

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, May 28, 1985 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 240
Public Ambulance Act

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being the Public Ambulance Act.

Mr. Speaker, proper ambulance service saves lives, and many groups in Alberta have been calling for adequate ambulance services for years. This Bill would ensure uniform and adequate standards and training for personnel and standards for equipment, communications, and other essentials of good ambulance service provincewide.

[Leave granted; Bill 240 read a first time]

Bill 273 Disabled Parking Act

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce the Disabled Parking Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to ensure and enforce the reservation of parking spaces in public parking lots for disabled persons. In addition, the Bill would create a standard parking permit, which would be recognized across the province, identifying a vehicle either operated by or transporting a disabled person.

[Leave granted; Bill 273 read a first time]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, some 22 young, bright students from grades 5 and 6 in Fort Vermilion. They're accompanied by their teachers, Lou Brosha, Ken Hampel, Trudy Hiesler, and Bridget Cardinal, and bus drivers Brian Fletcher and Henry Harder. I ask them to rise in the members' gallery and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MRS. FYFE: Mr. Speaker, today I have the privilege of introducing three classes visiting the Legislature from Sir Alexander MacKenzie school in the St. Albert constituency. They are accompanied by a number of their teachers, including Mr. Bouthillier. I ask them all to stand in the members' gallery and be recognized by members of the Assembly.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, 24 grade 9 students from the Peter Pond community school

located in Fort McMurray, in the constituency of Lac La Biche-McMurray, of course. They're accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Amgad Rushdy and Mr. Pat Davis, and parents Mrs. Yvonne Scott and Mr. Don Weiss. They're seated in the public gallery, and I ask that they rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, a visitor to Edmonton Kingsway from the beautiful country of Holland, specifically from the city of Heerde. Mrs. Elizabeth Hiel is vacationing in Alberta, visiting her son Dirk Hiel, a constituent and friend. They are seated in the members' gallery. I ask them to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, a very special class of 10 students who are in grade 9 in the Exshaw school in Banff-Cochrane. They're accompanied here today by their principal, Mrs. Betty Piwowar, and student teacher Ms Brenda Spencer. I wonder if they would mind rising and receiving the Assembly's welcome.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Income Tax

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier, and it flows from the taxation discussion we had last week. The Premier seemed to indicate last week that since the federal government collects the taxes for us, there is basically nothing the Alberta government can do to make sure that the wealthy pay their fair share of personal income tax. My question is this: has the government received any information which leads them to believe that we don't have the power to change the provincial tax rates for certain people, or is the problem just that the government does not wish to do it unless we administer the system altogether?

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, I'll refer the question to the hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. opposition leader knows, the federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Wilson, has tabled a discussion paper on the whole issue of minimum taxes in connection with the delivery of his federal budget. As the government which, through tax agreements, administers personal taxes in nine out of 10 of the provinces, the federal government has indicated that it is their intention to move in that direction and that they wish to explore three options and maybe others that were noted in the documents. We would be part of that exploration over the course of the next several months.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I'm aware of that, and we'll come to that specifically, Mr. Speaker. But flowing from the questions then, my question to either hon. gentleman simply is: regardless of what the federal government does, would the Alberta government consider moving on our own provincial part of the tax revenue to impose a minimum tax? We were led to believe that we didn't have

the authority; I believe we do. My question is simple and straightforward.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure exactly what the hon. gentleman is proposing. But there is considerable doubt as to whether that would be a move which the Alberta government could take by an amendment to the tax agreements, without the endorsement of the federal government. On the other hand, if the hon. gentleman is suggesting that we should move into our own personal tax system like the province of Quebec, then that would be another situation.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I wasn't suggesting either. It flowed from our discussion the other day, Mr. Speaker. Moving into that area — I believe it's on pages 29 and 30 — where they talk about an alternative minimum tax and looking for the co-operation of the provincial government, the federal government suggests that it is very possible for provinces to participate in an alternative minimum tax system by altering the provincial tax rates. My question is: at this moment, what is the policy of this government with regard to that suggestion? Are we going to move on the provincial part of it, as suggested in the federal budget speech?

MR. HYNDMAN: As I say, Mr. Speaker, the federal government has tabled this document, which represents a background paper on the question of a minimum tax, and has invited all 10 provinces to participate in a review over the course of the next seven or eight months in that area. The federal government has said that it will be proceeding to amend legislation to put in that kind of tax. So it is Alberta's position at this stage that we will review that document, and we will indicate what our position is, probably late this year.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. As a point of clarification, the Treasurer is saying that at this point we have no policy on whether the minimum tax should be provided to the wealthy on the provincial portion? We have no position on this at this moment?

MR. HYNDMAN: No, that would not be accurate, Mr. Speaker. The government has always taken the position that those with high incomes should be required to pay a fair share. The federal government, though, has now moved into the posture of tabling a paper on that topic. We will participate with other provinces in the discussions of not only those three options but perhaps others. We will indicate later on this year our response to the federal proposal, which I gather is a federal goal to put into effect perhaps during the January, February 1986 federal budget.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question flowing from the Treasurer's answers, Mr. Speaker. The Treasurer said that it's always been the policy of this government that the wealthy should pay their fair share of the taxes, if I understand him right. Could the Treasurer indicate why double the national average, over 1,800 people, paid no taxes at all in Alberta in 1981 if that's always been our policy?

MR. JOHNSTON: Did you read the document carefully, Ray?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, again it requires a reading of the document and an understanding that in Alberta there

is, of course, a progressive tax scale wherein for those who are earning large amounts of money, as that increases, the amount of tax which they pay increases. Again, during the course of the months ahead we'll be reviewing this issue with the other nine provinces, and we'll have our position well known by the fall.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the the Treasurer. I think maybe he got "progressive" and "regressive" mixed up, by those figures.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MARTIN: In his answers, the Premier referred to what seemed to be a mysterious task force on taxation in the white paper. My question to either hon. gentleman: has the government directed that group specifically to review the question of how to make the wealthy in this province pay their fair share of the taxes?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, one of a number of items which that task force is reviewing deals with the question of all those income levels paying a fair and appropriate share of tax. It deals with not only corporate but personal tax, so that's well within the mandate of the task force.

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

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we hope that's the case; time will tell. Could the Treasurer, as I take it, the chairman of this taxation committee — maybe I'm wrong there, but I certainly know he's involved — outline for the Assembly which private-sector representatives are on this committee and what the specific mandate of this group is?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's an internal group. They will be making recommendations to the government, and the hon. member will know what the government position is when the government announces it. This will be one of a number of inputs to government policy in that area.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could come back to this topic if there is time.

MR. ALEXANDER: Could I ask a supplementary on this question, Mr. Speaker? I wonder if the Provincial Treasurer could inform the House as to whether his tax group or he in his department has any analysis of income tax returns which would indicate why wealthy Albertans pay no tax in any given year. It strikes me the reasons can be only two: substantial investment losses or tax-deferred investments offered by the federal government. Perhaps there's some analysis in the hon. Provincial Treasurer's department that indicates why wealthy Albertans may not pay tax in any given year. If you have that, we should have it.

DR. BUCK: Nice speech, Keith.

MR. HYNDMAN: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, in many cases it's by reason of investments which subsequently create jobs in Alberta. The background material of which the hon. member speaks would be one of those items which the task force would refer to and which would be elaborated on in

terms of government policy relating to the white paper and input to the white paper during the course of last summer, which will be revealed over the course of the months ahead.

MR. MARTIN: We will move on. I thought maybe the hon. member was one of the people; that's why I was a little worried about it.

Health Care Costs

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second set of questions to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. It has to do with a study. I wonder if the minister is aware of it in his ongoing review; at least we read about his ongoing review of health care costs. It's a 1984 U.S. Congressional study, entitled *Estimating the Effects of Economic Change on National Health and Social Well-being*. My question is: has the minister looked at this report, which basically shows dramatic increases in direct health care costs associated with increases in unemployment?

MR. RUSSELL: No, Mr. Speaker. From the description given, I can't recollect having seen that report.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm a little surprised, because it's a rather important one, and the minister seems to be on an ongoing crusade about health care costs ...

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we could get to the question and not get too analytical about the hon. minister's reading habits.

MR. MARTIN: I'll help the minister out, Mr. Speaker. This particular study shows that in the U.S. in 1980 — it was released in 1984 ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I recognize the kind of exercise we are purporting to be about to embark on. The hon. leader will no doubt be choosing selected texts from the report, asking the minister whether he has a position in regard to them, and so on. May I respectfully suggest that the appropriate way to get information in regard to this subject and many others is to come out and ask for it directly and not lean on some American or Mexican or any other report.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, if you had waited, you would have found that's precisely what I'm going to do, but I had to make the case that there's a relationship and it's documented. They talk about \$187 billion in direct costs that was lost. My question is simply this: has the minister any studies here in this province to show how much direct additional health costs have been incurred in Alberta as a result of the 300 percent increase in the unemployment rate between 1980 and the present?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I dealt with that matter earlier in the House when I was responding to questions relating to utilization. One of the reasons put forward by some experts in the field is that perhaps during times of higher unemployment people see their doctors more, because either they have the time or they're apprehensive and their mental conditions bring about physical ailments, so they do visit the doctors. That is one theory. On the other hand, there is evidence to show that surgical rates have decreased during the same time. Another theory advanced for that is

that when work is harder to get, people hesitate to take time off work to have elective surgery done. So it is rather a complex issue. We have tried to analyze the way utilization rates change during times of employment or higher unemployment. They also seem to change during good economic times. I think the most interesting thing is that over the last decade they have steadily increased through bad times and good, in a relative sense.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister, flowing from this. He said there are various theories. My question simply is: has the minister any plans to undertake a study to determine both the direct and indirect health care cost increases which have occurred since our unemployment, I believe, has skyrocketed? If he says there are other theories, is he taking a study to look at this? Surely, in this sort of discussion, this would be important ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I have a little trouble responding to a question of that nature. I've said so many times that we have a health care system in Canada in which there is totally unimpeded, universal access, at no direct cost to the consumer or no requirement that the consumer need be aware of the costs. It's very difficult to analyze any particular utilization trend under that wide-open system. I believe the hon. leader is aware of the different moves that different provinces, including Alberta, have made to try to get some handle on utilization trends. Currently, we have a task force of governmental people and doctors from the participating professions trying to analyze the reasons behind the increase in utilization trends in lab and diagnostic procedures going on recently.

I'm in no position to stand up here to explain why a certain kind of test should have increased 25 percent in one year over the previous year. Obviously, there are some complex reasons behind that, and we're always in the position where we're trying to analyze those trends and utilization. Of course, the costs associated with them are tracked weekly, but as I mentioned earlier, it is very difficult under the Canadian health care system to try to establish any fences or terms of reference.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. On a point of clarification, it may be difficult, but is the minister saying that by advancing the various theories he did about rising health care costs, the government is not sure whether high and rising unemployment adds directly to health care costs or not? They do not have a policy on this?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, our policy is to endorse and support the five principles of Canada's medicare program and make the services available to people. We have tried in our own way to bring in some element of responsibility both at the patient's and at the practitioner's level and try to maintain some kind of cost control, but there is simply no way I'm aware of whereby we might pin a reason on increasing utilization. It is a national trend. It's one that's been apparent in Alberta over the last decade. The last annual report of the department, which I tabled a couple of weeks ago, shows that the average number of visits to a doctor by a typical Albertan has increased steadily each year over the past decade. It's a national trend, and of course all governments on the continent are trying to grope with that.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. To be a little more specific, has there been any analysis of an increase in stress-related diseases, alcoholism, more mental health treatment, since unemployment started to go up in this province in, say, the last three years?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, my colleague the hon. Minister of Social Services and Community Health is carrying out some work related to stress and mental health. I'm only in the position to track what is happening and suggest and repeat the various propositions that have been put to us. We have carried out the two studies that I'm aware of, the one on the use of surgical facilities in Alberta, because it seemed to have a very high surgical rate, and the current one dealing with lab and diagnostic facilities. I hope the hon. member appreciates that this is a very difficult thing to attach a series of reasons to against that ongoing, continentwide and steadily increasing rate in utilization over the years.

