

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, March 19, 1985 2:30 p.m.**

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

## PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to other members of this Assembly a special guest. It's been said that big things come in small packages, and this person is an example that great things come in tiny packages. For three years she was an alderman of the city of Calgary, where I had the pleasure of serving with her. For over four years she has been a school trustee on the public board in Calgary. She has stood up for educational rights and, in many respects, has done so because of her interest in children through her own two children. She's here to see the Minister of Labour with respect to individual rights, and I'm not sure whether she's here to talk about discrimination for age or discrimination based on height. Regardless, I ask all members of this House to [welcome] a giant of a school trustee, Ann Blough.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**Bill 206**  
**Alberta Development Fund Act**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 206, the Alberta Development Fund Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to restructure the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, creating two major divisions of the fund, one of which would make available long-term, low-interest loans to Alberta farmers, small-business men, and homeowners, while the other would engage in equity investments in business, which tend to strengthen and diversify the economy of Alberta.

[Leave granted; Bill 206 read a first time]

**Bill 214**  
**An Act to Amend the**  
**Guarantees Acknowledgment Act**

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 214, An Act to Amend the Guarantees Acknowledgment Act.

This Bill would change to the present Act by changing some terms from "notary public" to "lawyer", and a phrase to make prospective people signing personal guarantees fully understand what they're signing, rather than just aware of it.

[Leave granted; Bill 214 read a first time]

**Bill 211**  
**Alberta Economic Council Act**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 211, the Alberta Economic Council Act.

This would establish a 30-person Alberta economic council composed of representatives of the various sectors of the Alberta economy. The purpose would be to charge the council to advise and recommend to the minister strategies and policies by which Alberta could achieve the highest possible levels of employment and efficient production, to bring about a high and consistent rate of economic growth, by which all Albertans might share in rising living standards.

[Leave granted; Bill 211 read a first time]

**Bill 5**  
**Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**  
**Amendment Act, 1985**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 5, the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Amendment Act, 1985.

It's most appropriate to introduce this Bill this year, when Alberta will host for the first time the world conference on alcohol and drugs, sponsored by AADAC on its 100th anniversary.

The principle involved in this Bill is primarily to allow AADAC to continue to expand its range of programs in the province of Alberta, in the interests of education in the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drugs.

[Leave granted; Bill 5 read a first time]

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

[Motion carried]

**Bill 207**  
**An Act to Amend the**  
**Debtors' Assistance Act**

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 207, An Act to Amend the Debtors' Assistance Act.

Mr. Speaker, the problem of the agriculture debt crisis is not going to go away by being ignored. The purpose of this Act would be to establish a program of debt adjustment for farmers, small-business people, and homeowners in Alberta, and it would create a debt adjustment board to administer its provisions.

[Leave granted; Bill 207 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. FJORBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 1984 progress report of Farming for the Future and the 1984 annual report of the Farmers' Advocate.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to table the annual report of the Social Care Facilities Review Committee for the calendar year ended December 31, 1984. In doing so, I would like to thank the hon. Member for Calgary Egmont for his chairmanship and the hon. Member for

Cypress for his continuing hard work on this important committee.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care for the fiscal year 1982-83.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to file with the Assembly three copies dealing with school financing in Alberta. This is with regard to a query by the Minister of Education about where I got my figures. It's a report of the Minister's Task Force on School Finance.

#### head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, 12 students from the bilingual Madeleine D'Houet school in my constituency of Calgary Bow. Included in the group is a young neighbour of mine, Steven Morin. They are accompanied by teacher Mrs. Kathy Heinrich and by parents Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. DeSchryver. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and to hon. members of the Assembly 29 students in grades 4, 5, and 6 at the Allendale school in Edmonton Parkallen. They're accompanied today by Mrs. Whitney and Mrs. Kaptein, and I ask them to rise in the members' gallery and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. LeMESSURIER: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 20 students from English as a Second Language at the Alberta Vocational Centre situated in Edmonton Centre. Accompanied by their leader, Ms Fernald, they are seated in the members' gallery. I ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, Barrett Pashak and his new son, Justin. Justin is my colleague's brand-new grandson. They're seated in the public gallery. I ask Barrett to rise, and Justin with him, and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 19 grade 6 students from Satinwood school, located in the Lacombe constituency.

Satinwood school is in the Joffre area, which is the action centre of the petrochemical industry in Alberta. I thought my colleagues would like to know that. These students have come here from that area to see the action centre of government, and hopefully we can show as much life as the petrochemical industry does there.

They're accompanied today by their teacher, Mrs. Wendy Flewelling, and by parents Barb Walters, Elsie Duffy, and Bettie Ditzler. They're seated in the public gallery, and I ask them all to stand now and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. DROBOT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 34

senior citizens from the little hamlet of Ashmont, which is known as the heart of the Lakeland. Accompanied by their group leader, Alex Hancharuk, they are seated in the public gallery. They are a unique group: they have a total of 2,335 years of worldly wisdom. I ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of this House.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, it may be appropriate today to introduce two concerned parents who played a very active role during the teachers' strike in the Elk Island Regional School Authority Association by trying to keep in contact with the parents and doing whatever they could to help end this strike. Very seldom does anybody get credit when they do anything good. These two ladies, Mrs. Simpson and Mrs. Lammerts, have come from Tofield today to bring the hon. Minister of Labour a big thank-you card, two feet by 18 inches. The ladies are in the members' gallery, and I ask them to rise and be recognized.

#### head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### Dial Mortgage Investigation

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my first question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. What considerations led to the announcement today by the Securities Commission that they would not appeal the recent court decision dealing with Dial Mortgage?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I guess it's important for me to emphasize something that I thought had been emphasized in this House before; that is, the commission is a completely autonomous body. I'm sure the hon. member would not want to suggest for a minute that there ought to be political intervention or questions in terms of a political vein with respect to the commission. If the hon. member will read the legislation, I think he will very clearly see that the commission is responsible for the administration of the Securities Act.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I always thought regulations were the responsibility of the government, but apparently not. Because of the publicity on this — I believe section 33 of the Securities Act empowers the minister to order a special investigation of any aspect of the administration of the Act. Has the minister ordered an investigation under this section, regarding the competence or incompetence of the Securities Commission in dealing with this matter?

MRS. OSTERMAN: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would not respond to a question that deals with a specific case, particularly since the specific case the hon. member may be alluding to is still a subject of a hearing by the commission. But if the hon. member has suggestions with respect to policy, regulation, or legislation, I'd be delighted to receive and take into consideration those suggestions.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I'm offering section 33 of the Securities Act. Has the minister considered ordering a special investigation to look into the Securities Commission?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Again, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is addressing a question with respect to a particular case, and I would not answer it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, section 33 can deal with any case. My specific question: has the minister considered using section 33 to look into the relative competence of the Securities Commission in all cases?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member has suggestions which deal with policy, legislation, or regulation, I have already stated that I'd be pleased to receive them.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. Last April 18, I believe, my late colleague from Spirit River-Fairview warned the minister in this Assembly of possible limitations, difficulties, with respect to the Dial case. Following that, did the minister pass the warning on to the Securities Commission or take any other sort of action herself to make sure these charges would not be thrown out on this technicality?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the hon. member one more time; the commission is responsible for the administration of the Act, in reference to the question, I believe the answer was given on April 18. I believe the question was asked just prior to that. I consulted with the commission in order to bring that answer to the Legislative Assembly. If the hon. member will read that answer, he will note that I said that, as with all advice, it is subject to court interpretation.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, Harry Truman would have a new saying about the buck and where it stops. My question was to the minister; perhaps we can get some answers if we deal with the Attorney General. Did the Attorney General recently hold any meetings with the chairman of the Securities Commission to review whether or not an appeal of the Dial decision would be in order?

MR. CRAWFORD: No.

MR. MARTIN: It doesn't surprise me, Mr. Speaker. Let me move on and look at another matter dealing with this. The Attorney General rejected this before, but my question is: because the security charges against Dial Mortgage were thrown out on a technicality, has the Attorney General reassessed the RCMP recommendations that criminal charges be laid in the Dial [case]? There are no limitations there.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. leader should know information that I gave the Assembly last year. It was my view that it would be an abuse of the process of the criminal justice system to proceed with criminal charges in any case, and in this case against unnamed persons as far as I'm concerned, because I have never indicated — and would not — who might have been under investigation in respect to the Dial matter. But if for some reason other than the due process of criminal justice — for reasons of public interest or publicity or political involvement by the hon. leader in the process, or for whatever reason — he is suggesting that in those circumstances criminal charges should be laid when four senior Crown counsel unanimously said there was no basis, then that is a most extraordinary suggestion.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we don't want to upset the Attorney General. I've never seen him get quite so emotional about something. At the time, the Attorney General said the Securities Commission would be dealing with it. I recall

that in this Assembly. That has changed. They obviously can't, because of a technicality. If the Attorney General refuses to reassess the criminal charges, my question now is simply this: is the Attorney General considering any other legal action at all on this matter, or is it the view of this government that because a government agency failed to lay charges within the limitation period required by the Act, that settles the matter once and for all?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the question the hon. leader presented to me was properly enough within the scope of my responsibilities and within the scope of my duty to report and be accountable to the Assembly, as long as it dealt with the administration of justice in the sense of the Criminal Code, and I have answered that over and over again. I said last year and this year that in respect to that matter, although it has often been perceived that the decision in respect to the Dial matter may have been mine, it was indeed the decision of the law officers of the Crown in the traditional way, in the way it is in fact handled throughout the Commonwealth, and specifically throughout Canada, in such cases. An assessment is made by law officers of the Crown, and a decision is made by them in due course. My duty is to respond to the Assembly in an accountable way on appropriate occasions and to the public as to what was decided and, to the extent that it can be properly said, the reasons for it. I have done so. But when the hon. leader then moves into an area outside the administration of justice relative to the Criminal Code, I think he is aiming his arrow in the wrong direction.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. I would say quite frankly to the Attorney General that we have a rather new version of ministerial accountability here.

As far as the Attorney General is concerned — as far as the minister's assessment of that in this government — is the fact that the Securities Commission did not lay the charge within the time period the end of the matter?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I perceive that to be the same question in a slightly different way. In the light of recent events, which are publicly known as of the announcement made by the Securities Commission today, the hon. leader asked me if I've reassessed a decision that was made one and a half years ago in respect to certain criminal law matters. The answer is that that is not to be reassessed.

#### Social Assistance

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move on to the second set of questions and see if we can find some other versions of ministerial accountability. I'd like to turn to my friend the Minister of Social Services and Community Health and follow up on questions raised yesterday by the Member for Edmonton Kingsway dealing with the report Hunger in Our City. I hope members take the time to read this, because I think it's a very good document. I'd like to file three copies, if I may, for members of the Legislature.

Could the minister advise what investigation the government has done of the finding that 18 percent of those using the Edmonton Food Bank have no income at all? Specifically, could the minister indicate if these are single employables, who are not eligible for social assistance after three months?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the report the hon. member referred to was prepared by the Edmonton Gleaners Asso-

ciation, better known as the Edmonton Food Bank. If the hon. member has questions about specific data in there, I suggest he refer the questions to them. In reading and analyzing the report, however, it is my intention to have follow-up discussions with the Edmonton Gleaners Association, particularly as they relate to the recommendations in the report.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I recognize that it's somebody else's report, that might be embarrassing to the minister. I asked if there has been any investigation by the government to follow up on the claim in there that 18 percent of the people have no income at all.

DR. WEBBER: As I just indicated to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to meet with the association to discuss these recommendations with them. We have followed up on a number of the recommendations. For example, one of the concerns of the Edmonton Food Bank organization was that people who were going to the Food Bank outlets were not aware of social allowance benefits or, in some cases, whether they were eligible. We discussed the possibility of a better referral system being put in place, and we're preparing a brochure that can be handed out to people when they come to the outlets. The brochure would outline to them social allowance benefits and eligibility requirements and where the offices would be. That's just one example of some follow-up.

We have staff in the Edmonton region who will be working with the Edmonton Food Bank people to follow up on some of the other recommendations that were made, to discuss them and see how feasible it is to follow up on some of those recommendations.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. It's very nice that we're putting out brochures, but they're rather hard to digest if we're talking about the Food Bank.

I'd like to read just one line from the report. It says:

The Food Bank cannot, however, be considered the appropriate resource for long-term or basic feeding of poor people; these responsibilities rest with the provincial government.

My question to the minister is: is that a statement of government policy as well?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is well aware of our position with regard to that. I've indicated a number of times in this House that when it comes to providing services to people who are in need, it is a joint responsibility of many sectors in our society, whether it be the individuals themselves, their families and friends, the community, local government, or other levels of government.

I think it is important to point out another quotation in the report, on page 11, where it is stated that the Food Bank is operated on the premise that "within reason, anyone requesting a food hamper would be provided with one." That is not the philosophy we have as a government. We believe in the establishment of a need before social allowance is provided to those people who are in need. The fact that it is easier to get a food hamper via the food outlet than to come to the Food Bank accounts in part for the demand that is out there. There are, of course, a number of reasons why a number of people are in a position to have to go to a food bank.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to point out that on December 20, upon assessing the current situation and discussions with

the Food Bank people and using other factors, we decided it was important to increase the benefits for food, clothing, and household allowances for social allowance recipients by the amount of an additional \$30 million, providing us with the highest benefits in the country. At that time I predicted that would not have an impact on reducing the number of people who would be going to the food banks in the future, because I believed even our previous social allowance rates were sufficient to meet the basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter, except for larger families. In fact, in January the number of people who went to the outlets was higher than in December, even though the cheques were out by the middle of the month and in the hands of the social allowance recipients.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I was trying to get to the basis of the statement. I'm not sure, by what the minister said, whether he believes in that statement or not.

To follow up, maybe I can refer to the Social Development Act — which I'm sure the minister is aware of; he's in charge of it — which directs the minister to ensure that no Albertan lacks "the goods and services essential to health and well-being," which pretty well follows up on the Food Bank statement. Can the minister outline what steps he is taking to relieve the Food Bank's burden regarding basic, long-term — not short-term — food provision, particularly for those with no income?

DR. WEBBER: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the member wasn't listening very closely to my response, which indicated that in December we increased the food and clothing allowances and household benefits for social allowance recipients, particularly in the area of larger families or families with a number of children. We increased the benefits to where, in every category, they're the highest in the country. If the hon. member is attempting to indicate that our social allowance rates are the reason people are going to the Food Bank outlets, I believe that's false. In fact, if the member would read the report, there was no recommendation that related to increasing the social allowance rates.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. We just got through talking about the fact that they say 18 percent of the people have no income at all. That's what I was referring to. It has nothing to do with the rates.

My question now, something that does refer to the rates, has to do with the very first recommendation of the Gleaners report, that the government should undertake a new and objective study of the cost of living as a base for determining social assistance, rather than relying on updates of studies that are decades old. My specific question to the minister is: is the government acting on that particular recommendation?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, we have already acted — in the month of December, as I indicated. As a result of discussions with the Edmonton Gleaners Association, taking into account the cost-of-living index and such things as nutritious food baskets, it was decided that we would make significant increases in the food allowance for children and other benefits I've already mentioned.

A minute ago the hon. member indicated a distinction between short- and long-term benefits. The increases that took place were for both short- and long-term benefits. He also keeps coming back to the point about the number of

people going to the outlets who do not have any income. Again, I would indicate that we have a social allowance system in this province, so that if people do not have any income and are eligible to receive social allowance — their assets are such that they're eligible, and a number of other factors — then we will provide benefits to those people.

As I mentioned earlier, we think we can improve the referral system from the outlets to our offices, to have each and every one who wishes go to our offices have an assessment made to see whether or not they are eligible.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister.

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

MR. MARTIN: I would point out that the single employables are cut off after three months. [interjection] Well, that's part of the problem, and that leads to my next question. According to the Food Bank report, there's an inconsistency. They are very emphatic in stressing that there is ...

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. member might come to the supplementary question.

MR. MARTIN: I have to tell what it's about first. There is inconsistency of practice in the department ...

MR. SPEAKER: Would the hon. member please come to the question.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I have to tell him that it says in there that there are inconsistencies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. MARTIN: Oh, the backbenchers get to talk; it's exciting for them. Way to go, A1.

Has the minister issued any directive to the department in order to ensure consistent and compassionate administration of policy? They say that there is inconsistency.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I have trouble understanding the question from the hon. member. First he talked about single employables, and then he talked about inconsistencies. Inconsistencies in what?

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, if I may explain it this time, then he will understand the question. They say in the report that there is inconsistency of practice in the department regarding emergency needs, recoveries, and single employables policy. My simple question is: has the minister issued any directive to the department in order to ensure that there is consistent and compassionate administration of policy?

DR. WEBBER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have discussed the concern with the Edmonton Gleaners Association. I've also asked the regional director of the Edmonton region to meet with the district office managers to see that we have consistency in the way social allowance is provided to social allowance recipients. Having said that, however, I think the social allowance worker should have the flexibility to take into account the particular needs of the individual who is there. If we tie things down too tightly, it would take away some of that flexibility.

MR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health regarding a clarification with respect to one of the questions by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. Does the Food Bank have a referral system to the Department of Social Services and Community Health for those citizens who are either first-time users of the Food Bank or indeed require emergency help?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, this is one of the things we discussed with the Edmonton Gleaners Association. One of the points we've been making is that if people come to the Food Bank outlets and are eligible for social allowance, then they should be coming to our offices. That is why I indicated earlier that we're trying to improve that situation by providing the Food Bank outlets with a brochure they can provide to the individual who comes there. Again, it would indicate the benefits of social allowance and where they could go to have an assessment made.

MR. PAPROSKI: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It deals with the allegation in the paper that those citizens who are on social assistance and for some reason do not receive a cheque — a cheque is either misplaced or sent to the wrong address — have some difficulty in obtaining assistance. Has the minister investigated that particular area? Does he have a policy that when indeed a citizen does not receive the remuneration he is entitled to, something can be dealt with so that he or she can receive that immediately?

DR. WEBBER: If my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Speaker, when cheques are lost or misplaced, the social allowance recipient can get a cheque within 24 hours. In addition to that, there is referral to emergency food services in the department. We have emergency offices in Edmonton and in other centres throughout the province, so that people who are in immediate need can go there to get assistance.

MR. PAPROSKI: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It deals with the ongoing communication with the Food Bank from the minister's office. Does the minister plan to meet with representatives of the Food Bank in the not-too-distant future?

DR. WEBBER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary on this topic, and then we'll go on to the next question.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, reports published today indicate that upwards of 800 social allowance recipients were extra billed during the last year. My question to the minister is whether he has taken any action to reimburse those clients for those expenditures and whether the government has taken any action to prevent this happening in the future.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I will ask the the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care to supplement my response. First of all, I read the same article the hon. member is referring to, and it is my understanding that every individual who was extra billed has been reimbursed.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I was a bit startled by the news report of that item today. It deals with the report that

covered the statistical review ended March 31, 1983. It took several months to develop that report, and it was then made available to the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons. I guess they studied it and included a comment on extra billing in some kind of report they get out to their members. I have gone through that background to indicate that those statistics are at least two years old and, in view of what has been happening in the field of extra billing, should be regarded as out of date.

