

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, June 16, 1986 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, two distinguished visitors in your gallery. After I name them, I would ask that they rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly. Would members please welcome Mr. Erling Nielsen, the Consul General of Denmark, located in Toronto, and Mr. Donn Larsen, the Honorary Consul of Denmark, located here in Edmonton.

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you, and through you to the other members of the House, Mr. John Tilborg from Holland, a member of the rainbow group of the European Parliament. He is seated in your gallery, and I would ask that we give him our traditional warm Alberta welcome.

head: **READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I would request that the petition I presented Friday last be now read and received.

CLERK: To the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. The undersigned residents of Alberta hereby petition the Legislative Assembly as follows: to restore to Albertans their traditional right of free and unhindered access to the shores and waters of Ghost Lake via the Crown-owned land recently leased to Bar E & H Ranches Ltd.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS****Bill 5****Rural Electrification Revolving Fund
Amendment Act, 1986**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 5, the Rural Electrification Revolving Fund Amendment Act, 1986. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

The purpose of this Bill is to increase the amount of funds available in the Rural Electrification Revolving Fund from \$55 million to \$75 million in order that Alberta farmers continue to have access to financing on favourable terms for new electrical services.

[Leave granted; Bill 5 read a first time]

Bill 3**Department of Energy Act**

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 3, the Department of Energy Act.

This Bill changes the name of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources to the Department of Energy, and consequential amendments.

[Leave granted; Bill 3 read a first time]

Bill 201**Quality Child Day Care Standards Act**

MS MJOLSNESS: I beg leave to introduce Bill 201, the Quality Child Day Care Standards Act.

This Bill will amend the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act to set minimum standards which might be met by all child day care centres in the province. The Bill also sets out a series of standards governing such items as equipment, child/staff ratio, space allotments, and staff qualifications which would have to be maintained at a child day care centre.

[Leave granted; Bill 201 read a first time]

Bill 206**An Act to Amend the Labour Relations Act**

MR. STRONG: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 206, An Act to Amend the Labour Relations Act, which provides that after a strike or lockout all those workers who were members of a bargaining unit prior to the commencement of a strike or lockout will get their jobs back. Secondly, it provides that during a strike or lockout the employer may not replace striking or locked out employees with any persons other than management personnel who were already working prior to the commencement of the strike or lockout.

[Leave granted; Bill 206 read a first time]

Bill 209**Mortgage Interest
Tax Deductibility Act**

MR. R. S P E A K E R : Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 209, the Mortgage Interest Tax Deductibility Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide tax deductibility for mortgage interest paid on a principal residence up to a limit of \$5,000.

[Leave granted; Bill 209 read a first time]

Bill 202**Clearwater Alberta Act**

MR. Y O U N I E : Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 202, being the Clearwater Alberta Act.

This Bill would require any person supplying drinking water to the public to make sure that the water they are supplying is safe.

[Leave granted; Bill 202 read a first time]

Bill 205
An Act to Eliminate Extra Billing

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 205, An Act to Eliminate Extra Billing.

This Bill would amend the Alberta Health Care Insurance Act to remove the possibility of a physician charging a patient for basic health service over and above the payment made to the physician by the Alberta health care insurance plan for that service.

As a sort of a quid pro quo this Bill would also amend the Act to formalize a negotiated procedure whereby every year the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care would meet with the College of Physicians and Surgeons for the purpose of reviewing and amending the existing fee schedule.

[Leave granted; Bill 205 read a first time]

Bill 208
Council on the Status of Women Act

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill, being Bill 208, the Council on the Status of Women Act.

This Bill would establish a 15-member council on the status of women charged with promoting, as its primary mandate, the full and equal participation of women in the economic, political, and social life of the province and functioning in an autonomous fashion. Government adoption of this Bill would certainly be welcome.

[Leave granted; Bill 208 read a first time]

Bill 220
An Act to Amend
the Debtors' Assistance Act

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 220, An Act to Amend the Debtors' Assistance Act.

Basically, this Act would establish a regime of debt adjustment in Alberta primarily for farmers but also to some extent for homeowners and independent businesses. This Bill is modelled closely on and in many ways is virtually identical to an Act that was on the books in the 1930s in the province of Alberta.

[Leave granted; Bill 220 read a first time]

Bill 222
Retail Business Holidays Act

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill, being Bill 222, the Retail Business Holidays Act.

This Bill is modelled closely on legislation in effect in Ontario and would require retail business establishments with a floor display area of greater than 220 square metres to be closed on statutory holidays and on at least one day every weekend, which would be at the owner's or operator's discretion. A schedule attached to the Bill exempts from the Bill's provisions certain kinds of businesses that are recreation-, tourist-, entertainment-, or vehicle maintenance-oriented.