MR. McPHERSON: A related question, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister have any indication of how much this province spends over and beyond the services required within the Canada Health Act?

MR. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member referring to the current year or to previous years? My concern would be whether he's looking for information which is already public knowledge and available to anyone who wants to undertake the research.

MR. McPHERSON: My question would relate to the past fiscal year, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if we have time for that in the question period, depending on how far back "past" means?

MR. McPHERSON: Well then, let me ask for the current year.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, let me answer it very briefly and quickly. I believe what the hon. member is getting at is that Alberta does have, not only under medical services, a far wider range of services that are covered by our public health care program, but we also have the broadest range of options of any of the provinces; that is, chiropractic, optometry, physiotherapy, et cetera. So in Alberta we are spending and covering well beyond the minimum required by federal legislation.

Water Quality

MR. R. SPEAKER: My question is to the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in Edmonton the pollution study group of the Public Advisory Committee on the Environment reviewed Alberta's water quality standards. I wonder if the minister could indicate whether a review is taking place with regard to those standards and whether the recommendations from a review would be brought to the Legislature in the fall.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I've earlier indicated to the House that reviews are being undertaken at the national level with regard to surface water and drinking water quality guidelines. Alberta is participating in this process and, of course, the process in which you are involved in, updating

these guidelines, takes some time due to the new technology in place in terms of measurement of levels of substances in the environment, particularly in water. It will take some time to have this review completed. It is a priority item of the ministers of environment in the country and also of the health and welfare ministers.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could he indicate, in terms of the review and the establishment of new standards, whether the provincial government will wait for the federal government to establish the new standards first of all and that Alberta will fall in step following a decision by the federal government?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, looking at what drinking water quality guidelines should be is a very complex matter. It takes cross-country effort to come to suitable guidelines, and we want to have in place a recommendation from the various national bodies, in which we participate, in terms of what these drinking water or surface water quality guidelines should be. Once we have that information, we will be acting upon it with regard to provincial standards.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. When the minister says "we will be acting upon it", what is the reason we cannot have an Alberta-made set of standards in terms of water quality, whether it's surface water or drinking water? What reason is there that we cannot set our own tough standards right here in Alberta?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe I've already referred to the very complex, technical nature of arriving at what in fact should be acceptable levels of various substances in the environment, particularly in water. It takes the technical expertise which is gathered across the country to address the various numbers of substances with regard to the technological limits of measuring equipment we have and the input from the various experts across the country for us to come to some conclusions. That's why we have been relying upon national and international efforts by other agencies to determine what are acceptable levels. We are reviewing that in terms of the national context. It takes some time to review the various number of substances and have the technical expertise available to determine what, in fact, are safe levels. It takes some time. We are participating in that. Once we have completed the national review, we'll be able to come forward with drinking water quality standards which are accepted nationally.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. The minister indicates that expert advice should be taken into consideration, and I understand Dr. Ken Penniford made the statement at the conference that "Alberta's drinking water standards are light years behind the times." Has the minister used that expert, or has he had conversation with Dr. Penniford in terms of Alberta's standards and the possibility of establishing standards built in Alberta?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, in terms of an individual study, it's a very complex matter when you look at these substances to determine what would be an acceptable limit with regard to one specific substance which we now may be able to detect in the environment. The effort on a single substance may cost millions of dollars to come up with acceptable scientific criteria as to what an acceptable level would be. That is why we have to depend upon expertise.

not only in this country but reviewing literature in other countries where this type of work has been carried out, to come up with our standard. It's not something on which one individual has all the knowledge in the world to derive these standards.

The gentleman which the hon. member refers to may have expertise in one area, but he does not have expertise in the broad gamut. We must rely upon the scientific expertise we have across the country to come to acceptable conclusions with regard to these matters.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate any type of general time line that may be established at the present time? Will these standards be put in place in 1985, 1986? Has the minister set his own time line for Alberta standards, so that we can have some idea as to when they will change from their present status?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there is a task force on water quality under the direction of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers. The council will be reviewing the progress report from that task force this fall. We do not anticipate we'll be able to act until 1986 or '87 in terms of the conclusions of that task force. There is also a federal/provincial committee on drinking water guidelines under Health and Welfare Canada, which we are participating in. At this time I'm not sure of the exact time they intend to report, but as I've explained, it's not a simple matter you could come to a conclusion quickly on. These guidelines have been under review in the last year or two. The Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers' review was taken at the initiative of Alberta two years ago.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister in terms of the enforcement of the standards that are presently in place and monitoring the standards. I understand that when someone violates the standards, it's a matter of discussion between the Department of the Environment and the offender. Could the minister indicate whether he has taken steps in the past month or two to assure himself that full enforcement takes place with regard to the water standards now in place in this province?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of licences which the department has with regard to industry and municipalities. There's a high level of compliance by industry with regard to water emissions into river courses in the province. I think the compliance is somewhere 97 percent plus. We also have a fairly high level of compliance with regard to municipal systems, although there are more problems with municipalities meeting our standards than with industry at this time. The department has a number of enforcement measures which it uses with regard to municipalities and with industry if there are problems with regard to emissions. The general approach the department has taken is that if a problem is identified, we try to find out what the problem is: is it a blatant emission or is it a technical problem which requires to be resolved? But we do follow up and, as I say, there's a fairly high compliance with regard to the licences we currently have.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. My colleague asked about the status of the idea of a pipeline to the E.L. Smith plant in the west end

of Edmonton and indicated that that might resolve problems regarding water here in the city. Could the minister outline specifically at what stage his review of that particular idea is with regard to improving water quality in this city?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, before the week is out I'm going to be responding to the mayor of the city of Edmonton with regard to his request for the province to participate in a review of Edmonton's drinking water quality. We'll be addressing a number of matters in that, but I wish first to inform the mayor prior to commenting in the Assembly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary with regard to an interim change or interim establishment of a new set of water standards in the province of Alberta. In terms of the minister's action, could the minister indicate what deterrents there are that would prevent his establishing an interim new set of standards for both surface and drinking water in the province of Alberta? What are the deterrents, other than awaiting the environment ministers' report that's in process at the present time?

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I explained, these are very complex matters. You just can't pick a figure out of a hat and say this is what the new standard is going to be. It has to be based on solid, scientific information.

Genesee Project

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications concerning the Genesee plant. Since receiving the ERCB recommendations to delay the commissioning of power from the Genesee plant, has the minister initiated any meetings with members of Edmonton city council to assess the impact those delays will have on unemployment in Edmonton?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, a number of meetings have been held on the very important report issued by the ERCB, with both a representative from Edmonton city council and the other two investor-owned utility companies. All relevant matters are being reviewed by both the Edmonton government caucus committee and the utilities caucus committee before any final decision is made by cabinet.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Out of those meetings, can the minister confirm the city of Edmonton's estimates that the delays for Genesee will mean that about 1,200 jobs will not be realized during the next 18 months?

MR. BOGLE: No, Mr. Speaker, but if the hon. member is interested in the actual man-years involved, he could certainly look at the ERCB report, because that information was provided by the three companies that are in fact building the two power plants in question.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate the nature of representations from interested parties that are urging commissioning the Genesee plant sooner than the ERCB recommendation? Do those other groups that are meeting with the minister recommend the plant's going ahead now?

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I don't think it would be appropriate to get into discussions which are in process. I

indicated when the report was tabled in this House a week ago last Friday that I expected the time frame to be within a three-week period. That was the target set, and I am still rather optimistic that we can maintain that schedule.

MR. MARTIN: Did you talk to the Premier about the boom?

MR. GURNETT: Yes, I wonder if there's been communication between the Premier and the minister. Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is whether he himself has any intention to urge this government to commission power from Genesee in 1988, so that the project could create jobs now.

MR. SPEAKER: I have some difficulty. The minister is a member of a cabinet. It seems to me that predictions as to what the minister is going to say in cabinet in the future stand on the same footing as asking him what he said in cabinet in the past.

MR. GURNETT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I was just providing him with the opportunity to share his intentions with us, to let us know whether he personally will be wanting to recommend the project.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I'd be very interested in knowing the official position of the opposition on this matter. Is the opposition recommending that a plant be commissioned and brought on stream before the electricity is in fact needed?

MR. SPEAKER: With great respect to the hon. minister, I haven't yet discovered a body of rules or practices with regard to ministers questioning the opposition.

MR. MARTIN: We just want to know about the boom. The Premier told us we're in a boom, so we wanted to move it ahead.

Organ Transplants

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. In the fall of 1982 the Alberta Human Tissue Procurement Task Force was established to examine ways and means of increasing the supply of organs for transplantation purposes in Alberta. Would the minister please provide the House with a status report, if possible, and when will the final report be released?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, this item received some fairly extensive news coverage over the weekend when the task force wrapped up its three years of work by hosting an international symposium on the matter at Lake Louise. Between now and September I expect they'll be busy writing their final task force report, which I think the Assembly is probably awaiting with interest. A motion of this Assembly established the task force.

MR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. During the summer of 1984 the medical examiner's office in Edmonton instituted a new policy of phoning the relatives of sudden-death victims for the victim's eyes for transplantation. Could the minister share with this House whether this program has been successful and to what extent, if any?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the advice I have is that that met with limited success. One of the problems that I'm told was identified by the international group that was present is that the medical profession is not shopping for organs. There is some question relating to ethics, practice, and economics as to whether or not they should be. But the idea that is developing around the world is that if we all better understand the benefits that we can pass on to other people that are still here after we have passed on, by donating organs, perhaps we can expand the effectiveness of these programs.

MR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. There is a program called the human organ procurement and exchange program or HOPE. I'm wondering if this program has been successful in any way in obtaining other organs, such as skin, bones, kidneys, et cetera, that are definitely required by citizens in Alberta.

MR. RUSSELL: Yes, it has, Mr. Speaker. I believe there's been good national co-operation. Certainly, that's been my experience in discussing this matter with other provincial ministers of health. HOPE is very active in Alberta. I was present one day at the Kidney Foundation headquarters in Calgary when a Calgary kidney was being packed for shipment to Halifax. So there is the nucleus of a good program under way, but there's certainly room for incredibly increased benefits to our citizens.

MR. PAPROSKI: A final supplementary. With all of these programs that are being discussed and have been implemented, Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware if the waiting list for organ transplants is decreasing in this province?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any current numbers, but we know that there are always people waiting. Our technology is improving, our resources are increasing, and what we need to do now is work on the human understanding and public acceptance of organ transplant programs. The new Red Cross blood transfusion headquarters here in Edmonton will contain facilities for a tissue bank, and that will be a big help, but as to establishing inventories, the final result really rests with all of us.

Federal/Provincial Agricultural Programs

MR. LYSONS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. The minister met with his counterpart from Ottawa this morning. I'd like to ask if he's resolved the red meat stabilization question, farm fuel taxation, and if the excise tax will apply to farm machinery in the new budget.

MR. FJORDBOTEN: First of all, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the red meat stabilization program, the federal minister reconfirmed his priority and the federal government's priority on moving forward with Bill C-25 with all due haste. That's the enabling legislation that would allow the establishment of a national red meat stabilization program. It's still his intention to move as quickly as possible with that.

The other items the hon. member raised are part of the assessment I now have under way with respect to the federal budget and the impact on agriculture. When I complete that, I'll report back.

Container Port Facility

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Economic Development. Last week I asked the minister if the government was considering any support for the private consortium that was planning a container port, but I know now that the government's in bed with CPR, so of course he couldn't make that announcement. Can the minister indicate what discussions the minister has had with CN Rail and the private consortium to see if they could possibly have \$33 million for a container port?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I think he's got his facts all muddled up. First of all, CN is not exactly the private sector. Secondly, the arrangement we have with CP is a plus for the container research port, as I understand it. On the issue of whether or not we're going to find them, the answer is the same as it was on Friday. We have had a request for a guarantee. We've requested back from the company a business plan, so that it can be considered and taken before my colleagues.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister. In the discussions the minister or the department has had with people like CP Rail and CN Rail, does CN have the same capacity as CP Rail to move freight on their lines to the west coast?