The second point I want to make is that at the time those statistics were presented to us, I made it very clear to the college that that was unacceptable and would have to stop. It is my understanding that the college has been doing a number of things with respect to disciplining its members if those cases occur.

The last thing we did is that about a year ago we met with the college to ask them if, in view of the Canada Health Act, they could get a further meaningful reduction in the incidence of extra billing during the coming year. The statistics I have so far for the last few months indicate that they are making good progress on that.

The bottom line, therefore, is that I doubt very much if any meaningful number of welfare recipients are still being knowingly extra billed.

#### Oil Pricing

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the \$7 million minister, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. Each day we do not reach agreement with regard to the PGRT, it costs Albertans \$7 million. Since last Friday, when we raised the question, it is \$28 million. Could the minister indicate whether an agreement is being reached and how many more dollars it is going to cost us before finalization of the energy agreement with Ottawa?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, first let me say that the hon. member's comments simply underline why this government has taken the strong position it has with respect to all aspects of the NEP and, since its inception in 1980, we have seen such a dramatic pushing back of the NEP from when it was originally unilaterally imposed by the then government.

In terms of the specific discussions themselves, I don't wish to be repetitive but I can simply make the comment I made last Friday: we are involved in those discussions, and I don't think it is particularly helpful to a successful conclusion of those discussions to make public comments about their status. That continues to be our position. We're working hard to achieve an agreement, and we are pleased to see that we have the support of the hon. members on the other side of the House in this regard.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Now that negotiations have been delayed at least twice — in January and at this time — would the minister consider any type of resolution being discussed in this Legislature regarding the obvious position of the government in terms of PGRT, or tax in terms of profits, to assist the minister in further negotiations?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind offer of the hon. member opposite. The position of the government is well known and has been clearly elaborated consistently since 1980. I presume it's clear that we have the support of the hon. members on the side opposite in respect of

these matters, and I think that gives us a very firm foundation upon which to continue and conclude these negotiations.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate what actions are expected by March 31? Is it necessary that all aspects of the agreement be finalized by March 31, or can further negotiations with regard to parts of the agreement be concluded at a later date?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding my earlier comments, the hon. member continues to try to become involved in the actual negotiations, probing into how they should be conducted and concluded. While I recognize the interest the hon. members properly have in the subject, and that all Albertans have in this very important topic, I don't think it's helpful to the process to be commenting publicly about the time line of these discussions. It continues to be our hope and aspiration that a resolution of these discussions can be concluded within the time frame that has been set forward.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. In terms of the urgency and the cost of the matter to Albertans, and in light of the statement that has been made by the Premier that we are in a new era of federal/provincial relations, is it the intention of the Premier to become directly involved in the negotiations and bring them to a conclusion as quickly as possible?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, as I believe I mentioned on Friday, the carriage of the matter is in the hands of the minister of energy.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the answer, is it the intention that the Prime Minister and the Premier have interim discussions with regard to this agreement, or will all be left to the possible crown prince in this Legislature?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that will obviously be subject to an ongoing review from day to day.

#### Mortgage Defaults

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Housing. As we know, a number of citizens in the community have become victims of professional real estate people who have tried to assist them in purchasing and upgrading their home styles. I am wondering if the minister could tell us why Alberta Housing and Mortgage Corporation is pursuing deficiency judgments against homeowners who have sold their homes, in particular those innocent victims who used the professional assistance of real estate agents?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the reason the corporation has chosen in some cases to pursue not just the vendors but also the purchasers as a result of transactions is really threefold: first of all, to reduce and, if possible, eliminate the activity of these scam or dollar dealers; secondly, in recognition of the fact that the vast majority of individuals and families who have mortgages are meeting their obligations and making their mortgage payments; and the activities of these scam dealers have had an impact in driving down property values and thus eroding the equity, and the

people who are making their payments on time and regularly are being affected by it. Those are the principal reasons for the decision by the board of the corporation to pursue deficiency judgments.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. While I appreciate the minister's response, I would still like to know why Alberta Housing and Mortgage Corporation is treating these honest people who dealt with a professional real estate agent or sales person or broker and who, prior to making the sale of the property that was mortgaged to Alberta Home Mortgage, were keeping and meeting their obligations and who found an opportunity — why are we treating these people like dollar dealers rather than taking on the people who probably should be taken on: the real estate agents or sales people in this scam operation, and in fact through to the dollar dealers they have brought on stream through their offices?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, because of the circumstances that are occurring with these scam or dollar dealers, it's difficult to quickly identify the nature of the transaction. After a sale has occurred and a transfer has taken place and no payments are made, the corporation pursues it. Unfortunately, some of these operators are operating in a way whereby they're inducing vendors to sign transfers that are not completely filled out. Subsequent to the signing of that transfer, that property is moved on to a subsequent buyer, and the corporation is not aware of the middle transfer.

We have established a review committee, made up of four Alberta citizens and two senior officials from the corporation, to review those cases. Where an individual has entered into a sale and is unknowing in terms of the property ultimately ending up in the hands of a dollar dealer, we suspend the action. That process takes some time. I'd like to commend the Member for Calgary McCall for bringing to my attention circumstances in which that has occurred.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. While we're commending, at this time I would like to commend the minister for his assistance. It's through his office that some of these have been slowed.

Considering that Alberta Housing and Mortgage Corporation is pursuing some of these people, whom I have phrased and determined as being victims, I would like to ask if there is an opportunity for the review committee that has been set up to become independent and totally removed from the Alberta Housing and Mortgage Corporation, to give these people who have become victims — I'll use the term again — a fair hearing so that they can physically present their case to a hearing body and so that in the future there is opportunity for these people to be heard properly. In fact, many of these cases I have might be backed up and could also be given that same opportunity.

MR. SHABEN: As I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, the committee is made up of six individuals. Four are private citizens and two are senior corporation employees. I'll certainly give consideration to the recommendation of the hon. member.

I think it is important for members of the Assembly to know that on a number of occasions the corporation has advised all owners of property who have mortgages with the corporation to contact the corporation prior to concluding or making a sale. In many of the transfers the corporation

has been given advice of the sale taking place and has released the individuals from their personal covenant. But a lot of families, after having been in communication with the corporation and having been asked, have neglected to do so. So I urge the members to pass on that message to individuals who are planning to sell their homes.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, one further supplementary. Has the minister undertaken to investigate some of the people who have been involved with these scams, other than the victims who used professional advice in their dealings with the real estate transactions, I guess with some of these overzealous real estate people? Can the minister ensure that some procedure is in place to take action on these real estate agents who dealt on behalf of the people they dealt with, who were, as I determine, their victims?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the corporation has been pursuing the matter in terms of the type of transaction that's occurring, and the Member for Calgary McCall has described it in part. I really can't comment on whether or not legal procedures or charges have been laid, but I will check and respond further to the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: We're running short of time, and I wonder if we could come back to this topic on another day.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I just have one further supplementary, if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: To be dealt with briefly.

MR. NELSON: Has he given any consideration to further amendments to the Law of Property Act or the Land Titles Act to stop this dollar dealer situation from occurring in the future?

MR. SHABEN: As the hon. member knows, Mr. Speaker, in 1984 certain amendments were made to the Law of Property Act. Since the Attorney General is responsible for that particular piece of legislation, he may wish to comment.

#### Canada-United States Trade

MR. McPHERSON: Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the communiqué from the Quebec summit, I note that the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States have issued a declaration regarding trade in goods and services. My question to the Premier is: could he indicate if the communiqué issued by the Prime Minister and the President bears any relationship to, or indeed concurrence in, the urgings of our Premier on the subject of free trade at the recent First Ministers' Conference in Regina?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I've only had an opportunity to quickly peruse the declaration, as has the hon. member. It arrived in my office at noon. I have to say that it is positive in a number of ways, but it certainly doesn't go the full distance of the presentations that a number of the provinces made at the First Ministers' Conference in Regina toward a comprehensive free trade arrangement.

Mr. Speaker, it does set forth two or three very important statements that are positive for the province of Alberta, if there is appropriate follow up. That involves

reducing and eliminating existing barriers to trade in order to secure and facilitate trade and investment flows.

Those are very positive terms. And

to establish immediately a bilateral mechanism to chart all possible ways to reduce and eliminate the existing barriers and to report to us within six months.

Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, it would seem that it would be very important for Alberta to be involved in whatever way we can in the process of establishing that bilateral mechanism, because we have so much to gain.

Only one other comment to the member. There is a specific provision that is very encouraging and that sets forth the concentrating initially by the two governments that affect Alberta directly. So they're listening somewhat. I'd like to read into the record that particular important item. There may be others that I haven't had the chance to consider, Mr. Speaker.

Such action will proceed on the basis of full consultation with the private sector and other levels of government and will concentrate initially on [the fourth item] strengthening our market approach to Canada-United States energy trade by reducing restrictions, particularly those on petroleum imports and exports, and by maintaining and extending open access to each other's energy markets, including oil, natural gas, electricity, and coal.

MR. McPHERSON: A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Does the Premier intend to hold further discussions with the Prime Minister on the subject of trade, particularly as it relates to Alberta's access to markets in the northwestern United States?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to raise this matter directly with the Prime Minister at a meeting of first ministers scheduled for Ottawa on the morning of April 4. I will ask the Prime Minister, and in due course report to the Legislature, to elaborate upon this important document at that time.

MR. McPHERSON: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the Premier anticipate engaging in discussions on this important matter of free trade with the governors of some of the trading nations of the United States directly to the south of us?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, there's some advantage in that, but perhaps more important from our point of view is engaging in discussions with members of the United States Senate from those states which are particularly involved in trade with Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: We're running short of time. Perhaps we can deal briefly with a question from the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

MR. GURNETT: I'd be happy to wait until tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar wishes permission to revert to Introduction of Special Guests.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

#### head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

(reversion)

DR. BUCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take great pleasure this afternoon in introducing someone very close — closer than close — the mayor of Elk Point, which is the centre of the petrochemical industry right now in heavy oil sands development. The mayor of Elk Point, my kid brother, is seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask him to stand and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. OMAN: Mr. Speaker, if I could have your permission, I would like to welcome to the Assembly through you a number of students, who I believe should be here now, from the Thickwood Heights school in Fort McMurray. I'm filling in for the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, who had to be out of town this afternoon. They are accompanied by their teachers Dorothy Walch and Jeannie Tuomi, and parents Gary McNeil and Len Leippi. I would like them to please stand and receive the welcome of the House, if they would.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the questions and motions for returns, I simply move that Motion for Return 136 stand and retain its place on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

#### head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

130. Mr. Martin asked the government the following question: For each of the calendar years 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984:

- (1) in how many individual instances was a recommendation for prosecution forwarded by the RCMP to the Attorney General's department rejected, and
- (2) in each of the instances noted pursuant to clause (1), what was the charge for which the RCMP recommended prosecution?

131. Mr. Martin asked the government the following question: Will the government undertake as a matter of policy when responding to motions for returns and to questions susceptible to being made orders for returns, when the government feels compelled to move that the motion or question, as the case may be, be amended to note "the general principles contained in Citation 390 of the fifth edition of *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms* insofar as they may relate to a provincial legislature," declare either in the proposed amendment or in the course of debate on the proposed amendment, precisely which paragraph and subparagraph, as appropriate, of the citation is being deemed applicable?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I would like to raise a question of procedure that relates to questions 130 and 131. I recognize that questions, as distinct from motions for returns, cannot be debated. At the same time, the point of order I would like to raise has in it some ingredients which, I submit to you, will be relevant to those two questions.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, neither question would be appropriate for the minister to express the necessary opinion under Standing Order 36 that would result in a return being ordered by the Assembly. They are distinctly questions and do not lend themselves to that procedure which is allowed

for under Standing Order 36. Nor can either question be answered in the particulars asked for. If it were possible to do so, then the minister responding in each case would comply with Standing Order 34(2), which would call upon him to give an answer in writing.

Mr. Speaker, it may be that the rules could be looked at for some clarification. I don't have a specific proposal in this respect now but will conclude by noting that there may be a point later this afternoon when your ruling would be required. If clarification is required in any area, it might be as to whether or not a written question could be treated in any respect similar to an oral question; in other words, to have the response also given orally. Mr. Speaker, whether or not a ruling occurs on that point, in very brief terms the submission I make this afternoon, I admit without authority from either *Beauchesne* or *Erskine May*, is that since the standing order does not specifically refer to the fact that an answer to a written question cannot be given orally, perhaps by implication the *Standing Orders* would allow for that.

I intend to undertake today, as each of those questions is called, if I have the leave of the Assembly, to place on record some response which, if Your Honour later required it, could then also be submitted in writing in order to comply with Standing Order 34(2). I conclude with two points: that with the leave of the Assembly I would make some oral response to those two questions, but that neither of them are, by their nature, such that could be made an order for a return in the circumstances.

MR. SPEAKER: The Assembly is, of course, the master of its own procedure, and if there is unanimous agreement with the proposal made by the hon. Government House Leader, that can be done.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this is of course a new curve thrown. We could be establishing some policy here. I, for one, would not like to rush into it this afternoon but would take the remarks and give you, sir, some time also to think about what the Attorney General has said and perhaps come back in the next day or so with some arguments for it or not. If we make a decision here today, I think we're sort of bound by it. I, for one, want some time to study it.

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I would not see a unanimous consent given to an exception as establishing a binding precedent requiring that the same thing be done or permitted again in the future. But if the Assembly agrees with the suggestion of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, that the matter stand over until, say, Thursday for it to be given further consideration, that might be a way of dealing with the matter for the moment.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I wonder then, to be clear, if the Leader of the Opposition is simply suggesting that both matters stand until Thursday. If that is so, I have no objection.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, yes. I suggest that we just hold it until Thursday.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Anyone contrary?

It is so ordered.

I understand that we've now dealt with questions 130 and 131.

132. Mr. Martin asked the government the following question: Will the government undertake as a matter of policy, when commissioning, preparing, and presenting reports by consultants, to follow the procedure and guidelines outlined in *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms* (fifth edition). Citation 390(4); and, specifically, will the government undertake as a matter of policy in such instances to ensure that
- (1) all consultants' studies and reports are assigned a category similar to those outlined in Citation 390(4)(a) and (b) by the responsible minister, as outlined in Citation 390(4)(c), prior to the engaging of any given consultant's services, and
  - (2) all consultants' studies and reports are comprised of at least two volumes, as outlined in Citation 390(4)(d)?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to answer the question verbally, and the answer is no.

MR. SPEAKER: I hesitate to interrupt the hon. deputy leader, but aren't we doing now what we were going to consider whether we might do on Thursday? I'm not aware of any provision for extending the Oral Question Period as far as answers are concerned. It seems to me that the situation at the moment is whether or not the question is going to be answered at all, not whether it's going to be answered orally. However, again, if there's unanimous consent — although that might be departing from what we agreed to a moment ago, as I understand it — the House is the master of its own procedures.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can put it in writing, and I will undertake to do so on Thursday.

133. Mr. Martin asked the government the following question: In each case, what is the government's best estimate of when it will be able to table responses to the following written questions and motions for returns:
- (1) Order made November 3, 1983, on Motion 212 as amended, for certain documents relating to the use of Mount Allan for the 1988 Winter Olympics;
  - (2) Order made November 24, 1983, on Motion 218 as amended, for information concerning provincial employees located in offices outside Alberta and their travel;
  - (3) Order made April 5, 1984, on Motion 135 as amended, for production of Alberta Crown prosecutors agents' manual;
  - (4) Order made March 20, 1984, on Motion 139 as amended, concerning a trip to Europe by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs;
  - (5) Order made March 20, 1984, on Motion 140 as amended, concerning travel by Members of the Legislative Assembly, Executive Council, and senior staff;
  - (6) Order made April 17, 1984, on Motion 160, for production of information concerning the operations of the Luscar Sterco mine;
  - (7) Order made April 17, 1984, on Motion 161, for production of directives issued to Luscar Sterco (1977) Ltd. and/or Luscar Ltd.;
  - (8) Order made May 1, 1984, on Motion 162 as amended, for production of certain contracts providing for payments to a direct associate of a Member of the Legislative Assembly or to a minister;

- (9) Order made May 29, 1984, on Motion 178 as amended, for information concerning employees of the government in offices outside Alberta and their travel;
- (10) Order made May 31, 1984, on Motion 181, for information concerning reports and studies regarding Kanaskis Provincial Park;
- (11) Order made November 8, 1984, on Motion 182 as amended, for details of costs of a trip to Japan and South Korea by 15 government and school officials;
- (12) Order made November 8, 1984, on Motion 183 as amended, for information about a loan made through special warrant;
- (13) Order made November 6, 1984, on Motion 184, for information concerning special promotions undertaken under the "Canadian Umbrella"; and
- (14) Written Question 185, accepted November 13, 1984, concerning disaster assistance payments made to various residents of the Valleyview area.

#### head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

134. Mr. Martin moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1983, and ending March 31, 1984, a list of all expenditures approved by the Treasury Board with respect to hospitality and entertainment expenses, itemizing for each event, where known:

- (1) the meal, reception, or other entertainment provided,
- (2) the number of persons attending,
- (3) the names of those attending,
- (4) the offices of those attending,
- (5) the names of groups attending or represented by attendees,
- (6) the number of bottles of spirits, wine, and beer served,
- (7) the brand names of all the spirits, wine, and beer served, and the cost per bottle, and
- (8) the total cost of the meal, reception, or other entertainment provided.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, the basic elements of this motion for a return as requested are, and have been in past years, found in the *Alberta Gazette* and are also referred to in the directives of the Treasury Board. In its essence, the motion asks for the amount of public expenditure for each of the many functions which are held over the course of a year in the province of Alberta. It also requests the specific dates and locations of each of those functions. As well, it implicitly asks for the purpose of each of those functions, whether they're for trade promotion, to assist marketing, meeting with farmers or businessmen, or inter-provincial relations.

In the past we've had no problem in providing that kind of information. Since 1978 that information has been provided by the *Alberta Gazette*, as published from time to time. That has been our course of action, and that will be the situation in the future. So there is a duplication.

As members know, the *Alberta Gazette* regularly publishes, pursuant to Treasury Board directives, the hosting and hospitality of each of the various government departments. In that connection, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be appropriate if I filed for the Assembly copies of the Treasury Board directive which deals with and sets forth the detailed hospitality rules. There is a copy available for the Leader of the Opposition as well. The original directive

was in 1978. It has been amended and updated from time to time.

I think it's instructive to briefly review those, because they relate directly to the notice of motion. The requirements and conditions with respect to hosting and hospitality of this government, as indicated in this original directive and its subsequent directives, are comprehensive. They're pretty rigorous. For example, hospitality expenses are eligible only in cases where

- (a) the Government hosts private or government guests from outside Alberta and hospitality is necessary or desirable as a matter of courtesy or to facilitate the conduct of Government business,
- (b) official Government business discussions take place with persons not employed by the Alberta Government, and,
- (c) persons, including spouses, associated with international, national, governmental, or other organizations are involved.

