

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: Wednesday, March 20, 1985 2:30 p.m.

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of personal privilege. As the dean of the Legislature, at this time I'd like to have the honour of offering my congratulations to the hon. Premier, who has been leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in this province for 20 years. I would be remiss in my responsibilities if I let that opportunity go by.

In offering my congratulations, I recall a number of things as I think back to 1967. As I thought about today and some of those remarks — I was going to talk about sitting on this side of the House and getting used to being surrounded by Tories — I looked up in the gallery and saw some that have come back. I would have to say I feel barraged once more.

I see the hon. Mr. Yurko is up there. I recall his first entrance into the Legislature as one of the team. He entered in a very peculiar and unusual way. He came in rather short, with a squeaky voice. Someone who now works with me did a little bit of work on that voice, I understand, and we remember the improvement, the change, when we were on that side of the Legislature. We said, "Man, that guy's got potential." I understand that must have led him to become an Independent in the [federal] legislature.

I'll leave the Premier to the last in my list of recollections. I also remember Dr. Horner, who at that time was the deputy leader on this side of the Legislature. He had the greatest style, and I admired that style that was used in this House. When in a lighter mood, I often liked to stand up in the very same way. Mr. Speaker, if you would just give me the privilege of sitting down in my chair and demonstrating the great approach that leader in the province had, I think it would demonstrate the type of leadership that came from this side of the House.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. R. SPEAKER: [Mr. R. Speaker sat down, pushed his chair back, and then shot forward, his right arm swinging his clenched fist toward the other side of the House, as he said:] W-e-l-l! [laughter] With that arm coming forward, one of us on the other side of the House usually lowered ourselves below our desks, and we prepared for the attack. We certainly received the attack — and I think often deserving — from that honourable gentleman.

I remember the hon. Don Getty, who was on this side of the House, with the great quote: "On to Ottawa! Please go to Ottawa." I know we lost some support on that side of the House because of that great statement. It's funny how that statement seems to be coming back again.

The Premier himself — what do we recall of those early times in 1967 that seem to be characteristic of the presentation we received on that side of the House? We often talked about it amongst ourselves when we knew it was

time for the Leader of the Opposition to make his presentation. We would come into the House and say — and I say this with all due respect, Mr. Premier — "Well, we're going to get some theatrics today." We recall those theatrics of the hon. Mr. Hyndman and the hon. Dr. Horner, moving their chairs back, and the Leader of the Opposition moving his chair back and then standing up and launching the attack. First of all it was over here, and then it was over here, and back and forth, and then it was over here. We liked the effect. We liked the presentation.

It's part of the recollection of time. I know that with age — and I, too, have possibly picked that up — we've become a little more dignified in our presentation, and we stand in one spot. I think the only remnant that is still there is the turning of the ring. Mr. Premier, I certainly wouldn't want you to change that in your presentation to us here in this Assembly.

I offer my congratulations, certainly on behalf of my colleague and me. I offer congratulations on behalf of all Albertans for your service to the public — certainly your positive objectives and the desire for Alberta to be a better place to live. I know that today as well is 18 years in the Legislature, and I guess I'd say that it's nice that you and your government have reached the age of majority.

In a nonpartisan and very sincere way: congratulations and all the best in your public endeavours and pursuits for a good Alberta and for positiveness.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, as a member of the class of '67, I also would like to congratulate the Premier very briefly. Outside the Legislature I have always considered the Premier and Mrs. Loughheed as personal friends. We have a role to play in the House and sometimes don't appear to be that friendly, but we know that the process must be served. I would just like to say to you, Mr. Premier: congratulations. I still consider you an excellent friend outside the House. Inside the House we may have some differences, but my congratulations and best wishes.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to rise and congratulate the Premier on 20 years in political life. In politics they say that two years is a long time, and to last 20 years in this very rough and vigorous occupation is in itself to be commended. Of course, we know we don't have to look around very far to recognize that you've been relatively successful in your political endeavours in the province.

Obviously, I can't reminisce about the early days, like the Member for Little Bow, but I would just throw out one point that you probably don't remember. When you were first elected in 1967, I was a constituent in Calgary West. I remember those famous days, if you recall the runners and your coming up from behind. We did shake hands and talk for a couple of minutes. I'm not going to tell you how I voted in the election. I recall it was impressive. To be honest, it was the first political candidate I had ever seen at the door.

I, too, would like to congratulate the Premier. It's been a very vigorous 20 years. I say honestly that I hope you have a vigorous next 20 years, but I would have to say that I hope it's not necessarily in this Legislature. [laughter]

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, if I could take just a few moments to push my chair back, hold onto my ring, and

respond to the very kind comments made by the members of the opposition. They've duly noted that some of our former colleagues have joined with us in a brief get-together; I won't introduce them individually. Of course, my wife and my former secretary, Wylla Walker, are in the Speaker's gallery.

Just two or three observations, Mr. Speaker. One, it really does get to me a little bit that when the dean of the Legislature stands up and underlines that he's the dean, I notice he's hardly got a gray hair on his head. Of course, we all know what happened to me.

I recall those first times we came into the Legislature, and I want to make this comment for the new Member for Spirit River-Fairview if, in coming in, he had those qualms earlier about the procedure in the Legislature. The classic that I remember is that the six of us were gathered together to come in here and were going to make a motion on opening day to get a member of the opposition as chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. We went through the whole process, but the only thing we didn't go through was the last element of it, which was how we were going to vote. On the way in the door Mr. Getty said, "Tell me, is it aye or nay?" [laughter] That's how uptight we were about those circumstances.

I recall the drama lessons I'd been taking from others and the throwing of the documents. Perhaps we overdid that a bit. I gather, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Little Bow didn't mind the action. I'm not sure he appreciated any of the substance. But that was quite an experience.

For those who are new in the Legislature, at that time all the members of the government were on this side, and there was a side group that went this way. Dr. Buck was in that group, I remember. It wasn't raised at the back, so you couldn't see, Mr. Leader of the Opposition. You couldn't identify the large numbers. You think it's awesome here at times. I'll tell you, it was even more awesome in one sense. We looked at them, and all 62 were on this particular side of the Legislature.

I have great memories. I want to say two things, one in terms of appreciation and respect for this Legislature. I really believe one of the highlights in my life has not been just the 20 years of being a party leader — which, I guess, is the longest serving political party leader in the country — but the experience of being a member of this Legislative Assembly. Dr. Buck put it well: you can be in the adversarial roles that we have here and still be good friends. I think that's wonderful.

A final comment is to say to you, Mr. Speaker, and through you to members of the Assembly, that the very first time I ever came into this building, I was seeking the leadership of this party. It was in February 1965, and I confess I was seeking the leadership and had never before been in the building. I sat in about the third row up there. There wasn't a large number of school children like there is here. I listened to some speeches, and they weren't particularly exciting or interesting. [interjections] but they were speeches by the members. Just as I was wondering what I was about to get into, the page came and gave me a note. On it was written: "Mr. Lougheed, I notice you're in the gallery. I hope you will pursue a career in public life. The first 20 years are the worst. Signed, Ernest Manning."

Thank you.

head:

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. SCHMID: It's a special pleasure for me today to introduce you and to welcome, in your gallery, the executive officers of the China International Trust and Investment Corporation, especially because it reflects some of our hon. Premier's activities internationally. They're here as a result of the meeting with the chairman, Mr. Rong Yiren during the Premier's mission to China. They are here to consider investments in natural gas processing in our province.

In your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are Fei Kai Ping, overseas investment department; Mr. Hu Quingquan, senior executive; Mr. Huang Tiesan, senior executive; also our energetic trade director for China, Cantonese- and Mandarin- speaking Pa Wong.

Mr. Speaker, may I also relate to our Chinese friends our pleasure about yesterday's announcement by Nova for engineering design of a 250 kilometre pipeline, the second contract awarded to Nova in recent weeks. A special accolade in regard to this contract is due to our Premier's highlighting Alberta's technology while he was in China, and also to Mr. Jim Wong and Ms Dora Kwok who, through their persistence, backed in their perseverance by Mr. Olafson and Mr. Blair, have shown how business with China can be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my hon. colleagues to join me in welcoming our distinguished visitors and wishing them and our Alberta companies every success in their negotiations and a safe journey home. May I ask them to rise to be welcomed by this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: May I welcome, on behalf of the Assembly, some former colleagues. I can see the ones who are in the Speaker's gallery; I can't see the ones who are elsewhere, so if I have missed any, I'll ask them to stand anyway. We have Mrs. Catherine Chichak, formerly the Member for Edmonton Norwood, who is not only a colleague but also a neighbour; the hon. Mr. Yurko, who has been referred to before; and the hon. Mr. Jim Foster, who was the Member for Red Deer. With them is a longtime friend, Mr. Bruce Ferguson, and Mr. Youzwyshyn, who is at this end of the Speaker's gallery. I think Mr. Cliff Doan and the hon. Mr. Cookson are there. I can't see any others ... Oh yes, the hon. Mr. Schmidt. If I have missed any, I ask them to stand anyway. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them and a special welcome to our former colleagues as they come back to their former haunts.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 11

Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Amendment Act, 1985

MR. KOZIAK: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being the Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Amendment Act, 1985.

In introducing the Bill, Mr. Speaker, I might add that I've had the assistance and support of my colleague the MLA for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest, the Minister of the Environment.

The legislation that is going to be considered in Bill 11 includes a response to a review of the previous legislation, which unified the area into an important municipality in the province of Alberta. It deals with the special calculation of

provincial financial assistance and also responds to the requirements of the municipality to deal with a high number of encroachment situations because of shifts in the mountains, I am told.

[Leave granted; Bill 11 read a first time]

Bill 27

Credit Union Amendment Act, 1985

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the hon. Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I request leave to introduce Bill 27, the Credit Union Amendment Act, 1985. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

This legislation is in anticipation of the report of the Minister's Task Force on Credit Unions and will facilitate government support of the credit union system at this time.

[Leave granted; Bill 27 read a first time]

Bill 18

Natural Gas Rebates Amendment Act, 1985

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 18, the Natural Gas Rebates Amendment Act, 1985. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

The purpose of this Bill is to extend the benefits of the natural gas price protection plan at the present levels for a further three years, ending March 31, 1988.

[Leave granted; Bill 18 read a first time]

Bill 212

An Act to Amend the Landlord and Tenant Act

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I beg to leave to introduce Bill 212, an Act to Amend the Landlord and Tenant Act.

The Bill is prompted by the failure of many landlords in this province to refund security deposits. The principle of the Bill would make the owner and the directors of a corporate owner, jointly and severally, and indeed perhaps even severely, liable for the return of security deposits.

[Leave granted; Bill 212 read a first time]

Bill 204

Elevator Symbols Act

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 204, the Elevator Symbols Act.

