

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, April 9, 1986 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, a very important part of Alberta's tourism promotion is represented in the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta, and I have the great pleasure of having in your gallery today Dr. Brent Ritchie, the president of this association. Accompanying him is Mr. Don Smithson, the director of special projects of the Department of Tourism, and secretary Val Metez. Can I ask them to please rise and receive the appreciation of this Assembly.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 19**Insurance Amendment Act, 1986**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 19, the Insurance Amendment Act, 1986.

The principle of the Bill is to provide enabling legislation for the insurance industry to set up the mechanism to create an insurance compensation fund to protect Alberta consumers. A further amendment in the Bill provides relief to the adjusters from the requirement of an insurer to sponsor their application for licence.

[Leave granted; Bill 19 read a first time]

Bill 220**Retail Business Holidays Act**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 220, the Retail Business Holidays Act.

This Bill would prohibit a person from carrying on a retail trade on a Sunday or major statutory holiday. The Bill exempts from its provisions grocery and convenience stores with a total business area of less than 220 square metres. It also exempts such businesses as pharmacies, tourist trade enterprises, restaurants, gas stations, entertainment enterprises, and others set out in the schedule appended to the Bill. It also allows a business not otherwise exempted from the Act's provisions to open on a Sunday if it was closed the immediately preceding Saturday.

[Leave granted; Bill 220 read a first time]

Bill 218**University of the Peace Act**

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being Bill 218, the University of the Peace Act.

Briefly, Mr. Speaker, this Bill would amend the Universities Act to create the University of the Peace, the main

campus of which would be situated in the city of Grande Prairie. It would bring the cultural, economic, and educational benefits of a university to the northwest of the province.

[Leave granted; Bill 218 read a first time]

Bill 217**Freedom of Information Act**

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 217, the Freedom of Information Act.

This Bill is designed to put into legislation the basic right of Alberta citizens to be assured that information used to reach decisions in government is made available to the public. Mr. Speaker, this Bill very closely resembles the freedom of information Act passed by the federal government.

[Leave granted; Bill 217 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of the Alberta Securities Commission for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985. In addition, I beg leave to file the Superintendent of Insurance annual report for the year 1984, for the business year of 1983, and to file the 34th annual report, for 1985, under the Public Contributions Act.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the 1985 annual report of the Farmers' Advocate.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Committee on Legislative Offices, I beg leave to table the report of the Auditor General for the year ended March 31, 1985.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Assembly a copy of the Government of Alberta Emergency Response Plan for a Sour Gas Release. This is the third edition, which was developed in consultation with the industry, the public, and the ERCB.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Policy Recommendations for Private Adoption Practices and Procedures in Alberta, as submitted by a subcommittee of the Provincial Advisory Committee on the Family.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the annual report of the Department of the Solicitor General for the year ended March 31, 1985, the annual report of the Alberta Racing Commission for the year ended March 31, 1985, and the annual report of the Alberta Liquor Control Board for the year ended December 31, 1984.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two annual reports: the annual report of the Department of Housing for the year ended March 31, 1985, and the annual report of the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation for the year ended March 31, 1985. The latter report was distributed to all members in January.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today to make several introductions. The first one is a good friend from the wonderful constituency of Three Hills and mayor of the newest city and the only city in the Three Hills constituency: Ron Davidson, in your gallery. I'd like him to be accorded the usual welcome of the House.

Also, Mr. Speaker, as a follow-up to my tabling of a particular document, I'd like to introduce a number of people in the members' gallery. First of all, Mrs. Dorothy French, who is the chairman of the Provincial Advisory Committee on the Family; the chairman of the subcommittee that prepared the report, Mrs. Susan Friesen, who also happens to be from the Three Hills constituency; Mrs. Hazel Smith, member of the special subcommittee; and Dr. Joe Hornick, director of research, University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Welfare, who is a consultant to the special subcommittee. I'd like the members of the Assembly to accord the usual welcome.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to the rest of the Assembly, 24 grade 6 students from Bassano school, which is in the very important constituency of Bow Valley. They are accompanied by their teacher Molly Pilling, and parents Dave Kelly, Joanne Saunders, Keith Learn, Doreen Learn, and Sandra Neighbour. I would now like them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, today in the members' gallery are 73 active grade 6 students from Chinook Park school in Calgary Glenmore. They are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Donna Tabor, Mrs. Dianne Fortin, Mrs. Eva Jones, Mrs. Bonnie Kerr, Mrs. Dianne Weir, and volunteer chaperones Mr. Jones, Mrs. Godin, and Mrs. Bierraugel. I think they're probably understaffed for this number of children on a day-long bus trip, so I'd ask everyone to welcome them to the Legislature today.

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, as always I'm very delighted to once again welcome students from Donnan school, 28 grades 5 and 6 students. They are accompanied by their teachers Miss Gail Brierley and Mr. Larry Eshenko. I want to say that Miss Brierley at one time did work for the Department of Tourism and, of course, Mr. Eshenko is a very respected and well-known alumni of the Shumka Dancers. May I ask them to rise and be welcomed by the Assembly please.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Department of Tourism

MR. SCHMID: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to inform you today that Travel Alberta's new in-province travel campaign will not only encourage all Albertans to travel their own province but in doing so maintain and create thousands of jobs. Over the next two years Albertans from across the province will be invited to "Take an Alberta Break." "Take an Alberta Break" is the message we'll be sending to all Albertans. It will serve as a short, simple reminder for Albertans that there is lots of opportunity to get away from it all right here in your own backyard.

Mr. Speaker, the next two years will be an exciting time for both the tourism industry and for Albertans travelling around the province. Many private companies have expressed an interest in joining the program and offering their own special Alberta breaks. In addition, a \$250,000 grant program has been developed to assist smaller centres and event organizers in promoting their events.

Mr. Speaker, you know about the importance of tourism to Alberta's economy. If we can get more Albertans travelling around the province on short one-, two-, and three-day trips, we can increase income in Alberta's vital tourism industry and thereby provide the opportunity for countless more jobs. Albertans today account for approximately 50 percent of all tourism revenues in our province, and that amounts to over \$1 billion. We are out to break new ground in Alberta, and we are striving to break new records in awareness and participation in all the tourism opportunities our beautiful province has to offer, from the north's Wood Buffalo park to the international peace park on our southern border, from Paradise Valley's three-cities' fair in the east to the Banff television festival in the west, from border to border, all year round.

For the past 10 months, Mr. Speaker, Travel Alberta has been working closely with the departments of Culture and Recreation and Parks along with the Northern Alberta Development Council and the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta in developing the program. I would like to thank especially all the members of TIAALTA and my colleagues the Hon. Mary LeMessurier and the Hon. Peter Trynchy for the assistance and valuable input their people have contributed to the development of this program.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, be sure to take your Alberta break.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: In rising to reply to the ministerial announcement, Mr. Speaker, I certainly have no objection to the emphasis to encourage people in Alberta to travel within the province. Certainly that is desirable if we can keep some of the bucks within the province.

I would say though, Mr. Speaker, that advertising is certainly a component of tourism. As I say, on the surface this program looks desirable, but the point I would have to make is that if we're going to be serious about tourism, we're going to have to take a different attitude. I'm not talking about the government so much but as a provincewide thrust, because I've heard that whether people are from Alberta or outside our borders, we just do not know how to treat tourists. We haven't taken it as a major emphasis. That has implications for our postsecondary institutions; it has implications for the government; it has implications for Albertans generally.

So while I certainly think this program is desirable, if we're really talking about tourism as a diversification tool, we're going to have to do a lot of other things if these types of programs are going to work.

DR. BUCK: I'd like on behalf of the Representative Party to compliment the government on this program, Mr. Speaker, but I'm just a little hesitant in that this may be just an extension of the Stamp Around Alberta program, which was promoted by the former minister and which was an excellent program. I have some concerns, and I'd like to direct them to the minister. I wish him well, because the minister is an enthusiastic minister. I hope that he can do something for the tourist business in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage the minister to look at getting more youth involvement in these programs. To the new Premier: I think it's just about time we looked at the young people in this province and came up with a program such as the company of young Albertans or something like that. There are so many young people who are now unemployed, especially in the summer, willing to volunteer, willing to work for \$3 or \$4 an hour. Some of these people would be glad to have something constructive to do.

I would like to also say to the minister that I see there is some direction into training of people who will be catering to tourists. I've brought to the attention of the Assembly many times the school that they have in Montreal. People come from right across the province. They can take a six-week course, a six-month course, or a two-year course.

I think that until this government realizes how important tourism can be to this province, we're missing out on many tourist dollars. So I wish the minister well. I'd like to compliment him on the program, but I think there are many, many more things that can be done. If the government is lucky enough to be returned, and the Premier is lucky enough to be back, I hope they leave the minister in that department.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Grain Prices

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Agriculture. It follows the devastating news to the farm economy yesterday when the Wheat Board announced that the initial price will have gone down almost 20 percent. The minister indicated that grain is a federal responsibility. In recognizing that, my question to the minister is this: does he mean that there is nothing this government can do to influence the Conservative federal government on this matter?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we will always take every initiative possible to try and speak for the farmers within this province. In fact, this morning I had a long telephone conversation with the federal Minister of State responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and outlined the concerns that we in this province have about the decrease in grain prices. I asked him at that point to give every consideration to trying to cushion the blow with any tools he had at his disposal to try and help with the initial grain prices.

I also raised issues with him, an example of which would be the domestic price of grain. All members know that there's a range between a minimum of \$5 and a maximum of \$7 on the domestic price of grain used within the country at the moment, \$7 being the maximum price. We are now at that maximum price. I asked him if he would give some consideration to increasing that number, to which his response was, "Yes, he would give some consideration to doing that," taking into account, however, that if you raise it too far, it does have some impact on jobs. But that is one clear example, Mr. Speaker, of initiatives that we will always take in trying to raise the concerns of Alberta farmers and also do all that we can within our province, under our jurisdiction, to be helpful.

MR. MARTIN: Following up, Mr. Speaker. Saying that this is certainly what I would classify an emergency situation

in the western provinces and specifically Alberta, from the discussion that the minister had with his counterpart in Ottawa, is there any emergency meeting planned between this minister, the federal minister, and perhaps the ministers from Saskatchewan and Manitoba?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, there is no specific date for a meeting planned. However, we certainly will be having further discussions. One area we have raised that will certainly be discussed in our overhaul of the Crop Insurance Act is western grain stabilization. We're hopeful that there will be a payment out of that program that would be helpful.

I raised that also with the federal minister and asked him, "When and how much would the payment be that would be coming from the western grain stabilization fund?" which is basically an income insurance protection. He said, "Very soon." I said, "What do you mean by very soon?" He said, "Hopefully by May 1." I said, "Can you speed that up?" He answered, yes, he thought maybe he could, and he would try. I said, "Hopefully the payment from that fund will be larger this year, considering the initial grain price reduction and the need for our producers," so he would take that under consideration. So it's areas like that.