They set forth that

working luncheon or dinner meetings with the attendance of Government of Alberta employees are eligible for reimbursement [only] where such meetings are necessary for the conduct of Government business.

It notes that

no claim for hospitality or working lunches may be made where ... the event is purely social such as terminations, transfers, marriages, births

and events of that kind. It notes and requires that expenses for hospitality and working lunches must be reasonable ...

Deputy heads [of departments] or their designates must approve all requests for payment of hospitality and working lunch expenses.

Then there's a four-part series of steps through which any expenditure over \$400 must be approved:

- (a) approved by the department head,
- (b) reviewed by the Deputy Provincial Treasurer,
- (c) recommended by the Provincial Treasurer to the Treasury Board, and
- (d) approved by Treasury Board before any payment can be made.

When there is a payment or an application for hospitality or working lunch expenses under \$400, that can be made only on a detailed travel expense account form. As well, as I noted previously, section 11 states very clearly that all hospitality expenses paid pursuant to section 7 of this Directive shall be summarized and published annually in the *Alberta Gazette*.

That has been done ever since 1978.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the citizens of this province expect their government to avoid unnecessary duplication, minimize overlapping, and avoid the production of redundant information. I think they have that same requirement and expectation of their provincial Legislature. They want regulations and paperwork kept to a minimum. They want their government and their Legislature to be lean, trim, and economical. The May 1985 *Gazette*, forthcoming in a number of weeks, will have the essentials of this question as information provided, as has been done in previous years.

I am informed that the production of all the detailed information referred to in the total of the motion for a return would involve an expenditure probably exceeding \$50,000. I suggest and submit that that kind of expenditure, for what is essentially duplication and redundant information made public, would not be a prudent public expenditure.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I submit that to pass this motion would represent a duplication and a waste of time and manpower. I urge members of the Assembly to defeat the motion.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, a very good case was made by the Treasurer, if only he had told all the aspects of the *Alberta Gazette*. The Treasurer is well aware that not all the things we are asking for in Motion for a Return 134 are in the *Alberta Gazette*.

The point we have tried to make to this government is that actions speak louder than words. The reason for a process like this is that when this government talks about restraint, Albertans want to know that in fact this government is also following restraint. That's the purpose of an exercise like this. The Treasurer is well aware that you cannot get a lot of that information in the *Alberta Gazette*. To say that it's time-consuming and that the paperwork — where you get \$50,000 out of that, I don't know; I expect that one was reached out of midair, Mr. Speaker.

The point is that by doing this particular exercise and by having us all follow self-discipline in this so-called time of restraint, Albertans will then go along with other suggestions the government might make in dealing with the recession. But if we can't get this type of information and they feel that there are two rules — one for government, ministers, and top people in the civil service and another rule for them — then I suggest that cynicism develops. The Treasurer's hiding behind paperwork and duplication and trying to justify it that way is not going to wash with the average unemployed person and the other people we're talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I expect I'm going to be disappointed. I have not won a vote yet. But I think the government is hiding behind a technicality in not wanting to give this information, and I think they'll pay for it.

[Motion lost]

135. Mr. Martin moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1984, and ending March 31, 1985, a list of all expenditures approved by the Treasury Board with respect to hospitality and entertainment expenses, itemizing for each event, where known:

- (1) the meal, reception, or other entertainment provided,
- (2) the number of persons attending,
- (3) the names of those attending,
- (4) the offices of those attending,
- (5) the names of groups attending or represented by attendees,
- (6) the number of bottles of spirits, wine, and beer served,
- (7) the brand names of all the spirits, wine, and beer served, and the cost per bottle, and
- (8) the total cost of the meal, reception, or other entertainment provided.

[Motion lost]

## head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

201. Moved by Mr. Zip:

Be it resolved that the Assembly recommend that the government introduce a policy of issuing special licence plates for vehicles registered in the name of or regularly used by disabled drivers, that will permit such vehicles to be readily identifiable.

MR. ZIP: My decision to introduce this motion was prompted by two widely separated events in my life, one recent and one that reaches back to the 1940s. The latter event involved a cousin of my father who came back from the war a wheelchair case. He came in his car from Winnipeg to visit my parents, and across the trunk of his car were prominently displayed signs which read as follows: "Caution; Disabled Driver; Car Hand-controlled". I asked my father's cousin how necessary that sign was and whether he felt endangered by it. His reply was that it helped immensely, especially when he drove in Winnipeg. And any time he had trouble on the highway, people were prompted to stop and help him. At that time there was no concern over handicapped parking. The concern was over the care and attention motorists gave to handicapped drivers on the streets and roads to make their driving experiences safer and more pleasant. A prominently displayed sign on cars at that time readily identified the handicapped driver, something that special licence plates would do today.

The recent event involves my meeting with Mr. Rod Anderson, a constituent of mine who leads a very active life despite his serious disabilities. He is back in the work force and is very actively involved in the Crossroads community. He pointed out to me the difficulties he experienced not only with having to cope with boorish and inconsiderate drivers on the street but also with quick identification of his vehicle and using the handicapped parking spaces that are assigned to them. He indicated to me that the present system of transferrable handicapped signs was not visible enough and that the best way this problem would be solved would be through special handicapped licence plates. Hon. members, I promised him that I would take this matter to the attention of this House for your careful consideration.

Throughout the United States this problem has so far been addressed through the issuance of special handicapped licence plates by 33 of the 50 states. In Canada two provinces are issuing special handicapped licence plates; namely, Ontario and Nova Scotia. The province of Saskatchewan has special tabs on the licence plates of handicapped drivers. The upside of the special licence plate is ready identification, both on the street and in the parking lot, so other drivers can extend extra care and caution to such drivers and police can readily identify such vehicles, especially when a handicapped driver is visiting either out of province or in another town or city in the province.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

The downside, of course, is the fear that some handicapped drivers have of being exposed to robbery and assault because they are readily identified as being handicapped. There is the additional wish on the part of some of them to be as anonymous and invisible as possible. The special licence plate takes away from this. Of course, this is a concern that can be met partly by having a mobile phone or a CB radio in the car.

The problem of security on the streets for the disabled does not go away with another form of identification. People who look to committing acts of violence against the disabled can readily identify them through observation. Every one of us needs to be cautious while on the road and not travel alone at late hours or in dangerous areas of the city. Keeping to well-lit and well-travelled thoroughfares and busy areas of the city, especially at night, makes sense for everyone, not just the handicapped. Following these precautions alleviates most of the problems relating to assault and violence created by a readily identifiable handicapped licence plate. On the positive side, such a plate provides an incentive to extend courtesy and extra care towards a handicapped driver, whether he's driving or parking.

Hon. members, I urge you to pass this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to speak on Motion 201 this afternoon, not only as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Cypress but as one of the members of the Canadian Paraplegic Association, Alberta Division Board. I've sat on that board for a number of years, and I would like to speak on this motion from that aspect.

The hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View outlined some of the problems that exist with having disabled markings on licence plates. That's the reason the Canadian Paraplegic Association is hesitant about supporting such a move. The history of the association's work in this aspect goes back to 1981, when Rick Hiatt, the then executive director of the association, contacted officials in the Solicitor General's department to talk about what could be done to assist handicapped people with problems they faced in finding parking spots and parking. After a number of discussions about these problems and a great deal of time spent on this aspect at board meetings, the association took it upon itself to produce a placard, which I'll pass to all members, and also an application form, which members can forward to their constituents. It can be filled out and sent to the association, and they'll receive one of these stickers. The only thing lacking on the sticker that will be passed out is the registration number, so it won't be legal for use.

As was suggested before, Mr. Speaker, there are indeed problems when a unit is marked with a handicapped sticker on the licence plate or when a licence plate is specially made with the handicapped insignia on it. People face some problems with this. They become a target for ruffians, if you wish to call them that for want of a better or nicer word. There is much concern about that. I understand that in some of the states they are indeed exploring the idea of getting away from the use of these insignias on licence plates. They have a different or better system for signalling the use of the handicapped person, such as this plaque that I'll distribute. The other thing about the movable plaque is that it can be used not only by handicapped drivers but by handicapped people riding in a vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, we see handicapped stalls in front of many places, but there are other problems associated with them. The people in the two major urban municipalities, Calgary and Edmonton, have worked together with the Paraplegic Association and other handicapped associations in trying to develop some system for handicapped parking. Basically, there are still three problems that exist. We covered one previously: that of the tagged identification of a vehicle and the problems it creates. It leaves the desire in some people's minds to have a portable marking that can be placed in a vehicle whether it is being driven by handicapped people

or the handicapped are riding as passengers. Secondly, possible changes to the Planning Act would establish standards of design and agree upon an adequate number of handicapped parking stalls needed for any private development like a store or mall parking lot. Thirdly, we should probably be looking at amending the traffic Act so that the police can give tickets for parking in handicapped parking stalls in those places that have them on private property. There is now really little, if anything, that can be done to enforce parking rights in these marked stalls. Even though they're marked, people park in them. There's really little that can be done towards stopping people that use these stalls.

A resolution was passed at the last urban municipalities conference, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to read the last part of the resolution into the record. There are the two preambles, and then: Now therefore be it resolved the government of Alberta be requested to introduce enabling legislation to permit municipalities to enforce handicapped parking spaces on private property and to introduce a standard of vehicle identification system to facilitate intraprovincial travel for the disabled.

Mr. Speaker, I think that last part of the resolution pretty well says it all: we need to be standardized across the province, not only in the two major cities but in some of the other cities and towns throughout the province. We need to have a standard insignia that is acceptable in all areas and a way for the police and the cities to enforce the regulations that exist so that it's not made almost like a farce, in some cases, where these stalls exist and people are parking in them.

Mr. Speaker, it may be of interest to members of the Assembly to note that to date the Paraplegic Association has issued approximately 3,000 of these placards since the program began one year ago. In some ways it's a large amount, but in other ways there is obviously a lot more needed out there. As I said, to date this association has, on its own, taken over this program of distribution of the placards. Organizations like the ACT have donated substantial moneys toward construction of these placards, and we are very thankful for that.

There is also a problem with the voluntary organization sending out these placards. We have had some concerns about the number of people we are contacting, the number that are touching our organization. We really desire to achieve the best possible distribution of such an item. We would appreciate the Solicitor General's taking over the distribution of these items under motor vehicles or under some joint arrangement with this association or other associations, so we could have a better handle on the numbers of people who need such a certificate and where they are, and maybe do some joint programs funded partially by the organization and partially by government in order to carry out the intent of the program.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I support the concept of having the stalls and having some sort of marking on a handicapped vehicle. But I do have concerns about markings on the licence plates for the reasons I outlined, and I urge members, when they are looking at support of the motion, to consider those concerns.

Thank you.

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure today to speak to the motion sponsored by the Member for Calgary Mountain View. I wish to commend the hon. member for taking the initiative to bring this subject before

the Assembly for debate. It is a very worthy subject and one I believe should be addressed at length. In this context I would like to bring to the attention of Members of this Assembly my intention in the near future to introduce a Bill entitled the Disabled Parking Act. I trust that the debate on this Bill will be as constructive as the debate has been thus far on the resolution before us today.

Mr. Speaker, parking is a controversial issue, even for those able-bodied people who do not suffer from any disability. As a member of city council I recall a tremendous controversy that existed on the issue of parking and parking policy. It wasn't that long ago that I was doing a tour of churches on a Sunday morning in my ward with the hon. Member for Calgary Millican, who was then an alderman of the city of Calgary. We had visited two churches. We arrived at the third; it was St. Michael's Catholic Church. It was one minute to eleven. There was no parking to be had anywhere, despite the fact that this was a residential area. The time was one minute to eleven, and we had to get into that church. Of course, I was not about to park in the only space available — beside a fire hydrant. However, my colleague was committed to being on time. He said, "Brian, look; if we get a parking ticket, you can fix it anyway." I said, "You've got to be kidding; I can't even get my own pay raised." He insisted that we depart, so we got out of the car. He took out his business card and wrote on the back of it, "Forgive us our trespasses." He put it underneath the windshield wiper. We went inside and came out an hour and a half later. I'm certain that the police officer who issued the \$25 parking ticket must have been from his constituency, because he wrote on the back of the parking ticket, "Lead us not into temptation."

Mr. Speaker, I trust that the disabled will forgive us our trespasses for the unintentional yet benign neglect that we as legislators have given to this subject. But we should not lead them into the temptation of a quick, short solution that is not total and is not co-ordinated, and that is the thrust of my remarks today.

In contributing to this debate, I wish to do three things; first, address myself to six issues and problems which are generally identified with the users of disabled persons' parking identification, as outlined in the Hickling report. This report is entitled A Study of Handicapped Parking Identification and was prepared for Transport Canada in 1982. Secondly, I wish to evaluate this resolution, using this report as a yardstick to measure the merits of the motion. Finally, I wish to examine the resolution in terms of how it meets the needs of the disabled persons in Alberta based on the feedback I've received as a member of the Legislature.

With that said, I would like to begin with the Hickling report, which basically addresses all the issues we were speaking on today. The study was completed in 1982 and provides what I think is a complete overview of parking identification systems presently in use in Canada, the United States, and Europe. Mr. Speaker, the report addresses six primary issues: standard identification, enforcement, portable transferrable identification, reciprocity, program co-ordination and, finally, personal security. Let us deal with these issues one by one.

First of all, standard identification. Disabled persons have experienced problems with their parking identification for three primary reasons. First of all, organizations other than official government bodies issue parking identification. As you know, the Canadian Paraplegic division in Alberta, as identified by the previous speaker, does have a placard

system in place in Alberta, as do other organizations. The difficulty is that these systems are not ideal because of the lack of co-ordination between issuing organizations. The lack of standardization in all of this tends to be confusing for both the user and enforcement officials as well.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the identification is not authorized by government. It is not authorized by municipal governments, although there has certainly been a close co-ordination between the cities of Calgary and Edmonton. I understand it is not as much a problem in Alberta because the CPA has worked so closely with the two major cities.

Mr. Speaker, in preparing the Bill that I will be introducing later on, I wrote the cities in Alberta and asked for their comments on the need for co-ordination, and submitted a draft Bill. Here is the feedback. Mayor Decore responded in February of last year and said:

The City of Edmonton supports in principle provincial legislation adopting standards for accessible parking spaces for the handicapped.

Clearly the mayor wants to see the details, but there's a recognition that there's a need for provincewide co-ordination. Mayor Klein of the city of Calgary also wrote:

The City of Calgary supports any effort towards the provision of specially designated parking spaces for the handicapped in all Alberta municipalities.

Again, they have been working very closely with the CPA in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, because of points 1 and 2, if disabled drivers use unofficial identification, they can be fined. This is not a big problem. I understand that the hon. Member for Calgary North West brought this to the attention of the Solicitor General a year ago, and the department to this date has received only one complaint.

The second issue is enforcement. The report stated that enforcement policies across Canada are presently inadequate. City police and bylaw officers are not empowered to fine violators who occupy handicapped parking reserved in areas on private property. So while there are good intentions by many owners of parking lots, it is simply ineffective if no action can be taken.

Mr. Speaker, two weeks ago on a Sunday evening I attended a cultural event in Chinatown in Calgary. Parking at any time of the week is a challenge in Chinatown in Calgary, and on Sunday it is horrendous. I was driving around in one parking lot on that day, there were at least 10 other automobiles in line to find a stall, and there was one vacant parking stall reserved for the disabled. I noticed all 10 cars passed up parking in that stall except for one. It was a rowdy group of three young men. It was a half-ton truck. The noise of the radio was loud. It looked as if they had been drinking; they were certainly boisterous. While we could see at the end of the lineup an automobile that did have a placard in it for the disabled, these three young men decided to abuse the privilege that was provided by the parking lot owner and take that parking stall. I can't think of anything more discourteous, ignorant, or totally devoid of common decency than an action of that kind — devoid not only of common decency but of basic human respect.

The bad news in this regard is that with regret a tiny minority of individuals can abuse the spirit and goodwill of the majority. The net effect is that they can totally obliterate the value of the voluntary system that exists today. Unfortunately, it is in this case, because of the abuse of a minority, that I believe there is a requirement for some standardization and giving to municipalities the authority to

fine for the abuse. The good news, of course, is that in my view 99 percent of the public who are aware of this policy of parking stalls for the disabled respect that provision.

The third issue, Mr. Speaker, is that of transferrability and portability. User groups across Canada were polled, and they concluded from the review that took place in 1982 that stickers — not necessarily stickers, because they could be stickers or placards — should be (a) portable and (b) transferrable. In other words, the disabled ought to be able to utilize the placard or sticker in a vehicle other than the one they own. In some respects that is the system presently in place in Alberta, a placard system that meets both those criteria. It can be placed on the dash or the front windshield. It is beneficial to the disabled driver as well as to the disabled person being driven, as that person may not always be transported in the same vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth issue is reciprocity between provinces and between municipalities. Clearly, if we are going to have a system, it needs to be co-ordinated between all the communities not only in Alberta and Canada but in North America. I was encouraged to hear the mover of the resolution indicate that there are now 33 states in the United States that have a system of one form or another. But there is a great need for them to be co-ordinated.

Mr. Speaker, the fifth issue is program co-ordination. Program co-ordination is another area that the report looks at. It notes that disabled persons' organizations, particularly in Alberta, have expressed a belief and a desire to be actively involved in co-ordinating any type of parking identification programs that would be to their benefit. It makes sense: let's involve the people who are affected. I recall, when serving on Calgary city council in 1980 to '81, that the then administration attempted to bring forward a new bylaw with respect to parking as it impacted upon private building owners — very little consultation undertaken and very little involvement in the preparation of that policy by the people that were affected. I recall the day that we had the public hearing to consider that new legislation. There was almost a revolt in city council chambers, because the people who were involved were not consulted. As a result, city council threw out the work and said, "Go back to the drawing boards, administration, but this time consult the people who are impacted." It was over two years before that consultation process was completed. But the final result was a policy that had the unanimous endorsement of the private sector and the public sector, and it was undertaken and completed to their mutual agreement. So clearly, in keeping with the philosophy of this government, we must include and receive input from organizations and encourage their involvement in not only the formulation of the policy but the execution of it.

Mr. Speaker, the sixth issue, and probably the most difficult one, is that of personal security. Disabled persons have expressed a clearly spoken fear of being identified as easy targets for the criminal element. With licence plates or stickers which are not portable or transferrable, I believe the problem is exacerbated; it's worse. While there is a need for identification, the question is: which is more appropriate? As a member of the Calgary Police Commission, I recall the delegations that came forward to us and said, "Do something about security in parking structures at night." These were delegations who were fully able — a particular concern on the part of females who felt they were susceptible and easy targets. If all vehicles are clearly marked that they are driven or owned by the disabled, I wonder if we're not setting up these individuals for greater difficulty than they would wish.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to compare how this resolution meets these concerns. First of all, with respect to standard identification I think the resolution is excellent. It would bring about a standard identification system throughout the province and eliminate confusion. I would like to comment, however, that the standard identification system that has been introduced by the Canadian Paraplegic Association has not brought about a great deal of confusion. I think one of the strongest arguments for this resolution is that if you did have a licence plate system, it would help to bring about a standardization in rural communities that may not be exposed to the variety of parking lots in larger urban areas that already adopt this present system.