This Act would require the provision of raised symbol indicators in elevators in all new buildings and a gradual phase in existing structures in Alberta for the benefit of the visually impaired.

[Leave granted; Bill 204 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to file the response to Motion for a Return 184.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table four copies of Order in Council 452/84 pursuant to the Government Emergency Guarantee Act, as well as four copies of a report pursuant to section 16 of the Municipal Capital Expenditure Loans Act, which covers the 1984 calendar year.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. ALEXANDER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, quite a number of students from the constituency of Edmonton Whitemud. Hon. members might like to sit back and relax for a few minutes, because there are three schools here today. It would not be an exaggeration to say that we have the place surrounded.

I would first like to introduce 46 grades 5 and 6 students from Rideau Park school. They are accompanied by teachers Mrs. Dianne Gillespie and Mrs. Suzanne Ziehr and by parent Mrs. Celina Skrypiczajko. They are in the public gallery. They are already standing, and I request that they be welcomed by the House.

If I may continue, Mr. Speaker, there are also 24 grades 5 and 6 students from St. Monica school, accompanied by their principal, Mr. Ed Nimco, and by parents Mrs. Sandy Askin, Mrs. Lucille Bain, Mrs. Jane Lemieux, and Mrs. Noreen Barnett. They are also in the public gallery, and I ask them to stand and be recognized.

There are also 55 grade 6 students from Brander Gardens school, accompanied by teachers Mr. Gordon Inglis, Natalie Esteves, and Fred Dempsey, and by parent Mrs. Carol Anne Brown. They are seated in the members gallery, and I ask them to rise and be recognized.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking, I would like to introduce to you, and through you, nine members of the Argyll Womens Institute from Alliance. They are accompanied by their president, Mary Wold. They are seated in the members gallery, and I ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Securities Commission

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first set of questions to the Premier. It has to do with some answers I received yesterday on the Dial affair. I found them intriguing. Could the Premier clarify for the Assembly whether or not there is a minister of the Crown responsible to this Assembly for the administration of the Securities Act and, if so, which minister it is?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I believe that was answered by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs in the Assembly yesterday.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I wasn't sure. As I recall, Mr. Speaker, the minister said it was a

"completely autonomous body," and I'm quoting from the Hansard Blues.

In the absence of that particular minister, my follow-up question is to the Premier. Is it the policy of this government that the Securities Commission may take any action or do anything it sees fit, without answering to that minister?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it's very analogous to the position of the relationship between the Attorney General and the Public Utilities Board, and there may be other examples. Under legislation we do establish entities in which there is a minister that has responsibility with regard to policy or legislation. But because they are judicial or quasi-judicial bodies, they are autonomous. That is the way the minister was referring to the situation in the House yesterday.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question in terms of the analogy of autonomous. Is the Premier saying that the ultimate responsibility for the Securities Commission still lies with the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, in the use of the term "responsibility", one has to divide the situation between policy on one hand and administration on the other. Autonomous or quasi-judicial groups, boards, or commissions such as the Securities Commission or the Public Utilities Board are autonomous in terms of their administration. Involvement of the minister only comes into play when there is a matter of a policy direction change or whether or not there is legislation that should be considered.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the Premier, following from that. As I noted yesterday, section 33 of the Act empowers the minister to order an investigation into any aspect of the administration of the Act. That's clear. Just so that we understand it clearly, to the Premier: when we say that the commission is completely autonomous, is it government policy that the actions of the commission should never be investigated by the minister?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, there may be policy matters that should be considered by the minister, and in that case the minister would respond.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I'm sure the Premier doesn't have section 33 right in front of him, but it is worded so that the minister can order an investigation into any aspect of the administration of the Act. If I interpret that correctly, that seems to be a fairly wide-ranging power. Would the Premier have the minister look into the possibility of dealing with section 33, so we can come to the bottom of what's happening at the Securities Commission?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, no.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the Premier. Why not?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, because there's no reason or justification for it.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. We can certainly debate that, because I think there is. There is in many people's minds. I think the Premier is well aware of that.

Dealing specifically with the limitation, my question is: would the Premier be prepared to look into that one aspect

in the Dial commission — whether there was incompetence by the Securities Commission in laying the charges within that specified year?

MR. LOUGHEED: No, Mr. Speaker. That's a matter for the judicial process.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. We come back to ministerial responsibility again. I wonder who is minding the shop here. It's becoming rather frustrating to find out how you get to the bottom of something like this. I thought if we talked to the top person ...

Maybe I'll move over to the Government House Leader again and ask a question that he may be aware of. Has the government developed any parameters or guidelines as to when such an investigation is warranted under section 33?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, with respect to that, I don't know that I can respond from the point of view of my responsibilities as Attorney General. Numbers of issues come to mind; for example, if the commission and the department and the minister were aware of a certain type of activity that hadn't existed in the province before. This sort of thing happens from time to time. Other people's practices become imported, and certain types of business activities are coming on. Someone then says, "Is this trading in securities or is it not?"

When I was practising law, I had occasions like that come up. People would be marketing a particular type of product, in the sense of paper, selling paper in one way or another. The question would seriously come up when you're advising them: "Is this or is this not a security?" In such a case it would be very typical for the minister, alerted to that, to say to the commission: "I want you to conduct an inquiry into the type of activity that's going on in this particular situation. I want you to report to me on it and say whether or not you believe that when this type of activity is carried on, the individuals involved are in fact trading in securities or not." That immediately comes to mind as the sort of thing that might be checked by way of an inquiry by the commission with respect to matters that had come to the attention of the department or the minister.

That's an example I can give, Mr. Speaker, and I think I will conclude by saying that I don't know if the further interpretation of examining into specific cases would be appropriate under that section or not. I always have in mind that if you go to see two lawyers, you will get one opinion on each side.

MR. MARTIN: Not being a lawyer, I will accept your analysis, seeing that you are a lawyer.

My supplementary question is to either the Premier or the Attorney General. Besides that specific example alluded to by the Attorney General, does the government have in place any broad policy regarding what should be done when it is determined that the commission has not administered competently?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, when you're dealing with a board which is statutorily independent, in the example used a moment ago by the Premier or in the similar case of a commission, which is also a statutory body, I think it's important to continue to draw the line. The line that is to be drawn is that the minister and the government,

who always act upon advice — and the advice may indeed in part come from that commission or board — may want to give direction with respect to legislation. That is done here. For example, if there is something relative to the Public Utilities Board that doesn't seem to be functioning in the public interest, it may be proper to change a statute to divert them into an area where they maybe felt that under the previous statute they didn't have the authority to do that.

The Securities Commission would be in the same position. Acting on advice, and potentially the advice of the commission itself, from time to time they might say, "I think there are some areas where we should be looking that we're not looking, and we need a statutory amendment in order to arm ourselves necessarily to do that." That could be done.

To say that there should be a guideline which would aim an investigation at a specific case, a specific file within the commission, is an entirely different matter and not so easily arguable as something the commission should give its attention to, relative to a section like section 33.

Perhaps I can try to express it a little more plainly. The dividing line has to be there. Administration is an in-house, interior thing. It's what companies always like to refer to as their in-house management and what independent bodies would say is an internal matter to them. That's the way each specific file comes to somebody's desk and is then handled. That's when the body is an independent type of body. This is an important philosophy. It's when we move beyond that into the area of legislation, as I've described, that one could see a different type of debate and direction being taken.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, following up on that. I think we've established now that at least the government has some responsibility. I say quite frankly that because of the publicity, small investors especially are going to be very concerned. At this point they don't feel the Securities Commission can protect them, because of what's happening.

My question is to the Attorney General or the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, who just walked in. Are there any safeguards in place to assure this Assembly, Alberta taxpayers, and investors in general, that the Securities Commission is operating in a competent fashion?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that one has to refer to the entire statute to see the list of safeguards, the restrictions that can be placed upon people trading in securities, and the way in which the Securities Commission fulfills its role in that process as a licensing and administrative body in some respects and perhaps as an investigative body in some other respects. When that is seen in the context of the whole Act, and when it's compared with securities Acts which are in similar form throughout most of North America — certainly in Canada the securities Acts all tended to come from the Ontario precedent. There are an enormous number of similarities, and the reason for that is that the way people trade in securities tends to be similar from one jurisdiction to another. If one tries to make the case that the inadequacy, if there is one, is in the legislation, what we're dealing with is that that is the accepted form and the accepted manner in which people deal in these matters literally throughout any jurisdictions where the same type of problem would have to be addressed in the sense of regulation, trade, and so on.

The hon. leader asked for assurances as to how well that regulatory function is being performed. I think, Mr. Speaker, I'm getting into an area where I would be expressing an opinion. I welcome the opportunity to say that the system that is in place is an accustomed system throughout jurisdictions similar to ours and that the same type of agency is in place in order to see to the supervision of the securities areas. I don't know how far I can go in saying things like this: it's never intended in any of that legislation that securities commissions will become guarantors or will assure individuals with respect to specific investments. All they can ever do is look at the overall administration of the system and, on an investigative and regulatory basis, control the participants in that system.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. The point is that something broke down drastically in the Dial situation. That's what the problem is now with investors. I talked with them. They're not going to do it. That will hurt the economy.

To follow up, I believe section 162 of the Act requires that prosecution under the Securities Act should only occur "with the consent or under the direction of the Attorney General." Given this requirement, did the Attorney General provide any direction or consent regarding the decision not to appeal the Dial court decision?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I took no part whatever in that decision.

If I might, because the hon. leader has placed another matter before us really, and that is the need in that particular statute for the consent of the Attorney General, there are numbers of situations where that is so. For example, when the Sunday shopping laws were being enforced, all of those prosecutions had to be approved by the consent of the Attorney General or they couldn't proceed. That's in the legislation. It's various places in the Criminal Code. It is in other legislation as well, and it happens to be in securities legislation.

I mention that because there is a process which is very important to the administration of justice. I want to use both examples of the Sunday shopping. In those cases our policy was very simple. Consent to prosecute would be routinely granted. We would literally rubber-stamp a complaint as long as a police force was there saying that they had investigated it and that there were grounds for the charge. We literally rubber-stamped all of those and proceeded with prosecutions until the Alberta Court of Appeal decided the legislation was invalid.

The comparison with the consent section in the Securities Act that I want to stress because of the concerns raised by the hon. leader is that our policy is the same. If the Securities Commission, through its staff as investigators, brought forward a recommendation to lay charges, they were routinely and without exception agreed to. So what we're talking about is a statutory device not involving the Attorney General in the decision-making process, and surely it would never be in a personal way in any event.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary. We've had 11 so far, in addition to the original question.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, it certainly may be, Mr. Speaker. To the Attorney General, I would have thought this particular case had some significance and that they might have had some interest in it.

My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. As a result of what happened in the Dial affair, has the minister had any concern expressed to her specifically from her department officials about the Securities Commission?

