unemployed with the economy the way it is going. If we get any other indication — the government is fond, if you like, of raising statistics. But we found out today that from March to April retail sales in this province went down the most of any province in Canada, that we have the highest bankruptcy rate. Things are not improving as the government tells us, and people have more despair. So I suggest to the minister — and again I don't blame him specifically for all of it — that we do have some serious problems.

That brings us back to the idea the minister talked about, that we have to be competitive. That's certainly true. As I pointed out, that's part of the free collective bargaining process. Obviously unions have to be concerned about the lack of profit margins of companies. Nobody denies that. If management and labour develop that trust which I believe we all want, then the collective bargaining process will reflect that. That's where the action should be.

Tying back into this, I make the other point that you can't inevitably ask one side to tighten its belt all the time. As I pointed out last night, we have examples of boilermakers who are working at this moment for \$7 an hour. It has disastrous effects, Mr. Chairman, in two different areas. The number one area — I've already talked about it; I won't spend a great deal of time — has to do with the type of workmanship we're going to get in the future if we ever have an economy rebound. You're not going to have the skilled tradespeople there, Mr. Minister: it's that simple. None of them is going to train for four years

and upgrade their skills to work for \$7 an hour, nor would the minister or any of the members here.

The other area it affects is purchasing power, and my colleague has talked about it. You can't inevitably squeeze people, as in the construction unions, down and down, because they are not going to be spending and buying goods at the local store and the local store buying from the manufacturers. That has, economic repercussions. Frankly, Mr. Minister, I suggest that lack of purchasing power is one of the reasons, along with high unemployment, that we have the biggest drop in retail sales in this country.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

The government, with its massive majority, can certainly just shuck it off and say it's not important, but I think Albertans are looking for leadership. These are the real problems real people are facing. If the government is not prepared to do anything about it, they'll pay the political price. That's fine. But to make excuses and say that these problems do not exist makes me angry, frankly, because I'm dealing with too many people out there — and I know some hon. members are — who are hurting, who want action, not excuses.

With those initial comments, Mr. Chairman, I await with bated breath, so to speak, the answers from the minister.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, let me first deal with the question about the hiring hall and unemployment insurance. Last night the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood quoted some statistics in which he indicated he had been told by some union leaders that the unemployment in hiring halls ranged upward of 80 percent. I went on to explain to him that we need to distinguish between, if I may take an illustration, electricians who have registered in the hiring hall, seeking union employment through the hiring hall — we need to distinguish between the proportion of members of a union who are seeking employment through the hiring hall and the total number of electricians who may be seeking employment. Those are vastly different numbers.

MR. MARTIN: I'm talking about unemployment insurance.

MR. YOUNG: The fact of the matter is that we have high unemployment in the construction industry as a sector. I've already indicated some of the reasons. Everybody knows that; the statistics show that it is proportionately higher in the construction industry. It varies among construction trades, but it is nowhere near 80 percent or 70 percent or 60 percent. However, that may well be the situation for persons who have registered for employment with a hiring hall. I went on to indicate to him, Mr. Chairman, that some of those persons could very well — and I'm pretty sure some are — be working non-union at a different location but leaving their name at the union hiring hall.

That's quite different from their collecting unemployment insurance. I didn't raise that; the hon. member opposite raised the question of their collecting unemployment insurance and holding down a job. That would be illegal, of course; we all know that's illegal. I don't believe there are any people out there who would undertake that kind of action. I have much more confidence than that in the tradesmen of today. Beyond that, I don't know what the hon. member is asking about.

With respect to the construction industry collective bargaining situation, my information appears to suggest that there are 12 industry sectors or partial sectors that are taking or have taken lockout votes. Some of those industry sectors are provincewide; others are regional in nature. Some of the lockout

votes have been taken; others have been applied for. All those applied for would appear to be scheduled to go forward during the month of May. I think May 25 is the latest date I've seen for one. This is simply an illustration of what is happening in the construction industry bargaining situation these days. In terms of labour relations, the adjective "chaotic" is perhaps a good description of what's happening. There is a great deal of confusion and uncertainty among all the parties as to what's going on and what their problems are.

If I may stay with collective bargaining to relate to the question of spin-offs and the impact of spin-offs on collective bargaining, perhaps I can put it in this simple way. It has always been legal for a company to create a spin-off company. Since 1973 it has been equally possible for a union affected by that action to bring evidence before the Labour Relations Board, claiming that the newly created company was in fact a spin-off and claiming the right to represent the employees of the spin-off company because it met the test of being a spin-off. On that basis, rather than going out and organizing on the basis of membership or by a secret ballot vote, the Labour Relations Board has had the capacity to order the spin-off company bound by the collective agreement of the original company or owner. That's what has been there, and it has been perfectly legal.