With respect to enforcement, I'm afraid this resolution puts the cart before the horse. We could have a standardized licence plate system, but without enforcement I'm afraid it is virtually useless. It doesn't mean the resolution doesn't have merit. But if anybody can still park in a parking stall for the disabled and not be towed away, it certainly does very little good for those people who wish to utilize this privilege.

The Hickling report recommended that organizations of the handicapped should discontinue issuing parking identification in order to allow either municipal or provincial governments to co-ordinate this activity. I suggest that any changes in this regard should be a gradual process and should ensure that the needs of the disabled are fully met.

With respect to personal security, I know there is great apprehension on the part of user groups towards licence plates. This very important concern is really not met by this resolution.

Finally, I would like to address how the resolution meets the needs of disabled persons across the province. My office has been in contact with Eric Boyd, the executive director of the Canadian Paraplegic Association. I know many members have already received the information package. The association has clearly expressed grave reservations with this motion. In their opinion, the licence plate route is not the way to go. We've also been in touch with the Calgary Action Group for the Disabled, and they, too, have expressed the same reservation. They don't want to be identified as moving targets.

In closing, we've examined the following six issues: standard identification, enforcement, the issue of portability or transferrability, reciprocity between other municipalities and governments, program co-ordination, and personal security. We've examined how this resolution deals with the issues. In some areas it is an excellent initiative, but in others it falls short.

When I began my debate, I made reference in my opening story that we should be forgiven for our trespasses in not taking initiative on this earlier. But we should be very careful not to be tempted with a solution that is not complete, not total, and not co-ordinated.

Mr. Speaker, I believe a complete solution must deal with 10 basic areas. One, there should be a clear definition of disability and who should do the identification. Should it be government or should it be a private organization?

Secondly, I think there must be a standard throughout the province of a minimum number of stalls that are allowed in parking lots. Should it be a parking lot of 25 or 50 stalls, and what percentage should be allocated for the disabled?

Three, how should the stalls be marked? Should there be a standard identification for those parking stalls?

Four, what degree of local flexibility should there be? Perhaps one municipality would want a greater proportion than another.

Five, the placard or portable transferrable sticker should be standardized throughout the province. Six, there should be reciprocity.

Seven, and again I regret that this resolution does not address it directly, there must be some kind of penalty for an offence if there's to be any enforcement of disabled parking stalls. A local municipality or private parking lot owner should have the ability to have the offending vehicle towed away.

Eight, there should be close co-ordination between the private sector and government. We should make sure that the program is either administered by or closely consulted in concert with disabled organizations.

Nine, there should be joint co-ordination among the four ministries that would be impacted or provide services with respect to such initiative: Municipal Affairs, the Solicitor General, Transportation, and Social Services and Community Health.

Above all, Mr. Speaker, I believe the solution should be win, win, win. It should be a win for disabled groups who have been working on this problem for so long and are looking for a complete solution. It should be a win for municipalities who have been working closely with the disabled groups but are frustrated by the lack of authority to do anything with the problem. Thirdly, it should be a win for the public. I believe there is very strong support for the idea of parking stalls for the convenience of the disabled. Fourthly, there should be a win for parking lot owners who have done so voluntarily thus far but are frustrated by abuse by a small minority. Finally, it should be a win above all for the disabled, whose life is difficult enough, complicated enough, and challenging enough, without the frustration of finding a parking stall when they seek to be mobile in their own community.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I believe the resolution is a good one in principle. But because of the lack of complete, co-ordinated effort to deal with the issues I've identified, I think it's incomplete, and therefore at this point, while commending the hon. Member for Calgary Mountain View for his initiative, I cannot support it until these concerns are addressed more closely.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate on Motion 201, sponsored by the Member for Calgary Mountain View. First of all, I think it is an excellent motion. It's probably long overdue. I listened with great interest to the previous speaker, who indicated that he would support it in principle subject to a lot of conditions. Obviously, if those conditions were to be answered, the hon. member and other members of this House would never have need for any constituents to have this motion, because we should live so long.

It is again an indication that people who want to enshrine at a time when we are trying to deregulate, legislate at a time when we are asking for the spirit of volunteerism and co-operation, put before this House what I deem to be an excellent idea in spirit, an excellent idea in terms of someone who wants to help the ... I don't know how many of those 1.7 million licensed drivers in this province are handicapped. But I do think that we're seeing another example of — and it's happened before; we did it with child restraint devices — endeavouring, in terms of spirit, to help people in this province. Then we get into the debate

and end up with recommendations that would be academic if they were carried out because there probably wouldn't be automobiles available at the time that the legislation is passed.

Mr. Speaker, both members have mentioned Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia, who took initiative and have these symbols on the plates. I recall the debate here a year or two ago, when we talked about the vulnerability of those who were disabled. For example, if somebody who had a licence plate with the symbol of the disabled on it broke down on the highway, were they vulnerable to some of those types the member from Calgary Buffalo referred to? We would omit the word "young", because the inference is that young people are always troublemakers. He referred to some who had obviously been to a corner grocery store. They had been drinking, they were noisy, and they were a variety of things.

Mr. Speaker, I think a very real concern lies with those who would have a disabled sign on their plate and would break down on the highway, particularly in the wintertime, and be vulnerable to passersby. That's a concern. For many years the United States used plates. The state of Arizona is probably one of the best known.

In reading the motion, I have no trouble at all supporting it, as long as we don't insist that those who are disabled have to have it. Obviously, it's only on application. You would have to apply to receive that plate.

Mr. Speaker, the use of the symbol brought in by the previous Attorney General, with the co-operation of the Canadian Paraplegic Association, is an excellent one. I look forward to using mine, as I'm sure other members of the House do, being that they've been issued to the members of the House for those who are physically disabled.

This brings us to the point in the resolution of who is disabled. It doesn't refer to physically disabled. I think the Member for Calgary Mountain View is referring, by inference, to those who have a physical condition, such as emphysema, and cannot get to the store from wherever they have to park, or to those without legs or some real physical infirmity.

Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty at all supporting this resolution. I think we should move quickly. By moving and endorsing this motion by the Member for Calgary Mountain View, we'd set another example that this is a government that's noted for its action, not a government creating more regulation.

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to participate in the debate on Motion 201, presented by the Member for Calgary Mountain View. I must commend him on bringing the motion to the Assembly at this time. It shows the true intent and spirit that is behind it. It certainly is a motion worthy of debate on the floor of the Assembly.

It's always a difficult task to follow speeches made by the Member for Lethbridge West and the Member for Calgary Buffalo. They seem to cover all topics on an extended basis, and many of the points that I was hoping to make have already been covered very adequately. I would like to add a couple of points to the debate.

One of the things the Member for Calgary Buffalo referred to was the lack of courtesy displayed by members of the public when it comes to parking stalls reserved for the handicapped. His experience a week ago, when a number of uncouth youths seemed to have taken a spot away from a handicapped driver, reminded me of the promo that's aired on television quite frequently promoting a program

entitled, I believe, *Highway to Heaven*. It stars — I don't know what his real name is, but he used to be Little Joe on *Bonanza*. He plays some kind of angel who returns from heaven. He was walking in a parking lot and a couple of thug-type guys had parked in a handicapped spot. He asked them to move their vehicle, and of course they refused, not knowing exactly who he was. When they returned, the vehicle had been turned upside down and parked on its roof. These gentlemen were quite alarmed. I don't know if the Member for Calgary Buffalo thought of using that as an option in removing the offending vehicle, but certainly that was something he could have considered.

A couple of years ago, Mr. Speaker, as a member of this Assembly, I was able to sponsor another Bill that was to assist the handicapped people of this province. That was an Act to amend the Blind Persons' Rights Act, which would have extended to deaf people the same privileges extended to blind people with respect to hearing ear dogs and assisting those handicapped people. As such, I had quite extensive contact with handicapped individuals throughout the province, and I certainly became much more empathetic and aware of their needs.

I received a phone call one day from a constituent of mine who complained that he couldn't get a hunting licence. I asked him why, and he said that he was blind. I wondered what a blind person was going to do with a hunting licence. I had a few suggestions as to where he could go hunting, but that wasn't the point. He said that as a blind person, he should have a bag limit for ducks or whatever else he wanted to go after. Certainly, he wasn't going to operate the gun, but he wanted to be able to go out with bona fide hunters who would be able to bag his limit on his behalf, so he could bring back his own game or fowl or whatever he was hunting. That was certainly an interesting point that I had never considered. I looked into it for him with the minister and was able to satisfy his needs.

I also have a friend who is blind and owns a couple of vehicles, Mr. Speaker. It always amazes me what a blind person is going to be able to do with motor vehicles. Quite often I think we underestimate the abilities of handicapped people. The blind person doesn't drive his own vehicle; he gets others to drive it for him in order to take him out in the country or on business or skiing or whatever. We should be very aware of the needs and abilities of handicapped people.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Certainly, the spirit of this motion allows us to look at all the various possibilities that those of us who are not handicapped may never really think about or be aware of. One of the difficulties I had when I was looking at this motion was the definition that could be applied to a disabled or handicapped person. The information that I was able to go through offered a number of possibilities, and they were very wide-ranging. In some very open interpretations in jurisdictions like California, it even included people who were temporarily disabled, people who had broken legs or other limbs. As long as they were under medical attention or wearing casts, they were considered handicapped. Other provinces that have dealt with this question have defined "disabled".

For the purposes of this program, Mr. Speaker, I think we would have to call a disability any physical condition of a permanent nature which constitutes a serious hardship to mobility. This is intended to include paraplegics, quad-

raplegics, the blind, people with respiratory ailments, and other physical conditions which in the opinion of a duly qualified medical practitioner require inclusion. If that kind of definition could be adopted, I think it would be much more easily applied and members of the Assembly would be much more easily able to come to grips with a decision as to the viability of this motion, because a number of concerns have been raised by previous speakers.

With regard to the time, Mr. Speaker, and the number of comments that I would like to include, I would like to adjourn debate at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? I'm sorry, I didn't hear. The hon. member asked for leave to adjourn the debate? Is that the motion?

MR. SZWENDER: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

202. Moved by Mr. Hyland:

Be it resolved that the government of Alberta be encouraged to consider appointing a committee comparable to the recently appointed Montana-Western Canadian Provinces Boundary Advisory Committee to discuss common interests with the state of Montana and the province of Alberta.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, perhaps you'll get a chance to call the question when this motion ends, at the appropriate time.

It's a pleasure to participate and move Motion 201. Mr. Speaker, I should first say that there is a slight error in the motion in that the committee spoken of is not fully appointed. The Act has been through the state House of Representatives and through the Senate, and was amended by the Senate. I'll talk about the amendment later. It now has to return to the House of Representatives and then receive the governor's signature. The intent of the motion is there, but the wording isn't totally accurate.

Mr. Speaker, I should just briefly go over the history of the exchanges that have occurred between the legislators in the province of Alberta and in the state of Montana. It started a little over a year and a half ago. I went down and met with Dennis Iverson, who is the member for Whitlash, which borders on part of the constituency of Cypress and is against the American border. In fact, his land runs along the border.

I discussed this idea of an exchange of legislators with some of my colleagues, especially those in the agriculture caucus committee. From our desire to talk about the common problems that occur in agriculture, I posed this idea to the member. He thought it was a good idea, and the situation grew from that. A meeting was held in Edmonton in March 1984 between legislators from Montana, from both Houses and both parties — two from the Senate and two from the House of Representatives, each one of those being from various parties — along with some limited staff from the 49th Parallel Institute and from other organizations. We met and talked about common issues. I believe other members are going to cover those.

We met in Great Falls in October 1984, for a return trip. At that time Governor Ted Schwinden announced at

a luncheon held for both groups, and sponsored by the Great Falls Chamber of Commerce, the intent to put a Bill before both Houses of the state so that such a committee could be put together and be available to discuss common border interests with Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia.

Mr. Speaker, I know there have been exchanges of ministers from Alberta, and from other provinces, with Montana. But I believe the two exchanges of legislators which we have carried out so far — and hopefully these exchanges will continue — are the first times that legislators at that level have met across the border between Canada and the United States.

Briefly, Mr. Speaker, the Bill outlines the makeup of this committee from Montana. Their committee would be composed of nine members and would be chaired by the governor. Of the other eight members, four would be appointed from Legislative Council, two from the Senate, and two from the House of Representatives. So it would give them a fairly wide range to appoint people from, to discuss the problems and the things they wish to talk about.

The Bill was introduced in the House of Representatives on February 9 and received a unanimous vote. Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, it shows the interest and support this Bill has received, in that the announcement that this committee would be formed was made by a Democrat governor. The Bill was introduced into the Assembly by Mr. Iverson, a Republican. It received total support, to the best of my understanding, from the House of Representatives, and when it hit the Senate, only one change was made. Then, of course, it received the unanimous support of the Senate. My understanding of laws passed in Montana is that once they are passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor, they become law in October of that year. This Bill was amended to say that it will automatically become law when it receives the signature of the governor. So they moved the timing up. They were very interested in having this committee appointed and working before the October deadline.

Mr. Speaker, I won't lay out any guidelines in my speech as to what I think would be an appropriate number of people on such a committee or what that committee should talk about. That's why I have referred to it being similar to the committee in Montana. I think the numbers and who should appear on that committee are things that can be talked about and agreed upon at a later time.

Mr. Speaker, some of the topics that could be discussed by this committee were discussed at our two meetings in very shallow detail; such things as the movement of cattle across the border and the effect it has on the industry in both areas, the movement of grain, the movement of many things across the border. We spent a short time on better student exchange, north and south, so that students at secondary educational institutes would better understand the systems of government and the way both countries, both provinces and states, work. The discussion of water: above ground water, river water, movement of water through the province of Alberta and the state of Montana, the movement of water in aquifers and the effect activities taking place in one area have on the aquifer on the other side of the border.

Mr. Speaker, I think these kinds of things could be talked about. One thing that is important to people on both sides of the border is the spread of knapweed. In Alberta we have spent a lot of time and money on the control of knapweed, which is a very obnoxious weed that can totally

take over a crop or grassland. In Montana they have a very serious problem with that; indeed, they've lost production of some land because of the takeover of that weed. These kinds of things could be talked about. At the present time there is a signed memorandum of understanding between Alberta and Montana. It's concerned with co-operation in research for the control of dryland salinity. Some of these things have started, but at the level of such a committee, I think we could get more into policy items and how they affect governments on both sides of the border.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge members to support this motion. Thank you.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I heartily endorse Motion 202, and I commend the Member for Cypress for bringing it to the attention of the Legislature. I think it's timely that it's brought forward at this time, because since last September there seems to be a noticeable warming of relations between Canada and the United States. I regret that in the 15 years before that, we did a lot of things to make that relationship fairly cool. So I think this is a very timely motion, and it's something that I think members of the Legislature should support.

I'd like to take just a couple of minutes for members who are not directly involved with the international border. There are a few things that go on down there that possibly they don't understand. When you get about 100 miles north of the international border, the real impact of it is not quite as apparent as it is to those of us along the border, which includes the mover of the motion, the Member for Cypress; the Hon. Bob Bogle, the Member for Taber-Warner; and myself.

For instance, we have a sports relationship with Montana. We have a team from Billings in the western junior hockey league, and we have a team from Lethbridge that plays in the American Legion baseball league down there. So there is a relationship that way.

Then we go to the natives. I have a big reserve in my area. Directly across the border they have a big Blackfoot Reserve at Browning. There is a real relationship and a lot of travel back and forth between those two reserves, and the Peigans, too, because they're all basically Blackfoot people. The line cut across their area, so they travel back and forth and intermarry, and there is quite a relationship.

Then of course we get to the national parks. In the end of my constituency we have Waterton Lakes; they have Glacier park in Montana. They abut each other and are called the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. There's a real relationship between the personnel who work in those parks; they work together. A lot of wildlife goes back and forth, so there is quite an impact on that.

Glacier county is directly south of the MD of Cardston and is a very sparsely populated area. They do not have the same type of hospital facilities we have in Alberta, and many people in Glacier county come across the border to the Cardston hospital. They come to Cardston and Lethbridge for dental work. So in areas like that we have quite a friendly relationship with Montana.

In the dry years Montana ranchers come up to the irrigated areas of Alberta to buy hay. I understand that this year 3,000 tons of barley came from Montana to southern Alberta to help alleviate the feed situation. So there's another area where we work together.

I talked about transportation once before, many years ago. The Burlington Northern Railroad runs about 40 miles south of the line, and in actual fact I live about 70 miles

by road from Cut Bank, where the transcontinental line goes through. I live 140 miles from Calgary, where the main line of the CPR goes through. I suspect that in the future, as the benefits of the Crow Rate disappear, you will see people in southern Alberta looking towards Burlington Northern more than they have in the past as an alternate route for grain transportation to the coast. I hope they can, because I think there can be some savings there.

We as a province have had a good history of working closely with the Pacific northwest. I went to a conference called WASDA, the Western Association of State Departments of Agriculture. There are 15 western states in that association. We are an associate member and go to their conferences and support it. It's amazing that when you go to one of those conferences, you hear the same problems cropping up there that we have in Alberta: grain marketing and transportation. I think it does us good if we can sit down and talk to people about those kinds of things.

The Member for Cypress mentioned Russian knapweed, and I mentioned that Glacier county is sparsely populated. There is a terrific infestation of leafy spurge and Russian knapweed in the northern part of Glacier county. There are two rivers that come across the boundary there, the Milk and the St. Mary. When they flood, they bring in weed seeds, and we're starting to get pockets of these weeds across the border in Alberta. If there's one thing I would like to see us do, it's get together with the state of Montana. Even if we put some money into cutting down on that infestation of Russian knapweed just across our border, it will help us a great deal in holding it back in this part of the country. I don't know if that would work politically, but it sure would be an economic advantage for us.

Just a couple of other things, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how this commission will be set up, because the Montana commission is going to deal with B.C., Alberta, and Saskatchewan. We're just looking at it from the Alberta point of view. Obviously, if it's set up, time will tell how it works. Possibly we will have a commission that works with them, B.C. will have one that talks about forestry, and Saskatchewan will talk about their problems.

I'd like to close on one note, to show what has happened in the past because we didn't have this type of communication. In the '50s the Social Credit government built a road from Cardston, through Aetna, and down to Whiskey Gap. The state of Montana was going to bring a road up from Cut Bank to Whiskey Gap. We built the road and paved it, and they never got around to doing their end. Basically, it just dropped off to nothing down there. I think closer co-operation — either we wouldn't have built the road in the first place or it would have been continued. So the residents of that area have enjoyed a well-paved road, but it just stops at the line, and that's it.