MRS. OSTERMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, but I think it's important to note that department officials are quite apart from the Securities Commission.

MR. MARTIN: No kidding. I won't go into another supplementary, from that.

Unemployment

MR. MARTIN: I'd like to move on to the second question. It's to the Premier again, if I may, on his 20th anniversary. It'll make him active; I know he enjoys that.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 18, the Premier said in the Assembly that

the significant portion of the numbers that are unemployed are involved in building construction, which by nature is cyclical.

Following up on that statement, my question is this: would the Premier state to what this government attributes the unemployment among the close to 80 percent of the unemployed who are not part of the construction labour force in Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, the statistic — and I don't have the particular one in front of me that relates to construction — is approximately accurate in terms of the Leader of the Opposition's question, but construction also has construction-related factors to it. Our assessment of the service industry and various other sectors that are related in the statistics the hon. leader has been assessing relates to building construction in the sense that the activity in building construction which spreads through the areas of housing, apartments, office, and commercial space, involve not just those people who are directly in the business of constructing a new office or new apartment but those who are indirectly involved in it in a multiplier effect. They are substantial. They include people in the real estate field. They involve people in the financial area and in the insurance area. They involve people who are suppliers of products. So the multiplier effect within the building construction area is what I intended to speak about.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. It is part of what we have been saying about dealing with purchasing power, that there is a multiplier effect, and I agree with the Premier. My question to the Premier is: following that logic, would it not make sense to move in whatever way we can toward full employment and increase purchasing power among the work force of this province? Would that not significantly affect the service sector?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, it would depend upon the way we moved toward the so-called objective of full employment. If it is done through the private sector in the evolution of the independent investment decisions of business either to expand or to develop new enterprises, then that will be sustaining. However, if it relates to activities of government in an artificial way or through the use of public funds, that's a different matter entirely.

I have now had an opportunity to peruse the remarks of the hon. Leader of the Opposition on Monday, Mr. Speaker, and I have to say that I am frankly disappointed that the constructive suggestions I had hoped for are not contained in those remarks. At my suggestion we put aside the debate with regard to capital works relative to the budget on the 25th and subsequent to that. But with regard to the other matters, I am disappointed that the suggestion from the leader ...

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the hon. Premier, it would appear to me that when we start commenting on speeches made previously in the House, we are perhaps getting outside the scope of the question period.

MR. MARTIN: Well, I am disappointed that the Premier is disappointed, but I would have expected as much. I've been disappointed with this government too, with 15.5 percent unemployment.

To the Premier, I believe we're getting our ideological blinkers on here, because I think you're defeating your first argument, which I agreed with. The Premier has also implied that the high rate of unemployment in Alberta is due to the high, but falling, vacancy rates in apartment and office buildings. I think you'd accept that as one of the things he said. Is it the Premier's assessment that this is the major factor causing our 11.5 percent unemployment rate in Alberta and, again, 15.5 percent in this city?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I think it is certainly the major factor. There are other factors involved, and they include the confidence factor that I mentioned last Friday.

I have to take issue with the view that it is an ideological position, because I certainly personally feel that the response of our government is as practical and pragmatic as it can be. Look at the issue of where the jobs would come from. If they come from the private sector, they can be sustaining. They can be continuing, and they will have the multiplier effect. If they are from government, with certain exceptions — and we can debate that within the budget — they are not of a continuing nature. So, with respect, it isn't a matter of an ideological point of view.

If there are things this government can do that can be effective to reduce the incidence of unemployment, then I believe we should do it. I believe we are doing it. If other, constructive suggestions can be made, we welcome those. We welcome the debate on the budget with regard to our capital works program. But it isn't a matter of saying that it's entirely something the government is leaving to the private sector. That has not been the position of this government. It is the position of this government that on a permanent, sustaining basis it's going to be the private sector, through a confidence factor and through a multitude of other factors, that will result in the reduction of unemployment in the province.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. If he has read my wonderful words of the other day, I'm sure he will recognize that we talked about a countercyclical strategy which very much affects the private sector, as it does in many industrial parts of the world. That's what it's all about. To say that we are advocating government spending is not correct, if he follows that. I'll send our white paper over.

If we are looking for the quick fix, the Premier seems to be saying that it has to do with office buildings and the

vacancy rate. Would the Premier indicate then at what level of vacancy rates the government expects employment to pick up again and, following from that, is it the government's view that when this vacancy rate gets to that specified level, unemployment will decrease right across the board? Is that what the Premier is saying?

MR. LOUGHEED: First of all, Mr. Speaker, we have to recognize the regional nature of unemployment in the province of Alberta today. Many members of this Assembly are involved in communities outside the metropolitan areas, where there is a much lower incidence of unemployment, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition is aware. It is centred most heavily and most seriously in the two metropolitan centres.

We accept, within limits, that there is a cyclical factor and a response by the government to that. On a short-term basis, having regard to the climatic conditions in our province, we respond with programs such as the priority employment program over the winter months. I don't want to get into a budget debate now, but I can refer the hon. Leader of the Opposition to last year's budget. The position taken with regard to capital projects and the capital works programs of this government relates to the fact that this is an appropriate time for a provincial government to have a large capital works program. During the current fiscal year we've had a capital works program of approximately \$3 billion, which is by far the largest on a comparable basis in Canada.

There is no set position that one could establish with regard to when a private-sector investor is going to construct a new office building or a new set of apartments. Those are individual investment decisions. We try in every way we can to encourage those decisions to be made at the earliest possible time, and that includes the confidence factor. Reports today indicate that progress is being made in the metropolitan areas, certainly relative to office space and, to a lesser degree, with regard to apartment vacancy.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary. We have a relatively short list, but it almost looks as if we're not going to reach the end of it.

MR. MARTIN: I apologize, Mr. Speaker, but I will follow up with one more. We can talk about the countercyclical strategy and spending over-runs in competing with the private sector when times were booming. The Premier has noted the cyclical nature of the construction industry. Following from that, would the Premier state that it is his government's assessment that unemployment in the nonconstruction industries, which we say is close to 80 percent of the unemployed, is also cyclical? What measures is the government prepared to take to stimulate growth cycles in those areas? I'm thinking of the transportation, communications, trade, and manufacturing sectors.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I answered that in part in a previous question, because the statistics that are being referred to by the Leader of the Opposition refer to those who are involved in unemployment on a direct basis in building construction, as distinguished from those who are not. A very significant portion of those who are not in the category of being directly employed in building construction are indirectly involved.

We're involved in a structural adjustment that has to take place in this province. There are no easy answers. The structural circumstance is one I described in the House earlier in this session. We had an extreme overbuilding in apartments and office and commercial space in the province of Alberta in the period approximately '78 to '82. During that period, therefore, we had an excess of construction, and it involved the in-migration of a substantial number of people. Hence we have a capacity within the building construction industry that in my view can't be sustainable in the longer term, even for our peak requirements.

We are going to have to go through this difficult structural adjustment. The responsibility of the government is to cushion the impact of that in the maximum and most humanistic way we can and to be responsive to the needs of the citizens. There are no ways in which the government of the province of Alberta can move through this period and not have us live with the structural adjustment in building construction we're involved in.

If I could comment just briefly, Mr. Speaker, I think it's only fair to put this in the broader perspective. You still have a province in which total construction, even in '83 and '84, generally exceeded all the other provinces in Canada on a per capita basis. That has to be looked at in the total balance of the activity within our province and our economic thrust.

Oil Pricing

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier as well. It's with regard to the energy negotiations and the PGR tax that we've been discussing in the Legislature. I'd like to relate to the comments by the Premier on October 17, 1984, and last Friday in response to my questions. The Premier said, "We anticipate that those election commitments will be met," relating to the commitments of the Prime Minister in terms of the PGR tax. On Friday, March 15, the Premier responded, "Mr. Speaker, I've never felt I was in a position to dictate to the Prime Minister of Canada," and then the sentence goes on. My question to the Premier is: what has happened in the interim period that has changed the optimism towards the possibility of eliminating the PGR tax?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I don't see any inconsistency or even any change in the two statements. I do not have the statement of October 17 in front of me, but if the hon. Member for Little Bow read it correctly, it said I was optimistic that the new federal government would meet its election commitments. The answer I gave in the House last Friday had to do with a specific measure with regard to energy. My answer, which is obviously the fact, was that as Premier, there is no way I can dictate to the Prime Minister what he will or will not do within the tax jurisdiction of the federal government.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Has the Premier made any contact with the Prime Minister in terms of the PGR tax and its elimination or the energy negotiations in terms of accelerating them to reach an agreement prior to Monday, budget night in Alberta?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I have great difficulty with the logic behind the question, if there is any. We're talking about a federal tax. I think the attention of the Member for Little Bow should be on the federal budget night, which I am told — I believe it's public — is going to be sometime in the early to middle part of May.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. In terms of Alberta's budget the energy agreement, whatever it may be, will have some implications. If there are no implications, could the Premier indicate that whatever the new agreement is, it will have no implications for an Alberta budget? Is that correct? Is that what the Premier is saying?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, that's a valid question, but I don't think that it's possible for me, the Provincial Treasurer, or the minister of energy to respond to that before the budget is presented on Monday. I'd welcome the identical question, or one close to it, being presented shortly thereafter.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Clover Bar, followed by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I was to address my question to the Minister of Housing, who is not here, so I'll hold my question.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to offer the Minister of the Environment the opportunity to clarify for the House some very disturbing public reports about a murky subject, that of hazardous waste disposal, storage, and transport. I'd like to ask the minister if he could assure the Assembly that he has instructed his officials to be very vigilant in ensuring that hazardous wastes are not imported into the province without the sort of permit that's required under the Hazardous Chemicals Act.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, a week ago last Wednesday the Hazardous Chemicals Amendment Act, and with it regulations under the Act which required certain permits and licences to be required, was proclaimed. It also required bonding in terms of hazardous wastes stored off generator storage sites. It also concluded the requirement under legislation passed last fall that storage facilities in the province, other than generator storage facilities, would require authorization by the Special Waste Management Corporation.

In light of these regulations coming into effect with the proclamation of the Act, the department and the Special Waste Management Corporation are now in the process of implementing those regulations and working with the corporations involved, specifically with the storage of special wastes, as to how they will fit into the special waste management system in the province.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. We're aware of the regulations. The questions relate to

following through on those regulations. Has the minister been in touch with the president of Kinetic Contaminants to ensure that that company will not be importing PCBs without the required permit?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the department is in the process of implementing these regulations. They will be in contact with the particular firm the hon. member mentioned with regard to the implementation of these regulations.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell us whether or not there was any contact prior to the date on which the regulations came into effect to ensure that Kinetic Contaminants would have the opportunity to meet the requirements by that time?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there had been ongoing discussions and negotiations between the department and the particular firm the hon. member mentioned with regard to the storage of wastes. With regard to the specifics, in terms of the regulations, there had not been contact regarding those specific regulations prior to their coming into effect with the proclamation last Wednesday.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister inform the House whether or not Kinetic Contaminants, as far as he knows, would meet the requirements to qualify for a permit under the regulations?