If there is need for a meeting, I certainly will go have one but will raise at each opportunity I can the concerns to try and do all that we can to cushion the blow.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question flowing from that, Mr. Speaker. I think the minister indicated very clearly the fact that he was opposed to parity pricing. I would expect that would have an important influence on the federal government. My question is: has this minister scheduled a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture of the Conservative government in Saskatchewan, in order to review why Mr. Devine believes the domestic cost-of-production formula will help Saskatchewan farmers and, from there, to assess whether it might be a good idea for Alberta and Saskatchewan to speak with one voice in this matter?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I have no meetings planned. Of course, we have ongoing discussions, and I'm certain that at the next opportunity that will be a topic of discussion.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Because of the most recent announcement of this almost 20 percent cut, is the Alberta government now prepared to reassess its stand on parity pricing? Perhaps one of the options might be to work with the Saskatchewan government to influence the federal government.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, to bring parity pricing into this issue, I have some difficulty with, because parity pricing covers a number of other commodities from what I understand of the Bill that was presented in the House of Commons in Ottawa and that's being debated across the country at this moment. But with respect to the wheat price and the domestic price of grain and looking at what we can do with the domestic price, that's of course something that I think is worthy of every consideration.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. In the time being, as he indicates, that Bill is in the House of Commons. But I would say that we're able not just to go by that Bill;

we could present any other Bill. My question specifically: is the minister saying that he would look at some sort of parity pricing for grain prices? Is that what the minister is saying?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. Is government the least in favour of something that's banded around called a special federal deficiency payment, to counteract what the Americans are doing? If so, would he urge this one on the Conservative government in Ottawa?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I also raised that in my conversation with them and asked what their view was about a deficiency payment. There are deficiency payments in the United States, of course, that are very expensive. A deficiency payment here would be extremely expensive, considering their deficit position. It is one consideration that he is looking at, but how seriously, I don't know.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it would be expensive, but as indicated, there's probably \$1 billion going out of the western economy. In the conversations it was raised by the minister. My question specifically: is the stand of this government that they would encourage the federal government to move on that type of payment?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the initial prices have just been announced, and I think everybody in the industry, including ourselves, is analyzing what approach may be proper. I always have discussions with the industry on major issues, and I do intend to have discussions with them on this one. Then I'll be able to state clearly what the position is.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Has the minister been talking to any of our federal MPs, specifically the Minister of Transport, Mr. Mazankowski, to see what their stand might be on this and see if something could be worked out jointly on a type of payment?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't, but I will at whatever opportunity.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. The minister says he's reviewing it. I would say that this is another final blow to many people and that the time for analyzing is gone. Are there any other specific things the minister would tell us about here in the House that they might be planning in the next week or so?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we have been very aggressive in assisting our agricultural producers, and we feel very badly. It's another blow to the agricultural sector to have the drop in grain prices, but we have been very active in areas of energy costs, fertilizer costs, interest costs, and a wide variety of areas. We are always assessing options to try and be as responsive as we can. We will, of course, be assessing the options for the future in discussions with the industry and among our caucus colleagues and our agriculture caucus committee, to arrive at whatever we think is the appropriate approach.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As the minister just said, they are always assessing options.

If we're assessing options, why then do we unequivocally rule out parity pricing?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I can't answer that in question period, but I'm more than happy at any time to have a debate about the issue. Parity pricing doesn't look like a responsible approach. There are other approaches that we think are worthy of greater consideration, but we'll consider them all in developing a policy.

Royalty Debt Collection

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second set of questions to the Premier, if I may. I'd like to come back to the questions from yesterday when I asked the Premier if he had been informed of the special Esso royalty write-off before yesterday. In Hansard Blues, he promised me he would check and reply in detail. Now that the Premier has had a chance to review his files and check cabinet records, will he report today on whether he had been informed and, if so, on what date he had been informed?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I have checked into it a little bit, but I want to discuss the details with the hon. Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, who will be in the House tomorrow and who would be pleased to deal with the matter fully with the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I appreciate the fact that you're going to have a discussion with the minister of energy, and we'd like to have that discussion with the minister. But my question specifically has nothing to do with the minister. I asked specifically if you as the Premier were aware of this memo and, if so, when? That has nothing to do with the minister of energy.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, no, I was not aware of the memo before it was raised yesterday in the House.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I'm sure the Premier has had his staff working on this. Has the Premier as the head of this government — not the minister of energy — discovered whether or not the insiders' deal has gone ahead as outlined in the memo?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, those are matters that the minister of energy would be pleased to deal with tomorrow.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier, as President of Executive Council, now knows. I am surprised that after a day he wouldn't come back on this. Would the Premier advise then why we are waiting for a day? I'm sure he's had some discussions with the minister of energy. Why can he not tell us today what is the result of that memo, if the deal has gone ahead? Why does he need the minister of energy beside him to tell him that?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's a responsibility of the minister of energy. I haven't discussed it with the minister of energy at all. The minister will be here tomorrow, and the hon. Leader of the Opposition should direct his questions to him.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the Premier. The old saying, the buck stops not with the minister of

energy — he's quitting — but with the Premier. Let me ask a question then, Mr. Speaker, about government policy. I asked the Premier yesterday if he would provide a policy statement on whether bureaucrats in this government are empowered, on their own, to arrange details such as the one outlined in the memo. He assured me that he, not the minister of energy, would respond in detail. My question specifically: do such deals require ministerial approval?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, actually yesterday I dealt with the matter of policy when I advised the hon. Leader of the Opposition that all legitimate debts of the province will be followed up and collected.

MR. MARTIN: That's not the question I asked, Mr. Speaker. The question I asked is simply this: can bureaucrats arrange internal deals like this without ministerial approval?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, all legitimate debts would be followed up by the province. The hon. Leader of the Opposition is inferring details into a memo that may well not be correct, and therefore, he should wait for full details from the minister of energy.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I believe the Premier said he was not aware of the memo. My question specifically to the Premier: was he aware of the deal if not of the memo?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Leader of the Opposition still talks about a deal. He should wait for the minister of energy to go into full details with him.

MR. GURNETT: It's only \$19 million.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, only \$19 million.

The question I have for the Premier then, to come back to government policy on this, if we can get a handle on it ... As President of Executive Council, the Premier is responsible for documents, as quoted in the memo, "blessed" by cabinet. My question is: has the Premier had his staff search for a copy of the document referred to in the memo, the one "blessed" by cabinet, and will he agree to table it in the Assembly?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I have not at this time because that is the responsibility of the minister of energy, who will be handling it and who will be in the House to discuss the matter with the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: One supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary. It seems that the hon. leader is not prepared to accept an assurance that the matter will be gone into quite fully when the hon. minister of energy returns and seems to be devising every which way of trying to keep the thing going, notwithstanding the fact that there's been an assurance that it will be dealt with when the minister of energy comes back tomorrow. I find the series of questions has become excessively long under the circumstances. Perhaps we should get onto another topic.

MR. MARTIN: One final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder when the minister of energy became

President of Executive Council. I was trying to find out government policy ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MARTIN: To the Premier: has the Premier at this point even bothered to find out what the document is and if not, why not, at this point? It's over a day, and that's the way the Legislature works.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is simply, under rather ingenious variations, really asking the same question several times. I would respectfully suggest that he leave this line of questioning until it can be gone into properly tomorrow rather than take up further time in the question period today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Agricultural Credit

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. It's in light of yesterday's announcement with regard to the decrease in farm commodity prices and, as well, the number of farmers that are in a critical situation with regard to operating loans. What I'd like to know from the minister is what type of an instrument he is using to determine the crisis that is in Alberta today with regard to credit opportunities for farmers. What is the credit crisis watch that the Minister of Agriculture has in place, or is it done just by a few phone calls and sort of impulses now and then during a week?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, there is no way that I go out and talk to all the banks or survey all the farmers. I stated clearly yesterday that I rely on the information that comes to me from the district agriculturists, through the Department of Agriculture, in discussions with the banks and with the chairman and the board of ADC. To state there's a crisis — it's not a crisis. Certainly, there are problems in the whole area of finance, and that's why we made the very major step with our \$2 billion program. In answer to the question, I use basically the response I get from the department as well as discussions among the banks.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Is it the intent of the minister — and we have only hours and a few days before farmers must make decisions as to the kinds of crops, the amount of money they have to plant crops, whether they use fertilizer or not, or whether they're just going to farm for crop insurance. Is the minister going to put in place some kind of a plan by which he can listen closely to the credit needs of the farmers in the next few days, or do the farmers have to get on the phone and just phone the minister? Is that the only opportunity they have, or is there a listening ear in Alberta that's readily available for that crisis which exists across this province?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we have taken a very large step this last year through the department in our gear up financially courses. Farmers are good operators; they're good businessmen. They don't wait till the last minute to make their decisions. Through that course this last year every assistance was provided to try and work out what would be most profitable in their operations, considering a

wide number of variables including prices. That is one area. We have enterprise counsellors in place. We have our district agriculturists there. We have taken every step that we think we can take. We're always open to more if they think they will be of assistance. But we've taken all the steps at this point that we feel we can be of assistance to farmers for their spring planning, recognizing that there are difficulties, an example of which is the drop in grain prices, which have to be taken into account in the farmers' planning for the year.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate whether the farm organizations of Alberta have been put on alert to bring the best possible information to the minister and the Premier this week, so that if new policy is necessary, the minister and the government can put it into place? Have the key organizations been alerted to bring that information to the minister and the Premier this week? If so, have meeting times been set aside so that the Premier and the minister can meet with these various groups to know exactly what's happening out there? Because there is a change in circumstances as of this last announcement.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Member for Little Bow would know, we always work closely with the farm organizations and have discussions with them on a regular basis. In fact, last November we had a conference called Opportunities for Agriculture in which we got the best people in to give us advice. The farm leaders were there to try and work out the best approach that we could look at for the long-term strength and future of agriculture.

As far as farm organizations are concerned, I don't call them up and tell them what to do. They call me and they talk to the MLAs in their areas and we get that information. We always respond, and I think we're noted for responding as quickly as possible on each issue.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could I take from the minister's answer that he and the Premier are available this week to the farm organizations of this province to make an up-to-date presentation of how they see the crisis and, as well, present some recommendations which they have to give to government?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can't answer a hypothetical question like that. I talk on a regular basis to the farm leaders by phone and meet them personally. I'll be meeting a group tonight. We do that on a regular basis, as you know, to schedule times to meet. We do it as quickly as we possibly can, but if he's got some specific group that may be supporters of the hon. member who would like to meet with me, I'll be happy to do that.

Energy Ministers' Meeting

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the hon. Premier and ask if he has had an opportunity to get a report on the meeting held yesterday in Ottawa regarding the Husky upgrader proposal?

MR. GETTY: Yes, I have, Mr. Speaker. Members have probably heard, but I'd be happy to confirm that there was an agreement between the federal government, the government of Alberta, the government of Saskatchewan, and Husky

Oil to make sure that the upgrader proceeded right through on a normal basis, to handle all of the preconstruction planning and engineering. That would bring them up to the point where they would decide on actual construction. We're very pleased that it is proceeding as it should and as quickly as it can. We're pleased also that the federal government saw their proper role in supporting this, as they have with 40 percent of the costs, and that the provincial governments are 15 percent each, along with the company, which is 30 percent.

MR. MILLER: Thanks very much. May I ask a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, as to whether or not there is some indication as to when construction might actually get started on this project?

MR. GETTY: I would hope and expect, Mr. Speaker, that this engineering and planning work will be completed as quickly as possible. As I understand, they are setting a target, hopefully for the end of 1986 but no later than the first quarter of 1987, which is about the schedule they have had on a consistent basis since this project was announced.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the hon. Premier indicated to the Assembly that along with the Husky upgrader, Syncrude discussions would be taking place at the same table. Would the Premier have anything to report on those discussions at this time?

MR. GETTY: The matter was discussed, Mr. Speaker. It was a different meeting because, of course, the government of Saskatchewan or Husky would not be involved; it was between the federal government and the Alberta government representatives. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that we will be able to provide the House as quickly as possible with information that I think would lead us to be able to announce that we can proceed with the Syncrude expansion. My desire would be that it be a shared arrangement that would allow the preconstruction engineering and planning to go ahead in the same way. If it's not a shared arrangement, I've already told the House and the hon. member — and he can report it to the members of his constituency — that the Alberta government would then be willing to do it themselves.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Just to clarify a certain vagueness that I heard in some of the earlier replies, could the Premier indicate whether this government has been able to assure and hold the federal government to its previous agreement to actually provide the loan guarantee of some \$780 million toward the actual construction of the upgrader?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the original agreement has been set aside, if you like, while we go through the process I just reported on, without prejudice to any of the parties as to whether the original agreement would in fact stand throughout the next process of construction, because there will be many, many new matters of information that would be considered at that time.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. If the original agreement has been set aside, as we've heard, I wonder if in the current negotiations there's been discussion about the project being built on this side of the Alberta border so that there would be a maximum benefit for Albertans?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the government of Saskatchewan is firmly committed to this project, as we are. If any circumstances change in that province and it appears that anybody there does not want to support it, we would then give consideration to the matter that the hon. member has raised.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. With the changes in the situation and in the possible arrangement, I wonder if the Premier could indicate whether that could also entail the Alberta government's commitment being significantly greater than was originally discussed in terms of loan guarantees? Will there be equity investment on the part of the Alberta government?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is now getting into the realm of speculation, and I just can't speculate with him in that regard.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. We've seen this exercise with Alsands and Esso where public funds were committed to keep engineering in place. I may have missed the Premier's answer. How long will this program go on before we get a firm commitment from the federal government? Is there a timetable that the Premier has with the Prime Minister and his counterparts so that we can see that there's going to be some definite decision one way or the other?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as I did indicate a little earlier, the engineering and planning would go on as quickly as possible. The minute it is completed and can be assessed and the parties meet to deal with it, then a decision would be taken.