I urge all members to support this motion, and thank you for your attention, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STROMBERG: May I ask a question of the Member for Cardston? It is my understanding that the majority of the people from Cardston and Lethbridge go to Great Falls to get their Christmas shopping bargains, and everyone from Great Falls comes to Lethbridge and Cardston, believing they're getting an equal bargain. Is that true?

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Camrose. It used to be, but with the 70-cent dollar there are not too many people going south.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments about Motion 202. I would certainly like to commend the Member for Cypress for introducing a Bill such as this. As a member of the agriculture caucus, I can certainly see a lot of advantage in having a committee to deal specifically with Montana, but it could include some of the other western states.

The purpose of the committee is to deal with issues that affect the boundary. I was at a midwest governors' conference in Lincoln, Nebraska, last winter, and there were people there from Montana, as representatives on that committee. I could certainly see a lot of advantages in our communicating to those people some of the things that go on in Canada. I happened to come across a piece of paper that they were passing around showing all the things that were subsidized in Canada, in Alberta in particular. One of the things I noted on that paper was that these people were saying that the grain port in Prince Rupert was entirely paid for by the Alberta government and was a free shipping dock for western grain producers in Canada. If we could bring those things to light and get the people to know what actually happened with such things as the Prince Rupert shipping docks, we would do a lot of good for our agricultural industry. I see this as probably a very small follow-up to what President Reagan and Prime Minister Mulroney have been doing; that is, trying to get Canada and the United States on better working and trade relations. I certainly think that's a good idea. Also, Montana feels a bit like western Canada; they feel there's western alienation in the government. Working together, I think we could alleviate that in both nations.

Agriculturally Alberta and Montana are quite similar; they're mostly growers of grain and beef. But in the meeting with the representatives from Montana that I was at, they felt they would be a lot better off if they were to trade straight across the line with Alberta. They said that most of their feeder cattle are shipped to the midwest and fattened and slaughtered and the beef is shipped back to Montana. They said it would be a lot easier if they could just ship them to Lethbridge, to the irrigation district, and have them fattened and slaughtered and the beef moved back.

The problem with borders, and particularly with cattle, has been warble control. For the last 25 years, I think, I've been involved in trying to make Alberta a warble-free province. I understand that Montana has been working the same way. I see no problem because of warbles at this time, with the passage of livestock across the border. They mentioned that they had something they called "blue tongue", that we haven't heard of, but I don't think it's a very serious thing. It would probably be something we would look at.

Most of the things about the committee have been said. The co-operative effort in educating people on salinity has certainly been an improvement and a benefit to the people and can be improved yet. They now have an education program where any information on dryland soil salinity is passed back and forth across the border, and both countries benefit from it.

Knapweed was mentioned. When I was on county council, they had a tour of Montana and B.C. about knapweed. Unfortunately, I didn't make the tour, but I heard a lengthy report about it. Those people felt that we should make every effort to keep Alberta free from knapweed, the same as we have, until now, kept it free from rats. It is probably a worse nuisance than rats.

The makeup of the committee, I think, would probably have to be something equal to the Montana group. They

will be dealing with B.C. and Saskatchewan, although I certainly believe that Saskatchewan and Alberta have a lot in common that they can discuss with Montana also.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say first that in culture or history Montana and Alberta have a lot in common. For instance, the entry into the Northwest Territories at one time was through Montana. It was shipped up the Mississippi River and freighted through Montana into Alberta. The I.G. Baker Co. at that time set up a warehouse in Calgary. It was a Montana-based company. The other thing about the culture is that my favourite artist, Charlie Russell — I'm not sure if he was a native of Montana or Alberta, but he certainly lived in both provinces. Some of the oldtimers I knew as a youth actually knew Charlie Russell when he lived in Alberta. A memorial to Charlie Russell is built in Great Falls, Montana, and a lot of his paintings are housed there.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very good motion. I think there is some urgency in dealing with it, so I encourage everybody to vote in favour of it.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to speak to Motion 202. I'd like to congratulate the Member for Cypress for bringing it before the Assembly today.

To go into some of the detail of how this particular meeting of the agriculture caucus committee and the legislative representatives from Montana evolved, through the process we had meetings with Saskatchewan and Manitoba. At those meetings the committee from Saskatchewan mentioned the fact that they had had meetings with North Dakota. So from that point, we discussed it and thought it would be very helpful if Alberta could meet with the Montana representatives and eventually pull Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North Dakota, and Montana together for one meeting and enlarge the involvement of the different committees. The meeting that comes to mind — the hon. Member for Cypress mentioned the fact that it was March, but it was February 26, 27, and 28 of '84.

Just to give you some idea of the participation from Montana, I'd like to mention a few of the Senators and Representatives. Heading the delegation was Representative Dennis Iverson, a Republican. He's a farmer and rancher. His district borders on Alberta, as the previous speaker mentioned. He's chairman of the Environmental Quality Council, which is a permanent legislative agency charged with overseeing the implementation of natural resource programs and reporting on environmental quality. He's also a member of the Natural Resources Committee, the Judiciary Committee, and the Select Committee on Water Marketing. Representative Rex Manuel is a Democrat. He's chairman of the appropriations subcommittee and vice-chairman of the Appropriations Committee, chairman of the Legislative Council, and is in charge of bill drafting and committee staffing. Representative Hal Harper, a Democrat, a carpenter from Helena, is chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee. Representative Bob Marks, Republican, a rancher and in real estate, from Helena is minority leader of the House. Senator Jack Galt, Republican, a rancher from central Montana, is chairman of the Committee on Committees, which appoints members to committees. Senator Allen Kilstad, a Republican, is a rancher, and he borders on Alberta. He's the president pro tempore of the Senate, chairman of the Business and Industry Committee and of the Legislative Administration Committee. He's also vice-chairman of the Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Committee. Senator Dorothy Eck, a Democrat and businesswoman, is a member

of the Environmental Quality Council and Natural Resources and Taxation committees. Senator Joe Mazurek, Democrat, a lawyer from Helena, is a member of the Judiciary, Taxation, Legislative Administration, and Education committees. So you can see by the composition of that particular committee that there were quite a few people who were very involved and looking into the future as far as their association with Alberta.

Some of the things that we did discuss — and I won't go into too much detail because of the time. We touched on grain supply, benefits from Canadian or Alberta research — as I mentioned, soil salinity and the various other things. Border irritants: we are a brucellosis-free province; however, when we move livestock to the United States, sometimes it's held up because of inspection by the veterinary people. We also talked about production credit associations, to get their input. Certainly, it has been discussed many times in the agriculture caucus committee in this Legislature. We discussed things such as weather modification. Groundwater: water is a very important issue to Montana and, as far as the St. Mary is concerned, is certainly very important.

Basically, those are the things we discussed, and it was very useful from our particular point of view. I'd like to quote Governor Schwinden. The hon. Member for Chinook and I had the occasion to have lunch when we met with the chamber of commerce from Great Falls, and it was very interesting to note that as far as agriculture is concerned, the difficulties they're having are the same ones we are experiencing in this particular province.

One of the things Montana Governor Schwinden brought forward that I'd like to mention is the fact that the two countries share water under international agreement. I'm quoting him.

Severe drought this year on both sides of the border prompted keen interest in the possibility of a joint impoundment in Alberta. Each side is also considering unilateral solutions.

In his welcoming remarks to the Alberta delegation, Montana Governor Ted Schwinden stressed the crucial role of water and resources: "Nowhere is cross-border communication more important than in the area of natural resources. In fact, it was because of resource issues that Montana first realized the need for improved state-provincial communications."

It was very interesting to talk to these people. We're also looking forward to another meeting. However, with this committee in place, I think we finally initiated and got the movement from Montana. As the Member for Cypress mentioned, they are developing legislation at this time.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Member for Cypress on his very timely motion, and I urge all members to support the motion. Thank you.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to join with my colleagues who have spoken in support of the motion sponsored by the Member for Cypress.

I think it would be useful to outline some of the other actions which have been taking place with respect to our relationships with the governments of Montana and other western states. As has been pointed out, Montana is our only border state with the province of Alberta, but Montana shares in part the boundaries of British Columbia and Saskatchewan. They are very cognizant in the state of Montana of the importance of the relationship between the border provinces — in their case, three in number. I have had the opportunity of meeting with Dennis Iverson, the

sponsor of the legislation in the Montana House of Representatives, and I know how sincerely he believes in the importance of this relationship.

However, I think it would be worth while to note that the relationship has extended to the Governor and to the Premier of this province. Premier Lougheed visited Kalispell in the summer of 1983 as a guest of the western governors' conference, and prior to that participated in one other western governors' conference. In 1983 he formed a relationship with Governor Ted Schwinden, who was re-elected to that office in the fall of last year in an overwhelming sweep, I might add. That relationship continued with a visit to Alberta which, unfortunately, did not permit the governor to visit Edmonton because it was fogged in, an unusual circumstance for this city. The next day, however, the Premier was able to meet with and entertain Governor Schwinden at the Ranchmen's Club in Calgary, where he was joined by a number of representative Albertans who know a good deal about Montana, its background, its history, its culture, and its traditions. So in recent years we have had the opportunity of our Premier exchanging his views, his ideas, and his concerns with the Governor of our neighbouring state.

As well, I think it would be useful for me to point out that in my capacity as Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, since November of 1982 I have had a number of opportunities to visit state legislators through the organizations of the western state legislators, the national council of state legislators, and the Council of State Governments. I think it behooves us, as legislators in Alberta and as Canadian parliamentarians, to get to know a little bit more about the role of state legislatures, the various organizations which serve those state legislatures, and the impact those state legislative organizations have on the formulation of national policy in the United States. That's one of the reasons that I have encouraged and, through my department, have sponsored a number of members of the Assembly to attend various governors' and state legislators' meetings throughout the United States. It is my intention to recommend that that continue and that various members of the Assembly be invited to attend those conferences. It has already been pointed out that the Member for Bow Valley attended a conference in Nebraska and that the hon. Member for Red Deer attended the annual meeting of the national council of state legislators in Boston, and my colleague the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight has also represented Alberta. There have been others, and there will be more.

Another point I would like to bring to the attention of members of the Assembly is that through grants made through my department, as appropriated by the Assembly, on two occasions we have made grants of \$10,000 in Canadian dollars each year to the 49th Parallel Institute, located at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. That institute is headed by Dr. Lauren McKinsey and a staff of very dedicated and interested educators who are concerned with the relationship of Canada and the United States. They have published two documents, one of which I have with me entitled *Sharing the 49th Parallel*. It was their first publication and is a handbook on Canadian relations for Montana officials. The document is excellent reading, and of course the money provided by our government to that institute was in part responsible for the publication of that document.

Their most recent document is entitled *Bridging the 49th Parallel*, and this is devoted primarily to issues of trade,

investment, and the relationship of Canada and the United States on those two topics. It also explores how we might, as Canadians and Americans working together, do more to market our goods and export into the Pacific Rim countries. This is a particularly timely document, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that we have in recent days in Canada — particularly with our Premier's representations to the First Ministers' Conference on the Economy recently held in Regina — been making a very concerted effort to discuss the issue of free trade between Canada and the United States. This document has an excellent analysis of the issues that are implicit in that proposal.

There's an interesting historical review of protectionism versus free trade, a debate which has raged in Canada from the 1800s and continues today. It is also particularly appropriate that this document should be available for us and for American legislators to peruse and consider, in view of the significant document which has been signed in Quebec City between Prime Minister Mulroney of Canada and President Reagan of the United States within the past two days. So the issues that have been before us as Canadians and Americans are being very well analyzed and, I think, carefully reported upon by the 49th Parallel Institute. I hope we will see a continuation of funding for that organization from our government, the people of Alberta, in the years ahead as we pursue further the relationship between our province and the state of Montana.

Before concluding I want to mention the fact that on February 1 and 2 of this year I was invited to attend the inaugural ball of Governor Schwinden and Lieutenant Governor Turman in Helena, Montana, together with my wife and two staff members from my department. I had a meeting with Governor Ted Schwinden on the first day of my visit and then was introduced to and asked to speak to both houses of the Montana state government. I was well received in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. That is indeed an honour that is not given too often, and I felt it was an opportunity for me to bring greetings from our province to those state legislators.

It might be of interest to members of this Assembly to know that by the Constitution of the state of Montana, the legislators meet for only three months every two years. So they have a very tight timetable in which to complete their legislative work. There might be something we in this province could learn from that.

I had the opportunity as well of entertaining the members of the House leadership of both Houses at a breakfast the following morning. I originally scheduled it for 8 o'clock. This was a Saturday morning, February 2, and I was asked that the meeting be put back to 7:30 because they had to go back into the house on Saturday so they could continue with their work in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. I found that very interesting: in other words, a six day week, and they worked very long hours to accomplish their tasks. The evening of the 2nd we were honoured, and I might add that the Hon. Jack Kline and his wife, from the province of Saskatchewan, and Bernie Gagosz, the Consul General of the government of Canada and his wife from Minneapolis, were special guests at the inaugural ball.

Frankly, it was quite a thrill to see the pageantry associated with that: the opening and introduction of the Governor and so on. But the key thing that really made me proud as a Canadian and a good friend of the United States is that when they came in with the bands playing and the flags flying, one of those flags was the flag of

Canada, and in addition to the *Star Spangled Banner*, to open that very splendid and colourful event they played *O Canada*. I tell you, it surprised me how many of the several hundred people who were in the audience sang *O Canada*, because they knew the words. It made me proud as a Canadian to have been part of that event. I sang the *Star Spangled Banner* too, and I have no hesitation in saying so.

Mr. Speaker, I see that the time is running out. I fully support the resolution and urge all members of the Assembly to do the same.

[Motion carried]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, this evening it is proposed that the throne speech debate continue.

[The House recessed at 5:29 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

#### head: CONSIDERATION OF HER HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Moved by Mr. Alexander:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour, the Honourable W. Helen Hunley, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Alberta:

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

[Adjourned debate March 18: Dr. Webber]

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to be able to participate in the debate on the throne speech presented by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor. I, too, would like to join my colleagues in congratulating the new Lieutenant Governor for the fine job she did, and I wish her well in her term as Lieutenant Governor. We all have a great deal of respect for the lady. In my view she is a bright and neat lady. That's the best way I can describe her.

I also congratulate the mover and seconder of the throne speech debate, the Member for Edmonton Whitemud and the Member for Rocky Mountain House respectively. I also welcome our newest member into the Assembly, the Member for Spirit River-Fairview. Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that his colleague, the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Edmonton Norwood, would be here this evening to hear my comments as they relate to some of the questions, and social issues he raises in the House.

I have represented my constituents from Calgary Bow, Mr. Speaker, for 10 years, coming up very soon. I consider it a real honour and privilege to have represented them and to serve the public in the democratic system we have in Alberta. I don't believe there's a greater educational and self-fulfilling experience that a member can have than to be able to have the opportunity to serve as a member of the team that we have and to take part in the legislative proceedings.

The comments of the hon. members who spoke before me were very good. I want to point out the fine work

that's being done by two committees in particular, the Social Care Facilities Review Committee, chaired by the hon. Member for Calgary Egmont, and the Health Facilities Review Committee, chaired by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie, and also another member of the Social Care Facilities Review Committee — now I'm stuck again — the Member for Cypress. Mr. Speaker, I don't have the same ability to remember constituencies that you do. Anyway, in my view they are doing fine work.

In the opposition reaction to the throne speech, the Member for Edmonton Norwood talked about the high misery index that exists in Alberta. He lamented about the negative and sad things that are occurring in this province. He didn't really define what he meant by this high misery index. He used the term several times, but I think one of the indices we could use to measure misery would be the noise factor. Maybe we could label it the Martin noise factor. We could of course measure that in decibels, as most noise is measured. It would be related to the lamenting that he carries out here.

The view that more programs and more subsidies are necessary, that more government is necessary, which naturally leads to more taxes, although we don't hear that aspect of it related to more government involvement. But I'm optimistic, Mr. Speaker, as are my constituents, that we are on the road to economic recovery and that economic recovery is a function of the viability of the private sector and that as a government we can create a climate of confidence to assist in the process so that investors feel confident about putting their money here in Alberta. At the same time, it's our responsibility to assist with the social programs for those in need. The extent of the social programs offered is, of course, related to affordability or the revenues generated by the private sector.

It was interesting reading in the *Globe and Mail* the other morning about the situation in British Columbia where several years ago their revenues to the government from natural resources were about \$1.2 billion and have dropped in the past year to just a little over \$400 million; an \$800 million drop in resource revenue, which has to have a significant impact on that province in terms of their affordability in being able to deal with social programs.

The throne speech, Mr. Speaker, gives us an excellent summary of the unique ways we are serving those with personal needs. There are those who say or think that government should have the sole responsibility for responding to the social needs of society. I believe responsibility has to be shared. It has to be shared between individuals themselves who are in need, their families and their friends, the local community with its many volunteer programs, and finally of course, the different levels of government. It was my impression in listening to the hon. Leader of the Opposition that he seems to think that people don't need to have these responsibilities themselves but that big government should be the one that jumps into the fray to assist those in need.

I'd like to comment on some of the specific programs mentioned in the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, the first being the family and community support services, the FCSS program. It is mentioned that it is one of a kind in Canada. It's centred around the concept of prevention of family and social breakdown, and it relies heavily on the volunteer component in our communities. The program originated back in 1966 as a PSS program, preventive social services, one of the good programs brought in by the Social Credit government in that day. This program lasted some 15 years.

It was instrumental in the development of major provincial programs such as early childhood services, day care, and co-ordinated home care. I believe the hon. Member for Little Bow was minister around the time that program came in.

However, in 1980 the program underwent a major review. There was considerable support from municipal officials, from voluntary organizations, and the public for the continuation of a sharing, an 80/20 relationship, 80 percent provincial government and 20 percent local municipality. There was support for the extension of that program to all Albertans. Thirdly, there was support to increase the autonomy by the local governments so that more of the decision-making for how that money would be spent would be determined by local municipalities.

On April 1, 1982, the Family and Community Support Services Act was proclaimed. Mr. Speaker, the level of the funding that has gone into that program since 1980-81 is very significant. In the program at that time we had \$10 million from the provincial government to all the municipalities, and that has jumped to \$25.9 million in 1984-85, a 160 percent increase over five years with the greatest increase occurring in 1981-82. The formula was for \$10 per capita for cities and \$12 per capita for towns and the rural areas where there is a less efficient economy of scale. As of this past year we are now able to serve 86 percent of the population of Alberta by this important program. Two years ago we were able to convince the federal government that under the CAP agreement they should cost share municipal expenditures for certain social programs, particularly day care and after school care. Just a week ago Friday, I believe, we were able to deliver a cheque for \$1.7 million to the city of Edmonton as part of that cost sharing from the federal government. It is an important program that is meeting many needs in society. We look forward to working with the different municipalities in the future to see how they can serve us better and in different ways.

Two other programs mentioned in the throne speech were the assured income for the severely handicapped and the widows' pension, two programs that are serving a particular group of people in our province who, through a pension, are able to live fulfilling lives. Both programs are unique in Canada. In January '83 the level of funding was up to a maximum of \$604 per month, in February '83 we increased that to \$624, and just recently to \$695 per month: so significant increases there in meeting the needs of Albertans who need this pension.