MR. BRADLEY: I'm not able to provide the member with that information at this time.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Another firm involved in the same business, the D & D Group at Nisku, was recently bankrupted. Is it true that the Crown is now going to be stuck with the responsibility of dealing with all the barrels of contaminated materials that are left at their facility?

MR. BRADLEY: The Crown has taken several steps with regard to that specific storage facility. We've assumed temporary management of the facility of the D & D Group. We will be pursuing, to the extent possible, the recovery of costs associated with our assuming the temporary management of that storage facility. The Special Waste Management Corporation will be acting as our agent in terms of certain matters related to the ongoing continued storage. The department will be exploring all legal avenues to recover costs.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister have any estimate of the cost that's going to be involved in dealing with the matter of the materials that are left at the D & D site?

MR. BRADLEY: Not at this time, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question. Can the minister indicate when the government made a change in direction? When we were discussing hazardous wastes in this province, we were assured that we were not going to be importing other provinces' wastes. Why has the government made a change in that philosophy, and when did this come about?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there has been no change in the philosophy of the government with regard to this matter. I think it's very clear, in terms of the policy statements the government has made over a period of time, that we did not favour the importation of waste into the province. The system we are developing at Swan Hills, in terms of the special waste treatment facility and the overall special waste management treatment system for the province, is being developed to handle Alberta wastes.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister or the Premier very specifically indicate to this Legislature and the people of this province that they will not be importing outside wastes from other provinces to this province to be reduced to an inert, situation? Can he assure the people of this province of that?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think it's very clear what our policy statements have been on this matter. We are developing a special waste management system for the province to handle and treat Alberta waste within Alberta. That is the purpose and the intent and the direction in which our policies have been formulated over a period of years in terms of bringing into place a special waste management system for the province. We've always said that if we did have excess capacity, we might consider, on the basis of a specific request and need from another province, whether or not we would allow waste to come in from outside the province. At this time our policy is not in terms of favouring importation of waste, and we are not developing a system to handle that. We are developing a system to handle Alberta wastes.

DR. BUCK: It's the "ifs" that always bother me about this government.

Mr. Speaker, I and the people of this province want a commitment from this government that we are not setting up a hazardous waste disposal site for the disposal of other provinces' wastes. Can we have that assurance or not? We had a promise from this government on the Eastern Slopes policy, and now they've disregarded that. Can the minister promise the people of this province we will not be importing other people's waste to be treated in this province?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, what I can assure the hon. member is that we are developing a system at Swan Hills to handle Alberta-generated wastes. I've made it clear that there's a proviso that if another province comes to us with a request and we have capacity, we may consider it at that time but only on a very specific need and request basis. I can assure the hon. member that the system being put in place at Swan Hills is for the destruction and treatment of Alberta-generated wastes only at this time.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell us what consideration has been given to the possibility of banning private firms involved in dealing

with hazardous wastes and instead mandating that only the Special Waste Management Corporation be given responsibility to deal with these materials?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, the legislation we brought forward last fall dealt with that matter, in that the treatment and storage of special wastes in the province of Alberta would be through the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. The proclamation of the Act and the regulations which came into force last week make it very clear that anyone who would be specifically engaged in the storage of special waste off the site of a generator would require the authorization of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. So there is going to be a one-window approach through the Special Waste Management Corporation in terms of treatment of these wastes in the province.

Mortgage Defaults

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In considering my questions yesterday to the Minister of Housing and to now endeavour to protect a segment of our consuming public, has the minister given any consideration to developing criteria to protect these consumers who are buyers and sellers of homes through scam real estate operators or builders?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, in addressing that question, it's difficult to know initially whether we're talking about something that may well fit within the ambit of the Mortgage Brokers Regulation Act or alternately the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act. Obviously, people who are licensed under either statute carry on the business that that licence gives them the authority to do. However, if they are carrying on other business outside the statute, even though they are duly licensed under either statute, they have the full authority to do so. If the hon. member is suggesting that there is a scam or something illegal going on, obviously we should look at either statute. Alternately if the hon. member believes there is a possibility of broadening either statute to encompass the kinds of activities that are currently going on, we'd have to look at that.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Would the minister, in conjunction with the Attorney General, the Minister of Housing, and, me if necessary, undertake to develop some method of protection for these consumers, considering that we are talking about a number of bankruptcies and possible destruction of many families of honest citizens? Would the minister consider some method to undertake with the persons mentioned to assist in this matter?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't have a problem in the hon. member's request to review possible legislation as it may affect the type of transactions he's discussing and to involve the appropriate ministers.

Oil Pricing (continued)

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister of energy is a follow-up to my earlier questions. Could the minister indicate whether a meeting has been established with the federal minister of energy to work

towards the conclusion of an agreement? I like the minister to sit in the Legislature, but I get a little concerned about the progress that may be going on. If a date has been established, could the minister indicate it? If not, what seems to be the problem?

MR. ZAOZIRNY: Mr. Speaker, a couple of comments. First of all, by way of clarification, I think that in the course of the hon. member's questions in the last couple of days he may have inadvertently created some misunderstanding about the nature of the petroleum and gas revenue tax. That is a tax that is, in fact, levied against the industry. It is not a tax that is levied against the producing province. Certainly, there is no question about the importance of the industry having the necessary cash flow to be able to get out and invest. Just for purposes of clarification I think there should be no misunderstanding about the nature of that tax that is levied against the industry.

In specific response to the member's direct question to me, I'm sure the media very much appreciate his endeavouring to do their work for them. In terms of locale of specific meetings I say only that we are involved in communications on an ongoing basis. I expect that we will have more during the currency of these discussions. It continues to be our hope that these matters will come to a successful resolution on or before March 31. I don't think it is helpful to the process to go beyond that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce 46 grade 6 students from St. Anthony school in Drayton Valley. I'm sure they're also very interested in the energy negotiations that have just been discussed in the House, and await their resolution.

They are accompanied by Mr. Ronald Williams, the principal; teachers Miss Rita Steele and Mr. Szatkowski; and parents Mrs. Betty Machi and Mrs. Terry Lord. I ask that they stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

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 19: Mr. Nelson]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by congratulating Her Honour on the speech she gave at the opening of the session. It certainly was a delight to listen to the words in a very clear and easy manner. I wish her much success in her future endeavours as our Lieutenant Governor.

At the same time, I too would like to congratulate the mover, the Member for Edmonton Whitemud; the seconder, the Member for Rocky Mountain House; and all those people who have spoken previously for doing an excellent job. Certainly, I was pleased that I didn't have to follow right on the heels of the Member for Highwood last night, because that was something to behold. That's an impossible act to follow. However, we'll do the best we can.

Mr. Speaker, during my discussion I thought I might deal with some philosophy and also some issues that affect some of us out in the real world. That's not to suggest that some of the activity here is not within the realm of the real world, but I think those of us who still partake in the business community might sometimes question that.

At the same time that I recognize Her Honour and those people who have preceded me in the speech, I would also like to recognize the support I get from my constituency of Calgary McCall. The people in Calgary McCall are no different from any other people in the province. Their wants and requirements are no different. Certainly, many of them are without employment, and they are hurting. Fortunately, in the main they are working and able to support their families and communities to the extent that we have some of the finest communities in Alberta. I am proud to continue to represent these folks, as I have since 1977 at the two levels of government I have participated in.

Mr. Speaker, I am often asked the question: when are we going to see some positive signs of a turnaround in our economy? My answer is: depending on where you stand, there is some positive change taking place. Certainly, we all identify and recognize that the oil and gas industry has heated up, but unfortunately some of the spin-off from that development has not come down to the extent I thought it would at the present time.

We also examine the area of Ontario and Quebec, where the economy seems to be spurting along in a fashion that might be a little ahead of us here. Of course, some of that is generated through the oil and gas industry, the activity we have in Alberta. In essence, the activity through the oil and gas industry has activated much of the activity in Ontario and Quebec. Hopefully, those folks will recognize the seriousness of many of the activities the federal government will be pondering over the next number of weeks, relevant to the PGRT and other issues in that particular industry.

In discussions with our constituents we all know the oil and gas industry is extremely important to Alberta. Of course, we can't underestimate that importance. In discussions I've had with various members of the oil and gas industry, they certainly would like to see the PGR tax removed quickly so they can pursue the development of our natural resources. If some of the activities we're taxing these industries on are not corrected in the future, we may be back to a circumstance where these people will develop in the manner in which they have been in the last year or so.

Of I ask the question: in criticizing the federal government, do we as a province necessarily have the best program to enhance development of our nonrenewable resources? I am told by our minister of energy that our programs equate to any in other provinces. However, in considering this, I am of a view that we should sometimes re-examine some of our policies that have been in place for some time. It may be useful to discuss them with an open and fresh mind and possibly develop programs that will be simple and aggressive and get the oil industry to develop in those areas where they feel they have an opportunity to progress, rather than using incentives to take something away from the successful producer to give to a producer who may not be so successful due to the fact that he's drilling in areas that are possibly nonproductive but doing so because of the royalty scheme or incentive programs we have.

We may have to look at regulatory reform in this area, as we have discussed many times in this House since 1982, at least since I've been here. Regulatory reform is important. It gives incentive to the private sector and, in many respects, removes government intervention in some of these activities.

Mr. Speaker, tourism has come to the forefront as another area of discussion within our community of Calgary McCall and, of course, with my constituency association. The question is: are we doing all we can to promote Alberta? Of course, it's easy to take a question like that, because we can all respond by asking our constituents if they are doing all they can to promote Alberta, to assist in bringing their friends to Alberta, to stay in Alberta for their own holidays. During the winter months there are a number of activities we can participate in.

Those of us who like to enjoy a bit of sunshine and warmth may move to other areas. But when we go to these areas outside the province and examine tourism to see what they do, we look at our back doorstep and suggest to ourselves: why don't we do some of these things? Our hospitality industry oft comes to government and asks us to back away from certain charges on liquor and various other taxes. But I often ask: why are they not doing more? I guess my suggestion is that as far as our tourism industry is concerned, we need to go into the marketplace with a considerably larger effort — possibly do a little advertising, brag about our province, brag about the different activities to take part in, and, of course, encourage our private sector, the hospitality industry, to develop a little more staff training and development, similar to the positive actions taken by our neighbours to the south.