MR. PAPROSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. There seems to be some confusion in the press with respect to the terminology on this \$90 million injection of funds. The term "study" has been used, and I wonder if this is an accurate term, Mr. Premier.

MR. GETTY: It's a judgment, Mr. Speaker, but certainly in no way is it a study from our point of view. It is in fact an investment in this project, in the preconstruction engineering and planning that must be carried out in order to have the upgrader proceed and would be carried out over the same period of time if there were full agreement right now that it was going ahead totally to completion. So I think the term "study" is one that slipped out, probably from our media friends in eastern Canada, and you have to excuse that from time to time.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary. Are we on the same topic? The hon. Leader of the Opposition, followed by the hon. Member for Calgary Currie and the hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

We haven't a long list, but I'm becoming concerned about the time because we have had an extraordinary number of supplementaries, some of them very repetitive, on previous questions. I am concerned about reaching even this short list.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. The bottom line simply is that we don't have a commitment beyond the \$90 million and the federal

government has backed out of an agreement. Did the Premier have the minister of energy tell them in the strongest possible way that this is unacceptable, instead of coming back and congratulating each other on the \$90 million situation? Has it been made clear to the federal government that that's unacceptable?

MR. GETTY: There are a few questions there, Mr. Speaker. I think my answers would be no, yes, and yes.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. There was an agreement. The agreement that we had was trumpeted in this House. Now we don't have the agreement. Did the Premier tell the federal government in the strongest possible way yesterday, or have the minister of energy, that their attitude and behaviour in this matter have been unacceptable?

MR. SPEAKER: I have to identify that as being a twin of the question asked before it.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the hon. Premier is: was the general viability of the industry discussed with the federal government? If so, do we have any commitment that they will be taking some initiative to alleviate the problems faced by the industry in the near future?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the general viability of the energy industry was discussed in a great deal of detail, and there are further discussions going on. It's difficult to know when we might be able to get a decision from the joint discussions, and therefore, I could only say to the hon. member that we'll be pursuing them actively with the federal government.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, if I might be permitted one short additional supplementary. Could the hon. Premier relate what the mood of the federal government is with respect to the problems of the oil industry? Do they in fact recognize the difficulties we're facing, and are they actively participating with us in that regard?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there has been a tremendous contribution to the meetings through the very strong representations of the Alberta Members of Parliament. They worked very hard in coming to a conclusion with regard to the Husky upgrader, and they are working very hard in presenting the case for the energy industry in this province along with Alberta ministers and officials. I think it is safe to say on a general basis that the mood is a good one for coming up with a better understanding in the federal government of the concerns and needs and, therefore, a better chance of coming up with the right solution.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lethbridge West has changed his mind. The hon. Member for Calgary McCall, followed by the hon. Member for Clover Bar.

Alberta Stock Savings Plan Act

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I have a short question I would like to address to the hon. Premier. It's related to Bill 2 that was introduced. I would like to know what the intention of the government is with respect to the timing

of the debate on and the passing of Bill 2, the Alberta Stock Savings Plan Act.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Stock Savings Plan Act is a priority commitment of this government. Therefore, we are determined it will proceed with the utmost speed through the House.

Advisory Council on Women's Issues

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the hon. Minister of Advanced Education, that fount of knowledge. I'd like to ask if the minister can indicate how many people applied for the position that Margaret Leahey was appointed to. How many people applied for that position?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I guess that's in my responsibilities as status of women minister. I can assure the Member for Clover Bar that we examined a variety of people for the position. It was not advertised because it's a matter of contract and because we wanted to keep it separate from the civil service, so to speak. It was negotiated by a contract, and we considered several people for the position.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the hon. minister indicate how many were "several"? How many people were interviewed for the position?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd have to check to see all my notes and letters written to me. At the present time, even before the announcement of the status of women council, I have something of the order of 150 letters, plus or minus, from people who are interested in becoming members of that council. Obviously, from that list there are a variety of competent and able people who are interested in these issues, and we had a variety of choices to make.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, can the minister just very briefly indicate to the Assembly what criteria the minister and his steering committee were looking for when they were picking this person? Can the minister just give us some criteria?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, there were several criteria which members looked at, and I am sure that the Member for Clover Bar will agree that the current choice would satisfy most of the criteria. First of all, I think the ability to communicate and to articulate with a variety of groups across the province must be one of the very important criteria because, of course, this position will require an opportunity to communicate, to discuss issues, to listen carefully, and to articulate or summarize in a very precise way very complex issues for recommendation to government. Secondly, it's important, I guess, that the person should be a woman. Although that wasn't a 100 percent requirement, I thought that the chairman should be a woman, and I think we satisfied that criterion. Thirdly, I thought, by the way, that the person should be politically neutral, and as far as I know, the incumbent satisfies that test. Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, I thought that the person should have a clear interest and have evidence of an interest in the issues. Perhaps that was the largest or the first question we weighed.

Obviously, in compiling a matrix of variables which would be used to complete an assessment of this type, different weights were assigned by different people who were involved in this decision. But those are some of the

questions and some of the variables which were put together to mesh to come up with what I think was a very excellent choice for the chairman of this first council for Alberta.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. When you start believing some of that stuff that you're peddling, you're really in trouble.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, you've already said that we are always being pushed for time in the question period. If the member didn't really mean to ask the question, others would like to have a chance to express a view, I'm sure.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The minister indicated that one of the criteria is that the person was really apolitical. Can the minister indicate the way the committee was set up to determine if this person was political or nonpolitical? Can the minister indicate what the mechanism in place was and how many people were on this committee to make the final decision to pick this nonpolitical person?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I think *Hansard* will show that I did not say "nonpolitical." To my mind and to others who are involved, I think the term "politically neutral" is important. Obviously, somebody in this position must have some political conscience, be interested in political issues, and be interested in public debate. That was one of the criteria — not at all apolitical. I don't know anyone in this province who is apolitical; certainly I don't know of too many people who are apolitical. Finally, Mr. Speaker, others have written that the choice was one who was a small "c" conservative. Frankly, I think the vast majority of the people in this province are small "c" and perhaps even capital "C" Conservative.

Student Grants for Expo 86

MR. GURNETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address the question to the Minister of Education concerning the Expo 86 transportation grant program. In light of the fact that grade 6 is in many ways considered to be a traditional year for field trips and that representations have been made by parents and teachers and by at least this MLA to the minister on behalf of grade 6 students, my question is if the minister has any plan to change the policy that now makes that grant available only to students in grades 7 through 12.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to answer my first question as Minister of Education. I was kind of hoping it would be the official leader of the opposition, the old Delia boy, who had been in a position where he'd ask me all kinds of questions for the last several years — that apolitical guy from Delia.

In any case, Mr. Speaker, the response to the Expo visit program has been very, very good. From the latest count I've heard, we have some 32,000 young Albertans from grades 7 to 12 who will be going to Expo as part of that particular program. Certainly with any program, Mr. Speaker, there has to be some cutoff line, whether it be the widows' pension program or this program. The cutoff line was decided at between the grades 6 and 7 level, because the junior and senior high students were considered to be those who would benefit the most from the program. This particular cutoff line was considered very carefully, recognizing of course that there would be those parents and

children in the lower grades who would want to go as well. They certainly can go in any case. However, this particular program applies only to groups who are in the grade 7 to grade 12 range, and the response has been tremendous.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Certainly I'm as pleased as anybody about the 32,000 who will receive assistance in the currently eligible grades. However, that has nothing to do with the question that was asked.

My supplementary question to the minister is: what consultation, and with whom, was undertaken to determine that the program should apply to grades 7 through 12 rather than including grade 6 — what consultation with people who might be familiar with educational field trips in the province?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I can't think of any more informed group than our caucus. We have many teachers in our caucus. Our caucus, in consultation with our constituents, provided input to us in the decision-making process. I would have to take as notice any detailed response that the member may wish, as I was not the minister at the time the decision was made. However, I'm sure there was plenty of consultation that took place.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. The answer causes some concern that perhaps the program was developed in a reasonably informal way. My question to the minister is: in view of the fact that people are at various distances from major airports and the ability to travel, what study was undertaken and does the department have any plans in place to provide supplemental assistance to school groups that have a considerably greater distance to travel and other expense compared to students flying to Expo out of Edmonton or Calgary?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, one of the criteria that was used in developing the program was that it had to be simple. When we start complicating a program by taking into account distances that are involved, we end up with a very complex program that would be difficult to administer. For primarily the reason of simplicity: \$100 for each child that is involved in a group going to Expo, with very little administration, and they would be involved in projects to raise further money. I think it has worked out very well.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I trust he was not indicating that the program had to be simple so that he could understand it. My question is: how does the minister justify not making the program available to families who are travelling to Expo, perhaps coming from very small schools that are unable to make trips or from distances where the expense is too great, that the assistance is not available to children travelling to Expo with families as well?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of all the details of that particular program — and we won't get into the simpleness of any individuals in this Legislature, because it could be embarrassing for certain ones — I would be happy to sit down with the gentleman, and we could go over every A, B, and C of the program to see if he can understand it.

MR. GURNETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Might this be the final supplementary by the hon. member, followed by a final supplementary in regard to the question by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley. We're running out of time.

MR. GURNETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary question to the minister is simply why no criteria for duration of stay or study requirements were attached to the grants to ensure that there would be an educational benefit to the assistance that was provided.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, surely the hon. member can understand that any program that involves so many children and so many schools in the province has to be simple. To get into distances and length of stay of different groups in the schools would be, in my mind, an administrative nightmare. The primary reason for the program being the way it is — as I said, it's very clean-cut, easily administered, and serves an excellent purpose.

MRS. CRIPPS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make editorial comment, but I won't. Would students in grade 7 this fall be eligible to go to Expo and receive the grant?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, it is a good point in that any student who is in grade 6 and the school or the grade 6 class that would wish to go to Expo could do so after July 1 of this year. They would then be considered to be in grade 7.

MR. SPEAKER: In looking at the members who wanted to ask supplementaries, I regret that I overlooked the hon. Member for Barrhead. If the Assembly agrees, perhaps we could have a short supplementary question.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, but I'm afraid I have been pre-empted by my hon. colleague from Drayton Valley. She raised the question. It had to do with clarification on children who will be going into grade 7 as of July 1, 1986.

Agricultural Loan Guarantees

MR. FJORDBOTEN: On Tuesday last, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Little Bow asked a question relative to the Agricultural Development Corporation guarantee. The question he asked was whether

there is a clause in the guarantee program which can cancel the guarantee if for some reason the farmer is unable to make his or her payments.

He asked if I would review that, and I have.

I have to say that there is nothing in the attached agreement with the banks that would allow lenders to remove the guarantee from a loan they have approved under the modified program if the farmer is unable to pay. If the farmer is in default, the bank must take collection action on the section 178 security. If there is a deficiency, the bank calls on ADC to honour the guarantee and turns the remaining security over to the corporation.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, seated in the public gallery are 29 energetic, bright students from grades 5 and 6 at Dovercourt school, situated in the heart of Edmonton Kingsway. They are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. Berglund and Ms. Harrison. I would ask them to please rise and receive the traditional warm welcome from all members.