It happens very rarely. It happened last year. It may be happening this year, because we have two different wage rates or ranges of wage rates: a range of wage rates as determined by the union collective agreements, signed by both parties, for the construction industry; we have another set of wage rates, determined in the construction industry by individual employees and employers. Those two sets of rates are vastly apart. There is just no way they're going to remain widely apart. It would be a defiance of all the laws of rationality and economics for them to be different and so, in the long run, it isn't going to remain that way. In the meantime, to try to resolve their situation, to make themselves competitive, it's quite possible there have been some spin-off companies.

I think I'm also quite correct in indicating that in the first quarter of 1984, to my knowledge, only two complaints were put before the Labour Relations Board on the basis of spin-off applications. If we solve the difference, or if the industry solves the difference, in the two levels of wage rates. I don't think there is a spin-off problem. I don't think there's a section 133 problem. In my opinion, that's precisely why there have been no more applications. Having had longer to work with it now, people realize that the real problem is economics; it's got nothing to do with legalities. They'll have to sort it out.

Mr. Chairman, a question was raised about section 24 of the Employment Standards Act. That question was raised last night and alluded to again this morning. I refer the hon. member to section 24(3).

The amount of time off in place of overtime pay provided by an employer and taken by an employee shall be at least equal to the number of hours of work for which the employee, but for the overtime agreement, would have received overtime pay.

So all that's required is that there be an equal number of hours off for the number of overtime hours worked, in the event there is an overtime agreement. The law is quite specific.

On the question of the Individual's Rights Protection Act and potential changes, last night I gave the background to the decision by the court to interpret more narrowly than was originally interpreted the Individual's Rights Protection Act and the meaning of sexual discrimination as a characteristic. I further indicated that the Human Rights Commission was reviewing the situation. I expect to receive their advice in due course, and that would be weighed along with other advice and, I

believe I suggested last night, along with the considerations that would have to be taken with respect to the forthcoming application of the Charter of Rights in 1985. We would address all that together. I did not make a commitment that decisions for amendments would be made in the fall of '84, because I'm not sure it would be realistic to make such a commitment until we've advanced further on the review process.

A comment on the participation rate. I did not use a participation rate in the comment I made a few moments ago, but rather a proportion of the population who are employed as being higher in Alberta than anywhere else. The hon. member went on to say that the participation rate is really a misery index. I would only raise in the minds of hon. members of the Assembly that if it is a misery index, the most miserable place in the world has to be the Scandinavian countries, which have the highest participation rates. Generally speaking, those countries are not known for being the most miserable places in the world. So the hon. member should come up with some other social statistic to regale us with in future.

Mr. Chairman, I think I've dealt with the questions as posed.

MR. MARTIN: After those scintillating comments by the minister, I certainly have some more. I didn't mention one area I meant to, so I'll go into that first. I'm not quite sure what the minister was saying about advertising, because I gather that one of the areas we all agreed on is that the advertising done by the Human Rights Commission had been very effective. I gather he's now saying that we have to be careful: nobody doubts. He used the goose. I happen to agree with him on that particular thing with the federal government. But if we're so concerned about advertising, mood advertising and all the rest of it, I refer to what this government did with the heritage trust fund before the last election, where we had mood music and jingles with absolutely no government information at all. So it's interesting that we're so careful about advertising here but weren't so careful in wasting taxpayers' money for mood music and jingles about the heritage trust fund that gave no information to Albertans at all.

To come back, though, to a number of things and to a very serious — I guess it's worse than I thought. As the minister indicates, there could be 12 sectors involved in the construction union. Most of this, as the minister indicated — I suppose we'll know what's happening in a little more conclusive way some time this month. I guess that leads me into the question. I think the minister and I both agree, Mr. Chairman — and the minister didn't deny it — that it is chaotic. He would even use that word. So it leads me to the question. But before I do that, I suggest that one of the problems in this chaotic labour situation is the whole fact of spin-offs. That's one of the big reasons we're having this problem.

To say, as the minister is, that we have to come to economic reality, basically that economic reality seems to be that workers have to cut their purchasing power significantly; \$7, \$8, \$9 an hour were some of the figures going around. I remind the minister that if we are serious in this House about purchasing power, the same logic should appeal to this Legislature. We just froze our wages: we should have taken a cut. It seems to be good enough for construction workers but not good enough for the Members of the Legislative Assembly.

The point I make is that collective bargaining is not just one fold. It shouldn't be just one group having to look at economic realities and do all the adjusting. It's a partnership. I point out that there are some companies — I use the example of Triple Five, which seems to be about the only action in town or in the province. They seem to be able to use construction workers and be competitive. They seem to be doing very well.