I guess I can use an example. If I go into a restaurant in many of the tourist spots in the United States, I'm made to feel extremely welcome. I'm made to feel that if I spend only \$3, I should be spending \$5 because these people are so happy and jovial. When I go to the hospitality spots in some areas in Alberta, I feel that maybe I'm not doing these people a favour by coming in and upsetting their schedules by creating a little work for them. If the attitude were similar and positive in some of these hospitality areas, it would certainly give us rise to be more encouraged to visit some of the places in our own home.

I'm not suggesting that there are not places that have a positive, robust attitude that gives rise to encouraging our going there. But I think some of these negative areas that we occasionally tend to shuffle under the table a little bit, at least in the public arena, need to be examined. We cannot afford to ignore the tourism industry or the tourism possibilities in this province. It is our third-largest resource. Not only does it create a lot of jobs which we sorely need; it creates taxes for our municipalities and our province.

The area of education, Mr. Speaker. First of all, our constituency has 25 schools presently open and one under construction. We have probably one of the most dynamic groups of teachers and students in the province. Our students are energetic and positive, and our teachers, certainly in the main, generate much of that enthusiasm in our schools. On many occasions when I've had the opportunity to stand and speak in the Legislature, I've tried to express the one area that we are somewhat disappointed in; that is, the lack of a public high school on the east side of the city of Calgary. If you can imagine the cities of Red Deer, Lethbridge, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, or, for that matter, Medicine Hat without a high school — on the east side of Calgary we have something in the order of a couple of hundred thousand people and one high school. I certainly encourage the school boards to develop the program and request funding from the minister to build a high school, because ultimately the cost is going to be greater in the manner in which we are busing students now. Of course, the pride of the community is lost in some respects, because our students are bused to so many different schools.

Mr. Speaker, the area of agriculture was discussed in the throne speech and has been addressed by many of our colleagues from rural communities. I think we in the urban communities have to recognize agriculture as one of our most important areas of concern and consideration. The number of jobs created in the urban communities through the sale and transportation of implements and the manufacture and distribution of the products that come from the agricultural community has to be given due respect. Agriculture is part of the Calgary McCall constituency. Part of our constituency is in farmland. Of course, there are a number of small acreages that don't develop farming produce for the general public but do for themselves. On the other hand, there are farming activities that produce foodstuffs for the province. So I should recognize that we in the Calgary McCall constituency appreciate the farming community and certainly support the many programs and activities that are produced here for those people in the rural community.

The other area we support, Mr. Speaker, is the beginning farmers program. We would certainly support it much more if we could see to it that the Jaycees, who work on this program across Canada, are given the opportunity to perform that activity in the same manner they did two or three years ago, when the minister provided a small number of dollars for them to recognize beginning farmers of the year in the various programs. We support that program very implicitly.

Mr. Speaker, the area of Municipal Affairs. Having been an alderman of the city of Calgary, along with many of my colleagues here who have been aldermen or municipal councillors — the support of the municipalities in the past has certainly been beyond reproach as far as this government is concerned. I suggest that in the future we will continue to support those communities, at least in the programs we've seen to date.

There are certain activities we could promote to ensure that permissive legislation is given to the municipalities so they may judge for themselves what they wish to do in their communities. An example might be that when a city takes citizens to court for various test cases, we would permit the municipality to allow court costs to these citizens. At the present time we don't. Although the Act is silent, we should move in that area. The other possible area is casinos. I know that casinos are a sore point with many people. At this time the people in my constituency do not necessarily support the concept of casinos, at least to the

extent that has been proposed in the city of Calgary by a group of investors and even the mayor. But I think we should be in a position to do something regarding permissive legislation to let the municipalities make those kinds of decisions on their own. They, not us, would be on the hook.

Mr. Speaker, another area of extreme concern in our constituency is privatization. A couple in that area are Altel Data and, of course, NovAtel. We have constituents out there who work and make an effort to make a living. When they read on occasion in the newspapers that Altel Data appears to be undercutting costs to support them in getting sales and what have you, that becomes of great concern to many of our citizens. As an example, NovAtel, owned partially by the provincial government, creates jobs outside the province, along with the licensing they make with overseas companies. I become very concerned that we should be encouraging the development of those jobs in Alberta to the greatest extent possible. I know the government makes every effort to do so, and possibly due to lack of information that may be passed down, we don't fully understand this. However, for the people looking in from the outside, we have to recognize that the concern we have here is first for the province of Alberta and then for our major partner, the federal government in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, the area of hospitals and medical care. We have the finest care system in Canada and possibly even the world. I guess you could take the socialist approach to everything and suggest that we don't have the best care in Canada and maybe the world. Maybe some of these people who are discussing what we have and don't have, what we should do and don't do, ought to get off their butts and go around to other jurisdictions or countries of the world and see what they don't have. We just might appreciate the care we have in Alberta. I don't know of any citizen who would go without medical attention or care in the province of Alberta if they needed it, whether or not they could pay. I think all our citizens can recognize that health care is for all of them. Those who try to muddy the waters had better look at the facts, and those facts are that nobody in this country, or possibly anywhere in the world, is better looked after by medical care than the citizens of Alberta.

Our senior citizens, another area that is extremely important to our community, are looked after very generously. My mother is 70 years of age and often tells me that we do too much for her and maybe for other people. But she is still able to get around and do her tap dancing and other activities she is involved in, and maybe she doesn't recognize that others are unable to get around by themselves. Certainly, the programs that have been developed by this government address all our seniors better than any other community in this land of ours.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about housing. As you know, the issue of housing has been quite a topic of mine of late. A number of citizens have purchased homes, and certainly if they had not been encouraged to do so through various programs developed by our government, they would not have been able to purchase those homes. I would say that most of those people who have purchased homes through the programs are happy. They're able to pay and, in fact, are extremely gratified that they have something they can call their own. Of course, there are others who have been unfortunate and have lost their jobs, their form of security, and their homes. They have created considerable concerns in our communities, especially in two

of my communities in Calgary McCall, because of the vacancy rate that has occurred through these unfortunate circumstances. The people who have lost homes may no longer be with us in our province. At the same time, we have to give serious consideration to some of the programs that have been developed over the years wherein we allowed people to buy homes and enter into contracts when they possibly should not have.

The other area is our scam operators, who are creating havoc amongst some of our citizens by wheeling and dealing real estate transactions. Our innocent citizens are being treated like dollar dealers and guilty pawns. I think we have to examine legislation to ensure that these kinds of deals don't happen again and to ensure also that citizens who are innocent victims of some of these scams are not treated in the same manner as some of these dollar dealers who are out there ripping off the community.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of small business, one of the most encouraging things the government has done in the last couple of years is to develop the small business equity corporations, which have now been fulfilled. I encourage the government to continue with this program to bring into focus more encouragement to our small-business and investment community. Nowhere has anything been so successful, and I am sure that with the entrepreneurial spirit of many of our Alberta neighbours that program could be expanded considerably to ensure the development of jobs and business within this province.

We discuss the importance of small business in our community. Too often when we discuss that, we do so possibly with tongue in cheek, without a great deal of encouragement. We have many programs that are basically along the area of discussion. I think there needs to be encouragement in the area of incentive, not grants or handouts. The businessman does not want a grant or a handout. He wants to be able to get into business. He wants to be able to financially support that business, if necessary through loans from banks and financial institutions. What he doesn't need is a financial institution to come in and put him out of business because his security drops below the level the banks think is necessary.

Our financial institutions consider that they support small business, but I say again that with many of them it is lip service, possibly to cover their behinds. Our financial institutions have to recognize that although they're not big corporate citizens, small business and small-business people should only have to generate the same type of security as some of our major companies. I will discuss that at another time when I debate the Bill I will put forward in the House this spring.

Mr. Speaker, I have your note here that I have one minute. It's unfortunate.

I'll sum up the many areas I have left that I would like to discuss. We have a province that certainly requires the wisdom and the attention of our legislative body. We also have the opportunity to encourage and develop programs that will be positive for our people. The development of our transportation systems in the province — certainly considering impaired driving, and I hope this spring to introduce a Bill reducing the level of acceptable alcohol content in the blood. Considerable work is being done in our public lands and wildlife areas, and certainly the public is becoming more concerned and interested. They do belong to all of us. It is now International Youth Year. With the 1988 Olympics around the corner for Calgary, I think we should be encouraging our youth and giving them every

opportunity to develop through our educational system and through the many opportunities in our recreation and parks areas.

Mr. Speaker, I close by saying that we have a province that is unmatched by any other in Canada. We have opportunities. We have many, many circumstances that concern us all, but on the bottom line we have a province that we can all be proud of. We have proud citizens that are also proud of that province.

Thank you.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to have this opportunity to make some comments about the Speech from the Throne and to share with you and the members of this Assembly some of the ideas that motivate my being here. I want to begin by congratulating Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor on her appointment. And I've appreciated the many friendly words of welcome I've received from members here over the past few days. But I'm also reminded every time I enter this room that my colleague and I are really not part of the main gang here. I think of the kitten that was taken to see a tiger that was 37.5 times larger than itself. It looked at this huge tiger and then remarked: "Anyone who appears so large can have little real value. If there was anything to him, he wouldn't have to be so big."

My time is going to be used mainly to talk about concerns for rural Alberta arising from the Speech from the Throne. But at the outset, I also want to note that today is *Nauroz* or New Year's Day in Afghanistan, which was home to my family and me for several years. New Year's Day in Afghanistan is farmers' day, and today marks the seventh farmers' day since the Soviet-supported government added a horrible new dimension to the problems of farming there, in the form of the violent oppression of the people in that nation. Across the world in El Salvador it's now five years since the assassination of Oscar Romero, which silenced a voice that had spoken out for farmers' rights to live peacefully. Our main focus, obviously, must be the job before us here. But we must also keep in mind our responsibilities even to those who are very far away.

During the recent by-election campaign in Spirit River-Fairview, I frequently reminded people that they were not making a decision just between candidates or even between political parties — although there was no shortage of either one there — but they were making a decision between fundamentally different political ideas. All around us now in this province we see the results of decisions based on one of those ideas: the idea of government that doesn't get involved constructively, government that functions only as a paramedic at the scene of an accident, doing emergency patch-ups on casualties. This type of government produces a society of unfairness, where the strong and wealthy are able to continue to enjoy the best at the expense of the weak and poor. On the other hand, I know we can have a society that's based on a different idea: where equality and freedom have real meaning and where government acts creatively to prevent situations where people are hurt.

The Speech from the Throne indicated that the autumn visit of Pope John Paul II to Alberta was the highlight of 1984. We must remember that visit not just as an event on the public stage; we must remember the message of the Pope, a message which demands serious consideration by every one of us. During his time in Canada, the Pope challenged us to see that the true strength of a society is demonstrated in how it treats its weakest members. As I

read the Speech from the Throne, it's clear that this message was not remembered. During the by-election campaign I've just come from, people talked urgently about real problems and about serious concerns that were affecting their lives, threats to their opportunity to lead happy, successful, secure lives. These problems and these concerns demand active leadership on the part of government, rather than reliance on memories of the past and vague bureaucratic language that avoids admitting that human beings are suffering in Alberta today.