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Speaker, it is my very pleasant duty to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, eight ladies from the Little Red Deer Women's Institute, in the constituency of Innisfail. They are Estella Graham, Barbara Thompson, Livalle Edgar, Barbara Scarlett, Jean Wright, Rose Edgar, Win Tester, and Elna Edgar. They are seated in the members' gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 35 grade 6 students from the Glendon school, located in the village of Glendon in the Bonnyville constituency. These students are accompanied by two teachers, Mrs. Thelma Watrich and Mrs. Marilyn Kissel, and their bus driver is none other than His Worship Mayor Johnny Doonanco of the village of Glendon. They're seated in the members' gallery. I'd ask them to stand and receive the welcome of the House.

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

1. Moved by Mr. Hyndman:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly recommend to the Lieutenant Governor in Council the appointment of Donald D. Salmon as Auditor General for a term of eight years.

MR. HYNDMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is no need for a prolonged or elaborate debate on this motion, which is self-explanatory. The motion follows and reflects the procedures set forth in the Auditor General Act for the appointment of an Auditor General, and that procedure, although complex in some ways, has been followed. The record will show that the select standing committee made a recommendation by way of motion for the appointment of Mr. Salmon. Subsequently the required appropriate order in council was passed. Therefore, this motion appears before this Assembly reflecting a motion carried unanimously in the select standing committee.

[Motion carried]

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

Moved by Mrs. Fyfe:

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

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

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

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

[Adjourned debate April 8: Mr. R. Speaker]

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to the hon. Member for St. Albert, who moved the speech, and as well to the hon. Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, who seconded it. I would also like to say that it is my sincere pleasure to welcome the new Premier back into this Assembly. Over the years we have had a very good working relationship, and I certainly look forward to that working relationship continuing, whether it is in just the next few days, the next few weeks, or the many months ahead.

I believe, Mr. Premier, that you and I understand the roles we both play in this Legislature. We're not adversaries. We're not here to fight each other just for political gain. We are both equally elected for one very important purpose; that is, to serve the people of this province. Your duty, as I see it, is to lead this province. My duty is to assess the direction you take and to hold you accountable, and if and when I, in my role as leader of the Representative Party and as a member of this Legislature, believe that you have gone astray, to raise those issues.

I make note, Mr. Premier, that you've taken your responsibility in this Legislature at a very difficult time, at a time when we in Alberta are facing a difficult economic crisis. Alberta oil revenues are plummeting. Revenues for the province are going to decrease by billions of dollars. Chase Econometrics warns us that the change in consumer spending in Alberta will be half that of the rest of Canada. Investment in Alberta is expected to be down a negative 1.2 percent in 1986 and double that in 1987. Unemployment is predicted to approach 12 percent in December. The vice-president of Shell Canada estimates that some 3,000 Albertans have already received their walking papers. He also predicts that as many as 18,000 Alberta oil workers will be unemployed by Christmas.

Mr. Speaker, I make this prediction at this time to the Premier: if you are able to effectively manage the province through this economic storm, if you succeed in softening OPEC's blow against Alberta, you, sir, will go down in history and will be long remembered as a person that really cared and, as well, had the ability to say no at the right time. A great man has said many times, "I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure: try to please everyone."

The first task that I see before you, Mr. Premier, is to prioritize your government. You must decide what things you will do and what things you will not do. Each of those decisions is equally important not only to this Legislature but to the people of Alberta. Each decision is important because if we try to do everything, Alberta will fail. It's just not enough, though, to have some of these goals and objectives for this province. You must as well have a workable plan. Once you have that workable plan, you must stick to that plan and follow through during these difficult times.

As I think back during my time in this Legislature, I remember that in 1969 your political party knew what it wanted to do. Your party was going to diversify the economy of Alberta. It was a very noble objective then, and it is an equally noble objective today. Your party had a workable plan by which diversification could be achieved. Do you remember the plan? I do. You were going to cut government

spending and invest the new money in various sectors of the economy of Alberta. You were going to lower the province of Alberta's dependency on oil and gas. On March 3, 1969, your leader stood in this place on this side of the floor and said very clearly to the Assembly: why does Alberta have to be the biggest spending province in Canada on a per capita basis? It was a good question in 1969, rightly put, but today, in 1986, it is an even more important question, Mr. Premier.

Since your party took power in 1972, government spending has increased 820 percent. The civil service has increased by 261 percent. Once the oil revenues started to pour into this province, your government decided to abandon its original plan. Government ministers found it easier to spend than to manage money in this province. Suddenly everything the government did was bigger, supposedly better, but more expensive. We spent \$10.2 million on one single golf course, \$63 million went to beautify the Legislature Grounds, and \$280 million went to build one provincial park, Kananaskis park.

DR. BUCK: Is that the one called Lougheed park?

MR. R. SPEAKER: The Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation has spent \$3.3 billion in this province. Mr. Premier, the question to ask is: do we really want to be in the housing business in this province? Do we know and do you know, sir, that the Home Mortgage Corporation has lost over \$1 billion in its equity? The corporation, as well, has the dubious honour of having foreclosed on more homes than any other lending agency in this province. Is that the kind of government you want to give the people of Alberta? Are those the priorities: a bureaucracy, an institution like that that kicks people from their homes? Isn't it best that housing in this province is left to free enterprise? Isn't that a change we need at this time?

Mr. Speaker, to Mr. Premier: in 1969 your party made diversification its priority objective, and you planned to achieve that objective by cutting government spending. But once you became government, your party abandoned its plan. I must observe that your government failed to reach its objective. What I'm saying at this time is: don't let history repeat itself. In your throne speech that was before us, you laid out a very ambitious array of objectives. Now it's time to reveal a workable, sensible, and practical plan which reflects the current economic conditions in this province. The only plan, as I see it in face of today's economic crisis, is the same plan your party brought to this Legislature in 1972.

That plan, a two-part plan, should have but one objective. The first part of the plan is to reprioritize this government. The throne speech sets out agriculture, unemployment, and senior citizens as your three highest priorities, but, Mr. Premier, your speech failed to tell us about the rest of the list. What is the priority for education? What about health care? What about social services: the handicapped, single mothers, and the mentally ill? Where do they all fit in on the list? Surely, Mr. Premier, it isn't the intent of your government to give each one of them \$2 billion so they can exist, but where do they fit in that whole list of priorities of this government? Mr. Premier, whether we have an election or not, I believe you have a moral obligation to every Albertan to let us know where we fit in your list of priorities.

The second step in your plan must be to show us where you intend to cut the frills of government spending. What

about some of the programs that we have in place at the present time? In agriculture, for example, we have band-aid programs; we've got short-term programs. Are some of those programs going to be cut and replaced by these longer term programs? Are none of them going to be cut? Are we going to continue as we are?

What about the Agricultural Development Corporation? Will it change in its role under this government? I believe that's an answer we need. What about the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation that I referred to? Are we staying in the housing business? What about Alberta Government Telephones, which owns a company called Altel Data, which sells computers in the province of Alberta? Are we staying in the computer business, Mr. Premier, or are we getting out? What about the bailouts that have gone on in this province? Will that continue? Is that a priority of this government, or is it not a priority of this government?

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: restraint is the management tool of the 1980s. All we have to do is look around and see what other leaders are doing at the present time and how they are managing during tough times. Does the president of the Bank of British Columbia have some objectives? He's made some very difficult decisions. What about the leaders in Esso, Suncor, and Petro-Canada? Do they have plans at the present time for their future? Of course they have plans. They have objectives, they have goals, and they have a plan to achieve those goals. Their plan is to reduce spending by cutting back. Big companies, small businesses, homeowners, mothers, and single mothers are learning to manage with what they have. Mr. Speaker, none of us sees presidents of companies running out to borrow millions of dollars with which to finance new projects. The tool today is restraint.

What about this government? The government in this province has not shown any restraint in 14 years. Since coming to power in 1972, the Progressive Conservative government has spent an unbelievable \$80 billion. You, Mr. Premier, are inheriting a province that spends money like water. This province costs 30 percent more per capita to operate, on average, than the provinces of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. Today there is more fat in this government than there was back in 1969. It's only worse.

Mr. Speaker, to be a leader at this time, the Premier must have that capability and courage to stand up and say no a number of times, not just after the election but before the election. At the present time we can't use the excuse that the price of oil is falling and we must rush out and borrow billions of dollars. It is time that the government of this province followed the two-step plan of 1969. Promises will be fulfilled, and you, Mr. Premier, can become the greatest leader the province has ever known. First, you must prioritize this government. Second, you've got to cut government spending in areas where it is not important. Thirdly, you must balance the budget of the province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, at this time the Premier is in a position of balance in serving the people of Alberta. On the one hand, at the present time Alberta has nothing saved. There's no extra cash to operate this government. The Heritage Savings Trust Fund has been committed and invested on a long term. But on the other side of the picture, this province that is taken over by the new Premier does not have any debt. The challenge that lies in the Premier's leadership of this province will be determined by whether he is able to establish a plan of prioritization, of cutting government

where necessary and balancing a budget, but at the same time being able to utilize the funds of this province in the best way for the people of Alberta.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the challenge. It is the challenge which you, Mr. Premier, face in this province. As leader of the Representative Party and part of the opposition in this province, I will challenge you to take that responsibility in your leadership. I say very sincerely that if these kinds of decisions are not taken, if these kinds of guidelines are not put in place for your leadership, we in Alberta will suffer the many, many consequences that face us ahead. Mr. Speaker, I call on the Premier to take those responsibilities not because they are the easiest decisions to make, but in the long run, for the economic and social viability and development of this province, they are the proper decisions and responsibilities that must be taken.

MR. BATIUK: Mr. Speaker, it's a real pleasure for me today to participate in the debate on the throne speech. There is no doubt in my mind or in anyone else's here today that this will be the last time I will be speaking on the throne speech. It was a real honour and privilege for me to represent the people of the Vegreville constituency. I thank the electorate for giving me greater support in each succeeding election, which I found very gratifying.

I would like to compliment Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for presenting the throne speech in such a fine and eloquent manner. Her Honour was a member and colleague in this Legislature, and her dedication then proved that she was very deserving of that appointment.

I would also like to compliment my seatmate the Member for St. Albert and my colleague the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray, who have so eloquently moved and seconded the Speech from the Throne.

I would like to also commend you, Mr. Speaker, for the diligent manner you have acted in for almost 15 years. I know that many times it has been difficult, particularly with me being here. I have to be ordered to sit down and so forth. But I really appreciate the manner in which you have held your responsibility. I have never noticed you being prejudiced, and if you ever were in any little way, it would have been to the opposition, and no doubt because they were so small and maybe somewhat weak or whatever.

It's a real pleasure for me to congratulate you, Mr. Premier, on your election as leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Alberta and Premier of Alberta. When we look back, in 1967 the Premier was one of six who were elected. During the course of four years their dedicated work to represent their constituencies and the province convinced Albertans that they were an alternative, and when the '71 election came, the Progressive Conservative Party won with a substantial majority. The people of the province had placed their confidence, and again I might say the support has been increasing gradually. I think it was very fitting that you, Premier, were bestowed with this honour.

I have to also congratulate the Deputy Premier. Here again, he was one of the original six. I do feel that the Vegreville constituency has progressed to a great extent because of his involvement in our government and his dedication. When I think back to 1971, very shortly after the election — it must have been September 11 — I was asked to serve on a municipal finance task force. At that time, Mr. Russell, who was the Minister of Municipal Affairs, selected three present reeves of counties and two aldermen for this task force. We spent 23 days on it, and we made some recommendations. To this day Albertans

have saved several billion dollars, such as the tax reduction, the last-dollar financing on hospitals, and other recommendations that we made.

At that time the senior citizens' lodges were under the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and I boast today that on a per capita basis we have in the Vegreville constituency the largest amount of accommodation for senior citizens, and it's not just because of gain there. The reason is that there are more senior citizens in the Vegreville constituency than in any other constituency in Alberta. When I think back to almost six years ago, when we were delivering the gold medallions to commemorate the 75th anniversary, there were over 300 senior citizens who received the gold medallions in the Vegreville constituency. As I said, I am glad the senior citizens are looked after well.

When Mr. Russell became Minister of Environment, again I think he leaned, and I was able to convince him of our problems with water in several areas of the constituency. He ordered a study, and I believe it was because of him that we have the longest water line in the province of Alberta, from Edmonton all the way to Vegreville. At least there is an abundant supply of water, and it's good water. As I mentioned once before in the House, I think Vegreville always did have 'pasturized' water: that water used to flow through about 40 pastures before it reached the town.