So I think it's a bit of a red herring by some of the companies to blame everything on high wages. Certain companies are doing very well, I suspect because they have excellent management that knows what they're doing. That's the other part of the triangle, Mr. Chairman. To be fair we have to also look at the management part of it.

If we are into what the minister terms a chaotic situation, I guess my question is — I'm sure the minister is very concerned about this, because with the unemployment rate the way it is, we can ill afford any more blows to our economy. What is the minister's role? I'm not asking him what he's doing directly, because he shouldn't be. But what is his department's role in trying to bring the two parties together? Could he upgrade us on that? Is there ongoing discussion with both sides, trying to bring them together? Precisely, if it's as serious as the minister says, I hope he and his department are taking a very active role in this at this particular time.

The other area he talked about was spin-offs. He says spin-offs were always legal. Yes, they were. Of course they weren't used, because in the boom times both the government and the companies needed skilled tradesmen. They weren't cannon fodder at that time. They needed them because they wanted to get on with their massive projects. So no spin-offs were needed at that particular time. People were willing to pay them a decent wage. Times have changed now. Basically they've become cannon fodder.

The other point I make is that if they were always legal, I wonder why we went through this exercise of Bill 110 in the fall. If the minister says it was legal, what was the need for it then? If they were already able to have spin-off companies, if that was the case, why did we go through this exercise and waste the time of the Legislature? I would like some answers about that.

The other area — if he wants to use the Scandinavian countries, I agree. Social democratic countries have the best participation rate, thank you. But what the minister failed to tell you is that they also have the lowest unemployment rate. The worst of all worlds is a high participation rate and high unemployment. That's what I was talking about in the misery index.

DR. BUCK: Everybody works for the government.

MR. MARTIN: Well, whatever. They're working, hon. Member for Clover Bar. They're not on the dole like they are here.

The point I'm making is that the participation rate has to be taken into consideration with the unemployment rate: the two go together. If he wants to check those figures — I don't have them here, but I quoted them in the House to the Minister of Manpower — he will find that the social democratic countries are the lowest in the world right now. If he wants to go into that debate, we'd be quite prepared to do that.

I'll just relax for a few minutes and be interested in the minister's answers to those questions.

MR. YOUNG: Very quickly, Mr. Chairman. I don't think it's useful for us to go through all of Bill 110 and Bill 44 again; we've done that several times.

With respect to the concern about collective bargaining, I want to deal with the one notion that was advanced. That was the suggestion, as I took it, that rollbacks were tremendously unfair and that only the employees were making a sacrifice in the circumstance. I want to reiterate — it is the reason I quoted the statistics last evening — that 84 percent of the employees in the private sector in Alberta do not belong to unions and do not work under union collective agreements. Where necessity

has dictated, they have had to respond with their employers much more immediately to the circumstances of the economy.

It's not a question in my mind of whether that's good or bad, fair or unfair. It's a simple necessity. The alternative was no employment. Some of those companies were unable to maintain their businesses; some of them even went bankrupt. The hon. member has been quoting bankruptcy statistics. Those are the hard facts of life. It's up to the two parties to determine what they can do to react to the situation they are in. So I just want to keep in mind that there are all kinds of equities and relationships we have to consider.

I observe that since the question from his leader earlier this week with respect to fantasy land, the hon. member has had a mighty fast conversion. I was in fact told by some union leaders that that would happen, and I understand it began to happen within minutes following the question in the question period here.

Mr. Chairman, I have no other comments.

MR. MARTIN: As usual, the minister has tried to evade the questions.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is this a supplementary?

MR. MARTIN: Yes, it deals with the Labour estimates.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MR. MARTIN: The question I asked was not to go over the rehashing of all of Bill 110, Mr. Minister. The minister indicated that companies always had the legal right to form spin-off companies. My question was a very simple one: if that was the case, why did we go through this exercise of Bill 110? I don't want to go into all the merits of it. Why did we go through this exercise then? It's a fairly simple, straightforward question, and I'll ask it again.

The other point I make has to do with how much unionization and non-unionization. It has to do with some of the organizing laws of this province too. The government is in charge of how unions are organized. The minister well knows that this is one of the most difficult places in Canada for organized labour, and that has a bearing on what we're talking about.

The other point I make is that nobody was talking about fantasy land. What we were talking about were the first phases and the commercial aspect. If the minister knew anything about fantasy land, he would know that the commercial aspect is going ahead, and it is going ahead under organized labour. It has nothing to do with fantasy land, which we were talking about. If the minister is going to bring up these silly little comments, he'd better know what he's talking about. It's an actual fact that they have already — in other parts of the city too — let out an organized labour contract. So if the minister wants to giggle and act silly like we're in a grade I class, he can do that. But the fact remains that that's the truth.