On Monday the hon. Minister of Agriculture talked about the necessity of crop insurance being "actuarially sound" and "forecastable." But such businesslike kinds of words hide the real pain of families losing homes and land this spring. It reminds me of a colonel in southeast Asia some years ago who said, "It's not bombing; it's air support" to hide the reality of what was happening. I hear echoes of such an approach in the Speech from the Throne. But, Mr. Speaker, depersonalizing the truth does not change it.

I don't think we should be ashamed to be a government with heart. When I worked at Bowness high school some years ago, our motto at that school was, "People are important." That conviction was the foundation of some very good things that happened in that school and in that community. My convictions have not changed. I want to work to see that this province demonstrates — and demonstrates in practical ways, not just through lip service — that people matter more, more than profits, more than building monuments, and more than bureaucratic convenience.

Losing sight of this is a symptom of a disease called imperial arrogance. This disease is usually contracted by the powerful, but its worst symptoms of unemployment, suffering, and hopelessness are manifested by the weak. Imperial arrogance speaks with some fine-sounding public relations rhetoric, but it has no real substance to it. Imperial arrogance is a blinding pride which loses sight of reality. My children have a favourite story about imperial arrogance which some in this Assembly may remember. That story is called The Emperor's New Clothes.

Financial catastrophe now threatens not just the family farm in this province, Mr. Speaker, but the entire foundation of rural and small-town Alberta. Bumper crops are not going to repair the damage that's being done. The real danger is that a special way of life, a way of life many of us have chosen because of its good qualities, is going to be lost. This way of life is the foundation on which this province is built. It makes this province what it is today.

All across Spirit River-Fairview there are exciting examples of this way of life in practice. People in rural communities like Hines Creek, Eureka River, Savanna, and Bonanza have built sports complexes and community halls through the investment of thousands of hours of volunteer labour. Concerned citizens have worked very hard to assure the preservation of one of Alberta's most important historical sites at Dunvegan. Early this winter the hamlet of Whitelaw held an opening for its new community hall, and that community hall was the co-operative effort of the agricultural society, the school division, and the local municipal government. But the people of the community did not feel that their job was finished because the hall was built; they've already started the process of organizing a youth club for children in that hamlet. They've also held a community talent show that they hope will be an annual event.

My first official function as an MLA was to open yet another facility which demonstrates this kind of community

initiative, and that was the Cleardale curling rink. The ice there had already been used by the 4-H'ers. I was also honoured to open the Worsley-Clear Hills ski hill. This excellent hill was planned and constructed by local people who were concerned that there be something more for families to do together during the winter. It was in use within a year after the initial planning started. The runs had been constructed, a tow had been installed, and parents and children were enjoying the beautiful location and the pleasure of skiing together.

Mr. Speaker, if we travelled around Spirit River-Fairview we would find people of all ages enjoying each other's company. We'd find older people helping younger people to acquire new skills or perhaps the opposite of that, younger people helping older ones — in other words, people sharing their lives and continuing to improve and extend what they already have. I think the village of Wanham is one of the finest examples of this. Each year the small municipality stages a plowing match, which is a first-class activity. Several times this has included hosting the national plowing championships. When I look at the list of people involved in this activity, I'm sure there are not many citizens in that whole area who do not volunteer for some job or another. With each person doing their job, the result is a well-run and interesting weekend. In fact, I'd hope members here would feel welcome to join me there this June.

This special rural way of life I've been talking about is not seen just in recreation. When personal tragedy strikes, people respond from their hearts. I've seen this on several occasions when families have lost their homes due to fire. Their neighbours have responded with clothing, furniture, emergency housing, benefit dances, and just that sympathy that means so much at those kinds of times. I've seen concern for others demonstrated by Earl and Mona Wilds in our constituency, developing an area where Metis families can build homes and get a start. I've seen concern with a view to the future demonstrated by people in Whitelaw as they organized to fight a landfill site they saw as a real threat to an important water supply in the area. I've seen commitment to the young people of the area demonstrated through the establishment by the school divisions of the Notley scholarship fund.

The rural life-style that demonstrates itself in some of these dramatic ways, of course, is best seen in the day-by-day sharing and caring of people in areas like Spirit River-Fairview: communication over coffee around a kitchen table, hard work as new land is prepared for its first seeding, trust as neighbours borrow and lend some very expensive equipment, worship going on in small churches in the communities, and the co-operation you see as several generations — parents, grandparents, and children — work together with teachers in small schools to guarantee good education. There are many more ways.

Tommy Douglas said that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when they work together in dedication for a common cause. I believe that's true, Mr. Speaker. I believe the people of Spirit River-Fairview are vibrant proof of this truth, in fact. However — and it is a big "however" — in the complex world we're part of today, the philosophy of inevitability and inertia which comes across in the Speech from the Throne can be a serious threat to extraordinary things happening. The Speech from the Throne is painfully cautious, and it carefully avoids accepting that we can and must use government in an active and positive way to make change. The wreckage which is being created by Conservative economics is piling up, and we need to stop this

process. Courageous acts of political will can make a difference. They can turn things around.

Mr. Speaker, instead of a Speech from the Throne which contains no ideas to encourage rural Alberta, which contains no proposals of significance for agriculture, education, health care, transportation, forestry, rural municipal government, water resources, telecommunications, or independent business in constituencies like my own, we need evidence of government with conscience and compassion. It's not a weakness for government to display a sense of morality or for government to reach out to lend an economic hand to those who are less fortunate.

Mr. Speaker, each of us in this Assembly must recognize our responsibilities to administer this province as servants of its people. Each of us must work to make sure that every Albertan knows that he or she is a part of this province and has a chance to participate in the real life of this province. If we did this, we'd see a vitality, I assure you, that would delight every one of us.

Government should also be an advocate, Mr. Speaker. If we believe in the importance of Albertans, we have to go to bat for these people. When ordinary rural Albertans are ignored, the common good is not being served in this province. Why is it that a few of the powerful can influence government to help them, and then we see condemned as intervention any action for ordinary citizens? In the 1830s Lord Durham is quoted as having said:

It is not by weakening but by strengthening the influence of the people on their government that I believe harmony can be restored.

I feel that 150 years later that's still true.

Mr. Speaker, while the empty echoes of the past that were dredged up in the Speech from the Throne were floating around us here, Albertans were marking Agriculture Week. The week before that was Education Week, with its obscenely self-centred slogan about "Give a little and get a lot". This year has been designated as the year of youth. Where are the signs that these designated periods mean anything? Special weeks or listing agriculture, education, and employment as priorities in a document like this count for nothing unless they have content that does something for people.

You have perhaps heard it said, Mr. Speaker, that we do not inherit this planet from our grandparents but that we are borrowing it from our children. I want to share, for a moment or two, some comments from letters from young people at Rycroft school in my constituency. In these letters they talk about their school, but as we listen, I hope they might influence us as members of this Assembly to act boldly to create a society in Alberta that's marked by the kinds of things they are saying.

Michelle Isaac says:

Our school carries a special bond between students and students, students and teachers, and teachers and teachers. This is good for everyone's state of mind and ... has given me the opportunity to ... build higher standards for myself.

Crystal Nedahen, in grade 6, says:

I have learned to respect others and try to put my best effort into my work and helping out with other people.

Liann Bosch says:

There is ... a feeling of trust everywhere ...

Tracey Grimm, in grade 8, says:

Someone is always willing to help you or say a pleasant hello ... activities are always being offered

and you rarely find anyone who is bored ... because [everyone's interests are considered].

Mr. Speaker, if we are taking care of this planet and this province for our children, we must encourage them to think about how things could be, about how things might be, because therein lies the courage for them to move ahead. As we've just heard from these letters, children in rural Alberta still know a lot about the positive values on which this province was built. But the ripples that are spreading out as the economic crisis establishes itself are growing wider, and we must act to affirm the value of life of every person. Wise government action will let each person be confident about his or her work and about his or her future, confident about their ability to participate in society.

In Alberta we need economic democracy. Now, more than ever, that is something which is practical and realistic. It's something we can achieve, Mr. Speaker. Modern technology can allow diversification in many new areas in rural Alberta, thanks to microelectronics and communications technology. Small, efficient businesses could provide new employment in rural areas without any danger to our precious resources of soil, air, and water. The raw resources which are now pouring out of rural Alberta to create wealth in urban Alberta or elsewhere could be put to use to directly benefit those who are producing those things. State-of-the-art technology will then be the means by which a way of life is not simply preserved but can be extended and strengthened. But it takes economic assistance at the beginning, Mr. Speaker, to develop this kind of creative self-reliance in the long run.

My criticism of the Speech from the Throne has been anchored in a rural perspective, but it does not make my comments any less relevant to urban Albertans. In 1896 William Jennings Bryan said: "Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and grass will grow where you now have city streets." The harmful ripple from the economic threats to the family farm are being felt in our towns and cities, and they continue to spread. But the beneficial ripple from strong action to help ordinary rural Albertans would also be felt in our towns and cities, and it would bring benefits to every one of us.

Mr. Speaker, the intentions of the government, as outlined in the Speech from the Throne, are inadequate. With this outline as a guideline for action and legislation, the government both fails to meet its present responsibilities and avoids its responsibilities for the future.

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, on this, the third session of the 20th Legislature, it is my pleasure to respond to the throne speech presented so lucidly by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor in what could quaintly be referred to as a maiden speech. Witnessing the first female Lieutenant Governor deliver the throne speech makes it an historic moment for me and for all members of the Legislature.

At this time I would also like to congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion, the members for Edmonton Whitemud and Rocky Mountain House, for so energetically moving the throne speech. I would like to point out that after the presentation by the Member for Edmonton Whitemud, I had to return to the drawing board and restructure my speech, as much of it had been covered by his very pointed and informative remarks. It was a very satisfying endeavor, however, which I'm sure improved and strengthened my speech. I was able to add a number of additional points to it. There have also been many other excellent

speeches presented since that time, which I was able to observe and include comments on.

I would also like to welcome to this Assembly the new Member for Spirit River-Fairview and wish him the best success in serving his constituents and the people of Alberta. I only hope that the member takes a positive approach in his work in this Assembly and does not share in the negativism and pessimism preached by his leader. The Member for Spirit River-Fairview may already exhibit the leadership qualities which the negative democratic party has searched for in such desperation since last October. However, after listening to his tirade of empty socialist rhetoric, I believe these are false expectations. It is clear from those remarks that the member has much to learn about the vast array of social programs which this government provides to its citizens.

It was interesting to note that the Member for Spirit River-Fairview referred to the great number of facilities which he had visited in his constituency. It struck me as rather interesting that the member never pointed out how those facilities arrived there. Maybe the member should consider the fact that various programs provided by this government — programs like the MCR grants, the Agricultural Societies grants, and various other forms of assistance — provided those facilities the member was able to enjoy.