MR. PLANCHE: They certainly do, Mr. Speaker. CN dropped out of the negotiations of their own volition.

Income Tax (continued)

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to come back to the Treasurer about a very fascinating subject, this task force on the white paper and taxation. The Treasurer, I believe, said that it was a private committee. Could the Treasurer explain what he means by a private committee dealing with looking at our taxation system here in Alberta?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's an internal group, one of many which are at work within the federal government, within the provinces and the country, for the purpose of providing advice and assessing the various issues. The position of the government, though, will be brought forward at the appropriate time and will be stated to be just that, the position of the government.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. You said it was a private group, and now it's governments. I wish we could get this straight. Let me ask this question: if it's a private committee, can he assure the Assembly that no public money is being used to assist the committee in its work?

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that, as has been the case with all the policies of this government, we attempt by as many means as possible to secure the best possible advice to do the wisest possible assessment of all the options in order to come up with public policies that respond effectively to what Albertans want and need.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that's all very well and dandy; nice little speech. My question, though: if it's a government committee, how come we cannot know who is on the committee? I ask specifically: who are the private-sector

people on the committee? I don't know why that should be such a secret, if it's a government committee.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's a committee of the Progressive Conservative Party, which means it therefore represents the wide views of most of the people of the province of Alberta.

MR. MARTIN: That's an arrogant statement if I ever heard one. Is this committee getting public money or not, or is it Progressive Conservative money? Which is it?

MR. HYNDMAN: It's not getting public money, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LOUGHEED: Mr. Speaker, so that the Leader of the Opposition isn't perhaps quite so exercised, there is more than one task force of the nature described. What is involved is the follow-up to the white paper with regard to an industrial and science strategy for Albertans, 1985 to 1990. In some cases with regard to certain sectors or areas the follow-up is in-house by the government. In some areas it is involved in a combination of members of the caucus with members of the Progressive Conservative Party. In the latter case there is no element of public expenditure involved.

MR. MARTIN: Why didn't he say that? Didn't he know that?

Water Quality (continued)

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, just one question to follow up with the Minister of the Environment regarding the concerns expressed at the ECA conference yesterday about drinking water. I wonder whether the minister has any intentions to encourage placing my Bill 268, the Safe Drinking Water Act, on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders as a way to immediately begin giving some attention to this subject on at least an interim basis.

MR. BRADLEY: No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't given any consideration to that. I think I should refer the hon. members of the House to the treated water surveys, which the department conducts on a monthly basis, of all the major and municipal water supplies in the province. I think if one had a look at those, it would indicate that there are no problems with regard to the water which is being drunk by Albertans in these major centres.

Container Port Facility (continued)

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a further question of the hon. Minister of Economic Development. I guess I am a little slow ...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. BUCK: I'd like to know from the hon. arrogant minister ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I would respectfully suggest to the hon. member that he might be a little more temperate in his characterizations of other members of the House.

DR. BUCK: We're fraternity brothers. I've always known he's a smart aleck, so you see, it's all right.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't preside over the fraternity proceedings.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister inform the Assembly what the difference is then if we're talking about a distribution system where \$33 million of the taxpayers' money is being involved and a container port? Are they two different entities? Is this \$33 million project the government is involved in with CP Rail still an experimental project? Is this a distribution system or a container port?

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the opportunity to discuss this issue in the House. It will just take a minute to answer the question, if you'll spare me that.

I remember some of the hon. member's forays into rail transportation before. I remember his wanting to be sure that our hopper cars never left the province. Mr. Speaker, what we're trying to do is achieve for Alberta shippers the same economics as Ontario shippers get to the Atlantic basin. Without any alternative modes in Alberta, we have had to work very diligently to have the railroads accommodate our shippers in the same manner as other Canadians are accommodated. We intend to do that by guaranteeing quantities of containers and by providing, on a cost-recoverable basis, some unique three-axle truck, double-stacked container cars. The essence of those combinations of things, along with some others, is that the rates will average about 25 percent less than they are now. In all cases they will be less than they are now and in some cases up to 50 percent which, in my judgment, is an enormous edge for Alberta shippers.

Mr. Speaker, the member would also know that the other container port research corporation is not involved in rates at all. They are simply involved in stuffing and destuffing containers and other technological advances that they see as pertinent. We are not involved in those activities as a government, nor do we intend to be. The private sector will be picking up and distributing containers, stuffing and destuffing them, loading and off-loading them, on rail cars. So you can see that there is really no similarity between the two. I'm very sorry that the member didn't read the press release before he asked the question.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: It so happens that we have come to the end of the time. Perhaps we could just deal with this very briefly.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'm still worried about the \$33 million. I'd like to know from the minister if the project is so viable, why do we need the \$33 million of taxpayers' money to be involved? CP is hardly a poor-boy company. They could probably get by without that \$33 million.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, the \$33 million won't be an expense. Primarily it's used for land, for container repositories, so that we can get . . .

MR. R. SPEAKER: You are still giving them public money.

MR. PLANCHE: We are not giving it, Mr. Speaker. I was about to explain that to my colleagues across the way.

We are going to invest in this land, which is necessary in order to facilitate container traffic. We're going to invest in rail cars that will be cost recoverable. At the end of three years or some time between three and four years, our projections are that the project will break even and will be privatized, and all the money will be recovered.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege. I refer to the debate last evening on Motion 7. In particular I'd like to refer to some remarks made by my colleague the hon. Minister of Utilities and Telecommunications. I'm referring to page 24 of the Blues where my colleague had two possible misinterpretations of my remarks. I would like to quote them:

I was also a little concerned with what I believe were contained in the hon. Member for Calgary Currie's opening comments, when he indicated that he agreed with everything that had been said in the Assembly by all members . . .

Mr. Speaker, on the first hand, while I'm very flattered to be confused with the hon. Member for Calgary Currie, the record should read "Calgary Buffalo". Secondly, I believe the hon. member missed the word that appears on page 17, where I said I'm "tempted" to agree with everything that everybody said. But I didn't say it.

Further, Mr. Speaker, I'm tempted to recite my entire remarks yesterday to make the point that my remarks were an enthusiastic support for the entire motion, as was noted by my finally standing and voting with the government. I trust this clarifies the two possible misinterpretations for the benefit of my hon. colleague.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point, a correction was made in *Hansard* this morning regarding the hon. Member for Calgary Currie vis-à-vis the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo. I thought that in my remarks last evening ample opportunity was given to the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo to respond and correct any misunderstanding he may have felt that could have been contained. If there has been a misunderstanding of the intent of the hon. member's remarks, then I certainly regret that. I was extremely encouraged by not only the support given by my colleague for the motion last evening but also the support by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview, so that we had a unanimously approved resolution of the select committee of this Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the point of privilege raised by the hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo, perhaps under the circumstances it isn't necessary for me to deal with it any further, except to observe perhaps that one of the criteria which I must take into account is whether the matter was raised at the first opportunity. While there may be some advantage sometimes in checking a text in the Blues or in *Hansard*, ordinarily a matter of that kind would be raised at the time when it happened.

Does the Assembly agree that we might revert briefly to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. WEISS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, for your permission.

It's my privilege to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly a second group of students today. The 14 students are from grades 3 to 9. They are from the Beacon Hill school in Fort McMurray, located, of course, in the Lac La Biche-McMurray constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mrs. Sharon Turner, and parents Mrs. Ann Marie Steiner and Mrs. Sandy Bernatzki. They are seated in the members' gallery. I'd ask that they rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move that motions for returns 138, 142, and 145 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Deputy Government House Leader, do you all agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion carried]

head: **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

141. Mr. Gurnett moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
Copies of any and all summaries and/or reports prepared as a result of the monthly ambient water quality monitoring undertaken at 11 river sites in Alberta, jointly funded by the government of Alberta and the government of Canada.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move an amendment to Motion for Return 141, striking out "any and all summaries and/or reports prepared as a result" and replacing it with "the results".

Mr. Speaker, the government is certainly prepared to release the results of the water quality monitoring which has been conducted on these 11 sites, but with regard to any reports or summaries, they may be construed as inter-departmental documents, which we're not prepared to release.

MR. SPEAKER: Have the members had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the proposed amendment?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion as amended carried]

head: **GOVERNMENT DESIGNATED BUSINESS**

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

Bill 45
Local Authorities Pension Plan Act

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 45, the Local Authorities Pension Plan Act.

This Bill and the three that follow it, numbers 46, 47, and 48, all contain similar principles. The principles are

not new to the Assembly insofar as in 1984 the Assembly approved two pension Acts which contained those same principles, which I will elaborate on in a moment. Hon. members will recall that in 1984 amendments to the Public Service Pension Act and the Public Service Management Pension Act updated and modernized those two Acts. The proposals in respect of the principle of this Bill are the same, and they are as follows.

First, all the existing benefits under the local authorities pension plan to those who would receive them are maintained. There is in no way any diminution or reduction in those benefits. As well, all those benefits will continue to be guaranteed by the province of Alberta, which is, of course, a very significant benefit in terms of the assurance to those who will eventually receive pensions.

As well, the Local Authorities Pension Board will continue to exist as a separate, entity. There was discussion with regard to the possibility of having one provincial pension board rather than the six which is now the situation. But after considerable discussion over the course of many months with the groups involved, the general feeling was that each of those pension boards had a unique history and performed a series of unique duties and that to continue them, and continue the representation uniquely in the case of each of the six, was important. Therefore, that is continued.

As well, the administration of this pension plan will continue to be the responsibility of the minister responsible for public pensions, who happens to be me at the moment, operating through the Treasury Department. Of course, after decisions are made in respect of the administrative area, there are in this Bill a number of areas which can be appealed by a pensioner who may feel aggrieved or feel that the administration has not made the correct decision. The pension board then will be in a position to exercise its judicial role, at least a quasi-judicial role, to hear individual cases of pensioners who don't like the initial administrative decision. The board has authority, therefore, to act as an appeal tribunal. That is set forth very clearly. In the past there was some doubt as to whether those powers were there and what they were.

There's also very clear confirmation now with respect to matters of law or jurisdiction. If a pensioner feels aggrieved even after hearing the decision of a pension board, he or she can apply to the courts for a further determination as to whether the issue which has been raised should be reversed, changed, or modified.

Of course, the area of pension policy must and does continue to be the responsibility, first, of the Legislature through this Bill; secondly, as in many statutes, through the Executive Council; and with respect to minor matters, through ministerial order. I might further mention that the pension boards will have the responsibility clearly set forth for the first time of providing policy advice regarding the pension plan, so that over the course of months and years the boards can indicate ways in which policies might or should be reviewed, updated, or improved.

I might finally mention that there's been very significant consultation over the course of almost a year with respect to the development of this legislation and the other three Bills I mentioned. In this case, the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association and the Canadian Union of Public Employees were both consulted. Representations came in from both of them as well as from the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses, the Alberta Hospital Association, and the pension boards themselves through their chairmen and individually. In that way we were able to make quite a

number, over two dozen, changes and improvements to this Bill from the draft which was considered over the course of December, January, and February.

Accordingly, I urge the Assembly to endorse second reading in principle of the Bill, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 45 read a second time]

Bill 46

Universities Academic Pension Plan Act

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 46, the Universities Academic Pension Plan Act.

As mentioned in the second reading of Bill 45, Mr. Speaker, the same principles I've just elaborated upon are contained in this Bill, and it reflects the three I mentioned previously. The only differences are those which would reflect the unique history of the universities academic pension situation. Again, there has been widespread consultation and, as a result, a large number of changes were made. In this case representations were received from the University of Calgary, the University of Alberta, the Banff Centre, the Confederation of Alberta Faculty Associations, and the Universities Academic Pension Board through its chairman and the individual members.

Again, as the elements and principles are familiar to members, I urge passage of second reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 46 read a second time]

Bill 47

Special Forces Pension Plan Act

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 47, the Special Forces Pension Plan Act.

Here again, the same principles as I've indicated are present in the previous four Bills are contained in this Bill. The other changes are only to reflect the unique nature of the Special Forces Pension Act, which I believe was first passed by the Assembly in 1977.