The point I was trying to make was not about the merits of fantasy land. As the minister well knows, the fact is that one company seems to be able to hire organized labour and make a buck. The excuse was that they couldn't afford it for the other companies. That's what the minister was talking about. But I said maybe it has something to do with the management. Maybe we should look at that as the other part of the equation too, instead of always blaming one sector, as we seem to indicate. It's a very serious matter, as the minister is well aware.

With those general comments, I'll wait for the reply of the minister.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I've already indicated that I don't always blame one sector, that I try not to blame any particular sector but try to deal with the objectives. I think it's only in an objective, rational, analytical way that it's helpful to the parties to talk about these things. I regret that the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood isn't able to focus himself a little bit more in that manner.

With respect to fantasy land, I think the hon. member has gained some enlightenment, but he has further to go. I will leave it to others, who will probably be listening to his comments, to do that outside the Legislature.

With respect to the comments about Bill 110 and why it was done, since the hon. member and his colleague received the first of my notes in a brown paper bag even though they were left all over this province, and I have now supplied him with two other sets of speeches, he can read them very slowly. And if he reads slowly enough, maybe he will understand what the reasons were.

MR. MARTIN: Maybe I can ask questions slowly enough so that the minister can read my lips so he understands the questions I'm asking, because he's trying to avoid it by trying to be flippant. We're talking about very serious matters here, Mr. Minister. The estimates are precisely the place where we should be raising these issues. I want some serious answers as an opposition, and many people do. Rather than trying to be flippant, silly, and insulting, let's stick to the issues if we can.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. MARTIN: That's true, if you followed it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: "Insulting" is unparliamentary in this committee.

MR. MARTIN: Well, what is he saying about talking slowly? That's not unparliamentary?

I will come back to the question on Bill 110, and I will say it very slowly. The minister indicated that even during the boom times, companies had the legal right to have spin-off companies. That's what the minister said. A lot of time and energy and money went into debating this in the Legislature. I am still not clear why, if that was the case, we had to debate Bill 110. Then of course it wasn't even proclaimed. I think a lot of people want to know that.

Following up on that, Mr. Chairman, if we don't need Bill 110 — we haven't proclaimed it — if it's serving no value, will the minister now move to take it off the books? He said they already had the legal right anyhow. So why have useless laws that we don't need on the books? That's fairly straightforward, Mr. Minister.

As far as fantasy land, the only fantasy land I'm aware of is in this House at certain times, as we avoid the issues.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, the answer to the question dealing with "why" can be found in paragraph 1, the first full paragraph, on page 6 of my speech of April 18, which was supplied to the hon. member this morning. It can also be found in *Hansard*. If the hon. member cares to go to *Hansard*, he can find it in *Hansard*. So the matter has already been covered in the Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: As I understand it, Mr. Chairman, the estimates are here. We don't need to read the minister's speeches outside. We have the right in the estimates to ask questions. It shouldn't be up to me to read the minister's speeches. I am sure I would

enjoy them; I enjoy reading the funny papers at times too. But the point is that I'm asking the question here in the estimates. This is where it's debated, not in the minister's speeches outside. I am asking a very simple question. The minister has said today that companies always had the legal right to form spin-off companies. If I'm misquoting the minister, fine; but I thought that's what he said. So I'm just sort of curious.

You can wink at the Chairman if you like. Oh, gee, thanks; that makes me feel a lot better now. I hope that doesn't have anything to do with sexual harassment or anything.

My point to the minister is — not to go into all the merits of it — why, after having a legal right, did we then bring up Bill 110? It's not proclaimed. If we don't need it, would the minister move to take Bill 110 off the books of this Legislature?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated last night, I have made the commitment to a lot of people in the construction industry that pending the report of the advisory committee and the follow-up action based on the recommendations of that report, there would be no further legislative changes unless we had a very major new circumstance arise, which I don't foresee. Accordingly we cannot move Bill 110 without legislative change; it is legislation.

As far as why it's there, I will satisfy the hon. member by saying there were three reasons. One was to clarify the capacity of the parties, the employers and the employees, to communicate. Apparently there was some confusion; they believed they could not do so. One was to clarify that in the event the Labour Relations Board determined that there was in fact a spin-off, the employees of that spin-off would have the opportunity for a secret-ballot vote inasmuch, as the argument ran, that some of the employees of those spin-off companies did not want to be unionized. It was to enable them to make the determination by a free, secret-ballot vote, so we would have freedom to the ultimate and free expression on the part of employees.

MR. MARTIN: That's very interesting.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. MARTIN: Question, question. Yes, we're asking questions. It's what the people of Alberta pay us to do.