During the election campaign, if I may recall, one of the campaign platforms upon which the member ran was that it didn't matter whether a government member or an opposition member held a seat, that indeed statistics showed that the Spirit River-Fairview riding had greatly benefitted over the last number of years by having an opposition member, the late former leader, as the Member of the Legislative Assembly. I think the new Member for Spirit River-Fairview should take into account that all those facilities which his party so clearly put forward as having benefitted the citizens of Spirit River-Fairview came through government programs.

Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Edmonton Belmont proceed into 1985 with cautious optimism. There is no question that the recession of the last two years as well as international events beyond the control of the province have taken their toll in people's lives in my constituency. The old adage "when the going gets tough, the tough get going" applies very suitably to Edmonton Belmont, if not to all Albertans. In meeting with some of the unemployed in my constituency, I get a clear message: "We're counting on this government to restore the economy and the confidence which goes with it." As these individuals are speaking with me, they are not indicating any kind of shift away from the present government. They are not looking for alternative political parties on the fringe of acceptability from either the right or left wing. They base their faith in this government to maintain the high standard of living which Albertans enjoy.

We are well aware that large numbers of the unemployed in the Edmonton region, particularly in Edmonton Belmont, are tradesmen in the construction industry by profession. We know that that sector of the economy has had a lot of difficulty in recovering due to the overbuilding over the last few years of the boom times, as we call them. It's going to take some time, as has been so well described and explained in this Assembly, before new projects will go on stream to take up that slack.

The word "confidence" has been referred to on a number of occasions from the throne speech. I believe that this attitude is the most crucial element in the successful recovery

of our province to those expected levels. The word "confidence", according to the Oxford dictionary, means "firm trust; assured expectation". At no time since the economic downturn has there been greater job security for Albertans who are employed than at the present time. The period of fear and uncertainty has passed. Over the past 24 months there was a lot of that uncertainty and a lot of fear relating to job security. But I found that those 86 percent of Edmontonians or 89 percent of Albertans who hold jobs believe that the danger of losing those jobs has been largely alleviated. Those individuals, as well as the business community, are counting on this continued leadership from our provincial government to preserve this confidence.

I've conversed with many members of the Belmont constituency who are concerned about the future. There was mention made by the Member for Little Bow that this government does not listen. Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the member listens in his constituency and I think that he should believe that the members in the rest of this Assembly listen to their constituents, because I certainly do. I still find that to be one of the most satisfying aspects of being an MLA: working with constituents by listening and responding to their concerns. However, those people point out to me that if it is not their own future they are worried about, because it may well be secure, it is the future of their friends or families that they are concerned or worried about.

Given that, I believe it is important to once again highlight the six priority areas which the government has identified in the throne speech. I think these should be regarded as crucial in terms of the priorities which this government places on these six areas: number one, economic recovery and employment stability; number two, agriculture; number three, basic education reforms; number four, industrial and science strategy; number five, fiscal policy; and number six, legislative proposals. I think it should be made clear that all the areas included here indicate that this government is responding fully to those concerns that have been expressed to MLAs. I will refer to these areas in my remarks so that there is no uncertainty as to the government's determination to improve the economic health of our province.

The question some constituents raise as I listen to them in coffee parties, in doorways, town hall meetings, over the telephone, or through letters is whether they believe some other political party could possibly fulfill these expectations. After taking the time to point out to these interested individuals the vast array of programs and policies which the government has in place, they inevitably leave convinced of the government's commitment to put forth as many realistic approaches as possible. Mr. Speaker, only this government and this party has exhibited the ability to maintain the confidence of Albertans. As such, I pledge myself as a member of this government to continue to support those high levels of excellence which my constituents demand and to improve or expand any programs or projects which can be justified as beneficial to Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, if I may respond to some of the remarks made by the Member for Edmonton Norwood in his reply to the throne speech, I believe there are a number of points which must be clarified and challenged. The citizens of Belmont would be more than interested in being made aware of them. The hon. Leader of the Opposition seemed to be bending over backwards attempting to sound positive in his comments in this Legislature in the early days of this third session. But I have the feeling, after listening to that member

for over two years, that he is incapable of saying or believing anything positive about our beautiful province. The sad reality of those comments and beliefs, Mr. Speaker, is that he and his party cannot contribute to the strengths of this province but wish to benefit from the misery of some segments of our population. It is pathetic that the negative democratic party believes its fortunes rest with knocking and criticizing everything that Albertans have strived for and achieved. The constituents of Edmonton Belmont reject this doomsday view of those who believe in the philosophy of government intervention in all aspects of the economy — taxation to pay for unnecessary programs, servitude to union bosses, a condemnation of the free-enterprise spirit upon which this province was founded. Socialism is not the answer; it is the problem.

After listening to the Leader of the Opposition — and I hope he will stay just a few minutes longer — it seems that he intends to further his political fortunes on the backs of the unemployed and the disadvantaged. It's somewhat interesting that his aide, normally seated in the public gallery, is not here. The bearded wonder — he looks like somebody who went moose hunting and forgot to return — isn't here to listen to these remarks.

DR. BUCK: You're a cheap shot artist, Szwender.

MR. SZWENDER: He gave a speech in my constituency and — Mr. Member for Clover Bar should listen to this. He mentioned yesterday that the fortunes of the NDP rise proportionately with the unemployment rate in this city and in the province. I think those are very astute observations which all my constituents want to be aware of.

Also, I wish that the Leader of the Opposition were here to possibly discipline some of his aides in proper manners when we say prayers at the beginning of the day. I hope that particular aide will not keep his hands in his pockets; it's less than acceptable, in my estimation.

However, that approach cannot be permitted, because I care far too much for the people I represent to permit them to fall prey to such regressive and exploitive thinking. The Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Edmonton Norwood, has persisted in harping about the unemployment situation in this province. Certainly, my position and the position of this government has always been that any Albertan wishing employment should be able to find it. Anything less is unacceptable. When the Member for Edmonton Norwood attempted to put forward some concrete, positive suggestions for job creation, he not only failed to do so but simply suggested ideas which are already in place or are completely unworkable.

One suggestion he made was to clean up Alberta's rivers. That's an interesting one. But let me briefly outline a program we have, the Alberta environment employment program, which contains all and more of what was suggested. I have the brochure right here. The Alberta environment employment program is a provincial government program administered by the special Manpower programs branch of Alberta Manpower which will create productive employment opportunities for unemployed Albertans. The program is expected to achieve this goal by funding eligible employers who undertake environmental project activities in Alberta. It's unfortunate he was not aware of this program that is presently in place and some of the many others which he conveniently overlooked — programs such as Hire a Young Albertan, the Alberta youth employment and training program, the priority employment program, the Alberta wage

subsidy program. The list continues, Mr. Speaker. No doubt these are the significant contributions which are unmatched anywhere in this country and to which the government welcomes any additional positive suggestions which would enhance these programs.

In discussions held in this Legislature, there has been mention of putting on stream construction projects which otherwise would not go forward. Mr. Speaker, this government does not intend to fall into a deficit budget situation, which has cursed this country at the federal level; that is, deficit spending to be paid for by future generations. Are we to build more schools simply because we have unemployed teachers? Should we be building more provincial buildings simply to provide construction employment? Do we need more roads in the constituency of Camrose? My constituents have demanded two things, which, as I listen to them, they have repeated often. The first is "no deficit financing." We have achieved this measure of restraint. The second requests a cutback in the public service; that is, in the number of civil servants. Again we achieved that on a phased-in process. I am convinced that in both areas we have satisfied the expectations of our constituents. I am extremely proud of our achievements on both accounts.

Just briefly, in conclusion on this issue, I would like to quote the Premier's words from *Hansard* on March 15, responding to questions about the unemployment situation in Alberta, particularly with respect to unemployment in the construction industry:

If there are capital projects that are needed and they can be accelerated under the present circumstances, that's something we would welcome.

The key phrase is in the words "that are needed" and "can be accelerated." With this commitment I hope the government would look at some possible capital cost projects — in which, by the way, this province leads the nation on a per capita basis in spending and has maintained the levels of previous years, approximately \$3 billion. One project which I personally would like to see considered is the completion of the Genesee power plant, if given the approval of the Energy Resources Conservation Board.

In this, my third year as the MLA for Edmonton Belmont, I had the valuable opportunity to serve as a member of the advisory committee to the Minister of Education on the School Act review. Unquestionably, the experience I acquired as a participant on this committee has been incredibly rewarding in providing me with a much broader perspective of our province. Not only did I become significantly more familiar with the educational system in this province but I also gained a much better comprehension of the many diverse communities from northern to southern Alberta. As a committee we were hosted extremely well by the various communities and their MLAs, in centres like St. Paul, Edson, Wainwright, Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, and Fort McMurray. I could go on to refer to the beautiful educational facilities we visited in those locations, but I think adequate mention of and reference to those was made by the Member for Calgary Foothills. I was significantly impressed by the Crystal Park school in Grande Prairie and the G. H. Dawe Centre in Red Deer. A warm thank you to those communities and their MLAs.

As a result of those public meetings, I am much better able to appreciate the dedication and abilities of my legislative colleagues on that committee. In particular I appreciated the extremely competent leadership of the committee's chairman, the Member for St. Albert. I am certain that the efforts of

our committee will provide all Albertans with an educational system responsive to the needs of Albertans, an educational system that will serve for the remainder of this century. Having been a teacher for over 11 years, I felt I understood the many facets of education in our province, but only now realize how limited my perspectives had been.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Edmonton Belmont is growing by leaps and bounds. My wife and I moved into our new home in the Londonderry community last summer and, since that time, have seen many homes rapidly going up around ours. Since Christmas over 15 homes have been completed or are presently under construction within a two-block vicinity in the Londonderry Heights subdivision. In the other new community of Cherry Grove, over 50 homes have been completed during the past year. I welcome all these new residents to Edmonton Belmont and look forward to serving them as M.L.A. I will particularly welcome the newest constituent, whom I expect this July: my wife's and my firstborn.

Mr. Speaker, in summary, 99.999 percent of the world's population would thank God on all fours to have the blessings of our beautiful Alberta. We are graced with much, and I cannot understand those who bellyache, as if to say they do not respect our plentiful opportunities. Besides our natural resources, natural beauty, agriculture, and people, we enjoy a standard of living which would be the envy of most Canadians. Albertans pay the lowest personal provincial tax, no gasoline or sales tax, have the highest per capita income in the nation, the greatest per capita retail spending, the highest rate of assistance to social allowance recipients as well as the most generous allowances on most social programs, and the highest per capita expenditure on education as well as the highest paid teachers in this nation. Given all this, I join my constituents in expressing enthusiasm for the challenges that lie ahead in this year, as we experience a recovering economy which will once again provide opportunities to all Albertans in meeting their goals and aspirations.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of Bow Valley, I would like to respond to the throne speech. I would like to echo the congratulations we have been giving to the Lieutenant Governor, not only on her appointment but on the throne speech. I wish her the very best in all the years to come in that office.