The health care facilities also have been a great improvement in the constituency. Just a month ago we officially opened a new health care centre in Two Hills. Six years ago we opened one in Mundare. Sometime this year there will be the official opening of a new hospital in Tofield, which will be the Vegreville constituency. I tried quite hard to see that the people in Tofield would have this hospital. I attended meetings with them in their organizations and so forth, because the Tofield hospital will serve quite a few people from the Vegreville constituency. Again, as I said, it was the Deputy Premier who helped me a long way with it. I just couldn't see anybody who would be more appropriate for that position, and I think it was very fitting that he was selected.

I have to thank the minister responsible for Culture, who appointed me as the chairman of the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village Board, not only for the reason that I am Ukrainian, but it is abutting the Vegreville constituency, and naturally it would have to be an MLA of the government who believes in the policies and so forth. I guess I got the privilege of representing part of the Clover Bar constituency that way.

However, here again the minister listens. Our group has made many recommendations and many of those recommendations have become policy. I really believe that within two or three years, when that village has been completed, it will be the finest living museum on the North American continent. This year there are already over 3,000 students booked to visit the Ukrainian Village, and it is expected that there will be bookings for at least that many more.

I would also express my appreciation to the Minister of Agriculture, who was able to see fit to appoint me to the Alberta Grain Commission, serving as the vice-chairman. For 16 months, when there was an opening, I had to act as an acting chairman. The Grain Commission has played a very important role and over the last 13 years has made over 300 recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture. Many of those recommendations have become policy, which means a lot.

I also want to express appreciation to all members of Executive Council, starting with the Member for Edmonton Highlands right through the first two rows, all the way to the Member for Lloydminster. They have all served me well, and I am thankful to them.

Mr. Speaker, the budget that we have before us this year, that we are debating, definitely reflects the commitment of the Premier that agriculture is the number one priority; true enough. We know that depleting natural resources provide for many things, but a day will come when they will be totally depleted, and we will be looking to the land for our livelihood.

As I said, I am really happy to see what is in the throne speech. I hope that the crop insurance, which the minister has committed himself to review, is going to provide some better incentive. At present it's very alarming to see that the federal government picks up half of the premiums on crop insurance and the province picks up all the administration costs, so less than 50 percent is left to be paid by the producers. Yet for all these years only 60 percent of the farmers in this province are subscribing to hail and all-risk crop insurance. Dollarwise I don't think there's another insurance that is the bargain that hail and crop insurance is.

Mr. Speaker, since that 40 percent not subscribing probably needs that more than anybody else, I would recommend that maybe some more money should be put into it, but have a minimum insurance for everybody, even if they don't subscribe. To protect those who want bigger protection, they would be able to subscribe with additional premiums. This way, when there is some crop failure or anything else, at least the people will not have to keep running to the government. We have to put that money in. We put it in crop insurance for premiums, and then we put out these band-aid programs. We've had many of them over the years.

I had hoped that by now we would have had a two-price system for wheat. We see that the price of bread and baked products has been increasing continuously, yet wheat, which is the most important, has been dropping in price. You can't bake bread without flour, yet it seems that the yeast and other ingredients are the ones that are absorbing the things. As I said, you can't bake without flour, but you sure can bake it without yeast. I have eaten bread that was made in Iran. It's about two inches or so high. It doesn't rise, but it's fairly good bread and it's edible.

I was sort of amazed on Monday, when the Member for Clover Bar — and it's worth while to look at *Hansard* of April 7 when the member stated:

I say to the Premier of this province that this government discovered agriculture after 15 years in power. It took the leadership race for this government to discover agriculture. The Premier, coming back as a new member, discovered agriculture. The Minister of Municipal Affairs discovered agriculture ... and there are a few others. Mr. Speaker, I was amazed and even appalled to hear the statement from the hon. member. If Rip van Winkle came into this Legislature and made a statement like that, we would all know that he was sleeping for 20 years in the Catskill Mountains and didn't see what was going on. But when the hon. member, who has been a member of this Legislature for 20 years — and he does visit these premises occasionally — cannot see all of the programs ... This you can't say is election. In 1985 there was the subsidy for fertilizer. There was the announced increased subsidy for fuel, feed grain assistance, feed trans-

portation assistance, feed market assistance, the \$75 per head for animals. These programs have been continuous over the 15 years. There hasn't been a year when I can't remember three, four, or half a dozen programs for agriculture. So as I said, I was sort of very, very disappointed to hear that.

Listening to the members of the loyal opposition, I even found it intriguing to hear one member, in the throne speech debate say: "We should have this and we should have this. This should be provided." And the next one stands up and says, "Where are you going to get the money?" This is something that makes me wonder. However, it's always that way: you give more, but where does the money come in? This is one thing that I always appreciated about Premier Lougheed. I used to watch him when he was the Leader of the Opposition in this Legislature. He used to be critical of the government, but whenever he criticized, he always provided an alternative. I think that had the Social Credit listened to some of those alternatives, they may have stayed in office somewhat longer than they did. All we have left here of that party is the remnants.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this may be a good time for me also to pay tribute to our past Premier, Premier Lougheed. He gave his all over those 20 years that he served the party and the province. How well I remember, as a school trustee and municipal councillor, attending a finance seminar in Edmonton in 1965, when the Premier of the day addressed that seminar. He told us that within 10 years, 75 to 80 percent of the population of this province was going to be in the two metropolitan cities and that nothing could be done about it. Well, I accepted that if nothing could be done, it couldn't, and I felt sorry to see this. That was already materializing at a rapid pace. People were moving into the cities. I noticed that on the school board we had problems because we had to dismiss some teachers; the classes had to be combined and so forth.

I also remember when Mr. Lougheed addressed the annual meeting of the Alberta association of municipal districts in November of 1970, and he stated that should his party form the government, he would reverse these trends; he would decentralize government services to provide a balanced growth for Alberta. Even though he did see that the two metropolitan cities would continue to grow, at least they wouldn't grow at the expense of rural Alberta. Mr. Speaker, that was when I decided, right that day, that I would like to be a member of his team. I advised Mr. Lougheed as soon as he left the podium that a nomination was going to be held in the constituency in 12 days and that I was going to run, and I was fortunate.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Lougheed was indeed a great Albertan, a great human being. I will devote all my loyalty to him as long as I'm able to do it. I think he has well deserved it; he has sacrificed 20 years of good life for the people of the province.

I would also like to mention that I am glad of the many programs. I am glad to see that the population has grown in this province. Today the leader of the Representatives mentioned that the province has increased spending by 800 percent. I can see that increased spending, because our budget has increased by 1,000 percent since we took office. When you think of all the programs that have been initiated over the years, several of them per year, you need more people to administer those programs, so it's no wonder that our civil service had to grow by 261 percent, if that is right.

I am glad that the Minister of Education at that time saw fit to provide the \$100 assistance. Whether grade 7 is

the magic age or not, I believe it was a good try, seeing that a person has half of his elementary school completed. I recently attended the wheat growers conference in Calgary, and I had dinner with a fellow from Manitoba. He said, "Boy, I wish we had some of those programs that you have in Alberta." I wanted to ask a supplementary today, Mr. Speaker, of the Minister of Education about that, but the time expired. I wonder how much the province of Manitoba gives to students going to Expo? I wonder, is there is another province in Canada that is providing assistance for that purpose?

I am glad of the many programs. I am glad our government is looking for long-term agricultural programs. I know that many of these are called band-aid programs, and maybe they are, but they sure are helping to carry the people over. One of my guests when he was here for the official opening asked me, "Is your government changing Farmers' Day from the second Friday in June to April 3?" He, too, felt that the throne speech provided much for the farmers of Alberta.

Once again, I would like to thank all my colleagues who have worked together with me for their good co-operation and so forth. I'm sure I'll remember them to my last day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Two members rose]

MR. SPEAKER: I think the Member for Clover Bar preceded the hon. minister by a moment or two.

DR. BUCK: Was it you, Hughie?

MR. PLANCHE: It's a long time since you've won anything.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry, I didn't see the hon. minister.

I'd like to take a few moments this afternoon and enter into the debate. I would like to compliment the mover and the seconder. I would like to compliment the new Premier for returning to the Assembly.

I would like to say to my hon. friend, my neighbour the Member for Vegreville, that I will miss him because I know that he tries to look after my constituency, but I always reciprocate. We're so pleased that the opposition brought to the attention of the government the fact that the Holden complex was sitting there in a state of disarray. There were not sufficient funds available. Had the opposition not brought it up, I'm sure the hon. Member for Vegreville would still be going to the minister hat in hand, begging to have some funds so that complex could proceed. But that's part of the game.

I do want to say very sincerely to the members who have chosen to retire voluntarily that it's been a pleasure to associate with those men and women. I believe very, very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that we are all in this Assembly for the same reason; that is, to try and do the business of the people of this province to the best of our abilities. We all come here, I am convinced very strongly, for only one reason, and that's to do the job on behalf of the people of this province. Now, we take different approaches, but we are all here to serve. I am proud to stand in my place in this Assembly, and I'm proud to be a politician. I don't think we have to take a backseat to these task forces that tell us how far down we are in people's esteem. I'm proud to be a politician, and I think all the people in this Assembly

would support me in that. I know all hon. members in this Assembly are here for only one reason, and that's to serve the public.

Mr. Speaker I would like to cover some areas of concern that I would like to bring to the attention of the Assembly. The first one is that I would like to compliment the government on the extension of the 40-mile radius for flat-rate dialing. I would like to say to the retiring minister that I think it's time that we had a very good look at providing single-line service to the people in the rural areas in this province.

MR. PURDY: You said that last night, Walter.

DR. BUCK: That's right; I said that last night, but you guys double shift me, so half were in and half were out. I'm saying that for the benefit of the half that were out. [interjection] Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to the retiring deputy Deputy Speaker that it's been a problem he and I and many other members have had in our constituencies. I've recommended to the minister of telephones that if the extension was to 40-mile flat-rate dialing, that would solve probably 85 percent of the problems, and any politician that can solve 85 percent of the problems is pretty good. So that is a recommendation I would like to make to the government.

I see that our Tory colleagues to the east of us in Saskatchewan are in trouble, so they are promising so many things. I'd like to say to the Premier that if this House were divided 40-35 that the Premier would have been down with his colleague, from Saskatchewan talking to his federal counterpart. The Premier of Saskatchewan is in trouble, but this Premier doesn't think he's in trouble, so why bother going down there? It's so interesting, Mr. Speaker, when the Premier of this province and the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Premier of British Columbia were down with their counterpart dividing the revenue pie, they couldn't wait to catch the quickest airline to get down there to divide the pie. But now that the oil industry is in trouble, Mr. Speaker . . . I so well remember when the hon. Premier was sitting on this side of the House. "On to Ottawa" was his favourite line. Well, Mr. Speaker, that still works, and the Premier should have been there before this, because the oil patch is in a crisis, as the Premier knows. "On to Ottawa" was good in 1969 and it should be now, in 1986.

I would like to bring to the members' attention that we politicians seems to pay nothing but lip service to the preservation of agricultural land. It sounds good on a public platform: we're all for the preservation of agricultural land. I would like to say to the Solicitor General and the minister of public works that there did not seem to be any consultation with the local people in the Fort Saskatchewan area when we chose the sites for the provincial correctional institute. The first choice that was picked — anybody that picked that site should be fired, Mr. Minister. When they looked at putting the institution just south of the petrochemical complex, anybody with any kind of noodle would certainly not have picked that site for several reasons. There should have been more consultation. Then we put the site in prime residential, developable land. Not only did we take a large amount of land out of production, but we're going to sterilize about one square mile of potential residential property. Who wants to have their house butting right on to an institution? I'd like to say to the Solicitor General that that was not a popular decision as far as the location goes. But politicians,

local ones and others, sit there quietly because they want the grant in lieu of taxes.