Mr. Chairman, we talk about freedom. It's interesting that all of a sudden the minister is talking about absolute freedom. It's rather interesting in this case, when we're being taken to the ILO on one of the freedoms that's supposed to be inviolate according to the United Nations, the right to free collective bargaining. We've already lost part of it in Bill 41. So I guess freedom is in the eye of the beholder.

I won't spend a great deal more time on Bill 110, only to say that I recognize that Bill 110 is passed. But it's a very simple matter, Mr. Minister. You can bring in a new Bill taking away Bill 110 if it's no longer needed. We can change the laws; that's why this legislative body is here. To say it's already passed and so is there, is the most feeble excuse I think I've ever heard. If there's no need for it, bring back a new Bill. I think we could get it through this House rather quickly. If there's no need for it — obviously I'm not going to get the answer. We just went through a rehash of Bill 110, but I think there's a certain point when we're wasting everybody's time. We just had basically a rehashing of the merits of the Bill, or what I would term lack of merits. But at this point I expect that's as far as we're going to get on it.

I have some questions as we go through the votes. I have one on Vote 1. I ask for your direction. Should I wait or ask the question on Vote 1 now?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I believe there's a supplementary from the Member for Edmonton Whitemud, and then we'll continue.

MR. ALEXANDER: To sort of interrupt whatever it is that's been going on here. Mr. Chairman ...

MR. MARTIN: You finally woke up, eh?

MR. ALEXANDER: I guess we're not required by law to suffer through this indefinitely. Please don't accuse me of supplementing anything that's been asked so far. That's not my intent.

MR. MARTIN: We won't accuse you of anything.

MR. ALEXANDER: We have spoken briefly here about — the reference at least was made to a grade 1 class. I've sat for several hours now, including through two sets of estimates, listening to grade 1 economics, grade 1 labour relations, and other things, so perhaps we could try to get on with a couple of other matters that the House may like to draw from the minister.

Without being unduly facetious, I suspect that the real answer, Mr. Minister, for whatever value it may have on the member's question about Bill 110, is that caucus simply couldn't agree to repeal section 133. In hindsight, whether we should have done that or not is something I'll leave to others to speculate about.

I want to ask a question, because the point was raised a few minutes ago about the possibility of some amendments to, or at least another look at, the human rights Act. I'm a bit worried about what's happening in the whole human rights movement. As a matter of fact, I'm a bit worried about the whole idea of human rights. I think it's getting a bad name. I've looked into as much of the material as I can find, and going back to the human rights declaration of the United Nations in 1948 and subsequent ones — the universal declaration, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civic and Political Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the American Bill of Rights, and the recent Canadian Charter — it strikes me that we are in grave danger of reducing the concept of human rights to a state of meaninglessness by pursuing it far beyond what could be considered to be reasonable bounds, thus reducing it to yet another element of Newspeak, if you like, in which it means everything and at the same time nothing.

As an example, I read to hon. members the Declaration of Rights of the People of British Columbia, recently published by the Solidarity Coalition in that province, included among which are:

the right to freedom of expression and opinion without fear of reprisal

as though I were free to call you a name of any kind whatever and not fear your reprisal. I'm sure it means we shall not be repressed by the government for holding some political opinion, but it doesn't say that. It says:

the right of every women, in fact as well as in principle, to a full and equal place in society.

It doesn't say full and equal to who and under what circumstances, but I'm sure it contemplates something or other. It goes on to say:

the right to freedom from arbitrary or unjustified ... increase in rents.

It goes on to speak of "universal accessibility of necessary legal assistance",

the right to local powers of decision-making about the provision of social services, and effective regional planning of the development of . . . communities,

The right of all employees to negotiate freely and collectively with their employer all the terms and conditions under which they work,

The right to freedom from arbitrary or unjustified termination of employment,

The right to open and democratic government, scrutiny of government actions, due process of law, full parliamentary debate and consultation with affected groups on all legislative proposals, and express submission of fundamental changes in law or rights to the electors.

Mr. Chairman, in other areas human rights groups have proclaimed not only the right to food, housing, and clothing but the right to challenging and interesting employment, the right to high pay, to meaningful relationships and, most relevant of all to the human rights industry in Canada, the right to demand of people that they deal with you on terms they offer to others, whether or not you wish to deal with them at all. I've collected a file of these sorts of things over the last little while. Mr. Minister, I'm worried about the fact that the human rights industry has taken its mandate so far beyond the practical and realistic and meaningful limits of human rights that the whole idea is going to become confused and chaotic and meaningless.