I conclude by saying that the unique parts of this Bill which relate to special forces are brought forward at this time unchanged from the way they were set out seven years ago and the way they have been over the past seven years. However, there is an in-depth review of the actuarial situation as a result of and dealing with the recent recommendations of the Auditor General. That, as well as a review of contributions and related matters, has been commenced with respect to this Act.

I urge approval of second reading of the Bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 47 read a second time]

Bill 48

Members of the Legislative Assembly Pension Plan Act

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 48, the Members of the Legislative Assembly Pension Plan Act.

Here again, Mr. Speaker, this Bill simply incorporates the basic principles I elaborated upon during the discussion of Bill 45. There are a few changes which relate to the unique historical nature of the Act, but there are no changes in substance.

[Motion carried; Bill 48 read a second time]

Bill 50

Pension Plan Statutes Amendment Act, 1985

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 50, the Pension Plan Statutes Amendment Act, 1985.

This Act deals solely with amendments to those two Acts passed last year, Mr. Speaker: the Public Service Pension Act and Public Service Management Pension Act. What the Act does is make clarifications and essentially technical changes in those two Acts in order to make them congruent with the four Acts we have just dealt with in second reading. So the amendments proposed in it reflect public advice over the course of the past six months and make the two Acts which the Assembly passed last year similar in principle to the four we are now dealing with on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried; Bill 50 read a second time]

Bill 52

Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) No. 2 Act, 1985-86

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 52, the Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) No. 2 Act, 1985-86.

[Motion carried; Bill 52 read a second time]

Bill 53

Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Supplementary Act, 1985-86

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 53, the Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Supplementary Act, 1985-86.

[Motion carried; Bill 53 read a second time]

Bill 65

Appropriation Act, 1985

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 65, the Appropriation Act, 1985.

As has been the case in previous years, Mr. Speaker, this Bill provides for the voting of the net amount after considering the Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1985, as has been discussed, debated, and approved during Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried; Bill 65 read a second time]

Bill 66

Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 1985

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 66, the Appropriation (Supplementary Supply) Act, 1985.

[Motion carried; Bill 66 read a second time]

Bill 44
Crown Property Municipal Grants
Amendment Act, 1985

MR. MCPHERSON: Mr. speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill 44, the Crown Property Municipal Grants Amendment Act, 1985.

Mr. Speaker, in response to a steadily diminishing number of requests from the public on this particular Act, I would like to make just a few comments with respect to the principles. When I moved first reading, I indicated that this particular Bill had a number of very important beneficial impacts on downtown revitalization in the province of Alberta. Members may be aware that this legislation is made possible in part by the Municipal Government Act, introduced in this Legislature in 1983, which basically permits a municipality to designate an area within the municipality as a business revitalization zone.

Members may recall that the establishment of a business revitalization zone can be initiated at the behest of businesses within the municipality who wish to establish a business revitalization zone. Perhaps the key to this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, is with respect to how a business revitalization zone operates. Moneys are raised for a BRZ through a self-imposed surtax on business taxes on the premise that this will allow business citizens of a downtown area to manage and fund renewal projects on a self-help basis. In point of fact, however, there is one major business citizen, at least in most downtowns in Alberta, who is exempt from making any contribution. Of course, that is the provincial government itself.

In many downtowns throughout Alberta, Mr. Speaker, the provincial government occupies considerable business frontage through its departmental offices, courthouses, et cetera. As downtown businesses, these operations have a vested interest in downtown renewal just as private business does. Yet there is absolutely no avenue through which the provincial government may contribute. Frankly, it's been found, and has been advised to me at least as the sponsor of this Bill, that this situation seriously dilutes the capability of BRZs to operate within their appropriate budgets. In essence, Mr. Speaker, this Bill will allow the provincial government to contribute on an equitable basis and in an equitable proportion, based on the amount the province would contribute within the BRZ if the property they own were subject to a levy.

Basically, that's the essence of the Bill, and I urge members to support it in second reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 44 read a second time]

Bill 49
Insurance Amendment Act, 1985

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, in moving second reading of Bill 49, the Insurance Amendment Act, 1985, I would like to make a few comments regarding the provisions of the Bill.

One amendment would assist the process of appeals related to insurers so that insurers may now appeal to a board appointed by the minister as opposed to the Crown itself and Executive Council. This will make it more practical for judgments to be made regarding the assets of insurers in situations where that's necessary.

Another provision of the Act would increase the amount of insurance required for motor vehicles from \$100,000 to

\$200,000. At the current time most citizens in this province carry insurance far in excess of the \$100,000. However, there are 10 to 20 percent who do not, and it is the recommendation of the Alberta Automobile Insurance Board, the Insurance Brokers' Association, and the office of the Superintendent of Insurance that this be increased in the face of judgments which, according to my list, can go as high as \$735,000 and \$774,000. Many judgments for some relatively minor injuries are in excess of the \$100,000 for which some citizens of the province are now insured. This would take effect January 1.

Other provisions of the Bill deal with no longer requiring the licensing of individuals working in insurance agents' offices. This is to allow for step licensing procedures to move ahead. This portion of the Bill won't in fact be proclaimed until such time as the specific regulations suggested by the insurance association are enacted by the minister. This is so that individuals working in capacities not directly related to insurance policies and negotiating insurance policies, such as secretaries and so on, will not have to be classified in the same way insurance agents currently are.

The only other provision of the Bill allows for copies of insurance policies to be given to policyholders or their designates for a reasonable fee. It's been the situation in the past that while that's usually been done as a matter of course by insurance companies, on rare occasions attorneys for individuals have been unable to get copies of those insurance policies. This will ensure that that is now possible.

Those are the primary provisions of the Act. I ask for members' support for second reading of Bill 49.

[Motion carried; Bill 49 read a second time]

Bill 51
Grain Charges Limitation Repeal Act

MR. TOPOLNISKY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 51, Grain Charges Limitation Repeal Act.

The Act is no longer required for the following reasons. First, section 88 of the Act is now section 120 of the Bank Act, which supersedes this Act. Secondly, advance payments can be obtained against the crop before delivery. Thirdly, bonding is much improved. Finally, there is no system of auditing claims, so the provisions of this Act are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to enforce. Anything that falls under this Act is covered by federal legislation, therefore making this Act redundant.

[Motion carried; Bill 51 read a second time]

Bill 54
Liquor Statutes Amendment Act, 1985

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, in rising to propose second reading of Bill 54, I would like to make some brief comments which will be an expansion on those I made when I introduced the Bill.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill continues the slow, evolutionary change in legislation within the province in relation to consumption of alcoholic beverages. I would like to make some remarks about several features of it. The first is that we are going to allow in legislation for what are called "brew pubs". These are freestanding, very small breweries that will produce beer of an unpasteurized, unsterilized, nonpreserved nature, and they will be allowed to produce

several brews in succession. The significant thing is that it will be possible to consume them within the same premises; that's the change. This is really going back to the older European concept of a brewery, which was usually a small entity for retail sales attached to a licensed premises. It introduces a novel concept and, I think, will result not in any increased consumption but perhaps in some change in patterns.

A further change is to allow for the consumption of alcoholic beverages at designated picnic areas in public parks only in relation to the consumption of food. This particular provision is to rationalize the current situation where, if a motor home drives up to a campsite at a public park, the person driving the motor home thereby establishes [temporary] residence and is allowed to go outside their motor home, sit down at the bench and table, have a meal, and have a drink with it. The succeeding motor home drives to the immediately adjacent picnic site in the same public park, and because they have not established temporary residence since it is a picnic site, they are not allowed to have an alcoholic beverage with their picnic. It will also allow for the municipal, provincial, federal, or private operators of public parks to designate picnic sites within those parks. Not all of the picnic sites — they may designate certain sites to allow a person to have an alcoholic beverage with their wiener roast or barbecue.

A further change clarifies the relationship between the Alberta Liquor Control Board and the new duty-free stores on the U.S. border. That is necessary because, of course, these entities are already in operation; at least one of them is. It also clarifies the relationship that will exist between the Alberta Liquor Control Board and the new, privately-operated wine boutiques. These boutiques will be selling wines from the present ALCB list, and it is anticipated — in fact, it is hoped and is the whole purpose — that they will also go to the wine-producing areas of this world and bring back other wines not currently on the ALCB list. The proposal is that they will handle all their importing and wholesaling functions through the ALCB because of the expertise and the system the Liquor Control Board has developed. But once they take their stock from the ALCB, either current ALCB listings or their own listings, they will then be left to function in an unregulated way regarding prices, as long as they do not use any of the ALCB lists as loss leaders and undercut the ALCB price to a significant degree.

There are also some other administrative changes, Mr. Speaker. In particular, the provisions for seizure and prosecution are being brought in line with the Charter requirements.

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to make a few comments about the idea behind Bill 54 as we consider it. No matter what euphemisms we may use for it, especially in the amendment of section 82 proposed in the Bill, I think we're basically talking about a relaxation of laws related to alcohol use in the province. That's the motivation there. I have some real concern about that. I've been listening to and reading comments by a wide range of people. With the amendments we have before us in Bill 54, it seems to me that this is a case where there has to be some real care taken. We have to recognize that sometimes the number of people that may support something is not the only factor to be considered in looking at a change and that we should also look particularly at those who are suggesting change or are suggesting that things not change.

With relation to Bill 54, I'm very impressed that there seems to be an almost unanimous indication from those who deal with people involved with abuse of alcohol that these changes are not a good idea. Although they may not represent a numerical majority in the province, when I see hospital boards, educational organizations, and groups like that indicating almost without exception that this is not a good Bill to proceed with, I think we have to look at that very seriously, especially in view of the statistical evidence to back up the claim — and evidence even goes to the World Health Organization as a source — that whenever you have a relaxation of laws, you are going to have an increase in consumption.

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that by restricting too severely, there's a point at which you can also end up creating new problems. We saw that in North America with Prohibition. But right now we certainly don't have a Prohibition situation in Alberta by any means. I think we have to seriously look at this Bill as a situation where what's being proposed is a condition that is workable at this time being loosened significantly and having a potential to create new problems. That's what should be weighed very heavily.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed in one newspaper article, for example, that we're going to be spending government money through AADAC to develop a think tank to work with the problems of alcohol use in this province. I find it a little bit strange that at the same time we're recognizing that we already have a serious problem in this province and are even spending money dealing with that serious problem, we're also considering a Bill that by making alcohol more available under certain circumstances, by basically relaxing the laws, would also inevitably result in an increase in the problem, according to all the work that's been done to study the issue.

To a certain extent I think we have to ignore the fact that the media is paying a lot of attention, basically reflecting the opinion of a lot of people that are positive about this change, and say that there needs to be some leadership exercised. If there's good reason to see that increased availability will result in increased difficulties, we should exercise that leadership and not act on this Bill. I certainly hope we'll reconsider the serious problems that could result as we make alcohol more available through something like the amendment to section 82.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a couple of comments relative to the Bill that's presented here. First of all, in relation to the dissertation that the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview just gave, I guess if you examine the costs in our system relevant to people drinking and what have you, it certainly is easy to understand the concern of some people. On the other hand, if we examine who is actually paying the freight on this thing and ask how much money is collected off the tax on booze, if we can use that phrase, from the last numbers I saw, we collected nearly \$300 million from the users of the product in one year.

The other thing I suggest is that we, as reasonably intelligent people, unless we find ourselves with the illness of overindulgence, should have some freedom of choice. We talk about freedom of choice, and I'm sure the socialists like the fact that we do have freedom of choice in this country. It should continue. The removal of further prohibition in the area of liquor reform certainly offers that freedom of choice. We still have prohibition in this country as far as the drinking of alcoholic beverages is concerned.

I will stand by that statement for a long time, until such time as we remove that. Prohibition creates a lot of drunkenness and a lot of alcoholic difficulties.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude the few comments I wish to make on this, I'd like to commend the minister for taking leadership in the area of liquor reform, if I can use that term. Generally speaking, people in Alberta wish to have some reform in this area. If we take a back seat and start listening to the socialists in this area continually, I don't think we'll be that leader. In dealing with this issue head-on and offering people the freedom of choice, leadership is being placed on the table and being encouraged by government. I certainly hope the minister will continue with the leadership role he is showing here.