The important aids to daily living program, medical equipment and supplies to the chronically ill and disabled Albertans under the age of 65: benefits here beyond that of any other province in Canada. There were inefficiencies in the program in the developing years, and we have addressed those inefficiencies through co-operating with the different agencies that are suppliers and the professional organizations that were involved. For 1984-85 the program is within budget, the first time in a number of years; again, an example of co-operation between suppliers, volunteer agencies, and government employees to provide improved program delivery to our clients. This particular program, together with extended health benefits for seniors, now totals about \$34 million.

Reference was also made in the throne speech to the many programs for senior citizens. Recently, seniors came to me during and after two community meetings in my constituency, and said that they feel they are better off than seniors in any other province in this country.

We are also unique in the provision of services for the mentally handicapped and the mentally ill. Alberta has the only fully accredited mental health clinic system in Canada. We read and hear about some of the difficult situations that some of our citizens are in with mental illnesses, and I think it is important that we try to address their needs. Alberta mental health services, part of the community health division, has six major mental health clinics across the province, and with additional suboffices and travelling services, a total of approximately 55 service delivery sites in the province. We served over 21,000 Albertans last year through these mental health services, compared to 18,600 in the previous year. There are three extended care centres, Raymond, Claresholm, and Camrose.

We have grants to associations and community agencies concerned with mental illness, and this includes group and approved home residences and day treatment programs. I had the pleasure of going into the Edmonton Avonmore constituency a few months ago when the hon. minister was here for a couple of days. We opened an extension to a very fine sheltered workshop facility for the mentally ill, a very impressive situation.

In addition to those services, Mr. Speaker, there are some initiatives and accomplishments I would like to refer to. We recruited the provincial suicidologist recently, the only suicidologist in Canada. It precipitated new initiatives in various suicide prevention programs. In addition, our department funds the Suicide Prevention Provincial Advisory Committee, which supports a number of suicide prevention programs across the province. Reference was made to the social ills when people are in trouble, and references are made to such things as the suicide rate. The latest numbers I just received indicate that in 1984 we had a total of 416 suicides in Alberta, compared to about 420 in the previous year. The rate has fluctuated. It remained relatively steady since about 1979. In my view, it is very difficult to be able to measure how effective our suicide prevention programs are. We are particularly emphasizing trying to bring some assistance to the native community with these prevention programs.

We're engaged in preparing major planning initiatives and improvements in mental services for children and adolescents. This is partly related to the follow-up from the Thomlison report on the sad death of Richard Cardinal and some of the difficulties in providing mental health services for that young man over the years. Our department, together with Hospitals and Medical Care, is involved in preparation for a new Mental Health Act following the Drewry task force of two years ago. Various research studies have been undertaken to increase the knowledge and expertise of professionals in treating mental disorders in this province. The work of scientists is supported through grants from the Provincial Mental Health Advisory Council.

Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech there was a reference to the Alberta Women's Secretariat and the fact that Alberta is ensuring that women's concerns are integrated into the government's policy and decision-making processes. In a small way there is recognition in the Vital Statistics Act amendment which will be coming into the Legislature shortly, and hon. members remember that one.

There is reference in the throne speech to family violence and maintenance enforcement and initiatives taking place in those areas. Family violence of course covers the broad areas of child abuse, spousal abuse. We did have a new position created, the office for the prevention of family violence, which co-ordinates the initiatives interdepartmen-

tally, with the objective of trying to create a greater public awareness of family violence. Here again, though, is an area where government cannot nor should not, in my view, accept total responsibility for addressing this social problem. It is definitely related to societal attitudes, and societal attitudes are usually changed very slowly through the important process of education.

We try to deal with the symptoms as best we can, through such things as women's shelters, counselling programs for the victims of family violence and the perpetrators of family violence. In some of these areas we really don't know how effective these counselling programs are. So for those who are saying, "Throw more money into the counselling area; throw more money into the treatment program for perpetrators," I think we need to better assess the effectiveness of these programs before putting too much money in that area. We have on the agenda for the next federal/provincial meeting in Ottawa, April 25, the subject of family violence. It's at Alberta's initiative that it is on the agenda.

It was interesting that a recent mental health survey carried out here in the city of Edmonton showed the relationship between family violence, alcoholism, and mental health problems. The other day the hon. Leader of the Opposition was trying to tie together the relationship between unemployment, family violence, and suicide rates. Certainly, for people who are unemployed, there are stressful situations, and maybe there is some kind of a relationship. However, we had a high suicide rate and a high divorce rate in this province prior to the downturn in the economy, in our boom times, and unemployment was almost zero. So I ask the hon. member, "How would he account for the rates at that time?" I think a very, very important factor in dealing with social problems is, of course, the presence of the family. If the family is close by, around to help individuals with problems, it's an important factor in these rates. Of course, Alberta, having been a province where many people left their homes, came here seeking their fortunes, so to speak, when they ran into difficulties, the family often was not around to help them out.

We have the Child Welfare Act and the Public Health Act, Mr. Speaker, that were passed in this Legislature last year. We're now working on the regulations related to those Acts. I intend to table a full report in the Legislature this session on the progress on the child welfare initiatives, dealing with the recommendations from the Cavanagh Board of Review, and also on the Thomlison report. The report will consist of initiatives taken involving the native people in the handling of many of their own social problems, particularly taking over responsibility for child welfare matters in many cases. I'm finding that many native leaders in this province feel strongly about being more responsible for their own programs. We just appointed a new Children's Guardian in anticipation of a new Child Welfare Act being proclaimed on July 1 of this year. We recently had the official opening of a project in the city at Westfield, dealing with mental health difficulties of young people; an important initiative there.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of questions in the last several sessions related to social allowance and food banks, and we went through that again today in question period. Of course, when the unemployment rate is what it is, there is a greater demand on our social assistance programs and a greater demand on food banks from many people who may not be on social allowance but do need some assistance when they get into difficulties.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition, through an amendment, was talking about having public hearings across the province. I made reference to this in the Legislature the other day, that when I recently had meetings in my own constituency, dealing with concerns of citizens there, we had a good turnout. People brought their concerns, but I certainly detected a spirit of optimism and hope that the recovery was taking place. It was interesting that the night before I had my meeting, the Leader of the Opposition had a meeting in the same community hall. Dealing with unemployment? No. Dealing with the Oldman River. The residents of Calgary Bow were invited to come out to a meeting on the Oldman River. I'm not sure whether the hon. leader realizes that it's the Bow River and the Elbow River that go through Calgary. Anyway, there were four people who showed an interest in that.

Mr. Speaker, the social allowance system is in place to help those in need, and no one in Alberta begrudges assistance to those who, for one reason or another, are unable to get along without some form of social assistance. We worked with the Edmonton Gleaners Association in trying to get a handle on the kinds of people that show up at the food bank outlets. I don't think there's any need to go into the details of that any more, other than to say we look forward to working with that particular organization to see how we can better work together in providing services to the poor.

Last year in the throne speech two priorities were related to deregulation and privatization or, as the hon. Member for Camrose indicated yesterday, 'deregulization'. I believe that was the terminology used. In any case, it is an important concept. I look forward to seeing what might be referred to as the Alexander report soon being made public.

In terms of privatization, I gave a speech a few months ago and scared the daylights out of a number of agencies in the province that were involved in providing social services to communities. Number one, there was the fear that we were going to have these services provided by profit-oriented agencies as opposed to agencies where volunteers were doing the work. So I want to assure members that the term privatization with respect to social services means turning over services to agencies, whether they be in the private sector or in the volunteer sector, to help us provide services to Albertans.

Also, I think there was the fear that all of a sudden we were going to come out with a massive program where, in a very short time period, all these services would be turned over to local agencies. That's not going to be the case, Mr. Speaker. We have to take a cautious and, in my view, careful approach to examining each particular service to see who can provide the most efficient delivery, not only in terms of efficient delivery; we have to be concerned about the quality of service as well. Sometimes it's in our more free-enterprise oriented communities that I find the most negative reaction to turning some of the services over to private agencies. But I think that if we work with those communities and explain to them what our objectives are, we can do this in a cautious, careful approach.

Some of the concerns expressed are: "How can you be accountable for the money that you give to these agencies? There have to be standards in place." I agree with that. Contracts should be used rather than just providing grants, and there has to be some form of audit review. Also, there is a concern on the part of some of the agencies that — maybe "concern" is not the right word. Some agencies have indicated that when they receive funding from the

provincial government, at the end of the year they have to have this money go back to the government. We are working with these agencies now to see if we can come up with some kind of a surplus retention policy.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech refers to economic recovery in Alberta. As I mentioned, I'm hearing positive comments from my constituents. The extent of the recovery in 1985 is of course dependent upon a number of factors, and these have been referred to: world commodity prices, interest rates, and a number of others. I sense, though, a spirit of enthusiasm and a sense of hope in the future in what I consider to be the most promising province in Canada. For those Albertans who are going to have continued personal needs, we will work with families and community organizations and other levels of government to continue to provide the highest level of social services in Canada, with the hope that the lives of the people we provide these services to are or will become more meaningful in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Two members rose]

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the hon. Member for Innisfail was on his feet first.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Speaker, in joining in the debate on the throne speech, I wish first to congratulate Her Honour the Honourable Helen Hunley on her appointment as Lieutenant Governor. Her integrity, competence, and dedication to Alberta and Canada are well known. I, too, wish to congratulate the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud, the mover, and the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House, the seconder, for their contributions in thanking Her Honour for the Speech from the Throne in this, the Third Session of the 20th Legislature. I also welcome to the Assembly the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

I would like to express my confidence in you, Mr. Speaker. Your wisdom, impartiality, fairness, and sense of humour are greatly needed and most appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne spoke of the accord which will institutionalize the First Ministers' Conference. We all well know that this will strengthen the relations between the federal and provincial governments, something which has been lacking these past 15 or 16 years, as the hon. Member for Cardston pointed out this afternoon. The speech also spoke of reinforcing private sector economic recovery and expanding job training and student support programs, all of which I readily support.

I was also pleased to see that, in co-operation with the federal government, there will be a variety of initiatives and measures to improve the net income of the farm sector. We all know that the producers' credit needs must be addressed. However, we must remember that the financial difficulties faced by some Alberta farmers were alleviated by initiatives such as the reamortization of arrears of ADC and direct farm loans, trade debt consolidation and fixed-rate loan options through ADC loans, relaxation of off-farm employment restrictions for beginning farmers, the farm development guarantee program through the Agricultural Development Corporation, financial management training and counselling and the farm financial management workshops. On a special note, Mr. Speaker, I think we must remember that the government has extended the Farming for the Future research program through 1986-87: 104 projects, for a total sum of \$4.8 million, have been approved.

An important investment in the Prince Rupert grain port facility will result in cost savings to our Alberta grain producers. Of great importance is the position paper on agriculture and food, which will outline further directions in strategies for the development of agriculture.

I will also welcome policy statements outlining junior high and high school programs so that the students might better meet the realities of the world marketplace. As well, Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted that regulation reform, deregulation, and privatization will continue. I'm also looking forward to the position papers on certain sectors, especially agriculture, as set forth in the White Paper: Proposals for an Industrial and Science Strategy for Albertans 1985 to 1990.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Innisfail is often referred to by many as "the parkland", and indeed it is. It contains some of the province's richest and blackest soil. It is also rich in oil, gas, and coal. I'm told that the Innisfail and Garrington oil fields, which lie west of Innisfail, have some 250 producing wells.

There have been many projects completed in the past year in the constituency, Mr. Speaker. The Spruce View-Dickson Diamond Jubilee Arena now has artificial ice. Much progress has been made on the restoration of the historical Markerville creamery. Of particular note, the Premier and the hon. Minister of the Environment officially opened the Dickson dam and Gleniffer reservoir on July 12 last summer. This past summer the town of Bowden officially opened a water reservoir and pumping station, as well as a new senior citizens' self-contained unit and the rest area just south Bowden.

Innisfail was honoured by the presence of the hon. Minister of Culture, who opened a new library. A new addition to the senior citizens' lodge was also opened, as well as the new four-sheet curling rink.

In the town of Penhold the new Jessie Duncan elementary school was opened, and the Waskasoo regional sewage system, serving Minansky Park, Penhold, the county industrial area, and the businesses on Highway 2 south of Red Deer, known as Gasoline Alley, was also officially opened. Valley Centre is now enjoying the use of a new community hall. Delburne's new community hall was officially opened by the hon. Minister of Recreation and Parks. Pine Lake and Lousana have both completed drop-in centre additions to their recently built community halls. The agriculture society in the village of Elnora now have their plans for a new community hall, which will be under construction this spring.

The drought assistance program did assist farmers in the southeast part of the constituency, and the feed freight assistance program did assist farmers north of the line. Mr. Speaker, many projects and programs have been completed or begun, but much has yet to be done. There have been several concerns expressed to me, because of the dam and the stockpiling of gravel near the dam, the traffic on the Cottonwood road has increased manyfold. As a result, the road is rough and dusty. Residents of the area wish to have it paved and dust controlled until it is paved. It's really a county road, but they feel that the government should pave it. My philosophy is, as my seatmate in caucus has said, it doesn't matter what colour the cat is as long as it catches mice.

A sanitary landfill site for Bowden, Innisfail, and Penhold is an ongoing concern which has not been resolved. As a matter of fact, it has been an ongoing concern for seven years. A proposed change in divisional boundaries within

the county is of concern to many in the east end where the population is sparse compared to the central part of the county. Many are concerned that they will be losing representation on the county council and on school matters.

Constituents are also concerned about Highway 54. They wish to have the curves straightened and the shoulders built up to widen the road. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that the ministers involved have been very sensitive to the needs and wants and I'm sure the problems will be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat again that I look forward to the new initiatives and measures that will support our farmers through the difficult cost/price squeeze and improve their net income. In the constituency of Innisfail, as in most constituencies, the hamlets, villages, and towns are dependent on the agriculture sector. We must be ever mindful of this.

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion put forth by the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud. Thank you.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would certainly like to enter into the throne debate this evening. First of all, I would like to offer my congratulations to the Member for Edmonton Whitemud, the mover, and the seconder from Rocky Mountain House for initiating this debate. I'd like to also offer my congratulations to the new Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Helen Hunley, and wish her well in her role and her responsibilities of the next few years to come.

I'd also like to offer, on the eve of the Premier's 20th anniversary, my congratulations to him for being involved in the political system of Alberta for some 20 years. As I look back over those 20 years, I had the opportunity of observing the Premier as an upstart in this Legislature, observing him as he travelled across the province prior to 1971, attending meetings of four and five and 20 and 30 and finally in 1971 building up to becoming the government of this province after becoming the Official Opposition in 1967.

I recall those years with interest. I remember the first speech of the Premier on this side of the Legislature as Leader of the Official Opposition. I remember the hon. Lou Hyndman, who now sits as Provincial Treasurer, backing up his chair, and I remember the hon. Dr. Horner, who was the deputy leader on this side of the House, backing up his chair. At that time the Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. Lougheed, proceeded to deliver to the House his pronouncements about how he would run the government of Alberta. I remember sitting over just next to where the Minister of Agriculture now sits and observing that great performance. I remember commenting at that time to my colleague the hon. Bob Clark about the display and the performance that we were going to see.

This man was attacking the problems of Alberta and was going to become that great leader. In performing and presenting that speech — the actions and the movements were something I just can't forget. It wasn't a matter of standing in position and presenting the speech to you, Mr. Speaker, through to the Assembly that was before the leader at that time. It was a matter of pacing and moving and strutting and sharp, jerky motions that said, "I'm aggressively going to take this province on and take it into prosperity, and I'm going to take the fat out of government." Well, that was one of the pronouncements. There was the pronouncement that we were going to change the educational policy; there was a pronouncement of concern about the government in Alberta. The leader at that time asked back in March 1969: Why does Alberta have to be the biggest

spending province in Canada on a per capita basis? What is being done to assess areas where expenditures, particularly for general administration, can be reduced? Questions like that were asked. He was going to aggressively attack those problems. Regarding the question of unemployment in 1970 — we had a minor, little recession — we were going to build more capital projects by government and solve the unemployment problem; just let us move in with our programs. Well, we believed the Premier of that time. We believed the Leader of the Opposition.

I only make these comments about the stature and the pronouncements to lead into my remarks with regard to the present throne speech, and as I see them today. That very same leader doesn't strut around in this legislature any more. You know, that same aggressiveness, that same desire to lead this province out of the problems, to look after the fat in government, to solve the question of unemployment, to give 100 percent financing to the school boards across this province, to listen to the people. It's not there today. It isn't even 15 years later. That same strut and aggressiveness isn't there. The Speech from the Throne that we were presented just a few days ago typifies that very thing.

I said to someone the day after the speech was read, "that sounds like a Speech from the Throne that was written by the government of 1970": a little tired, don't really recognize the problems of the day, got lots of power, not concerned that we're ever going to lose, or people want to change things in this province. The members are all on committees, and they're busy doing their work around the caucus, busy and concerned about going to meetings and banquets and various things like that. It was back in 1970 the very same way. I look at this Conservative government today, and it isn't any different. The people of Alberta constantly say, "Is the government listening to me?" They answer it themselves: "They are not listening to the concerns I have." I'm going to talk about them some this evening. The Speech from the Throne tells the story completely as to whether the government is listening or not.

As we turn to the first page, we see the government's list of priorities of concern. They list six. The number one concern:

Economic Recovery and Employment Stability — To reinforce private-sector economic recovery by expanding opportunities in job training and student support programs and by supporting key Alberta industries such as tourism. Such initiatives increase development and job creation.

What does it mean? It doesn't say a thing about what's going to be done. It doesn't even use the word "unemployment." I was very impressed with a column that I read the other day by Don Braid talking about "Tories losing the human touch." I think as Tory backbenchers it would be of interest to read that column. I think that is one of the better observations in terms of the throne speech and where the governing party of this province is at the present time. He said,

Amazingly, the government could not bring itself to use the word "unemployment," although this is Alberta's most urgent problem.

Agreed. As for environment, the speech didn't mention the Eastern Slopes, and under Social Services there was no hint that people are going hungry in Edmonton and Calgary or that the welfare rolls in Calgary are the largest and the longest in Canada.

They are a government that uses civil service words to talk to the voters. They have lost the knack of plain talk.

Well, that's what happened in the government. When the government is separate from its people, that becomes very evident. As you go through this Speech from the Throne, you see more than one time where it's a Speech from the Throne for the government, trying to impress themselves that they're doing their job, but it's not speaking to the problems of the people of Alberta. In that sense it's just not good enough. The massive salaries, the wages of the support staff for this government, the travelling that's done, and this kind of document results. It's lost that enthusiasm that the Premier had when he came into this Legislature when he led that group of six into challenging the government, asking the people of Alberta to lead the government. Well that's gone. And I don't think that the government itself can renew that spirit and meet the needs of the people of Alberta. That's said not only in this Legislature, but you go from one end of the province to the other, and today as I have never heard before in 20 years, that very pronouncement is made by many Albertans.