I commend the Alberta teachers, who recently have published in their own journal the idea of a committee on rights and responsibilities. I wonder if the minister could comment or suggest to us whether it might be a very useful exercise to question the idea of the extent to which we can realistically pursue the idea of human rights without falling into the chaos I'm suggesting here, without losing the meaning of the term; secondly, perhaps to even question the use of the term "human rights" and revert to what we really seem to be talking about so frequently, and that's the area of civil or legal rights; and thirdly, to match the concept with responsibility.

In the process of what I'm saying, I should be clear that I think the Alberta Human Rights Commission has so far not proceeded so far beyond the boundaries I speak of as to make rights meaningless here. But the temptation is there; certainly the impetus from some sectors is there. Before it gets to the point of meaninglessness, perhaps we should address the issue and determine whether there's something constructive that we can do to pre-empt that. It seems to me that as the nation proceeds along the path of trying to establish what the new Charter of Rights and Freedoms means — and no one seems to be terribly sure where that's going to be yet, if we can rely on the word of the newly appointed Supreme Court justice — we may well do ourselves and others a great favour by trying to clarify what exactly we mean, and by returning to the idea and implanting the idea in the minds of Alberta's citizens, particularly young people, that there are no rights without responsibilities, conveying the idea that your primary duty in life of course is to seek your own highest potential but recognize that your potential stops where someone else's nose starts, and that human rights in and of themselves eventually become meaningless unless attached to an offsetting and concomitant set of responsibilities.

I leave those thoughts with the minister. I have a lot of background information on it and a lot of views that I needn't take up the time of the House to discuss, but it struck me that that might be a useful thought if there is some contemplation

of revision over the summer. I leave those thoughts with the minister for whatever response he may think is appropriate.

Thank you.

MR. YOUNG: Very briefly, Mr. Chairman. I think the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud makes some very good points. There has been a tendency to diffuse and confuse a whole lot of things by the loose use of the expression "human rights". The recent comments have referred to civil rights, legal rights, and economic rights, and there very obviously is a concomitant responsibility that goes with any right. As a matter of fact, I've reached the point where I'm very leery about using the expression "right" any more, because I think it has caused a great deal of confusion.

I would indicate that it is my view that the longer our society struggles with this particular trend or direction, for want of a better expression, I think it is forced to become more analytical. And as it becomes more analytical, or as those people who work with it become more analytical and a bit less emotional, the sense of the concomitant responsibility begins to emerge and be recognized. I also think also the limitations become more apparent in terms of going down this particular road of legislating this and the other thing.

Maybe the greatest educational exercise we have right now will be the one the Supreme Court will conduct, because I detect that they will be very careful in any analysis they do of some of the suggestions that some members of the legal fraternity are very quickly advancing to lower courts as justification in support of a whole variety of causes that really perhaps shouldn't have support. It seems to me that I recall a recent decision or opinion from the new chief of the Supreme Court, that this required a great deal of careful attention and that we should not be expecting to resolve as many things and advance the argument of rights — civil, economic, legal, or whatever — the way many of the legal fraternity have been doing. As a matter of fact I thought he was chastising, in a way, the overexuberant usage of that particular support for very weak cases.

If we were to contemplate extensive revisions to the Individual's Rights Protection Act, surely the responsibility aspect of it would have to become involved. It would be a very long process. Having been through it once before, it is a very long process. I do not contemplate that we are looking at that many suggestions this time, but I'm not sure. We're not far enough into the discussion. If we get into it to that degree, there is no possibility of amendments to the legislation this fall.

Agreed to:

1.0.1 — Minister's Office	\$168,930
1.0.2 — Executive Management	\$341,574
1.0.3 — Personnel	\$282,286
1.0.4 — Finance and Administration	\$1,019,307
1.0.5 — Systems	\$376,683

1.0.6 — Communications

MR: MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, just a straightforward question. When we look at this budget, this seems to be the biggest increase. My question to the minister is simply this: why does the minister have a 19.8 percent increase in the communications budget in a time of restraint?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, number one, we are contemplating that with the private pension developments there would need to be a fair amount of additional discussion, promotion, explanation, and participation with the public. Number two,

the new fire code will require a great deal of communicative work. And the hon. member himself today discussed at length efforts that should be undertaken to communicate a better understanding between management and trade unions.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up on that, I would say to the hon. minister that I think there are much better ways. I made those suggestions, and obviously at this point the minister has rejected them. We got into the types of advertising. We've had some discussion about that, Mr. Minister. What he's talking about is perhaps legitimate. If he's saying this will be used as a communications budget to give information that is needed to people that are affected, I'd have no quarrel with that.