MR. MCPHERSON: Mr. speaker, in consideration of Bill 54 in second reading, I wonder if the minister might be interested in commenting when he concludes debate, or if not today, perhaps I can raise the issue in Committee of Supply. The one area I have received representation from constituents on is with regard to the consumption of alcohol at the same time as the consumption of food in a designated picnic area. Seeing, though, that the minister who is sponsoring this Bill is also responsible for the enforcement of the law in this province, I wonder if he might be able to indicate to members at this point in time if he anticipates an increase in rowdiness or abuse in public parks when they are specifically designated. That's the only concern I have in this particular issue, Mr. Speaker, and I wonder if the minister would be interested in commenting on that in debate.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some comments relative to Bill 54, the Liquor Statutes Amendment Act, 1985. Of the principal changes commented on by the hon. Solicitor General, I'd like to comment on three of them.

First of all, with reference to allowing pubs to brew their own brew, as it were, I frankly don't have any major concern. I hope members of this House are aware, as I'm sure most of them are, that in this province we have, in my view, a very significant social problem. We not only treat tens of thousands of people for the effects of misuse and abuse of alcohol, but indeed, day after day we read of the very tragic consequences for those who for some reason believe they have a right above others to drink and then drive an automobile. Ten days ago the Minister of Transportation tabled with this House a report from his department with regard to deaths on the highways. Some 700 people were killed last year on the highways of this province. The Solicitor General's own department makes reference to one in every two accidents involving alcohol.

Very clearly, Mr. Speaker, I think we should recognize that at this point in time in Alberta we have not only an adequate system of distribution of beverage alcohol but, as the Member for Calgary McCall stated, a winner in terms of revenue — almost \$300 million. Thank heaven, consumption dropped 700,000 gallons last year in this province. Much of it, I suppose, is a result of economic circumstances or of people who came to this province during the boom having now left. Perhaps they were the heavy drinkers. Let's hope so. If so, the Treasurer is going to feel the effect, obviously. But thank heaven for indexing of booze, because we've offset the decreased consumption, in terms of revenue, by increased prices. Nonetheless, I hope members are well aware that virtually anything that leads to

increased liberalization which results in increased consumption certainly has a price to pay. So on the first point that was raised by the hon. minister, allowing pubs to brew their own, I honestly can't see where that's going to lead to any increase in consumption, except that the novelty may initially encourage people to pick out specific places for their consumption.

Reference was made as well to the wine boutiques. For the gourmets of this province — I expect they would have to be gourmets, because I'm confident that the prices will have to start at \$20 a bottle at least. I have no quarrel with that. Good wines have long been synonymous with good food. They go together. I have no hang-up about that at all, and I wouldn't think anybody would have any serious concerns, as long as we do not see a proliferation of the so-called grocery stores of this province selling wine, which is going to lead to beer, which is going to lead to other things.

Let's not for one moment kid ourselves that with the introduction and the passage of these amendments there's not going to be strong pressure to say, "What about me? I'm a new Canadian. I want a chance because of Safeway. What about me?" Let's hope, Mr. Speaker, that we don't view the allowing of certain boutiques — and it's a very attractive name — to encourage chambers of commerce and others to suddenly say that on every street corner next to every bank, there should be a store with beer and wine selling the odd box of cornflakes.

Mr. Speaker, the one which concerns me the most has been referred to already by the hon. Member for Spirit River-Fairview. It is this business of drinking on picnic sites in so-called parks, whether they be provincial or municipal. The argument has been put forward, and logically so, that for many who camp in our campsites, it's their residence and therefore they can consume. Ten or 20 feet away, people may go for a day's picnic and feel they are discriminated against because — never mind the \$80,000 motor home that may be parked there, and they're in their Volkswagen — they also want the right to consume alcoholic beverage.

I issue a word or two of caution about that, because I think there are some major differences. I don't know of any park in this province today, certainly not a provincial park, where you camp free of charge. In all of them I believe you must pay a fee. On the contrary, I don't know of anywhere you go for a day's picnic where you must pay. There's a major difference in principle, and this is the reason. People who camp are generally there for a period of time. Indeed, it is their home; indeed, they're probably going to cook food. But when they go for a day's picnic, with respect, Mr. Speaker, they're going to get there by an automobile. They're probably only going to be there, if they obey the law, until 6 or 8 or 9 p.m., because very clearly there is no overnight parking at picnic sites. So we know almost by definition that those who are going to consume alcoholic beverages at those sites are very shortly going to be driving away.

If we as members of this Assembly recognize that some hundred people are convicted every day in this province — that's the good news. The ones that are caught are the good news. That shows that we've got a good police force. Of those charged by the Attorney General's department, 93 percent are convicted. That's the good news. The bad news is that the chances of getting caught for impaired driving range all the way from one in 400 to one in 2,000.

I urge members to use some caution with regard to passing the amendment dealing with drinking at picnic sites,

because in my opinion the one thing that's synonymous with picnics is automobiles. We say in the amendment that they must consume food. I don't know what kind of food. Members are well aware that if they go into any hotel in this province and want alcoholic beverages in the [restaurant], they must order food when they order their second drink. Are we going to see some type of artificial food? I don't know.

I have serious concerns about allowing drinking at picnic sites throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, without a couple of things in place. I understand that the Minister of Recreation and Parks must designate, obviously not for the cities because that's up to the municipal government; that's their jurisdiction. But I hope we're well aware of the concerns of the law enforcement officers, the police, who may have to pick up the pieces. That is, if you're going to allow this, you're also going to have to be fair in terms of who can do it. Are we going to suddenly say that the so-called Mr. and Mrs. with the two children and their bottle of Blue Nun over their chicken lunch are okay and, at the same time, for some reason hope to prohibit 17 Hell's Angels on motorbikes? We've passed a Charter of Rights in this nation. We no longer can differentiate with people. I hope we're not opening a hornet's nest we're going to later regret in terms of deployment of police officers. For example, what does Chief Lunney think of the city parks in Edmonton? I don't know. I haven't heard from him. What do we think about Little Bow Provincial Park? I don't know.

I would like to close with the comment that in passing this, we should be well aware that we're perhaps going to create some problems that have not existed to date. If and when local jurisdictions, including local police forces, come to us and say, "We need more help because you people passed legislation that means we must deploy our police forces in a different way; therefore, we can't carry out the normal police duties" . . . With those reservations, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the balance of the debate on this Bill.

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, a couple of comments with respect to two elements of Bill 54. I don't think my colleagues in the House will be too surprised by my expressing support for the initiatives being undertaken by the minister — initiatives that in many respects, I believe, are long overdue. There are five important reasons why I think the wine boutique initiative is a good one.

First of all, I think it's an important step forward and almost a breakthrough in our saying that we trust that the private sector is capable of selling wine without government supervision. Of course, there is going to be government regulation, but I think it's an important acknowledgment that perhaps the private sector can do as good a job, if not a better job, than the ALCB. So that's positive.

Secondly, I think the four additional wine boutiques in the province, perhaps more later on, will contribute to the destigmatization of alcohol. In other words, the more it's available, the less mysterious product it is. I think that will contribute to a more enlightened attitude in the province toward alcohol and more particularly wine.

Thirdly, there is freedom of choice. In the past, were there to be a strike on the part of the employees of the ALCB, there was little choice. Certainly, there is an indication here that the public now will have freedom of choice.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, I think the wine boutique concept is a sophisticated one in the sense that we're acknowledging

the growth of the consumption and the taste patterns of Albertans. I know that in this province we now have the Italian wine drinking society, the French wine tasting society, the American wine tasting society, and the Opimian Society. It's developing as a hobby and a pastime, and now connoisseurs are going to have some choice. More importantly, I think this is a breakthrough in some respects for our multicultural communities, who have been expressing interest in a wider variety of wines from their homelands. Of course, the ALCB has been limited by space. Specialty boutiques will now have the opportunity to respond to the demand by our various multicultural communities, and I think that's positive.

So this is a small step in some respects for deregulation, but I believe it's a giant step toward the principle of additional free enterprise in terms of the government's selling a consumer good. The next step is a logical step, Mr. Speaker: to permit the sale of wine in conjunction with food, where the emphasis should be the consumption of wine not as a cocktail but as a part of the meal, which I think would be a positive step forward in our drinking habits and patterns.

I just want to make one other concern or point of view. I see that my colleague from Lethbridge West has escaped the Chamber in anticipation of my remarks. There seems to be a doom-and-gloom attitude toward allowing the public to consume alcohol in parks. It's the same kind of doom-and-gloom attitude I can recall before the government decided to permit the sale of light beer in paper cups at professional sporting events. This was going to be the beginning of the end. Yet when we look at the track record, the consumption of hard alcohol was reduced significantly when the public was given a choice. All we're really doing now, Mr. Speaker, is legislating that which already happens. It's not as if there's going to be any great patterns in consumption. The public is doing it today; we're simply recognizing that what they're doing may be okay.

For those reasons I commend the minister, a most progressive minister yet a conservative minister, on a positive Bill. I think it's a step in the right direction.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few remarks about this Bill. It is my opinion that the availability of alcohol to people in any place in the world does not contribute to extra abuse of it. In my lifetime the availability of alcohol to people in Alberta has increased considerably. It's my personal opinion that abuse really hasn't changed all that much.

As far as the beer cottages are concerned, they are in other parts of the world and really haven't caused a problem. The economics of beer cottages will make it so that they will be only in the larger centres, because the beer has to be consumed on the premises. Of course, it is not preserved and will not keep very long, so it will have to be somewhere where the patronage of the cottage will be at the point where it's a living for somebody.

As far as wine specialists are concerned, they would be the same as the beer cottages. Economics will dictate that these types of cottages will not be in all the smaller centres. I certainly think it would be nice for a person who is a connoisseur of wine to be able to taste the type of wine they're buying, buy something relative to their own taste, and not have to gamble on what they pick up in our liquor control outlets presently.

The portion of the Bill allowing people to consume wine, beer, or spirits with food in some of our public parks: as

the former speaker said, that has been happening illegally. The people in the overnight areas — and contrary to what our Member for Lethbridge West said, where he's got a \$30,000 motor home, all you have to have is a tent in the park. It is then legal to consume alcohol within the confines of that tent or on the close premises. Of course, a tent is not even as valuable as a Volkswagen. So I quite disagree with that part. For a family or group to go to a park nowadays and have their overnight people partying, who are generally the ones who cause the abuse, and not even be able to open a bottle of wine to consume with their dinner — it would seem they are second-class citizens.

Mr. Speaker, my personal opinion is that the illegal possession charge should be dropped from our Alberta laws. Illegal possession nowadays is something that is not very well understood by people. For instance, you can walk down the street in any city carrying a full bottle of liquor, which is legal, but if it's a half bottle, it's illegal. In my opinion, that creates more problems than it solves, because rather than throwing out what's left in a bottle before going someplace different, someone will probably drink it, and it would probably cause more problems than others.

If you are riding in a vehicle, you can stop at the liquor store or any bar and pick up one bottle of beer, put it in a paper bag, and take it home legally. But if you happen to have an open dozen in your vehicle, and there is a bottle left from somewhere you were visiting last night, that becomes illegal possession. There are a lot of things that have to do with illegal possession that are hard to explain to the general public. I don't think dropping that charge would add anything to the abuse of alcohol. So it's my very personal opinion that that charge should be dropped.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Minister conclude the debate? Are you ready for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't know what the intention is.

DR. REID: I would like to make a few remarks in response, Mr. Speaker.

I think the Member for Spirit River-Fairview was referring in his remarks to the old confusion between availability and consumption and the problems that result from excess consumption. In spite of all the efforts that have been made over the decades to relate availability to consumption, it has not been possible to do so. One only needs to look back at the days of Prohibition in the United States or to the days of consumption by the case of beer or by the bottle of hard liquor in Alberta in the 1950s to realize that in those days there was probably just as much, if not more, excess consumption as there is nowadays.

From the experiences I had as a physician when I first came to this province in the mid-1950s, I can assure hon. members that although there was not the public concern about impaired driving there is nowadays, the problem was just as great, if not greater. Certainly in relation to the size of the community I lived in or the size of my practice, from the number of alcoholics I saw, there were just as many alcoholics in those days as there are now. It was a matter of its not being recognized, spoken about, or being a socially acceptable disorder.