I think it's time that we as legislators woke up to the fact that there's only so much arable land available in this province. It doesn't bother me nearly as badly if a house goes on agricultural land, where at least you can raise some carrots and potatoes and a little bit of grass, as it does to use it to put a public facility, which could have gone on nonagricultural land. I'd like to say to the Premier that that was not your decision, but the fact that the error has been made as far as the location means we should not make an error when we look at another institution.

I'd also like to know from the Solicitor General and the minister of public works what is going to become of the present site, the old site. I was quite alarmed to find out that a fairly substantial tender has been put out to upgrade that facility when we're going to be moving into a new one within two years. That institution is certainly not in that bad shape physically that we have to put more money into it for a two-year period. Also, I would like to know what is going to happen to the grounds themselves if that institution is completely removed from that area. I'd like to know what some of the long-term planning is.

I'd like to say to the new Premier and to some of the members of the Assembly who are concerned about keeping the cost down that I went through the town of Two Hills, I didn't know if I should be happy or sad when I looked at the new hospital. The reason that I say that, Mr. Premier and Mr. Member of the Assembly for Vegreville, is that, as a layman and as a businessman, between the hospital at Two Hills and the hospital at Tofield in my own constituency, I could save \$4 million on those two, because they are architectural masterpieces. I've had people who are in the business of supplying materials to hospitals telling me: "We're cutting our own throats, but we're also taxpayers of this province." We are asking for stainless steel louvers on exhaust fans when ordinary zinc louvers would do the same job. There are two concerns that were brought to my attention: number one, that specific type of louver was supplied by only one company in this province. It was just more than a coincidence that this contractor who installed the thing, who is making his livelihood on government largess, said, "As a taxpayer, it bothers me."

So I say to the Premier that in a time of financial crisis such as this, we all have to be more diligent in how we spend the taxpayers' money. If there is anything we should have learned from proposition 13 in California: if the taxpayer says, "We have had it with you politicians; you're wasting our money" — as my colleague the leader of the Representative Party said to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, we have to start setting some priorities. It's been easy come, easy go the last 15 years in this province. I think the old pot is getting dry, and taxpayers are not going to accept increases in taxation. They want more bang for their buck when they pay their taxes. To the Premier of this province: I haven't met a politician in my nearly 20 years in this Assembly who knows how to spend my tax dollars better than I know how to spend them.

What I'm trying to say is that the more money you leave in the taxpayers' pockets, the more we stay out of taxpayers' lives, the less we regulate them, the fewer handouts we give them, and the less interference in the economy, the better the system works. All the programs that we politicians dream up we dream up with good intent, but, Mr. Speaker, I think we'd be doing the taxpayer a great favour if we stayed out of many of these programs.

I would like to say to my hon. friend the Solicitor General, whom I admire personally so much, that he certainly was indiscreet in his use of the telephone. Mr. Premier, the minute we as a member of Executive Council pick up a telephone, especially when we're head of the Crown agency over the RCMP, there is only one way you can construe it, and that is leaning. We all have the right to appear before a judge and jury and say that we think we've been unfairly treated, but the minute we pick up that telephone, we are leaning. All of us as members have to remember that we are in a position of power. We are elected by the people, and there are certain things we cannot do. I have a son-in-law who is in the RCMP, and I'd like to say to the Premier and the members of this Assembly that one of the finest law enforcement forces in the world, the RCMP of this province, has been very, very embarrassed over that situation. I find this very hard to say, because I personally like the Solicitor General so much. These remarks are not meant to be malicious. They are meant, Mr. Speaker, to remind us that we could probably all be found guilty of leaning at times. That's all on that thing, but I would just like to say to my hon. colleague the member from Edson-Hinton that I think it was just an indiscretion. I know the member personally, and he's not that kind of a man to take advantage of his position.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak to the agricultural crisis. I mentioned it in the Assembly two days ago. Our party advocated a 5/20 policy, 5 percent for 20 years. This was not a policy that was dreamt up by bureaucrats or politicians. We said to the people who were concerned: "We know the problems. You suggest the solutions." Mr. Premier, if you were to take a \$200,000 loan and rather than paying, say, 12 percent you are paying 5 percent, that's \$14,000, which would keep many, many farmers. It would put food on their tables and clothes on their backs. We have to look at agriculture also in the long term. I'm just as optimistic about the energy situation as the Premier is. I'm also optimistic about agriculture, because the farmer is very, very resilient. But I'm not so sure that maybe the load he has been carrying to provide the people of this country with some of the cheapest and best food in the world isn't too heavy for him to keep bearing it by himself.

I would like to make one or two comments on education, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that it's becoming very apparent to many of us in this Assembly that provincial support for education has gone down from between 80 and 85 percent to approximately 54 percent — the middle fifties — from the time this government came into power. Getting back to the local taxpayer just about ready to revolt, I think we have to look at re-establishing priorities so that we have more provincial support for education. I know the Minister of Education can throw figures around about all the millions we put in and we're the best and the greatest, et cetera. But the people at the local level, at the school-board level and at the town and city level, are finding that their share of the cost of education is going higher and higher while the province's share is going down and down.

One other point I would like to bring to the attention of the new Premier and members of the Assembly is this practice of sending cheques to municipalities through the local M.L.A. I really find that distasteful, to put it probably as politely as I can. Funds that go from one level of government to another level of government should not be walking around in the pockets of M.L.As, waiting for an appropriate time to present the cheques so they can get their pictures in the paper. I think the minute those cheques

come off the press and are signed by the Provincial Treasurer, they should go directly to that local level of government. We've heard horror stories of politicians packing large cheques in their pockets for several weeks. I would like to say to the Premier that that nonsense should be terminated. That's not good business practice. We don't need to have our cotton-pickin' pictures in the paper, handing out cheques from the provincial government to a local authority. Send the cheques; get them in their hands. It's their money; get it to them.

One other recommendation I make, Mr. Speaker, to members of the Assembly and the Premier is that we've had studies on taxation. We've had studies on acreage taxation. But if we want to give members of this Assembly something really viable to do for the summer, I would strongly recommend that we strike a special legislative committee to review taxation as it applies to acreages. I know we've had task forces, but I think if there's anybody who can have some input, it is elected people who understand better than the bureaucrats and the so-called experts what's going on and some of the problems we have in taxation of acreages. So I would like to recommend to this Assembly that such a legislative committee be struck. Smart government finds one great way to keep the opposition out their hair and that is to put them into committees.

I well remember the former Premier when he was sitting on this side of the House and I was sitting on the government side. If you want to keep these guys busy all summer and keep them out of your political hair, just put them on a legislative committee. That keeps them busy for a long time, and of course the more committees you strike the more you spread them out. Of course if the government gets 83 out of 83, they'll have to get some of their own members on that committee. But, Mr. Speaker, I say as sincerely as I can — and I'm sure the hon. Member for Vegreville and the hon. Member for Stony Plain, people who have a large number of acreages in their area — that I think it's time we got some politicians on a special legislative committee to look at the entire picture of taxation as it applies to acreages.

Mr. Speaker, I really want to close by saying that I hope I'm back after the election is called, but I guess all our jobs are up for grabs. I do wish the members of the Assembly who are taking voluntary retirement — the hon. Member for Vegreville. We fight a little in the House, but we're good friends outside the House. That's the way it should be, because we're here to do a job. But I sincerely wish to thank the members. I've had the pleasure of serving in this Assembly with some of them for many, many years. I wish them well. As I said to the Premier when he retired the first time, "Don, at least you had a choice. You could retire because there were other people to take up the slack." But those of us who sit on this lonely little side over here don't have a choice. I would hate to think that when this Assembly came back after a contest of skill and science, whenever this contest may arise, there'd be nothing but Tories. Not that I dislike Tories; it's just that I don't think there should be so many of them.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say again to the members who have taken voluntary retirement: bon voyage. I hope there are some members of that side that we can put into involuntary retirement, but we all let the voter decide that. I would like to thank the members for their attention.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PLANCHE: Mr. Speaker, I recall that in 1975 I was afforded the privilege of seconding the throne speech, after

my colleague Henry Kroeger. At that time I was able to read notes without glasses and I was about 20 pounds lighter and not quite as wise as I am now. I'm delighted to have an opportunity today — I presume my last throne speech — to make a few comments.

First of all, I'd like to congratulate the Member for St. Albert and the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray for their excellent contribution. I've gotten to know and enjoy both of them. I understand the importance of the comments and contribution they make to this body. I'd like also, Mr. Speaker, to offer my sincere respects to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, a very dear lady. I'm very proud, as all of us are, that she has that job. I'd like to congratulate the new MLA for Edmonton Whitemud and wish him Godspeed. We're lucky to have him. He has lots of problems, but I'm absolutely convinced that with his leadership they'll be handled.

I'd like to express my gratitude to you too, Mr. Speaker, for your indulgence. I was here four years before I found out *Beauchesne* wasn't somebody on the other side of the House. I know how difficult it has been for you riding herd on some of us that don't have any pretensions to be parliamentary experts.

To the voters of Calgary Glenmore who have allowed me 11 very stimulating years, to my deputy ministers Clarence Roth and Dallas Gendall and the whole of Economic Development, and to my office staff of Marilyn Nixon, Doug Neil, and Nancy Naumenko: thank you very much.

Today I wanted to talk just a little bit about that magic word "diversification." I appreciate that it's perhaps a matter of perception, but I think it's important that I leave a perception on the record of what I've been doing since 1979. I seem to only surface every once in a while, when something important seems to be going on, but in the background we've thumbed a lot of pages and met a lot of people and travelled a lot of miles trying to find out where our opportunities might be. I'd like to break my perception into four or five general categories. What are the root impediments by priority? What has this government done? How well have we succeeded?

First of all, just the word "diversification" itself needs some description of what it entails. In my view it entails creating activity that's competitive, that has the potential to compete. It means exploiting our natural advantages, of which we have many, which means recognizing them and putting them to proper use. It means preserving our clean air and water, and that's true because environmental licensing has primacy over everything else in terms of activity. It means maximizing the job-creation potential of our intellectual property at our superb postsecondary institutions. I think we'll see over time, Mr. Speaker, that most of the interesting jobs that are created will probably be homegrown, and many of them will have their genesis at our universities. It's going to be a tricky business, this transfer of intellectual property. It's going to take some diligence and there have to be some building blocks put in place, but I'm persuaded after my experience at those two universities and the other university and the schools around our province that the potential is huge.

We've got to overcome the difficulties of dependency on commodity price and demand. We've got to create a tax and infrastructure environment that will minimize the risk of failure. We have to balance our opportunities in this province geographically, and we have to strike a balance between proactive and reactive government. I guess the last one is the one that philosophically bothers my colleagues

most. There is a time when a government can move when no one else will move that it becomes an important thing to do.

Identifying the root impediments to diversification is a sort of easy job. But the change required in those is so profound that it's not going to come easily. Simply put, it is our distance to market and tidewater, our dependence on the volatile commodity markets and the resulting problems in suitable financing vehicles and, to a lesser extent, our lack of political impact on federal government decision-making vis-à-vis central Canada.

I'd like to start first of all with transportation initiatives and perhaps refresh the memories of those in the Assembly. In my view the most important thing that's happened is Alberta intermodal services. The National Transportation Act, which is our federal legislation controlling transportation, presumes competitive modes will control rates. Unfortunately, in the commodity business, which is where we are, there is no such thing as a competitive mode. We had a break two or three years ago when the U.S. rail system was deregulated. At that time we finally had our competitive mode. It was Burlington Northern through Coultts to Seattle-Tacoma. Armed with that, we then began to approach the railroads on the basis of the discrimination in the per tonne mile cost between containers from central Canada to Atlantic tidewater and those in Alberta to Pacific tidewater. The interesting thing about that precise exercise, Mr. Speaker, was that they were double. We have managed, through a variety of pressures overt and covert, to get them to the table and break those rates.

Alberta intermodal services, I am proud to say, can now offer containers at some 25 to 40 percent [less] on average from Edmonton and Calgary to Vancouver. That's a very important thrust. It's a very important thrust as a precedent. It now affords us the muscle through this collective tonnage to begin talking about water rates, so that we will have land-water rates for our shippers so they'll all be able to quote CIF with the best rates available to every place we want to service.