On this 20th anniversary of our Premier's being the leader of the Conservative Party, I would also like to congratulate him on this occasion. Certainly, we can all say that Alberta has improved significantly in the last 20 years, and I think we owe quite a lot of that to our leader.

Mr. Speaker, I was a fraternal delegate to the urban municipalities convention in Jasper in 1982, where a former cabinet minister from Saskatchewan, from a different political party, expounded for an hour on how the province of Alberta had led in the debate on the Constitution. He said that without Alberta the west would never have gained the amendments that were made in the Constitution. Certainly, we would all have to say that as well as having a good province, we should also be thankful for having a great Premier.

I should also congratulate the members from Whitemud and Rocky Mountain House in their moving and seconding of the throne speech. I thought both were very eloquent.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I have a constituency office in Brooks, Alberta. It's in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce

and is open from 9 in the morning till 4:30 at night. The girls who work there claim that the people of Bow Valley have mental telepathy, because when I don't seem to be around the country, they get a few phone calls and a few letters but no great things happen. They said that if I happen to be in for a few days, we get a lineup of people wanting to talk about something. I also have an arrangement with some people in Bassano. There's a firm where I have some office space whenever I need it. So when I happen to be in Bassano, I also have a constituency office there.

One thing I find is that I have hundreds of people phoning and writing letters. Some of their problems might seem insignificant to some people, but to those people it's the most important problem they have. So you have to deal with it at that level. Recently I have not been able to be in my constituency office during office hours, and when I go in and pick up a pile of telephone messages on a Sunday and phone somebody, they say, "Boy, you've got funny office hours."

Bow Valley is a typical Alberta constituency. The three main things we have going are agriculture, energy, and, recently, tourism. Tourism was not a significant industry in the Brooks area until recently. Since the downturn of the energy economy, people have certainly taken a lot more interest. I also do quite a lot of work with the Eastern Irrigation District. They're having their 50th anniversary, being celebrated on May 3. I believe everyone here has had an invitation to that anniversary. It will last from Friday through Saturday and probably into Sunday; it's something like a Ukrainian wedding. You are certainly welcome to attend any part of it. On behalf of the EID, I hope you people will attend.

The energy industry in Bow Valley was very strong until the downturn in 1981, when we had some problems with the service and drilling parts. The production people, although there were some problems with shut-in gas and oil wells, carried on through the downturn with a lot more strength than the service industry did. There were quite a few bankruptcies in those areas, although they have now strengthened to quite an extent. There are a lot more wells being drilled, and the service industry is now quite stable.

The Chamber of Commerce and the town council and the downtown business association and, of course, all the service clubs are trying to promote tourism in that area. We have quite a lot of interest to visitors. We have three provincial parks. Dinosaur Park is a world heritage site. It's a supplier of most of the fossils in the world. Certainly, you can go to Europe and find a dinosaur fossil setup that came from Dinosaur Park, called Steepleville at that time. One of my sons was in Ottawa a few years ago and visited a museum. He said, "Lo and behold, here's a great big dinosaur." He read the little plaque on it, and it said "This came from the Dinosaur Park at Steepleville." It's also quite a supplier of the dinosaurs for the Tyrell Museum in Drumheller.

We also have Kinbrook Island Park. It's at Lake Newell, where there's great fishing and sailing and water skiing. There's a park called Tillebrook. It's mainly an overnight park, but it has some good camping facilities. Recently we have established the Crawling Valley Provincial Park. That's only being built at this time, but it certainly should be a tremendous attraction to visitors in the future. We also have the provincial horticulture station. They have a field day in August and show the visitors what types of improvements there are in agriculture. Of course, they're open to visitors year round. We have the wildlife centre, where they raise,

along with a lot of other things, approximately 100,000 pheasants which are turned out throughout the province every year to enhance hunting.

Agriculture in Bow Valley is quite similar to the rest of the province. We have a problem with the cost/price squeeze, where the cost of production is generally equal to or above commodity sales. Of course, the people in Bow Valley are telling me that subsidy is not the answer. They really don't want subsidies. If we're talking about free trade, we have to say that commodity prices have to be subject to the world market. That can't be changed. What we have to do is reduce production costs. Some of you have heard me say that when I started in the cattle business, when I was a young fellow, an old rancher told me, "If you want to make any money in this business, don't spend any." As a matter of fact, one of them came to me and said, "If you're going to ranch, don't go and buy a whole lot of machinery. All you need is a three-ton truck and a saddle." In those days you could live that way. Hay was \$10 a ton. As a struggling beginner, I often wondered how much wisdom was in that remark, as I was trying to pay for a lot of machinery and irrigate to grow feed. Since that time, that option has disappeared. If a person had to buy all the feed that he fed to his cows this winter, at today's prices, he would be out of the cattle business by next month. Maybe we should be looking at getting back to part of that theory.

During the boom days, when people were competing with labour at high costs, they tended to buy bigger machinery and got very capital-intensive. Of course, interest was what broke them. Today, I don't think you need to be concerned about competing with high labour costs. As a matter of fact, on our place last year we needed to hire a man, and we advertised in the paper. My son was looking after it, and I think he said he got 37 answers for that one job. So it shows, that maybe instead of buying a bigger tractor, we can run the old one a lot longer, with a little less cost.

I stopped in one of my constituent's fields one day last fall. He was combining a field of soft wheat. I was congratulating him on his good-looking crop. He said, "Oh, it's running all right. But when the bank gets through with it, it might just as well have been hailed out."

Part of the problem is that we're competing with subsidies from other countries and other Canadian provinces. Last summer the beef industry was competing with subsidized beef that was shipped here from Ireland. In a discussion with the chairman of the Alberta Cattle Commission the other day, I said: "How can Ireland be a threat to North America in beef exports? I'd be surprised if they could supply their own country." Well, they have what they call the European Economic Community. Several countries in the European Economic Community have foot-and-mouth disease, so they can't export cattle. But they can export them to Ireland, and the Irish people can eat beef that was slaughtered in a country that had foot-and-mouth disease. That allowed Ireland to export every hoof they raised. That's what we're up against. It was highly subsidized; it was subsidized at 50 percent of the cost of production in Alberta. We are certainly in need of a red meat stabilization program so we don't polarize the red meat industry in Canada and we're not competing with the treasuries of other provinces.

The chairman of the Cattle Commission told me that same day that the method of payment of the Crow rate costs every producer of feeder cattle \$37 a head. How he came about that formula he didn't explain to me, but he

assured me he would have that formula before me before today. However, I haven't received it. He also commented on what it does to our value-added industries, such as feedlots and packing houses.

I should make a few comments about the problems in the sugar industry. Some people have talked about it, and there are some comments I think I could add. As was said before, the cane-growing countries are the competition to the sugar industry in Canada, and their production costs are 50 cents a pound. I believe there's an 11 percent overproduction of sugar in Canada, and it's dumped and brought in here at 4 cents a pound, which is a dumping price. They say that the cost of production is 15 cents a pound in the cane-growing countries.

I'm not familiar with a lot of cane-growing countries, but when I was in Hawaii, they told me that the value of an acre of farmland over there was approximately \$40,000. They said that very few individuals own any land; it's mostly owned by the state. It takes two years to grow a cane crop. On an acre of \$40,000 land, I'd say that there have to be some subsidies in the cost of production, if that's 15 cents. If a person was paying anything like the interest on that investment, that would cost him more than 15 cents a pound. You produce a sugar crop every second year. They seed it once every six years and harvest it every two years out of those six. Taking two years to grow it on land of that value, I wonder if they can actually produce it for 15 cents a pound or if they getting the use of that land at no cost or at very little cost.

I'd like to say a few things about the vegetable growers in my constituency and the particular problem they had in the fall of 1984. There were a lot of vegetables frozen in the ground. We have the Newell vegetable packers in Brooks, and they said that in some areas only about 65 percent of the crop they contracted was actually harvested, and less than that in others. I know one young grower who started out in the carrot business last year. He rented some land, he put in 95 acres of carrots, and he got 15 acres harvested. He told me that the cost of producing that crop was approximately \$600 an acre. The worst part of it all was that for the 15 acres he did get harvested, he got a young fellow that I knew to go out and help him for a few days. There was a serious accident, and that young fellow lost his arm in the accident. That was really added disaster. However, it wasn't to do with his loss.

I hope we can do something for relief for some of these growers, for the simple reason that Newell vegetable packers have to have some contracts fairly soon if they're going to carry on through the 1985 year. If these people are in a financial situation so that they can't contract with Newell Vegetables, then that industry will also have to close.

Mr. Speaker, I was at a midwest governors' conference in Lincoln, Nebraska, last November. I noticed that their agriculture industry is no better than ours, and probably there was more doom and gloom in that area than you'll see in most of Alberta. They were concerned about competing with subsidies in Canada in particular, but also in other countries that produce agricultural products. At a

recent seminar in Banff, one of the United States economists said that in 1984 the United States subsidized agriculture to the tune of \$18 billion. I understand that President Reagan has said there won't be any subsidies in the United States, so we should be working with those people to come up with some agriculture products that we can raise effectively without subsidies, and both compete in the same market. The problem the U.S. has is that they do have a cheap food policy. The United States is the lowest in the world. The wage earner in the United States pays, after taxes, 14 cents out of his wage dollar for food. In Canada it's slightly higher; I believe the Canadian wage earner pays, after taxes, approximately 17 cents for food, which is not a significant amount. Certainly both of them are way down the scale compared to the rest of the world.

Along with the suggestions in the white paper, Alberta is supposed to establish an agriculture and food policy this summer. This was also alluded to in the throne speech. Certainly, we should have something to work on when that paper comes out.

One of the highlights of 1984 for the people in Bow Valley, Mr. Speaker, was the small business equity program. There was a lot of interest. Some people have used the small business equity legislation, and although the amount of money that was put into it has been used, I would certainly support our adding to that in 1985.

Mr. Speaker, I can certainly see that it's going to be an exciting year. There are going to be a lot of new challenges, and I think we should support the throne speech.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, in view of the hour and in view of the fact that I have so many positive comments to make about Her Honour's positive speech, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the motion by the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, by way of advising the Assembly as to the business for tomorrow, it is of course private members' day in the afternoon. It is not proposed by the government to sit in the Legislature tomorrow evening. We'll proceed on Friday with a number of other speakers and perhaps conclude the debate on the Speech from the Throne that morning. I therefore give notice to the House of that intention.

I move that we call it 5:30.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 5:18 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]