However, it is true that as the availability is made greater, there appears to be somewhat of a change in

consumption habits. That has indeed been evident in our own province, where there has been a greater decrease in the consumption of hard liquor, spirits, than in any of the other groups. Indeed, there has been an increase in the consumption of wine over the last few years.

He mentioned the problem of rowdiness, and it was mentioned by other members. There are provisions in other statutes, from the Criminal Code to municipal bylaws, for dealing with rowdiness. One cannot deal with rowdiness and group drunkenness in the Liquor Control Act. That's not the provision of that Act; it's not the purview of that Act. There are other places for dealing with those problems.

The Member for Calgary McCall got onto the subject of political philosophy as related to the consumption of alcohol, and I must say that I don't see the relationship. I find people of all political persuasions covering the whole gamut from complete abstinence to alcoholism. I've never seen any relationship between the political philosophy of an individual and their alcohol consumption philosophy, with the exception, of course, of those groups who have religious reasons for not consuming alcoholic beverages and who may in addition have some particular political persuasion or abstinence from the political process.

The Member for Red Deer raised an issue in relation to the consumption of food and alcohol at designated picnic sites, the potential for rowdiness, the difficulties that might come from that, and law enforcement. What is being attempted in that particular provision in relation to the consumption of alcoholic beverages at designated picnic sites in conjunction with the consumption of food? We are trying to allow for reasonable behaviour by reasonable people without being in conflict with the law. Again, it is not the purview of the Liquor Control Act to attempt to control rowdiness related to excessive consumption, especially group rowdiness.

The hon. Member for Lethbridge West, in his capacity as chairman of the Alberta Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Commission, of course, has very considerable knowledge of the effects of excessive consumption of alcohol and the problems it causes. I think all of us are well aware of the problem of alcoholism in modern society. But it is a problem that is not related only to western societies. It's related to totalitarian regimes of both the left and the right. It's a problem that crosses all occupational and economic borders and by and large is not associated with the availability factor, as most alcoholics consume their excessive amounts in private, not in public.

I thought he made an interesting comment about the price of wine in the wine boutiques. We are anticipating that the spectrum of sales in the wine boutiques will pretty well mirror that in the Alberta Liquor Board Control stores, and of the lines they will carry, there will not be an excessive number in the high prices but rather most of the wines will be in the medium range, as that is where most of the interest is shown. I am aware — I'm not one of them — of wine connoisseurs who think it is perfectly reasonable to spend \$100 or \$150 on a bottle of wine. It's not just my Scots nature and my preference for scotch, but I cannot see that any wine would, to my mind, be worth \$150. Most Albertans seem to consume wines in the category between \$6 and \$16, and I'm anticipating that the wine boutiques will enlarge the availability of product in that price range in particular, although they may well bring in different vintages of Chateau Margaux and others.

I am aware of the Member for Calgary Buffalo's interest in some other aspects of the retailing of beer and wine. We have not taken that step, but he did bring out the point

of the multicultural nature of our province and its population and, therefore, the interest in a broad spectrum of wines. Indeed, the recent experience at the Viva '85 exposition in Edmonton indicated a very large interest in a broader spectrum of wines being available. Many of those, of course, are not normal ALCB items and will not be in the ALCB stores. Of course, they will be available to Albertans by request. I think it is anticipated that some of those particular lines may well come to the fore in the wine boutiques.

The hon. Member for Bow Valley has longer experience than I with Alberta society and also mentioned the changes in our society without increased problems.

MR. SPEAKER: I regret to interrupt the hon. minister, but I must draw the attention of the House to the allotted time for this order of business having expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't think I can put the question. First of all, the hon. minister has the floor and, consequently, would ordinarily be entitled to begin the discussion when this item of business comes up again. Secondly, without unanimous consent to extend the time, I wouldn't be able to put the question outside the time allotted for this order of business.

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

218. Moved by Mr. Musgreave:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to strongly address the problem of family violence by:

- (1) ensuring the enforcement of current laws;
- (2) establishing policies of automatic overnight incarcerations, restraint orders effective from the time of arrest until the time of court appearance, and compulsory counselling for the batterer; and
- (3) increasing assistance for the rehabilitation of the family.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on Motion 218, because it addresses the issue of family violence I'm sorry that I can't say it's a pleasure to rise and propose this motion to the Assembly. I'm also sorry that I can't follow the usual procedure of many of my colleagues who get our attention by coming out with a funny joke; family violence is no laughing matter. I hope, however, that all of us here today will consider the issue seriously, according to the attention it deserves, which is long overdue.

Domestic violence is a very broad subject which is defined as abusive behaviour in the interpersonal relationships within families. It involves coercion, punishment, and violent behaviour which often escalates in frequency and intensity. Family violence is most commonly directed at children, women, and the elderly, but today I want to deal primarily with women. While most people sympathize with the plight of a battered child or a dependent elderly person, very few understand the issue of wife assault. The problem is not a new one. What is new is society's recognition that it has a responsibility to deal with this issue.

Historically, the right to physically assault one's wife has not only been tolerated, it has been encouraged. This so-called right has been protected by religious beliefs and even the law. Although for the most part the laws are now

off the books, the attitudes which supported them still exist. Today many men still adhere to the belief that it is their "right" to chastise or discipline, to batter and beat their wives. An old English law said you could do it as long as you didn't use a stick that was thicker than your thumb.

Mr. Speaker, I propose this motion to the Assembly because I feel that not only society, in some abstract sense of the word, but this government, in a very concrete way, has an obligation to deal with this issue. Unfortunately, even in 1985 there are many who argue that domestic disputes are family matters and subsequently private matters to be resolved somehow without the intervention of the state.

[Mr. Purdy in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, long, long ago — and I'm talking about centuries ago — our ancestors agreed that organized political society had an obligation to protect its members from violence, that violence against its members was of importance to the government and was not going to be tolerated. Our common law system of criminal justice is based upon this assumption. If not the oldest, certainly one of the most important reasons for the existence of an organized state is the protection and defence of those individuals who make it up. I'm talking about crime and the state's responsibility to deal with crime. If we were to talk about battered women as a social illness, a problem, an issue, a malady, or an unfortunate occurrence, and call the incident what it really is — crime — we might not have so much difficulty in deciding whether or not this government not only has a responsibility but indeed has a duty to deal with it. Wife abuse, battering, or assault is a crime.

As is the case with all crimes, statistics about occurrence are only hard and fast for those incidents which are reported. It is estimated that one in 10 women in Canada is abused by her husband or live-in partner. For our province this means that potentially 55,000 women are physically assaulted within the family setting. If psychological abuse is also included, the estimates of occurrence rise as high as one in four. In 1984 in the city of Edmonton, police responded to 5,348 complaints involving family disputes. That represents nearly 15 cases every day. While the statistics are not analyzed to specifically isolate cases which involve assault or cases which involve husband and wife, other studies estimate that 72 percent of all domestic violence involves wife assault. It is estimated that 83 percent of all domestic violence remains unreported and that wife assault is the least reported violent crime. I note that the minister of social services has just issued a booklet on assault and, regretfully, the emphasis is on children and the elderly. I think the key has to be on the wife. In Calgary last year seven women died at the hands of their partners. In 1984 approximately 3,235 women and 4,415 children were housed in Alberta's women's emergency shelters. At Edmonton's WIN House they turn away 14 families per month and continue to receive about 250 calls every month.

It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that there is a problem here, and it is not the purpose of my remarks to provide a statistical analysis of wife assault. We know that battering affects the lives and health of many thousands of women each year. We know that the injuries suffered by battered women range from bruising to broken bones to burns. Some suffer miscarriages and some are permanently disabled as a result of repeated assaults. We also know, for example, that 20 percent of Canadian homicides are the result of one

spouse killing the other and that the majority of these are wives murdered by their husbands. In Alberta the Department of the Solicitor General reports that wife assault contributes significantly to homicides. In 1982, 15 percent of homicide suspects were either husbands or common-law husbands of their victims.

In researching this subject I was often surprised to find myself listening to yet another account of someone's personal experience. I would be talking to my constituents about my work, about my concerns in this area, about this motion coming up, and about the problems gathering statistical information, and more than one woman would say, "I was a battered woman, but I was never a statistic." The reason they were never a statistic? They never had a charge laid by the police. These experiences led me to believe that this problem is more widespread than we realize. The statistics are not giving us a very complete picture as to the extent to which even our own constituents are affected. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm not convinced that our best efforts should be directed to the gathering of more statistics. In my opinion, one battered woman is one too many. We should be dealing with the causes of family violence, the ultimate goal being not just to significantly reduce the incidence of wife abuse but to try to completely eradicate this serious social crime.

Dealing with wife assault involves a variety of issues. We must deal with the practical realities faced by women who are battered. We must provide clear signals that this society will not tolerate violence in the family, and we must continue to study the causes in the hope of eventually preventing wife abuse altogether.

First of all, I'd like to deal with the needs of battered women and discuss some of the underlying assumptions this society makes and uses to judge the abused wife. All too often we tend to forget that the battered woman is a victim. We eventually find ourselves saying, "Why doesn't she just leave?" To me this is about as constructive as asking the victim of robbery in a high crime neighbourhood, "Why don't you move?" It assumes that the victim, simply by living in that neighbourhood, or that woman, by living with her husband, is primarily at fault and subsequently ignores that she is the victim and not the perpetrator or accomplice of the crime.

There are some good reasons why a woman is reluctant to leave. Some of them are cultural and necessitate a change in basic attitudes about women and family relationships, but others are not. In our society there are structural and institutional blocks which serve to prevent a woman from simply leaving a violent relationship. Experts and observers and the victims themselves have given a number of these reasons. First of all, one of the most important ones: economic independence. Economic reality means that many battered women, who for their own safety must leave their marriages, must choose between a life of fear and one of relative poverty for themselves and their children. Of course, there are exceptions. Evidence clearly shows that single women, especially single mothers, are significantly more likely to live below the poverty line. Many women are willing to make this choice for themselves, but the decision process is complicated when the comforts and necessities of their children are involved. The fact that husbands in general do not comply with child support or maintenance payments certainly makes this economic reality worse, and I'm glad to see that in our present session we have a Bill that will address that problem.

Society expectations. Within the North American cultural tradition, marriage and family are still very important insti-

tutions. A great deal of religious and community pressure is brought to bear on women to keep their families and marriages together. Hence, she struggles to maintain the facade of a successful relationship. No one wants to be a failure or to be perceived as such. The pressure to keep even a disastrous marriage together is reinforced by the response of family, friends, and helping professionals who are ignoring the fact that the woman is a victim. They do not believe the abuse has really taken place, or if it has taken place, the actual blame for it should be on the woman.

A woman is also bound by a number of fears, the most extreme of which is that her husband will kill her or her children if she tries to leave. In her experience, this fear is usually well founded. If he has managed to beat her senseless on any number of occasions, what is to prevent him from killing her? The fear is regularly reinforced simply by reading the newspapers.

In Calgary on April 1, 1985, while the Progressive Conservative Party was in convention in Edmonton — ironically passing a resolution much like this motion today, addressing the issue of family violence — a man, separated from his wife, killed her, their daughter, and himself. This motion received unanimous support. It was brought forward by Calgary McKnight's Lee Fowers, a woman who is very concerned about this problem. To refer back to the case in Calgary, the woman who was killed had left a bad relationship. Her husband had been ordered by the court to stay away from them until their divorce was finalized. He had threatened her and the children a number of times. The newspaper photograph shows a policeman guarding the front door of the home. To my mind this is perhaps a case of too little too late, but it is an account of the realized fears of many who live in abusive relationships.

While I was working on this, Mr. Speaker, the daughter of the woman who made the motion at our convention gave me a book by a woman in the United States, Lenore Walker, called *The Battered Woman*. I was able to read about half of this book, but I had to quit because the stories were so horrendous I couldn't believe they were actually true.