Now I heard that when I sat on that side of the House when the Premier sat here as Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues sat on this side of the House. They tried to say to us, "You're not listening to some of the problems." Dr. Homer in Agriculture, Len Werry in Social Services, the Hon. Lou Hyndman in terms of some of the financial problems in the province. What did we do on that side of the House? And what do I see in this throne speech that is so evident of that complacent, self-gratifying position that I see here in the government at the present time?

I turn to the section called "The State of Alberta's People Programs," and that typifies the present condition and attitude of this government. It is attempting to tell the people of Alberta, "We are doing a great job, better than anybody in Canada; believe us."

MR. COOK: Agreed.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Well, you go out and talk to the people on the hustings. Go out and talk to the people across this province. They don't say that. They don't agree with that kind of comment. I would just like to look at what's here as the self-praise proceeds through this section of the throne speech. They say:

Many Albertans are unaware that a number of Alberta's people programs are unique in Canada and, in most cases, are the most fully funded of the provincial programs across the country.

That may be true, but the Premier forgot what he said originally, that maybe we do spend the most per capita, but we should find out what we're spending it on. He forgot that initial objective in his rush to power in the province of Alberta.

"The family and community support services . . . only one of its kind." The program for the handicapped: "Benefits are the highest among the three provinces . . ." Senior citizens: "far ahead of the rest of the country." Pension program: "unique in Canada." "Alberta has the only fully accredited mental health clinic system. . ." Maybe we do in Alberta. Maybe we do. But in that section, is there any recognition of the problems that people are facing in this province?

The 150,000 people that are unemployed, the farmers in northern Alberta that are having to leave their farms and tell their children that tomorrow the bank takes their farm. And I'm not just saying that. Today I had that actual experience from a constituent in northern Alberta who said

to me, "How can I tell my children that we're going to lose our farm?" That's a social service. That's somebody that needs counselling, somebody to talk to him. The hundreds of people that have lost their homes in this province — what is the rate, 200 a month? What about dealing with those people and showing some conscience, some concern? Instead of standing around and sitting in a sea of self-praise, we should think about those people in this province. That's what should have been done. That's what should have been in this throne speech. If the Premier of this province is really concerned about the people, he would have tackled the problems head-on, the unemployment, those that are suffering mentally and physically and financially across this province. But he doesn't care.

MR. COOK: What would you do, Ray?

MR. R. SPEAKER: First of all, the first thing you do, mister yellowbreast, is recognize the fact that there are problems in the province. If you can't recognize the problems, you can never represent that problem in this Legislature. So Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of format this government uses. It is unfortunate that during a most difficult economic time, the government can't care any more than that. As we go through this Speech from the Throne, you can see it time and time again.

Basic education, people concerned today about parents being involved in the educational process — not even mentioned. Hospitals and Medical Care: people in this province are concerned about the quality of care in hospitals. Is the problem addressed? No, it's not addressed. Native Affairs, Environment, mercury in the rivers in southern Alberta, North Saskatchewan, South Saskatchewan: is the problem addressed in the Speech from the Throne? No, it's not. We go to Economic Development. It's not a plan to deal with the problems in Alberta, an overall strategy to deal with all of those multiple problems out there. It's a collection, a blunderbuss approach to really not lead to anything.

Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough. I'm talking about what this government is presenting to the people of Alberta as a document that shows leadership out of the economic and social and cultural problems of this province.

MR. COOK: What would you do, Ray?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Glengarry keeps asking what I am going to do. Certainly I will tell him what I am going to do and what the intent is at this point in time. But that's my concern in terms of the leadership in this province and the direction at the present time.

What are we going to do about it? What seems to be the alternative? Well, I'll tell this to the members of the Legislature, advise them, and put them on notice: the people in this province are looking for a change. A lot of you can look at that in any way you want. Those that look at it in terms of not taking it seriously — let's go to the polls and go to the people and find out just how serious that is. Out in the hustings across this province there is an attitude of change. That change started in 1970. People started talking about change, and they changed. Historically in Alberta it's happened three times, and it can happen again. That is one of the reasons we have introduced into this Legislature the Representative Party . . .

MRS. CRIPPS: The what?

AN HON. MEMBER: Who?

MR. R. SPEAKER: ... which is an alternative for the people of Alberta that will be dealt with in constituencies right across this province.

That question of "who" and "what" will be answered. When the people across this province mark their ballots, there are some constituencies that will wonder what happened to them, wonder why they didn't pay attention, wonder why they didn't bring into this Legislature a throne speech that addressed the problems. It's not there at the present time. The leadership in this province is tired, and that's not good enough under the very difficult economic challenges we're facing today.

Mr. Speaker, we had a very successful convention that launched the Representative Party, which will offer a challenge to this government, a convention that brought together 500 people, who today are working right across this province. We have said it on paper, a set of principles, which is different from the Conservative Party of this province. The Conservative Party that is represented so heavily in this Legislature started with 12 guideposts that were not principles. They were just general, pragmatic directions. That's the way this government has administered, in a pragmatic manner. Whatever worked on a certain day, whether it intervened in the private sector or whether it didn't, whether it was open government or whether it wasn't; whatever satisfied the powers of this province, the cabinet, the small cabinet committee, or the caucus of this government, was what happened at that point in time: a very pragmatic approach to the leadership of this province. That has led us to disaster in many areas. How we intervened in the housing area of this province was one of the worst examples, and today we are picking up bad debts that should not be picked up by the taxpayer of this province. If we had stayed out of the private sector, kept our nose out of the housing industry, we wouldn't have the difficult situation we're now facing in the construction industry of the province of Alberta. The private sector could have looked after things; the marketplace would have determined what was needed and what was not needed at the present time. But we did it. We intervened.

We intervened in the oil and gas industry. The energy agreement was clinked and saluted by the Premier in Ottawa: Mr. Lougheed and Mr. Trudeau, buddies over the energy agreement. The Premier tries to deny that he was part of that agreement, but we've all seen the picture many times, where at the final agreement they clinked glasses. We've had to live with the disaster of that, the massive take. We've had to live with the PGRT that our Premier let slide by; \$2.4 four billion a day goes to Ottawa. Now we're trying to recover all those losses.

MRS. CRIPPS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member knows very well that the Premier did not negotiate the PGRT.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. Member for Drayton Valley, if she wishes to use it, will no doubt have her opportunity to intervene in the throne speech debate. It's quite out of order to interrupt a member simply to disagree with that member. It isn't a valid point of order. May I suggest respectfully to the hon. Member for Drayton Valley,

that if she wishes to make that argument, she may do so when she has possession of the floor.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know who the Premier was who was leading this province, but the PGRT came in place, 12 percent was taken off at the wellhead, \$2.4 billion went to Ottawa, and \$6.7 million a day is now leaving Alberta. Who was the Premier of this province? Who allowed that to happen? Who protested? I didn't hear any protest.

MRS. CRIPPS: It was in the federal budget, and you know it.

MR. R. SPEAKER: I didn't hear any protesting from the Premier, getting out and fighting, and so on. He just let it happen. You show me the news clippings where the Premier really protested violently at that kind of thing. Mr. Speaker, there it is. [interjection] It wasn't me. I didn't pass it. I didn't agree with the federal government. Now we're living with it.

The situation today is that the Premier, through his minister of energy — and the Premier refuses to get involved because we know we're going to fail in Alberta. He says: "My minister of energy, my crown prince, is going to negotiate the new energy agreement, and I know he will get rid of the PGRT." If he can get rid of it by negotiations, that's great. But if the issue is important enough, as I think it is — and in all my visits to various oil and gas companies in this province in the last two months, they told me the number one thing that must be removed is that PGRT.

The Prime Minister has made a commitment to our Premier and in their back-room negotiations said they'll get rid of it. The Premier had a commitment, so now the minister of energy has to see that the Premier's commitment from the Prime Minister is met. As far as I'm concerned, I would have to say that the Premier is responsible and will be held responsible as to whether that tax is removed or not, because he got the commitment during the last campaign that it would be. That to me is the way it stands. Now if the Premier can't do that ... Twenty years ago as he started out with the Progressive Conservative Party, and when he became the Leader of the Opposition in 1967, he said aggressively that he would take on Ottawa, go fight Ottawa. I heard that from this side of the House: "On to Ottawa. Fight Ottawa." The Premier did that, and all of a sudden he's got friends in Ottawa. He doesn't know how to handle them, and so the negotiation goes to the minister of energy. I hope that one of these days the Premier realizes that he is the Premier of the province and must lead us through difficult times like this. It's nice to lead when the times are good, but the times are tough, and the Premier must get involved.

Let's go over some of the other things that I note a more representative kind of government should listen to in Alberta at the present time. We must all agree that the first problem, the priority problem, is unemployment. There's no question about that. It was our hope that after the Minister of Manpower introduced a number of programs in the fall session, unemployment in Alberta would improve. But in February of this year we find 151,000 people unemployed, 12.3 percent of Alberta's labour force unemployed — up from January, which was 11.9 percent. We find that Alberta ranked well behind Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Manitoba in terms of employment. We were always leaders, ahead of Saskatchewan. All through the years in

government that I can remember, we were the leaders. Saskatchewan didn't lead us, Manitoba didn't lead us; they had more unemployment.

On the municipal level, Edmonton had the third-worst urban job situation in Canada in February. Calgary, 12.5 percent in February; Edmonton, 15.5 percent. Calgary had about 43,000 people looking for jobs in February, Edmonton 60,000. In terms of youth, 18.1 percent of Albertans from 15 to 24 years of age were unemployed in January, up from 14.6 percent in December. The statistics, which do not make Alberta look very good in terms of its leadership, go on.

We look at the answers in the Speech from the Throne. It's a matter of generalizations, not coming to grips with the problem as the government should. That's their responsibility. They took on a responsibility in 1982 to deal with the economic problems. One of those is certainly unemployment.

How we can come out of this situation at the present time rests first of all with the minister of energy and the Premier, to come through with a good energy agreement. That's a very necessary item in terms of providing job opportunities in this province. The second thing is the matter of interest rates. The Premier and the government of Alberta must pursue the cause of interest rates and federally, first of all, attempt in every way to stabilize interest rates as low as possible for as long a term as possible for investors and people who need to use credit in this province. If that happened, we could have many investors who would like to invest but are afraid of the interest rates going out of sight again. First of all, the government must pressure and lobby and influence Ottawa and the Prime Minister, who is a buddy of our Premier, to hold interest rates at a low rate on a long-term basis. That one very thing would build confidence back in our economic system. Secondly, in terms of the crisis we face, I think it's incumbent upon government that we use our heritage fund or our economic means to protect the interest rates here in the province of Alberta.

There are people on the edge of the knife in terms of economic failure, small business men and farmers across this province. It's incumbent upon the government to use their economic means to protect them during the next eight months, 10 months, 12 months, or year and a half, so that they can get through the very critical economic situation we have, to maintain the jobs we've got, give them protection to improve the job situation in the Alberta, and build confidence in this economy in this province. It's a very, very necessary item, but if the government continues to take an attitude of not really caring or not aggressively pursuing policies such as that, then economic confidence in this province will not follow as well.

The second area I think we should look at is agriculture. We know what the problems are in southern Alberta in terms of 2,200 acres of beets still under the ground. Now they've gone through the winter freeze, and they're nothing but mush. Farmers are working them up, and they're very doubtful as to whether that land is going to produce, because of the beet acid or sugar or whatever it is that is left in the soil. The northern farmers are certainly in difficult positions. I'm told 25 percent of the farmers are still in trouble in the north.

I had hoped that the Minister responsible for Disaster Services would have helped the farmers in southern Alberta. The Minister of Agriculture has proceeded to put the Alberta hail and crop insurance program in place, and that was an excellent decision. The farmers of southern Alberta are very

impressed with that decision and supportive of it, so that next year they can insure their beet crop and protect them from weather conditions such as this. But there are a number that have lost their beets, their fresh vegetables and are facing some difficulties, and I would appreciate the government looking at that policy again. I'm sorry the Minister responsible for Disaster Services is not in his seat, but I hope he would review it.

I know it's difficult for us to hand out money in these situations, but we have a crisis. I've looked at past years when I've resisted providing funds in situations like this, and it's been provided and it's gotten people through a difficulty and they're on to the next step and on their own.

In my tour of northern Alberta about three weeks ago, the request was in terms of further extension of crop insurance. I would say that I saw 120 to 150 people at various meetings. As I understand it, a fair amount of the money that was given went to pay premiums, and the net to the farmer was not an extensive amount. Some were saying that they weren't getting anything. The highest amount that I heard was \$1,500. That's maybe a comment on inadequate information, but it was an attitude of the farmers of the area. They were saying, "Why can't we have this 25 percent extended to 50 percent so that we would have a greater amount of cash flow?" And if the crop was good, then at that time the crop insurance people could recover some of the money back. They would have a further extension so that they could harvest the present crop and put in the crop for 1985.

Mr. Speaker, I understand my time has run out. There are some other areas that I will cover in my budget address. There were other areas. To the hon. member who is not in his seat at the present time, I did want to make some positive suggestions in terms of agriculture. My suggestion is in terms of input costs. Everything I say here is certainly not criticism, but I wanted to make some suggestions in terms of small business and in terms of tax incentives.

I want to talk further about oil and gas, in terms of the royalty and taxation policy. And education, I wanted to talk more with regard to how parents should be involved. The health care system, environment, and justice were other areas, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to assess them in a representative way but also make some suggestions to government. My intention will be to cover those matters in my budget speech.

I thank you at this time for the opportunity of entering into this debate again and raising some concerns I have.

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, it seems so easy to criticize.

It's really a pleasure for me, however, to participate in the throne speech debate, particularly on the occasion of the opening being administered by the first woman to hold the office of Lieutenant Governor in our province. I extend congratulations to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor and join other members in recognizing her many capabilities which she brings to this office.

In addition, I wish to express my appreciation to the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud and the hon. Member for Rocky Mountain House for their part in moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne. Both members delivered their messages sincerely and touched on issues of importance, not only to their constituencies, but things that are important to all of us as Albertans.

In responding to their motion, I tend to relate to issues and to what is happening in Calgary Foothills constituency and, of course, the larger constituency of Calgary. This is

particularly important to me in trying to estimate the recovery through the challenging and difficult times all of us, as Albertans and Canadians, have just gone through. The indicators of recovery are visible in my constituency, and there are things happening, like the opening of a new apartment building that's almost filled, lower vacancy rates in most apartments and indeed in the shopping malls in our area.

As with our province, most people view the degree of recovery as dependent on external factors perhaps a little bit out of their control, such as interest rates and cash flow that results from increased productivity and sales in our province. Hopefully this will increase. The discussions that we held in the fall on the white paper and economic strategy are, I think, proof that we have taken a great deal of effort to get out to talk to people around the province and know our constituencies well and, I believe, represent them well.

It's also evident in Calgary Foothills that our people programs seem to be helping the parts of the population for which they were designed; that is, those most in need. Hardly a week goes by that I don't receive a call from a senior citizen who wants to talk about an issue and eventually to express his gratitude for the level of support they receive in our province. They tell me how much they are enjoying their retirement and the quality of life here, and they continue to participate in society relatively without worry. In fact, I had a message to go to the Minister of Recreation and Parks from a senior citizen who is very anxious that the minister become aware of the lower rates charged to senior citizens. He suggested that perhaps they shouldn't be allowed to take advantage of these lower rates in the recreational vehicle parks and campgrounds in Alberta on the weekends because it is important for families to take advantage of these facilities, and senior citizens, after all, have a lot of time. I feel he is typical of Albertans when they are thinking about the programs offered in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the good fortune over the last few months to be part of the minister's advisory committee on the review of the School Act. In this capacity I have had the opportunity to visit schools throughout our province that have appeared to be outstanding examples of excellence in public education. We have seen community schools in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, and Fort McMurray, and in St. Paul we saw a regional school that was an example of co-operation by three different levels of government. We saw a Blue Quills Indian school that gave us a real insight into the difficulties in educating native children who were perhaps in difficulty in schools and in their homes. We saw a program in Grande Prairie at Crystal Park school that has already been described at the Legislature. It integrates handicapped children into the main flow of their whole school.

Overall, the school at the Dawe Centre in Red Deer integrates Saint Patrick's school and the Dawe school along with community projects and is an outstanding example of what can be done in co-operation and faith in the work of the school community. Talking to the students, to the teachers, to their principals and looking at the results of their efforts renews confidence in the partnership that exists between students, teachers, and parents and in the larger sense between elected trustees, their administrators, and the government of Alberta.

This process of review has been enlightening to me in the wide range of views representing different parts of our province, as well as in detecting a similarity in the basic desires of different communities which we live in and

represent. Yesterday the Minister of Education spoke of the many different ways that this government tries to build up communication links with the people so that we can understand and truly be informed and sensitive to their needs. Contrary to the remarks made by the Member for Little Bow, it is quite apparent as we travel that efforts are being made to communicate with people.

Mr. Speaker, in recognizing the excellence of our schools, I would also like to comment on the threefold mandate of the University of Calgary: first of all, in the teaching and the transmission of knowledge; secondly, the research area; and thirdly, in the service area. In the teaching area of the university we have had recognition of some outstanding scholarship in the community. In the research area we have just received the new Supercyber in Calgary. It is now possible to extend existing theoretical computations to much larger model bases, including neglected effects and channels that previously were unable to discover. It's also possible to resolve virtually intractable problems with the Supercyber and do this in a very short turnaround time for such complicated tasks. In Calgary it is also well known that if highly qualified people are the keys to high-technology industry, then Calgary and Alberta have a greater potential than other areas of Canada. In a 1981 census of population and employment in natural sciences, engineering, and mathematics occupations, it was stated that Calgary had 44.2 persons per thousand of population actively working in those careers, compared to the next highest area, which was Toronto with 23.7. We have the potential at our universities. The Supercyber is a tool, and I think that our future looks bright.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to speak briefly on the service area of our University of Calgary, mainly on the application of knowledge and its transfer into the private sector. In its efforts to produce graduates with skills necessary for future leaders of commerce and industry, the University of Calgary is working to extend its influence into the community. One of these projects is designed to fill the entrepreneurship knowledge gap. We talk about the financial knowledge gap and the information gap; this one is the entrepreneurship knowledge gap. The program is designed to enrich the educational experiences of grad students involved in entrepreneurship and new venture development. With a relatively small investment, assistance was given on request to entrepreneurs in the community and in the follow-up study done, it appears that for the \$75,000 invested, a value-added return of \$1,750,000 and an employment generated of 20.4 full-time equivalent positions, and all-time generation of capital amounting to \$5.1 million is possible. Considering that nearly all of the ventures that participated in this program had the potential of adding again to the economic base of the community and that smaller and newer ventures are more likely to externalize their benefits within the region, it wouldn't be unreasonable to expect even more investment on the original \$75,000. The most important part of all this was the very evident increase in the excitement of our students at the university. I think that in itself would justify any of the expenditures involved.