The second thing we've done that I think was kind of interesting is that we've done rail relocations in Lethbridge and Fort Saskatchewan. They were done in such a way that the capital cost was recovered by the increased value of the land that was freed up. Those are a microcosm of the larger issue, but they've turned out to be very effective.

The third thing that I think was important is that we did a burden study and identified that Alberta, which receives and ships about 28 percent of the nation's rail freight, pays in freight invoices about 70 percent of the fixed costs of the nation's railroads. That's a very interesting set of statistics. We approached it in two ways: we did an econometric study, and then we redid it in another year and found out that we were plus-minus 3 percent accurate with these numbers. We've posed them since to the Minister of Transportation.

When you live in Alberta, though, the interesting part of that is that just complaining about the rates or attempting to cap them politically doesn't solve our problem, because pragmatically the railroads can only get income where there is a noncompetitive mode structure. Where they run along the seaway, they have to compete with vessels. Where they run in the golden triangle, they compete with trucks. So we've got to be careful how we approach this newfound information. Everybody always suspected we were getting it in the ear from the railroads, but when you get it documented, it really is a startling revelation on paper.

So from this we will begin to develop a freight strategy with which Alberta will attack this problem. It will entail things like: it's important now that the federal government, if they impose compulsory activity on the railroads, take that out of general revenue. If that's a political decision to keep people employed in other parts of the country, it should not fall on the backs of Alberta shippers. The second thing is that we simply have to allow the railroads to effect cost saving as it's appropriate. Over a year now they've been trying to get permission to run tests to find out whether or not they need cabooses. Finally, we're going to have to be very insistent that this imbalance in terms of how much of the fixed costs the Alberta shipper pays doesn't further escalate.

Another thing we're doing that's of some interest is we think that because of the deregulated U.S. rail system there's room for shippers' associations, so that their combined volume can develop wholesale rates. For instance, we're working now on a forest shippers' association for forestry products that will take us down to perhaps hub-and-spoke centres like Louisville, Kentucky, access the Mississippi waterway, and there were be surge capacity built at both ends. Those are things that are long overdue. For a great many years some products that were shipped from our forest gate to Toronto paid the same price from their forest gate to Coultts, Alberta. As a result, we've been hung with this one-mode service for long-haul commodities, and it isn't going to happen anymore. With the determination of this government and the newfound precedent in container rates, we've now got some running room.

Before I was here, people bought PWA, and there was some derision about that decision. It turns out now that they have commonality aircraft and superb services to almost every community of any size in western Canada and, indeed, now eastern. It probably could be categorized as the largest, most effective regional carrier in the country.

We have just recently funded the University of Calgary transportation institute. The funding wasn't large, but it is the sense of direction that's important. If it is in fact the root problem for economic development, then we'd better start it at the universities too, so when we draw on academic expertise, it will be homegrown; it won't be somebody who is peering at us from some distant region where the problems aren't as severe.

On the policy side I think we've had leadership, certainly on the abolition of the Crow rates and the beginning of the WGTA. We were leaders in the establishment of WES-TAC, which has turned out to be one of the most exciting forums for developing, through all the sector leaders, a policy for the nation, and particularly western Canada, in transportation. Finally, I think it would be fair to say we've been very active in the port of Vancouver and Canada Ports, the new autonomy for those ports. We continually point out to them that we're not likely going to compete with Seattle-Tacoma with three overhead cranes when they have 50, that you can't invest in an infrastructure when you get one-year leases, and so on. There's starting to be an awareness that in fact it's not a yacht basin; indeed, it is a port designed to serve the freight and exports of Alberta businesspeople.

On the finance side I think we learned early, particularly in 1981, that almost every homegrown business in Alberta is dependent, at least peripherally, on commodity price swings, and it's almost impossible to finance those with demand loans. Our debt/equity ratios are historically too high in this province. Canadians by nature are savers, and even the RRSP tends to direct people into debt instruments.

There's really not a significant regional decision-making presence in banks, insurance, or underwriting that's visible in western Canada. But we have made some sort of progress, and it's more or less beyond our control to do a great deal without putting a lot of taxpayers' money at risk, so you have to be sort of innovative on how you approach it. We've supported the regional banks and we've taken our losses. But I don't think that was the issue. The issue was that those decisions need to be made here. We've broadened the mandate of the Treasury Branches. It's true that if we go interprovincially we fall under the purview of the Bank Act, but we can go internationally, and our Provincial Treasurer has done that.

We've encouraged venture capital here. We've done it through Vencap and the SBECs. Those are interesting thrusts for the government. You can get money into investments; unfortunately, you can't get money out unless we have an active stock market. Towards that end we've addressed a lot of energy. You will know from the Treasurer's Bill 2 that the Alberta stock savings program is in place for that end. We will have exchange offering prospectuses, I hope operative very quickly, that will speed up the turnaround in cost. We've got a \$1 million soft loan out to the Alberta Stock Exchange, so it can respond to this new volume that we see coming. We're helping the investment dealers with education programs. It will be our purpose to make as a caveat any kind of creative activity that affects any kind of business from this government that when they go public, they will list on the Alberta Stock Exchange.

We've got to improve that stock market, Mr. Speaker, because that really is the only ongoing, level-playing-field source of equities for our junior high-tech resource and ag. service companies. There simply isn't another one. The more support the exchange gets, the more analysis for investment follows, and it becomes an industry unto itself. I don't think it's appropriate that people four or five provinces away pick the stocks that are winners and losers on an Alberta exchange. I think it's something that will change. Right now I think our stock volume is about 10 percent of Vancouver's, and we can probably get that up to where this is a respectable, active, small-issue exchange that will afford investors and venture capitalists an exit point, which is really crucial.

On the federal side, we've had a very difficult time with this DREE business and this tier 1, 2, 3, and 4, where if you live in one part of the country, you get a capital contribution for a cost that you don't get in another part of the country. It really skews the way the nation should develop. When we have a scarcity of funds, as the federal government now does, surely it's important that you don't try to transcend or overlay business decisions with social problems. With scarce funding we should be directing our funding towards those kinds of things that can cause jobs in Canada, not placing them someplace because the unemployment numbers indicate you should. We think there is an ERDA which they've developed that's appropriate. What it does is allow the governments to negotiate a fund of money and then you agree on priorities and you cost share in the programs. It isn't distortive geographically. The difficulty with that is that ERDA is funded on a grandfather basis so that, again, Alberta gets 3 percent of the total ERDA, and most of the projects that we think are interesting are, again, flowing to central Canada.

In federal purchasing, we get about 3 percent of what the federal government spends. I had an opportunity to spend some time with my counterpart and the Minister of

Supply and Services federally in Banff a couple of weeks ago, and I told them that this government was getting sick and tired of that formula and why didn't we start bidding on federal stuff FOB plant gate on a postage-stamp rate, so you could bid anywhere you like? As long as they buy for consumption in Ontario and we have to buy part of what we supply to Ontario from Ontario, we're not likely to be competitive. I think it's a lot better than transfer payments, to allow individual initiative to supply the federal government. So I think there is a solution if someone has enough courage to do it.

There are some other opportunities. On the offset program for military spending, we don't participate because we really don't have very many players. That's changing. We're getting some interesting people. ATCO has some remote control target initiatives that are exciting. We've got some exciting opportunities, we hope, coming in aerospace. But if we don't get our fair share of offset programs, then we'll have to change the offset laws so that we can supply things other than defence to satisfy offset and so that we can supply some of the things we do as offsets to military spending.

On the science side we spend three times per capita more than any other province in the country — in aggregate, just less than Ontario — and we still don't have a presence here. AOSTRA is as big as CANDU. The federal government doesn't even have a National Research Council presence in Alberta. Invariably, that activity goes into the Ottawa valley or Quebec. We think that's offensive. We didn't get any support for the cold-weather lab over here in Edmonton or the long-base array initiative in Lethbridge, and I'm not going to discuss the merits of those. It was summarily indicated to us that there was no money. Shortly after that there was \$800 million for a space initiative that will be ideally located for the supply of materials from Ontario and Quebec. So there is some work to do there.

I thought I might now branch into: what has the government done? We've tried to put some building blocks in place, Mr. Speaker, that are nondistortional in terms of geography or private-sector decisions, but facilitative. I would just like to read quickly a list of those. In the financial sector we've got SBECs, the small business equity corporations, the Alberta Opportunity Company, and Vencap Equities Ltd. In technology we've got an electronics test centre in Edmonton that's probably the best in Canada, maybe in North America; we have a centre for frontier engineering research that's working on cold-weather metals. We have a supercomputer, one of three in Canada. We have an enriched and very sophisticated, proactive Alberta Research Council now that's in research that's important and understandable to Albertans. We have an Alberta microelectronics centre, which has been one of the reasons for the attraction of LSI Logics from Palo Alto. We have Alta-Can Telecom Inc. in the mobile cellular telephone business. We've got the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. I think there's something over 100 world-class scientists now operating out of our two universities, each one with his own team. This is becoming a mecca for people who are in advanced health care research activity.

On the energy side we have a coal research centre that opened at Devon and, of course, we have AOSTRA. For export assistance, we have a market development assistance program. We have export services support programs and loan guarantee programs for Alberta exporters. Those are all designed to respond to needs that our exporters have in order to get small companies into this very competitive world export business.

We have an Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation that's very successful. Under agriculture we have a Nutritive Processing Agreement with the federal government, a food processing development centre at Leduc and, finally, the Agricultural Development Corporation.

It's sort of important to recall that quite impressive list of things that are in place. How well have we succeeded? In manufacturing, our share of Canadian manufacturing output increased 50 percent from 1971 to 1984. Our value of manufactured shipments from 1971 to 1984 went from \$2 billion to \$13.7 billion. We have 52 percent of the nation's petrochemicals. We will shortly be announcing a fourth major hardwood initiative. We have over 10,000 people employed in high tech. We've got a strong, developing film industry. We have a visual arts community that generates \$65 million in annual activity. We have a splendid performing arts presence. We have professional sports with two NHL and two CFL teams. We have hosted the Commonwealth Games and will host the 1988 Olympics. We have dozens of international sports events over the decade all over Alberta. We have interpretive centres at Fort McMurray and the Tyrrell at Drumheller. Both are world class, with international recognition.

Our noncommodity exports include: manufactured homes, transportation equipment, cellular modular telephones, lasers, engineering of all sorts, economic studies, irrigation technology. Alberta ranks within the country as fourth in total exports, third in exports to the United States, second in exports per capita to the United States, and third in exports per capita worldwide, excluding grain.

As in everything else we do, it could be better, but, Mr. Speaker, that's not bad for 2.3 million proud Albertans.

MR. PAPROSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to participate in my fourth throne speech debate. I rise with very mixed emotions: with happiness that I'm able to add my comments on this most positive throne speech; with much sadness, however, that this speech will be my last as it pertains to Her Honour's words, in that I will not be seeking re-election for Edmonton Kingsway.

My congratulations to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor on her presentation of the speech and her continued dedication to all Albertans.

My congratulations and thanks to you as well for your continued expertise, your continued knowledge, your efforts on behalf of all of us as legislators.

My heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to the new quarterback of the Progressive Conservative Party and, indeed, the quarterback of all Albertans: our new Premier, the Hon. Don Getty. I wish him as much success on the Alberta legislative gridiron as he had with the Edmonton Eskimos during his football-playing days. I know him as a winner. He will be a winner for all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, my thanks to the constituents of Edmonton Kingsway for permitting me to be their MLA. We have shared many happy and sometimes sad experiences. The 16,000-plus constituents in the great constituency of Edmonton Kingsway have honoured me many times by requesting my involvement to work with them to solve their problems, to deal with concerns, and to give new directions to their government: always to make Alberta a better place for all of us now and into the future.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will truly miss being the MLA for Edmonton Kingsway because this constituency is so vibrant. It's so exciting and has such a super future due to its people, its busy community leagues, its thousands of small

and big businesses, its many organizations, its super schools and its super hospital, the Charles Camshell. I've appreciated, for example, working with Dr. Stan Souch, the president of the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, his many staff members, the board and, indeed, their students.