Finally, getting back to why women stay in the situation they do and why society takes the attitude it does, marriage in our society is seen as a very private institution and women find it very difficult to go outside for help from professionals. When they do decide to seek help, sometimes it's not as forthcoming as it should be. For example, one of the first institutes a battered woman might deal with is a medical establishment, for the treatment of her physical injuries or her mental state of health. Often professionals will not ask about the possibility of battering. They will treat the symptoms, but they are reluctant to treat the cause. They have not been trained or encouraged to deal with battered women. By and large, hospitals have not developed response procedures for suspected cases of wife battering. Often injuries are not carefully documented in the emergency ward for further use by the police and the authorities. Doctors are often turned to as a source of help, and it is especially horrifying if medical personnel either refuse to take battering seriously or are ill equipped to recognize the causes as well as the symptoms of their problems. If the woman is not well received, she may return to the battering situation with an even greater sense of helplessness.

The fact that the police and the courts do not protect the battered woman is clearly evident. Despite important improvements in both the law and its enforcement, police are still reluctant to lay charges. Family violence is still treated with unusual amounts of discretion as something

less than criminal. When the police arrive on the scene, it is unlikely the man will be arrested or charges will be laid. A woman who has just been beaten and faces the possibility of even more severe beatings is in no condition to lay the charges herself. This lack of formal official intervention renders the law useless and reinforces the notion that the batterer's conduct is not that serious. It also leaves the victim in what becomes all too often a life-threatening situation. It is important to remember that laws currently exist which should, if applied properly, protect the woman who is assaulted. I'm glad to see that our Attorney General has moved in this direction with instructions for these to be followed more than they have in the past. But if these laws are not applied equitably, my motion, which urges the government to enforce the current law, spells out the importance — we're not asking for more laws; I just want a more positive approach to enforcing the current laws.

Recent studies in Canada have shown that among those men who are charged by police, fewer than one in four repeat the offence. Donald Dutton, a professor at the University of British Columbia who has spent more than a decade researching wife assault in Canada, said: only an arrest tells a man that wife assault is wrong and that the state with its authority will not put up with it. Thirty days in jail gives him enough time to think about his actions.

Getting away from the needs of battered women for a moment, I want to address the second part of this motion, which deals with the batterer, the perpetrator of the crime. I think we can go a long way in preventing the incidence of abuse simply by using the current law to deter the perpetrator and, as well, to punish the offender. Unfortunately, as I've already explained, the full extent of the law is not being brought to bear. Other jurisdictions have experimented with automatic arrests and overnight incarceration for accused or suspected offenders. In Philadelphia, where this has been tried, the result has been a 50 percent reduction in incidents. It is interesting to note that for many of the men involved, this was their very first lesson that wife abuse was considered a criminal activity.

Another point which we should address relates to the practical needs of battered women as well as the punishment of the offender. That is, why should the woman be expected to leave? Perhaps by effectively restraining the offender, it not only would be possible to serve the requirement that women have the protection but would significantly reduce the burden on emergency shelters. Why is it that a woman is effectively locked away for her own protection and not the man who, after all, is the offender? Restraint orders and other mechanisms the law possesses to protect victims are not being used to their full extent and, as indicated by an earlier example, are not wholly effective. If that man in Calgary had been jailed for threatening his wife and children, it's quite possible they would be alive today.

While many may argue that this would place an incredible burden on the police and the jails, I answer on two points. First, if we can lock someone up overnight for failing to pay old speeding tickets, we can certainly lock up a man who has beaten his wife. Second, what kind of burden do we think would be created if there were enough emergency shelters to actually deal with the demand? Right now in Alberta we have 12 emergency shelters, and except for the constant preoccupation with funding, these shelters are doing a great job. The shelters and transition houses provide counselling, child care, psychological evaluation, legal information, and volunteer support groups. Our province is contributing \$2.7 million a year for the operation of these

shelters and more money for women and children who cannot be accommodated in the shelters. If we don't take firm action to punish and incarcerate offenders, our commitment to emergency shelters will have to be drastically increased.

While we must all be concerned about the increased burden on the public purse if we pursue wife batterers in an all-out offensive, we should be more concerned about the consequences if we don't. The consequences include increased expenditures for medical care, for police response to recurring and increasingly more numerous complaints, and for social services which assist a family in readjusting to normal lives. More attention should be given to educating the variety of professions who deal with battered women, including doctors, nurses, psychologists, police officers, lawyers, and judges. With increased awareness and sensitivity on the part of these helping professionals, both the victim and the offender can be assisted in leading more productive and certainly less destructive lives.

By giving more attention to this issue, perhaps by even conducting a public awareness and education program, we're going to have a lot of ugly scenes coming out of the family closet. I argue that we have a responsibility to face this possibility and to deal with it as effectively and efficiently as possible. Perhaps we should consider placing more emphasis on isolating and punishing than on rehabilitating the offender. While I recognize the dire need for emergency shelter accommodation services, I cannot help but think that unless we prevent family violence through education and the exercise of authority, the incidence of wife abuse will continue to have a devastating effect not only on the public purse but on the cultural strength of our society as well.

Wife assault is a serious problem, one which affects not only the immediate victim but the children who witness it. Studies have shown that the vast majority of offenders and many abused women were victims of family violence as youngsters. Men have learned that violence is an appropriate response to anger, and women have learned to put up with it as a necessary evil. Their children are learning this right now, and unless there's formal intervention and the beginning of a countereducation process, the cycle of family violence will continue.

We can hope to come to grips with this crime only if we give it our serious attention and take action through public education and awareness, by using the law for the purpose for which it was created and encouraging and allowing changes in the institutions of society which perpetuate the abuse of women. Work on this issue is presently going on across this country. Governments in every province are doing things to solve the practical problems of battered women and to find solutions to domestic violence. We have information on what is being done in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario, all provinces well respected for their advances in this area. I hope that through continued co-operation and the process of sharing information, we might collectively arrive at a successful plan for the resolution and eventual prevention of family violence.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to leave my colleagues with a final word. Yesterday morning a woman died in the University hospital in the city of Edmonton. She died in an intensive care unit because she was a successful suicide. This woman recently moved from Ontario to escape her husband, who had been battering her for several years.

Thank you.

MR. SZWENDER: Mr. Speaker, I rise in my place this afternoon to participate in debate on Motion 218, presented by the MLA for Calgary McKnight. I have to apologize; I was out of the Chamber for a few moments and didn't catch all the comments, but I believe the member, who has spoken on very similar issues on a number of occasions, has covered the topic as presented and worded in the motion extremely well.

As I engage in this debate, it brings back a bit of déjà vu to the first motion that I as a newly-elected member had the opportunity to bring forward in this House. That was Motion 203 on March 22, 1983, which dealt with urging the Attorney General to take firmer action in prosecuting spouses, primarily husbands who engage in wife battering. As I read over my words that afternoon, it brought back a lot of interesting points that I know are extremely relevant to that issue. It's important that I rise again today and assess everything I've learned about the issue since that time and whether we've really progressed or if the situation has really changed.

At that particular time, I made four recommendations, and I'd like to briefly review them. I'm very happy and proud to say, if I can take some credit for the action the Attorney General took last year in terms of encouraging and giving more authority to police departments to prosecute and charge battering spouses, that maybe it was a result of the motion I presented a couple of years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the first solution I brought forward at that time is directly related to the information I've just presented: that police forces should have more power to prosecute husbands engaged in wife beating, without the consent of the wife, without the wife having to lay the charges, without the wife even presenting evidence at a later trial or, because the wife later withdraws those charges, their having to be dropped. It's an example set by Legislatures in other provinces, and I believe we've now taken the right step in treating wife battering, spousal abuse, as common assault rather than some privileged action between a couple simply because they share a marriage licence.

The second recommendation I made at that time was a matter of public awareness, and this is directly related to education. There are certainly a great number of societal problems. If it's not wife battering, it's child abuse or alcohol and drug abuse. To date, the best method I have determined to deal with these problems is public awareness and public education. The AADAC program has been extremely useful and successful in educating the public about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. That has curbed it in many ways in particular segments of our society. I don't know if statistics bear it out, but I think we're much more aware of the drunk driver; there is a social stigma attached to it. I believe that program has been responded to extremely well.

Just as courses have been brought in in elementary school to teach young children to be aware of strangers, not to become too attached them, to be aware of some of the dangers that are involved, we should possibly extend this public awareness to education about violence in the home, so that even children who are continuously exposed to it do not grow up believing this is the normal way of life that is acceptable, that indeed it isn't, and because someone — whether it's their father or someone else living there — is doing it, does not mean it is right. The school has a great deal of responsibility in setting the moral values, what is right and wrong. In the long run, I think that form of education will certainly affect, if not change or reverse, the pattern that we're trying to effect here.

Proper funding for transition homes is a third recommendation I made. I don't know if the Member for Calgary McKnight referred to extensive funding, but this is a difficult one. As I assess my comments of two years ago, I wonder how much government funding needs to continue in order to curb the excesses of our society. There is a general trend, Mr. Speaker, that programs that initially begin out of the willingness of volunteers to do good where there is a need or a desire eventually become more and more institutionalized or are referred to as essential. The Red Cross is a good example. Even the public school system is an example where a few individuals provided a service on a volunteer basis. As more and more people came to count on it, the government slowly had to take over and thus provide funding for it.

As more and more shelters for battered women are developed, we have to be careful that the government does not eventually have to take the full burden of financial responsibility. In the press and in information that we receive, I've read numerous comments about people involved with these various shelters. They're concerned that there is no stable, reliable source of funding. What they're implying is that the government has to provide that. Comments are made all the time from someone who thinks there should be a home in their community and that the government hasn't come forward with enough funding. So it's a difficult situation, and we have to continuously assess that the government is not burdened with the full responsibility, regardless of how crucial and essential these various programs are. In many ways, volunteerism is still the hallmark or trademark of how successful these programs turn out to be.

My fourth recommendation at that time, Mr. Speaker, was that the police should be better trained to deal with domestic problems. My understanding of the police force in the city of Edmonton is that they have specialized training for officers responding to domestic calls, because it deserves specific training in psychology and sociology, learning and knowing about the family. It's not simply a matter of breaking up a fight in a bar. It's a lot different; it's more complicated and complex than that. In general, I think police forces have responded extremely well, not only in Alberta but, from what I've heard and read, throughout Canada.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of broad comments, because I know there are a couple of other members — I can see the minister responsible for the status of women eager to jump up and take part. I won't take up too much time, because there are probably many members who have extensive comments to make. Many of mine were made on March 22, 1983, and I expressed my feelings at that time.

Mr. Speaker, I think society as a whole is falling into a kind of dilemma here. On one hand, we have the federal Minister of Justice relaxing the laws on divorce. Previously, a three-year separation period was necessary; now a one-year separation period is necessary. The grounds for divorce are far more easily identified and easier to reach in terms of a divorce settlement. I don't know if that's completely well and good. We keep hearing that the family is extremely important to the stability of our society, yet we are making it easier for a couple to break up their marriage, with all the consequential problems that develop. With the old period, the difficulty in getting a divorce — it may have dragged on for two or three years, but at least those two individuals couldn't jump into another marriage and repeat a mistake without having sufficient time to ponder what their actions had been, to prevent a repetition of that type of incompatible marriage.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

In many ways, I think the whole institution of marriage is on trial here, according to this motion. The government is asked to take action for the irresponsibility of certain individuals. We in this Legislature all believe in freedom of choice. One of those freedoms is who we want to love, who we choose to marry or live with. When those relationships fail, those individuals begin to rely heavily on the government to extricate them from the difficulties in which they find themselves, and often those difficulties end up in family violence.

On that note, I think the motion has to be a little bit more specific in terms of its intent, because family violence can be looked at in two different ways. You've got violence between the two marriage partners, the spouses, and then there's usually the children. I think the social services department addresses the whole issue of child abuse or violence in the family regarding children extremely well and has a very excellent record in dealing with children to its credit. The motion, as I see it, doesn't really differentiate between the two types of involvements. Again, does the government have a responsibility to rectify situations which individuals have put themselves in through their own choice?