My question is simply this: will the minister give us assurance that it will be for information rather than the type of advertising we saw with the heritage trust fund, which didn't give information but was clearly a mood thing to better enhance the government's image rather than anything else? Will he give the Assembly the assurance that this communications budget will be used for giving information and not the other type of advertising we talked about? I use the specific example of the heritage trust fund advertising that was done before the last election.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, it will be for brochures and publications such as this. The only advertising I'm aware of that's contemplated at the moment is to provide public notice of when meetings are going to be held dealing with one or the other. It's simply a notice that at this time and this place, this subject will be discussed and you're invited to attend.

Agreed to:

1.0.6 — Communications	\$64,510
1.0.7 — Research	\$648,968
1.0.8 — Library Services	\$231,070

Total Vote 1 — Departmental Support Services \$3,133,328

Vote 2 — Labour Relations

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Chairman, I want to go into 2.0.3, mediation services. I notice that rather than an increase in the estimates, we have an 8.9 percent decrease. I'm basically asking the reasons for that decrease in mediation services, because that's a rather important area. Is this indicative of a change in policy regarding negotiations? Why are we able to cut this down? We just got through talking about a fair amount of chaos, and everything else we talked about. So I want to know the reasons why we can afford to knock that particular service down 8.9 percent at this point.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, the fact is that we've had a vacancy in that particular area. We believe we're responding to all the needs that are coming forward. We also have officers who are involved in preventive mediation to a fair degree and to relationships by objective with the parties, but there is a limit on how much of that we can accomplish. There's a limit on our responsibility relative to others. But more important from our perspective is that both parties have to be of a mind to accept assistance. We believe the amount provided will meet that particular objective and need as expressed by the parties.

MR. MARTIN: Let me follow up then. Mr. Chairman, we've had this discussion about what may occur in May and what is already in fact occurring with the potential of lockouts. Certainly votes are being taken. Does the minister not think that

this year could be an extremely hectic one, especially in that one segment? I know there is a limit; I will accept that there's a limit to what you can do. But it seems to me, when we've had this discussion about a very serious matter, that there may be more call on this department and the mediation services in view of the labour climate right now. I say to the minister that perhaps other areas, even communications budget if necessary, might have been better put into the mediation services. I just get this feeling that they're going to be extremely busy, Mr. Minister, if we don't get this thing in the construction unions settled fairly quickly.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, just a very quick response. Our experience this year is that some of the parties which in the past have required a great deal of assistance have had their attention focussed rather sharply upon collective bargaining and have assumed their responsibility in a very direct manner. Accordingly there has been less demand upon us than has been the case in some times past. It's of course not possible for us to predict what will happen in the future, certainly not what will happen in the construction industry. But I think our experience in the construction industry would suggest that before government can assist, there has to be a willingness by the parties to receive assistance. That's not always there. Even if it were there, I believe the budget would provide ample assistance.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 2 — Labour Relations \$5,180,994

Vote 3 — General Safety Services

MR. MARTIN: Just more of a general question. Having served on the committee, there's often some confusion about where the responsibilities of this part of Labour, general safety services, break down with ministry of Workers' Health, Safety and Compensation. Going through this I thought I remembered, but I don't. Is there a fair amount of communication between the two areas? How is the interrelationship between the two areas? Are they entirely separate and — if I can use the famous expression — apples and oranges?

MR. YOUNG: First of all to answer the communications question, I think there is a reasonable amount of communication. I would say that is especially so with respect to occupational health and safety officers and persons involved in the building standards branch who do inspections of buildings under construction or buildings that are being taken down or renovated. There is a closer fit there. It's a fact that occupational health and safety was at one time a portion of the Department of Labour, and some of those personal contacts have been retained. Of course that was a while ago and there are many new people involved, but there is a fair flow of information back and forth. That is the juncture of most of the communication. Most of the contact would be between building standards and occupational health and safety, although not uniquely that.

MR. MARTIN: Just to follow up on that, Mr. Chairman. In travelling across the country it seemed that most areas of workers' comp. and occupational health and safety, when we met with them, were generally with the ministry of labour in most areas of Canada, although there were exceptions. Flowing from that, because it does create another bureaucracy in a time of restraint, does the minister feel it is necessary to have the two departments, when it seems that many other provinces are existing with the one ministry under the ministry of labour? Not

that I'm trying to add extra work for the minister, but I think it's an important consideration when we are in a time of restraint and are looking to cut back expenses. If one could be amalgamated — I think that's what we would say private industry is having to do in many cases. I ask for comments and how he feels about that.

MR. YOUNG: More important than how I feel would be a rationale or an indication of where the rationale came for the division in the first instance. It arose from the Gale commission, which recommended the higher profile that would be given to occupational health and safety and workers' compensation by the separation, having those as distinct and separate units. That rationale was accepted. It's a judgment decision and, being a good judgment decision, is open for all kinds of debate.