While we were talking about winners yesterday and the day before, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the NAIT Ooksiks hockey team and their coach, Mr. Perry Pearn, for again, two years consecutively, they have won the Canadian Colleges Athletic Association championships.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed representing a constituency with the Edmonton Space Sciences Centre that offers so much to the vitality in Edmonton. I have enjoyed the few months of working with the citizens of the community of Woodcroft, a new addition to the constituency of Edmonton Kingsway.

In my eyes the citizens of Edmonton Kingsway are number one. They are winners, they are concerned, and they are communicators. I will cherish the hundreds of new friends my family and I have been privileged to meet. I only hope that the future will maintain communication between us.

Mr. Speaker, I must thank my colleagues in the House for their friendship, their assistance, and their guidance in and out of this House since November 1982. I also want to take the opportunity to thank some very special people who have helped me accomplish many goals. My secretary in the Legislature Building, Sharon Taylor, has been invaluable. My secretary in my constituency office, Rose Stec, has been a godsend. My family — my dear wife, Vania, and my three daughters, Anndrea, Tara, and Melanie — have been with me, and they have to be thanked publicly for tolerating my many hours away from home and for sticking with me through happy and, indeed, stressful times. I don't have to tell hon. members of the importance of family in this occupation.

I also want to extend my best wishes to the hundreds of civil servants that I have been able to meet since 1982. So often, Mr. Speaker, we criticize these individuals. Too often we don't give platitudes. I for one would like to say a big thank-you to those in the Alberta government offices, from one end of the province to the other, who care for Albertans and who care a lot.

Mr. Speaker, what a throne speech. The hon. Member for St. Albert spoke so eloquently in moving Her Honour's speech and, as usual, the Member for Lac La Biche-McMurray also gave a tremendous speech in his seconding of it. The Member for St. Albert used the word "confidence" as her one-word descriptor of this speech. I think that's a super word, but I for one would like to add an additional word, and that descriptor would be "optimistic." The speech underscores again my thesis since 1982 that Alberta continues to be the best place in North America to work, to play, to learn, and to live.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, all is not positive on the Alberta scene. We have too much unemployment and we have lowering oil prices. But the throne speech is optimistic, and it is filled with confidence. Let's look at just some things the government is proposing.

As an Edmonton boy born and raised, I want to stress that I concur wholeheartedly with the major emphasis on agriculture. We can't control climatic conditions, and we can't control world economic conditions that have put our farmers in serious, serious difficulty. Surely no one can quarrel with our agricultural initiatives in the throne speech.

My goodness, Mr. Speaker: a whopping \$2 billion in long-term credit.

I'm excited about the initiatives in tourism. Tourism needs more hard work and a good review with action, but action now. The new minister will carry his exciting personality into a portfolio that should be so positive economically for all Albertans. I was honoured to be one of the authors of the tourism task force report last year. To the minister: he has a good start with the initiatives expressed in that report. To the hon. Member for Edmonton Avonmore: go get those tourists. To those in the tourism industry throughout Alberta: let's keep them here, treat them well, and let's bring them back.

Again, our government is underlining the major importance of trade. Mr. Speaker, the hon. Premier is leading the charge in Canada for more trade and more open trade. Again, it's the right time. What better province than Alberta to lead in this initiative? Just look at our export sales in the last year: simply terrific, simply phenomenal as it grows. But more has to be done. Bravo that this priority will continue and become even stronger.

Best wishes to the Premier, because your success, Mr. Premier, is success for all citizens in all sectors of the economy.

Let's talk briefly about the throne speech again and its emphasis once more on our pioneers in Alberta, our senior citizens in all areas of the province. I beg the opposition to show me a province doing a better job. In the last 15 years the Progressive Conservative government has offered more programs than any other place in the world, but more is yet to be done. Since 1982 I have suggested rather vociferously in this House for a ministry for senior citizens. Why? Because of the involvement of so many departments with seniors in this province; because of so many ministries involved with seniors in this province and so many programs for seniors in this province. There is a need for better co-ordination and, indeed, better communication. Congratulations for indicating in the speech that the Premier will designate an elected member to co-ordinate and chair the Senior Citizens Bureau. It's welcomed by this member.

Home care expansion: super, Mr. Speaker. Albertans want to stay at home as long as they are able. I'm sure — and I know through my involvement in the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee, for example — that far too many citizens are in our hospitals. Far too many seniors are in our nursing homes and other institutions, and they should not be there. Home care funding to date has been helpful, and it's helped countless Albertans. But many more funds are required in this area.

Jobs? Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is still a top priority for our government. The largest job effort in history has been put on the table. Let me quote from the hon. Premier's remarks at the annual First Ministers' Conference in November '85 on what he believes are priorities in this area.

Another priority facing Canada is job creation. Unemployment — across the nation — is too high. I cannot accept projections that Alberta, for instance in the future, must live with unemployment in the range of 10 to 11 percent. In a country as diverse and rich as Canada, with its skilled and aggressive [men and women], we can do better than that.

But in tackling unemployment, let's remember government "make-work" programs are not the solution. There is only one [permanent] way to create jobs — and that's by building the vitality of the private

sector and by encouraging the profitability and strength of our small businesses.

That is the future of this government, Mr. Speaker.

There are so many other initiatives in the speech, and I'd like to touch on just a few of them. Firstly, the government is committed to the health of the energy industry with extensive new, unique initiatives. Secondly, a direction to relieve the financial pressure on our educational systems is indeed welcome. Thirdly, a commitment to the women of Alberta through a new Women's Secretariat Act and the establishment of the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues. Fourthly, major pension reforms will be initiated. Fifthly, another postsecondary endowment fund totalling \$80 million will be established. Sixthly, I'm proud to be a member of the Legislature for Edmonton Kingsway at a time when a decision was made to build a new Northern Alberta Children's hospital in my city, Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many other positive, optimistic, and confident initiatives in the throne speech. But I'd like to divert to something I believe is important and I feel obliged to share with hon. members, and that is the results of a questionnaire that I forwarded to my constituents a few months ago. The results of this questionnaire should be food for thought for all hon. members, perhaps a new awareness of Albertans' concerns. I'll simply touch upon a few.

First of all, with respect to high-speed train service between Edmonton and Calgary that has been discussed in this House:

Do you think the government should help fund construction of a high speed train service between Edmonton and Calgary or not?

Forty-five percent said that there should be funding; 55 percent said no.

With respect to free trade:

Alberta should lobby the Federal Government to develop a comprehensive free trade arrangement between Canada and the United States. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?

A whopping 66 percent agree, only 21 percent disagree, and 13 percent have no opinion.

With respect to private school funding, an issue that has been discussed and will be discussed, I'm sure, in many months to come:

Private schools in Alberta should not be funded, in whole or in part, by the Provincial Government. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Fifty-one percent agree or strongly agree with that statement, while 41 percent say no.

To the right of teachers to strike:

Teachers should have the right to strike. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Twenty-six percent agree or strongly agree; 72 percent disagree or strongly disagree.

With respect to extra billing, another hot issue:

Doctors in Alberta have the option of extra-billing patients. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this alternative?

Only 29 percent agree or strongly agree; 65 percent disagree or strongly disagree with that statement.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, mandatory seat-belt legislation — and isn't this topical?

In Alberta, seatbelt use should be...mandatory for persons of all ages.

Fifty-seven percent said yes.

Mandatory only for children ages five and under.

Only 11 percent. And "Up to the individuals," 42 percent.

I shouldn't say "finally", because one area that I asked a question of my constituents was a concern to many of us in the House in the last year. I hope that it will again rear its head. That, of course, was Senate reform.

Do you support the forming of a Triple E Senate (Elected, Equal, Effective) in Canada?

Seventy-seven percent of the constituents of Kingsway who responded said yes; 23 percent said no.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I want to be bold and offer the House some suggestions, some areas for hon. members to consider in the future. First of all, let's start thinking in this House in 20-year cycles and not just in three-, four-, and five-year cycles, dealing with a number of issues. Albertans deserve more long-reaching plans in terms of health care, social services and its funding, employment directions, environmental concerns, education and, indeed, economic development. I wonder how many futurists the provincial government has hired. I don't know, but I think it's time we start thinking and start thinking now about the 21st century with respect to Alberta and these issues.

Secondly, let's not neglect our youth. The unemployment rate in this province and in this country is simply too high, three and four times the unemployment rate of the adult population. Something has to be done, and something should be done now. Mr. Speaker, I appeal to the Legislature to establish an all-year hire-a-student program for the young people in this province, a program where, indeed, young people and people who are hiring youth can communicate, where youth can walk in and say, "I need a position," not just in the summertime. We know the statistics and we know the figures from the Minister of Manpower as to how much it's used. Indeed, thousands and thousands of youth use it during the summer period. Well, what's wrong with extending that all year round? For the amount of money it would cost, I'm sure that would help our young people.

Mr. Speaker, let's listen to youth. They are our future adults; they are our future leaders. I just want to allude quickly to a conference that was held last year in Ottawa where representatives of the young people across Canada got together. They discussed and summarized a number of their issues they believed were important. I don't believe they're any different from what we have, but I really wonder whether we listen enough. Racism is one issue. Pornography, chemical abuse — and I refer to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West, the co-ordinator of AADAC: tremendous programs. The young people are so concerned in this area, and it has to be dealt with even more.

The education system concerns our young people, coping with technological change. We're here, Mr. Speaker. This is the information age. How have we been working with our young people to deal with the changes that will be transpiring in the next 10, 30, to 40 years? The future of the family — and we heard from the hon. Member for Calgary Currie about the importance, the disintegration of the family. Don't think that young people don't have trepidation about walking down that aisle and getting married today.

The environment? Yes, we've talked about it before. We are still talking about it. We're concerned. No, we don't have acid rain yet — let's hope we never have it — but let's always be vigilant and always look in that particular area. Of course, unemployment is a major concern as well. There's no question that globally, international relations is also a major concern of youth.

What else? Besides youth, a third area that I think is important is: let's truly help small business in the future. We heard the hon. Member for Clover Bar say that governments shouldn't be involved in handouts; governments shouldn't be involved in helping people. Well, that's what governments do: they help people. I'm not talking about digging into the provincial coffers and shelling out millions and millions of dollars. I'm talking about the individual, the small businessman and woman in this province, the husband and wife team that runs a shop, the individual entrepreneur that needs \$10,000 or \$15,000 — not 150, not a million, but some extra bucks to get over the next pay period to purchase some extra inventory. Mr. Speaker, I think we have to help that individual with those small amounts a little bit more than we have been doing, and I look forward to the budget in that area.

Four: remember that hon. members don't have all the answers to all the questions. I appeal to hon. members in this House and to those members that will be returning. As I look around, I know all of you that are going to run again will be re-elected. I ask you to seek out feedback on a regular basis from the public in this province.

In closing, to all members: the best of luck to you in the future; the best of health and happiness to all of you. And yes, Mr. Speaker, there must be life after politics, which might indeed one day include politics again.

Thank you, Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to participate in the throne speech this afternoon, be it all going to be quite short. If I do it right and do it shortly, I'll get credit for a good speech. [interjections] Some of my colleagues say show us, not tell us.

Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank a few people that have assisted me in the last year, starting with my family, my wife and three small children, for the work that she has done in keeping everything together on the home front while I have been away serving the constituents of Cypress and the province. I would like to thank a lady who works very hard in my constituency office in Redcliff, Velma Pancoast, who does a terrific job there. I would invite any people who ever had any doubt whether the constituency offices are worth while to come and visit that office when it's open and see the activity and the number of people that come through that door. It really shows that that office serves the people of the area well. I would also like to thank my secretary, Donna Kuhnel, who works in the Legislature Annex.

I would also like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of this speech for the tremendous addresses they gave on Friday.

I would like to congratulate the Premier in his new position as Premier, and also in his renewed position of MLA for Edmonton Whitemud. I can remember the first term that I served in the Legislature with the Premier between 1975 and '79. I congratulate him and personally welcome him back to the House for a good number of years.

Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of pages of notes and the time is going on. I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker. I think hon. members know that government business tomorrow is the budget presentation in the evening.

I move that we call it 5:30.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree?

[At 5:25 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]