I want to look at the question of what happens once these individuals — in most cases, 99 percent I guess, it's the husband who is doing the battering, and he is the one that's charged or is made accountable. We have 99 percent; there is always room for that 1 percent to be of the female gender. Point three of the motion, "increasing assistance for the rehabilitation of the family," is a very, very difficult one. On one hand, we're promoting the incarceration of an individual, if indeed violence has gone to that extent. The individual may spend time in jail, and then if we want that family to stay together, he's expected to return to the home. Is it realistic to expect an individual to return to a home from which he has been forcibly removed because of assault charges?

I was reading of one case in which an individual had so violently attacked the woman he was living with that she lost one eye. The judge in this case sentenced the man to eight months in prison for aggravated assault. Some people applauded the severity of the sentence, because indeed these sentences are too lenient and actually the convictions are too few and far apart. Others said it wasn't sufficient, considering that aggravated assault carries a maximum of 14 years. But what happened was that the woman originally laid the charges and within 10 days had thought it over, didn't want to live by herself, and wanted to drop the matter. The law had clearly been broken; it had to be verified by a trial. The man had physically harmed and handicapped this woman — his common-law wife would be the best way to address it, I guess — and yet she didn't feel there was a necessity to press charges. Sociologists, psychologists, and other experts in the field tell us that in most instances the woman takes the man back within a few days. So removing them from the home isn't always the answer.

In this case somebody got himself a good defence lawyer, and with all apologies to my colleagues who are lawyers, we know how these things work. The guy took a bath, maybe for the first time in six months, he got a shave, somebody bought him a tie, and he came into court and started looking respectable. To make things even more effective, he came in holding hands with the same woman he had physically beaten and deformed; this was supposed

to impress the judge. Fortunately, the judge was not fooled by these manipulations of the court's sentiments in determining guilt in this particular case.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

My point here is that on one hand we're asking for action through this motion, and we realize the great number of impediments that we face, whether in the judicial system or in the standards we have in society as a whole that we're trying to preserve in other ways. It is a very difficult question. I know that debating it here in the Legislature will help in terms of public awareness; that's the most we can do in the most immediate time. Of course, we can take other firm action in the longer course. In many ways there is frustration on my part, as I have dealt with this issue over a longer period of time. I have followed it closely and realize that there are no simple, open-and-shut answers as to how we can alleviate the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I've been told by my colleague to stop. He's certainly heard those comments from me on many occasions with respect to his speeches, and I'm sure much more deservedly. Possibly he wants to rise to his feet; I think he's an expert on this topic. I will relinquish the floor to my colleagues.

MR. STROMBERG: Mr. Speaker, our congratulations to the Member for Calgary McKnight for tackling a very difficult subject. No kidding about it; it's one of the more tragic subjects that you can imagine — to think that something like this can happen in a civilized nation. It's my opinion that a man who would beat a woman must have a very sick mind. I don't want to admit my ignorance of the good book, but I'm sure the Bible refers to wife beating. I asked four of my colleagues if they could give me the verse in the scripture, but they know less of the good book than I do. We have a saying in my community that if someone is so negative and sick of mind that he would cause abuse to a woman, that man should be tied to a post and horsewhipped.

MR. SZWENDER: And hard too.

MR. STROMBERG: I agree. Up to about a year ago, I had honestly never heard of any wife abuse or wife beating in the Camrose constituency. If they could follow the RCMP around and have a first-hand experience or sit in on the court sessions where this sort of thing comes up, perhaps the citizens of the city of Camrose and the constituency would have an idea how widespread wife abuse is.

It came to our attention through a very dedicated group of Camrose businesswomen who belonged to a business and professional club that recognized the need for this type of shelter in east-central Alberta. These ladies went ahead and met with different groups, different councils, different towns and cities for quite a radius around Camrose, and also got in touch with our department of social services and the federal government and got the ball rolling. It was quite an event when they had their official opening in early winter, and I was really appreciative of the invitation to attend. It was quite surprising that in two months of operation approximately 100 people went through it. That's not 100 families; that's mothers and children. On further inquiring on how smoothly the sheltered women's organization worked with the RCMP, referrals from hospitals, et cetera, I was shocked that this sort of thing went on in the peaceful

Camrose constituency. I would like to mention that credit also has to be given to the federal government for their contribution towards the shelter.

When I was asked to speak to this motion, I mentioned it to my wife for some ideas. I suggested to her that I would perhaps talk on the subject of the husband who takes considerable abuse. I pointed out to my good wife that since the weekend was coming up and I had planned for six months for my annual fishing trip, I was taking considerable abuse from her because she had made a list of things I had to do before I could go fishing. I had to plow the garden, plant the potatoes, take the storm windows off, get the lawn mower started, and yak, yak, yak — all the way down the darn list. I thought that was husband abuse, but I didn't get very far with that argument. I had to do it all before I went fishing.

From the information I was able to gather at the opening of the shelter in Camrose — and it's been touched on by many members who have spoken — if you're going to get at the root of this thing, the police or the RCMP have to lay the charges, not the wife. That's got to be mandatory through legislation. If the RCMP or the local police can lay that charge, I'll bet you that after that wife beater had a couple of months thinking time in the slammer, it would perhaps curb a very large percentage of what I would call a very horrendous problem.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LEE: Mr. Speaker, in addressing this motion today, I want to quote from an *Edmonton Journal* news article dated May 15, 1984:

A downtown . . . store has stopped selling a joke item called a "wife beater" after protests that it wasn't very funny.

Two members of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee complained to store officials . . . about the 60-cm-long foam rubber bats inscribed with "wife beater".

A representative of the association said:

"The material the bats are made from is not the point — it's the attitude this fortifies . . ."

A representative of the store

described the bats "as a contemporary item" that have been very popular.

In addition to "wife beaters", there are bats inscribed with the words "pet beater", "husband beater" and "child beater." The latter two are sold out, he said.

It's absolutely amazing and shocking in the year 1984 that something as obviously dangerous in terms of developing attitudes would be permitted to be sold on the shelves of stores in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Motion 218, with respect to family violence, I think we should address a fundamental principle that I would like to speak to, and that is simply this: no civilized society can allow some of its members to beat other weaker members without consequences. And it's interesting that the motion is worded as family violence, because there are really three components of family violence: child abuse, elder abuse, and wife battering. I want to address my remarks specifically to the issue of wife battering, which I believe we are becoming more aware of and is obviously an area that needs to be addressed.

I guess the fundamental problem goes back to a traditional view by many that women are the property of men and that the institution of marriage condones that. The hon. Member for Calgary McKnight mentioned earlier that there's

an old tradition called the "rule of thumb", which comes from the tradition that a male could have a stick to beat his wife with but it could be no thicker than the size of a thumb. I wasn't aware of that, but these things kind of slip into our culture, and we're not aware of it. Yet the attitudes are brought forward.

I think the public is becoming increasingly disturbed by the extent of wife battering, and we're shocked at some of the statistics we've heard in the debate today. The time has come for us to stop turning a blind eye to the problem and address this silent yet very real tragedy.

In some respects, Mr. Speaker, the greatest barrier to the problem is not the views of men but the views of women who have been taught that they must be passive when violence develops and that they must accept whatever happens, and also their lack of awareness of the problem. It's absolutely amazing how many women who have had unhappy marriages come out of the marriage to discover that when they talk to others, in fact they were subjects of wife battering. I read of an incident of a lady who left her husband at age 30; she had two children. After they were married for three weeks, he beat her up and broke her nose for not performing the way he expected. She thought that was the way marriage was. She had no awareness that there was anything better. It's tragic that that awareness still exists today.

I think many members have reported on the important and increasing role police have in dealing with this problem. How ironic it is that the profession of policing is now looked to in many respects as the answer for this difficult, complicated problem. I served for over three years on the city of Calgary Police Commission. I believe the city of Calgary attempted to deal with this problem in a very progressive way. In fact, it was one of the first police departments to adopt a policy of implementing a victim crisis unit. The victim crisis unit was begun in 1981 and had two mandates. Number one was crisis intervention: to assist the regular police force to step in and assist police officers to deal with the domestic dispute. The second area was victim follow-up, victim understanding. After operating for only six months, it became evident that if we wanted to do proper victim follow-up, there was a need for literally millions and millions of dollars of additional funding for this victim unit. There was a demand that could not be met. So a serious look had to be taken at what could or could not be done in terms of resources. It became apparent that, yes, we'd like to pursue victim crisis units, but officers themselves would have to become more aware and more educated.

It's interesting that since the city of Calgary adopted a policy of actually issuing charges in every case where they intervened, the number of charges has increased seven times. In other words, only one out of seven male-battered women previously took the initiative to report the incidents of violence. I think that's rather a sad commentary. What has been the key to success in Calgary? First of all, a substantial number of volunteers who would step in and assist the police and, secondly, the police themselves taking the onus for laying the charges instead of the frightened victims. That has had a very major impact on improving dealing with the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I think the tragedy in this whole issue of wife battering is the impact it has on children, because children adopt their beliefs from the environment of their family. They adopt their beliefs based on accepting or rejecting the experience in their own family. Our beliefs

are based significantly on the impact our family has on us. My beliefs came from my parents, my parents' came from their parents, and so on and so forth. So it's not surprising that we have males adopting negative behaviour from parents as well as females adopting passive behaviour from parents. I believe that many of these lessons have to be unlearned.

When I was growing up in Winnipeg, my parents separated when I was seven. My twin brother and I lived with them, and I recall the absolutely helpless terror when our parents fought. We would be listening in another room. We could hear dishes breaking and we could hear our mother crying. How helpless we felt, because we loved both parents and didn't know how to deal with it. The traumatic scars that are impacted on young children in cases of wife battering last a lifetime. We shouldn't kid ourselves; they go on forever. Any one family, one child experiencing and seeing their mother beaten, is one too many. I think that oftentimes we deal with these in terms of statistics.

So what are the answers? I'm excited by the attitude that parents today are adopting. There is a new generation of parents that I think are most progressive. They've learned; they've been educated and seen better role models. In many respects I think we have an extremely progressive generation of young parents. If there's any answer, it's their setting a positive example of relationships. I think there's a great opportunity in the school curriculum. But we're already looking to the schools to do so much in terms of dealing with our social problems. We look to them to deal with teenage suicide, as we should. I think a great deal has been done in that regard and more can be done. Certainly schools have played an important role in addressing the whole question of child abuse, and we've seen great progress. I think the more programs in health that we can develop in junior high school, in high school itself, in terms of role models for families and preparation for marriage and responsible parenthood, the better.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most significant opportunity for changing society's attitudes lies with television. We've never looked at television as a major institution for cultural and social change, but I can recall several good specials made for TV during the past year, movies that dealt with very difficult social problems. I believe it's the role models that are being established on television that help children who are growing up to understand that there may be a better way. So those are the areas that I think offer future opportunities for solution.

Mr. Speaker, I'll just refer briefly to the three recommendations in the motion today. Number one, "ensuring the enforcement of current laws" — absolutely. I think that's being done, and the more we can do, so much the better. Number two, with respect to "establishing policies of automatic overnight incarcerations" — an interesting suggestion. I'm not certain it's feasible in every case. We're going to have to address the issue of the impact of the Charter of Rights. Thirdly, "increasing assistance for the rehabilitation of the family" — a very noble recommendation but certainly a difficult and challenging one in view of budgets.

I want to close, Mr. Speaker, by quoting from a report on Violence in the Family; which was prepared by the standing committee on health and welfare of the federal Parliament. In the introduction to their conclusion they say:

From the foregoing [report], one can see that "the problem" of wife battering is really a multitude of interrelated problems. Inevitably under Canada's federal system, some of the possible solutions fall under federal jurisdiction, some under provincial jurisdiction, while some lie in areas where both levels of governments have competence. Private institutions and individuals can also do much to change the situation.

Mr. Speaker, the motion is a step in the right direction and, yes, we should look to government. But more than anything we should look to society as a whole for the solution. I'd like to continue with this debate. However, I note the time, and given the late hour, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It is so ordered.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is not proposed that the Assembly sit this evening. By way of business for tomorrow afternoon, it is proposed that we continue with second reading of Bills on the Order Paper and, should opportunity arise thereafter, move to committee study of other Bills on the Order Paper.

[At 5:27 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]