Mr. Speaker, this excitement can be nurtured, and it can dispel the images of doom and gloom that we have heard in other remarks. Another project in which the university is interfacing with the community is the Canadian Centre for Learning Systems. It is a rather daring and innovative project by all levels of education in Calgary, as well as by industry, the federal government, and the provincial government. It's a nonprofit organization whose

function is to provide the setting for the development, evaluation, and use of all kinds of learning systems. Computer-assisted learning is the main focus in the first instance. Presently it is being constructed in a school in the Calgary Bow riding. The founding partners are the Calgary Board of Education, the Calgary separate school board, Mount Royal College, the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, the University of Calgary, Control Data Canada, Honeywell Canada, Reid Chartwell of Canada. Each partner has a major financial commitment to the centre, as has the federal government. The province of Alberta has supported the goals of the centre and will now have an opportunity to locate units in the centre. This is a most exciting first, on our continent, into the production in a major way of Canadian learning materials.

Also, Mr. Speaker, in recognizing the growth of our potential in Alberta, the re-introduction by the Premier of the idea of a comprehensive free trade arrangement to be negotiated with the United States, is of prime importance. I believe the credibility of the Member for Little Bow could be questioned by the hundreds and thousands of people that watched the Premier of Alberta participate at the First Ministers' Conference in Regina with energy, vigour, knowledge, confidence, and enthusiasm. Without question, he is the leader of Alberta. With close to 75 percent of our exports, both manufactured and resource related, sold to our American neighbours, we can't ignore the opportunity to expand our markets in that direction. In addition, Canadian/U.S. investment in each other's economies is over \$50 billion, the largest two-way investment flow of any two countries in the world. With a strong sectoral approach on our agricultural commodities and processed resources products, we will not only benefit from increased employment but the consumer will, in the final analysis, benefit from a greater selection of products and, hopefully, lower prices. While I realize that there are extensive negotiations to be undertaken and procedures to be developed, Alberta has such a strong interest in promoting further trade relations and incentives. It is important.

We've also taken many incentives in the past that have really added to our economy. For instance, the great trade show of China and the twinning relationships mentioned with Pacific Rim countries, Hokkaido, Kangwon, and Heilongjiang. A further opportunity is introducing itself in Expo 86 in Vancouver. For five months the whole world will be coming to Canada, and Alberta is taking full advantage of this opportunity to demonstrate the extensive range of Canadian products, Alberta products and skills, to investors and key areas. In addition, I think our province has assisted Alberta business exporting to international markets in an unbelievable way. As was said, there was an increase by 265 percent last year, achieving record sales of \$347 million for Alberta products and technology resources in world markets.

In the throne speech there was reference — a small example in my constituency of what was portrayed as a cottage industry that has grown and is now recognized across Canada and ready to move into the export market. In some of my work during the winter I stopped by their store. It's called Granny's Attic. The lady started making dolls in her basement, then her kitchen, then her living room. Her whole house was taken over by it. She now has a shop, and they need help in getting into the export market. They've found a great deal of help from the minister of trade, have also gone to Tourism and Small Business, and have been able to get some help in product promotion. They're excited to discover that there is a lot of information for them, if they

know where to go. Again, we're back to the problem of communication. I think there are many initiatives to support industries in our province, and in the throne speech you can see that our province acts as a catalyst as well as a consultative and advisory influence.

Mr. Speaker, an initiative that will be especially appreciated is the support of export industries by the establishment of a container distribution system for Calgary and Edmonton. This is an exciting and timely idea and move for Alberta and will likely expand us even further into the markets.

I would be remiss if I did not also take this opportunity to comment on one final section of the speech, issues mentioned in relation to the status of women. Nineteen eighty-five marks the end of the Decade for Women and, as we look back, many things have happened, not the least of which is the appointment of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor. In our province two initiatives have been taken that I think are worthy of mention. First of all, to mark this year an exhibition of women's art is sponsored by the Alberta Women's Secretariat. The artwork includes both painting and sculpture. It has been juried and will be exhibited from April 17 to 27 at the Hett Gallery in Edmonton. It will travel to Calgary, Grande Prairie, and Red Deer. This is important because the visual arts in Alberta, painting and sculpture, are a \$60 million industry. I feel that this is a pathway for some women to enter this area. So often we focus on the negative aspects of the status of women in our province that I think this, in a way, provides an outstanding opportunity to show the energy and creativity of women in a very positive way.

Another initiative from the Women's Secretariat to mark the end of the United Nation's Decade for Women is a special grant program offered to volunteer organizations and groups for activities relating to the status of women. Through this program, volunteer groups are enabled access to funds for projects, and their work could complement the research being done by the Women's Secretariat. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, in discussing the positive things that are happening, it is also apparent that this government is not ignoring some of the difficult things that impact the lives of some women in our society. We are trying to do something about the realities that exist in this regard.

For instance, it was mentioned in the throne speech that there would be some consideration of pregnancy leaves. It was also mentioned that enforcement of maintenance payments would be considered, and I think this is extremely important. We have a divorce rate in Alberta of 40 percent of our marriages. Of these 40 percent, it was proven that only a third of ex-husbands paid their orders fully, and 30 percent did not pay at all. In families with small children this gets to be a very difficult problem. Many of the single-parent families that are headed by women in Canada live below the poverty line, and every effort should be made to ensure that they receive their fair share. The public and private systems are not entirely separated here. Where the private law fails, such as when maintenance orders are not obeyed, the public domain is often affected. The state is called upon to support single parents with dependent children. I believe it's therefore in our best interests to see that the private law is enforced through our Department of Social Services and Community Health.

In 1983-84 approximately \$6.6 million were pursued and collected, but this represented less than 20 percent of the money owed by defaulters, so this is not a small sum that we are talking about. It has been demonstrated that a procedure can be initiated whereby the collection rate can

be improved. It appears the reason behind nonpayment is not so much the inability to pay as the lack of desire to pay. Noncompliance seems more related to the effective enforcement procedures, and I believe that can be improved a great deal with a very small investment.

Mr. Speaker, there are other positive initiatives, and I have high hopes that they will resolve some of the problems facing women. For instance, the Women's Secretariat is working with the office for the prevention of family violence. The hon. minister mentioned earlier the discussions and the work his department is doing in the field of wife-battering.

In child care there are federal/provincial groups organized to discuss with federal officials the financing and cost-sharing arrangements. There is also a great emphasis on the part that women play in the economy, with a real focus on education and training. Our Women's Secretariat is also preparing an inventory of agencies and organizations that exist in the province, as well as looking at a statistical profile of women in Alberta. Rather than using statistics that are founded elsewhere, they're trying to develop a data base that will be very useful in planning future legislation for our province. We will have statistics regarding the situation in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I'm really proud to be an Albertan. I'm really proud to serve this government, because I see throughout this report and in the work of the House a real focus on people. The programs are designed to help people who need it and ensure that none are forgotten. I feel that our Speech from the Throne reflects a real concentration on the quality of life in Alberta and the freedom of all to participate in that quality.

Thank you.

MR. ALGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm almost sure that some two years ago, when I stood at my place in this Legislature to deliver my inaugural address, I promised — indeed didn't I threaten? — that I would never speak on this floor again. At that point in time I had hoped to have done it twice at the same time, for the first and last time. But as you recall, I got by it pretty good and, like most politicians, I kind of changed my mind. I thought maybe you'd allow me to speak to you again.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start off with a little poem.

The man who misses all the fun  
Is he who says, "It can't be done."  
In solemn pride he stands aloof  
And greets each venture with reproof.  
Had he the power, he'd efface  
The history of the human race.  
We'd have no radio or motor cars,  
No streets lit by electric stars,  
No telegraph nor telephone.  
We'd linger in the age of stone.  
The world would sleep if things were run  
By men who say, "It can't be done."

Since my arrival here some two years ago, Mr. Speaker, I've been most impressed with the attitude of my 74 colleagues. Each in his own way and in co-operation with all the others has never had to say, "It can't be done." In two years I have personally presented more constituent problems to the various ministers than I care to recall. I don't suppose anybody knows of a government anywhere in the world that accomplishes more through proper leg-

islation or, in many cases, just wholesome goodness in less elapsed time than does this august body of men and women in the Alberta Legislature.

I am so proud to be here in your midst and have been delighted to be the representative of several thousand citizens in the grandiose constituency of Highwood. The citizens of whom I speak join me in heartily congratulating our new Lieutenant Governor in her attaining the appointment of that high office. In her inaugural address, the Speech from the Throne, I was pleased with her delivery of what I thought were most encouraging facts and figures.

With reference to encouragement, I would like to say a kind word to our new Member for Spirit River-Fairview. Mr. Gurnett, I'm not sure how the press reacted to your winning, but I will say this about how they reacted to mine. It was rather strange in a way. I, too, was up against some pretty formidable people. The press said, "Kesler loses the election." It didn't say a blessed word about who won it. In any event, Jim, on behalf of all my colleagues I want to welcome you here and to wish you Godspeed as you go through the tribulations of representing the opposition in this magnificent House. It isn't an easy chore, and the man whose shoes you fill was a magnificent person, and you're going to have difficulty doing that. Mr. Minister of Social Services and Community Health, I'm reminded of the day practically a year ago today when that same magnificent man got up and was the first man in the Legislature to welcome us back after a most horrendous airplane experience of our own. I congratulate you for your win and, as I said earlier, wish you well in your endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased with the motion of acceptance, if you like, of the Speech from the Throne, delivered by the hon. Member for Edmonton Whitemud. If memory serves me correctly, he indicated that after consultation with you he reluctantly stayed away from using the word "pride", as you had indicated to him that pride is one of the seven deadly sins. Well, since I'm so prideful of the citizens in my constituency, and since I'm probably guilty of the six other deadly sins, I think I'll use the word rather liberally in my remarks tonight.

No matter who had been elected in that constituency in 1982, he or she would have come here with the same prideful feeling that I did. Why, some might ask, would anyone be so proud of the Highwood district? Well, the physical goodness of the setting, as most Albertans know, is most magnificent. The flat prairies blend into the rolling hills that finally grow themselves right into the Rocky Mountains with hundred of streams and several beautiful rivers servicing the whole area. It is awe inspiring. Anyone would be proud to live there.

But the really true wonderments of Highwood are the people, Mr. Speaker. Kind, thoughtful, courageous, interested, energetic people. That's what we have in Highwood, and when those same people have a problem, believe you me, they don't take long to get together to resolve the said problem.

Mr. Speaker, until I became a novice politician I didn't realize the problems that people have. I really didn't. I didn't realize the problems that people have. In the words of my own secretary, Debbie Hayman, when she tried to help me filter through my stuff she said, "This is one humongous bunch of stuff." And that's what it is really, humongous — the amount of problems that we have. I'm sure it's a coined phrase of her own, but in any event, that's what we're up against.

We opened a constituency office down there and hired a more than competent secretary by the name of Lottie Germaniuk. From that day to this I'm almost willing to swear that we get more traffic through that office than McDonald's enjoy on a given weekend. When you have the Lord on your side, Mr. Speaker, you have a definite plus. I've confessed to my wife, Norma, after a long hard day at the office that some of these people must think I'm taking His place.

Some folks really are up against it, and I'm sure my people have no exclusive in that. But to be able to help them, that's where the pride comes in. On occasion I'll bring a person or a group of people up here to Edmonton and sit them in a minister's office. There they can lay out their problems like a cold supper, and more times than not they go home with a far lighter heart.

Mr. Speaker, we don't contend with problems all the time. We have vigorous groups who want to discuss the feasibility of all kinds of plans for the future; private sectors that will employ people, lots of people, and give the economy a real jolt in the arm.

The Minister of Economic Development has spent many, many hours with us in the resolution of a big magnesium plant that is earmarked for my area. He has worked with me on lots of other issues as well. The Minister of Housing helped me save a complete trailer court business in my earliest days here, and his department has been involved with me in the CHAP program ever since, and if you'll pardon the pun, Mr. Speaker, in a very constructive way.

The Minister of Hospitals helped me officially open a brand-new building known as the Oilfields General hospital. His generosity, too, has taken the High River hospital out of its financial struggle. His continued brilliance and aggressiveness are still being exercised throughout the whole of this province.

The Minister of Recreation and Parks was quick to act upon our request of two years ago, and now his \$100,000 investment is a \$1 million park. Through the co-operation of him and the Minister of Culture with their MCR grants, my constituency is enjoying some of the best facilities that money can buy. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has combined her efforts with the Minister without Portfolio to develop a much appreciated Wild Rose Foundation that probably will benefit thousands of people in the province as the years go by. And I'll guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, those people in Highwood will be quick to jump on it.

Indeed, there is not one minister in the House who hasn't assisted me in my constituency in one way or another. The Minister of Transportation has bent over backwards to help build up our road system down there with a minimum of expense to the municipal government. In our exploitation of coal and petroleum products, the minister of energy is always concerned with production that emanates from the general Highwood area. If he's interested in the activity throughout the province, I would like to advise him that some 357 drilling rigs are presently activated and more than 300 service rigs are also going full tilt to get as much done as possible before the spring breakup. In the company I was formerly with 36 of their 39 rigs are on the jobsite, really quite remarkable when we keep hearing so much doom and gloom.

But the minister whose portfolio is invaluable to my area is, of course, the Minister of Agriculture. His interest in my people in these very trying times is most appreciated by all our farmers and ranchers. My friend, Stan Wilson,

the president of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association can attest to the co-operation and communication that the minister extends to us all. Stan is one great pillar in our constituency, and I want you to know, he certainly knows the difference between fightin' and foolin'.

I'd like to read, if you don't mind, Mr. Speaker, for the first time tonight, just a little excerpt. He says

Dear Harry,

The following observations of reaction by local residents to the draft proposals of the Kananaskis planning team may be of assistance to you in addressing the subject.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not addressing the subject of Kananaskis per se, but I want you to know what kind of man he is and how many I've got like him — several.

To begin with, most of the ranchers, hunters, and other groups are resentful of the fact that they had little or no involvement in the terms of reference on establishment of objectives or development of the proposed plan. In their opinion, they have had little opportunity to defend their interests or to contribute their practical experience to the process.

That resentment is justified in my opinion, because the priority of those responsible for I.D. 5, Kananaskis Country, is obviously biased towards recreational interests. Those who depend on resources such as grazing, timber, petroleum or mineral extraction became alarmed at proposals to restrict their activity in favour of wildlife and other recreational interests. That is particularly alarming to those who have demonstrated their willingness to co-operate with the public and practice good conservation on the land.

Mr. Speaker, I say to you in all fairness that these men have a justifiable complaint when people like us in our bureaucratic society just demand thousands of acres to do this and thousands of acres to do that and preserve this little weed and preserve that little thing and whatever else. It just almost drives us crazy when we're trying to raise good cattle herds for the betterment of this country. My own son will be more than interested in both these books, *Farming for the Future* and the annual report of the *Farmers' Advocate*, a man who knows how to conserve soil and what the goodness of the soil can do for all Canadians.

Well, I'm pleased anyway to hear that our government is continuing to recognize the importance of the agricultural sector of the Alberta economy. Judging by the number of initiatives and programs outlined in the Speech from the Throne, it is obvious that this government realizes the need to address the number of problems associated with the agricultural sector. The farming industry in this province has always played an integral part in maintaining the social and economic well-being of Albertans as well as all Canadians. Alberta makes a significant contribution to the total agricultural foods and goods exported from Canada each year. In 1983 — which are the last figures I have, and I don't know why that is — Alberta agricultural products accounted for 20 percent of total agricultural exports.

The revenues generated from the sale of agricultural products, from our beef, dairy, pork and grain industries, create employment and a number of other economic spin-offs to other primary, secondary, and tertiary industries in Alberta. In 1983 Alberta received \$3.4 billion in revenues from provincial agricultural export sales. Currently there are approximately 80,000 Albertans employed in farming and other occupations directly related to agriculture. Overall, farming and its spin-offs generate employment for one in

three Albertans and account for more than \$8 billion in annual income. Since the agricultural sector plays an important role in the economy of my constituency of Highwood, this means real good business for us, as well as for all Albertans.

Once realizing the number of benefits that are generated from our agricultural industry, it is not difficult to understand why our government is continuing to maintain and initiate the programs necessary to support and strengthen the agricultural sector. The intent of our government to see that the agricultural industry will be given high priority in the multilateral trade discussions under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade is a positive step in ensuring that this sector of our Alberta economy will remain a strong one.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear the government will continue to assist Alberta farmers with a number of programs to alleviate some of the financial difficulties they are now facing. The recent policy changes to the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation are just one example of the type of initiative this government is taking to help farmers with their credit needs. As the grain and red meat industries are important aspects of our Alberta economy, I am pleased to hear that the government will continue to seek improvements in the federal grain income stabilization programs as well as the implementation of a national, tripartite red meat stabilization program.

I think it is important for all of us to recognize the need for a diversified agricultural industry to ensure long-term economic stability and the opportunity for growth. For this reason I support this government in their continued commitment to changes in the Western Grain Transportation Act. Such changes will allow Alberta farmers to make the best possible economic choices as to the use of their grain products.

This one's a little touchy, Mr. Speaker, but property tax inequities have been a controversial issue for many years. Under our current municipal tax legislation, there are some classes of property owners who pay virtually no taxes, while another class of property owners pay a great deal of tax. In most cases, all of these property owners are receiving the same type of services; for example, schools, hospitals, road maintenance, snowplowing, and so on. The current inequities are putting an ever-increasing strain on only one segment of the population. I would like to see the appropriate measures taken to ensure that all property owners pay their fair share of the tax burden. We are currently working with the Minister of Municipal Affairs to turn this problem around.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be an Albertan, and especially proud to emanate out of the Highwood constituency. The people make this job educational, interesting, exciting, and above all, a labour of love. We are doing so many things down there, and we have so much more to do. It's invigorating, to say the very least. Once again, I congratulate the movers of this motion. The seconder, in particular, never seems to be at a loss for words. My thanks and praise go to you as well, Mr. Speaker, as you so resolutely guide us through all types of political weather.

Sometimes when we legislators feel that we are overdoing it, it's nice to recall this:

The clock of life is wound but once  
And no man has the power  
To tell just when the hands will stop,  
At late or early hour.  
Now is the only time you have.  
Life, love, toil with a will.  
Place no faith in tomorrow,  
For the clock may then be still.

Good night, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, considering the hour and the tremendous debate that just was given, I don't feel I'd like to follow it. I ask to adjourn debate. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, before dealing with the business tomorrow, perhaps I should also say to the hon. Member for Highwood that, having heard him begin in poetry and end in poetry, he and I know what the other members of the Assembly should really hear is when he sings.

Mr. Speaker, adjourned debate on the address and reply will be continued tomorrow afternoon, and that will take the entire afternoon. I'm not able to advise hon. members yet as to whether or not it's likely that the Assembly will sit Thursday night. At the moment it's more likely than not. We will be able to advise the Assembly more assuredly tomorrow.

[At 10:04 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]