MR. MARTIN: Again, I'm suggesting it as an area, having been on that committee. In Alberta generally I think the department is doing a relatively good job. So I'm not questioning, and I'm not even sure in my own mind if it should be combined. I recognize it came from the Gale commission. Perhaps it has given it a high priority. Like in all things — and we've been told this many times by the government — there are ideal things but there's a reality of the economic climate. To follow up, I guess my question to the Minister of Labour is: at this time of restraint, does the minister think it's feasible to have that department as part of the Department of Labour to save money, and that this would adequately do the job in occupational health and safety and workers' comp.?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, it's a straight judgment question. The hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood has already advised us that he has made certain observations about how it's handled in other provinces. I suppose we're talking about the span of control, administrative responsibility, policy-making responsibility, and how much is too much. That's a straight judgment question.

MR. MARTIN: I accept the minister's answer. I didn't expect I'd get an answer to it. But I raise it not in a flippant way, because I think it is a serious matter to consider. When we talk about the ideal and the realities, as the government often talks to us about, that's one of the areas I hope the government is considering and looking at, an amalgamation and cutting back on the number of ministries. I'm sure the minister is well aware that we have the most in Canada, and that is expensive. I'm not going to pin him down, because I know it's a cabinet decision. I won't proceed with it, but I think it's a legitimate question for us in the opposition to ask at this point.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 3 — General Safety Services	\$15,606,074
Total Vote 4 — Industrial Relations	
Adjudication and Regulation	\$1,093,634

MR. MARTIN: On Vote 4 I have two or three things I want to ask of the minister. We've had a fair amount of discussion about this particular board. We see the mediation services going down 8.9 percent. For the industrial relations board, the increase is 13.9 percent. Why is that increase necessary for the Labour Relations Board? I understand that that increase does not include any more full-time positions. Maybe I'm wrong on this, but I want it clarified. Is this strictly an increase in wages or whatever?

Just to make the point again, I suggest that at least some of the members should have taken a pay cut for at least one

very famous incident we talked about, dealing with the very serious slip the mine workers brought to attention, as I have in question period. So I'm quite interested why this particular board — that at this time I think many groups are calling for a public inquiry — gets an increase and mediation services has a decrease.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, to deal first of all with the last observation, to the best of my knowledge I have not received any correspondence asking for a public inquiry. I would have to check that, but I don't recollect receiving any.

On the question on the budget in respect of the Labour Relations Board, it does contemplate that a position that was vacant in the previous year will be filled, so the actual manpower on the board would be closer to the full-time authorization. That's distinct from the previous year. Further, the distinction with the Labour Relations Board is that our labour legislation everywhere, but particularly in western Canada, is being challenged more, simply because of the economic times in which we're living. So the number of applications the board has received has increased tremendously over previous years. The trend line would appear to be in that direction, and we are anticipating it will continue in that direction for some while longer. It was a calculated judgment to try to provide for close to a full complement in the Labour Relations Board compared to our previous experience, in anticipation of the events we're seeing today.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Minister, I understand that increase. Basically in the 13.9 percent, there's one more person coming in to fill up the complement. I thought that some of the rationale the minister is talking about and the pressure because of the times, the same sorts of arguments, could be used in terms of mediation services. That was partly my point.

I am interested, though, that the minister, said there has not been any formal inquiry about a public inquiry into the industrial relations board. Did I understand him right? There has not been a formal inquiry to the minister in terms of inquiry into the industrial relations board. I am surprised about that. If that's the case, I just say to the minister that I expect there might be, because the process, as I understand it, is in action. I know the mine workers went to the Alberta Federation of Labour. So if they haven't done this, I expect you're going to hear more about it. But is that correct? I understood him to say there has been no formal request to his department for that inquiry.

MR. YOUNG: I indicated that that's my recollection.

Agreed to:

Total Vote 5 — Individual's Rights	
Protection	\$1,196,180
Department Total	\$26,210,210

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I move that the votes be reported.

[Motion carried]

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

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. PURDY: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has had under consideration the following resolution, reports as follows, and requests leave to sit again:

Resolved that funds not exceeding the following be granted to Her Majesty for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1985, for the Department of Labour: \$3,133,328 for departmental support services, \$5,180,994 for labour relations, \$15,606,074 for general safety services, \$1,093,634 for industrial relations adjudication and regulation, \$1,196,180 for individual's rights protection.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report and the request for leave to sit again, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, for the business next week, we propose on Monday afternoon to call Committee of Supply with the estimates of the Department of Social Services and Community Health, and on Monday evening the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

Mr. Speaker, I move that we call it 1 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 12:52 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]