[Leave granted; Bill 222 read a first time]

Bill 207
An Act to Amend
the Local Authorities Election Act

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present Bill 207, An Act to Amend the Local Authorities Election Act.

Basically, it would allow a municipality to limit by bylaw funds spent on municipal elections.

[Leave granted; Bill 207 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table with the Legislative Assembly the Western and Northern Canada Acid Deposition Long-range Transport of Atmospheric Pollutants Activities 1985 annual report.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour of tabling today the annual report of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources for the year ended March 31, 1985.

As well, I wish to table the annual report of the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority for the year ended March 31, 1985, along with AOSTRA's 10-year review.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file with the Assembly copies of the Southwestern Alberta Medical Diagnostic Review study. This report was previously released at a public meeting on June 11 in Pincher Creek.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, it's a great honour for me today to introduce a very distinguished young person from the McKernan junior high school in the Edmonton Parkallen constituency. I will shortly ask him to stand along with some others, but hon. members should know that Ken Nakamura competed with some 400 other students across Canada and won the Canada-wide science fair prize. The project that he completed was on acid rain and water life. Last month he also won the Canadian environmental research award, an award that is presented by the federal Ministry of the Environment. The group with Mr. Nakamura today has had an opportunity to tour the Legislature and meet the Minister of Education and the Premier. I would now ask them to stand. I think we should have Ken stand first; his mother, Dr. Alice Nakamura; the principal of McKernan school, Mr. John Lummis; the head of the science department and president of the Edmonton regional science fair, Ms Debra Dixon; and with them Mrs. Francis and Mrs. Bra-cwell.

MR. HERON: Mr. Speaker, I have the distinct pleasure of introducing to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 70 students from the grade 6 class from Queen Street elementary school in Spruce Grove, situated in the Stony Plain constituency, and their teachers Mr. Don Sink-wich, Mrs. Shirley Hill, and Mrs. Carmen Mykula. I ask that these students and their teachers please rise in the members' gallery and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour today of making two introductions. The first introduction to you, and through you to members of the Assembly, consists of a dozen members of the political action committee of the unemployed. The Dandelions are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

Also in the public gallery, Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to introduce a few of my family members, if I may. I have my nephew from British Columbia, Derek Humphrey, and my parents-in-law, Joe and Angeline Verbonac, from Leask, Saskatchewan. Along with them today is my wife, Cynthia Verbonac; fortunately she's from Edmonton.

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, a group of students from the Wild Rose Adventist school in the beautiful town of Olds who are here today with their teacher, Dorothy Yacoub, and a very proud grandparent of two of the students, Mr. Bill Wigley. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask that they rise receive the very warm welcome of this Assembly.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Department of Labour

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of Alberta I would like to express deepest sympathy to the families and friends of three young people killed in the tragic accident at West Edmonton Mall on Saturday night. The tragedy has shocked and saddened us all.

I wish to announce, Mr. Speaker, that under the Public Inquiries Act the government of Alberta will establish a board of inquiry to conduct a full investigation into the cause of the accident. The board, which will carry out a thorough and exhaustive examination of the circumstances which led to this tragic incident, will begin its investigations within the next few days.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, as Leader of the Official Opposition I, too, would like to take this opportunity to pass on our condolences and, I'm sure, the condolences of all members of this Assembly to the families of the deceased. I welcome the announcement, and rather than spend time here, I'll follow it up in question period.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has been approached with respect to this matter, and so it will be that on behalf of the Assembly I will send an appropriate message to those involved.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Banff-Cochrane I share with the Member for Highwood the privilege of representing Kananaskis Country as a part of our constituencies. On June 6 past, a single-engine aircraft disappeared west of Calgary while its pilot, Ken Wolf, and wildlife biologist, Orval Pall, were conducting an aerial survey of bighorn sheep near Mount Allan.

Members of the Assembly, 11 persons have now tragically died in two separate crashes searching for the missing plane and its occupants. Bruce Pratt, Rod Harradence and Hayden Evans died on June 6 searching for the first plane when their craft crashed into Mount Loughheed. On Saturday, June

14, Captain Wayne Plumbtree, Captain Ted Kates, Sergeant Brian Burkitt, David Hall, Jerome Schindler, Carl Grant, Charles Masur, and Patricia MacLean were killed when their search plane went down south of Sibbald Flats.

As the search continues and our hopes go to the families of the missing men, I would ask that you too, Mr. Speaker, give consideration to sending appropriate letters on behalf of the Legislative Assembly and the people of Alberta to the bereaved families of those who have given their lives.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will be only too willing to do that appropriate action suggested by the Member for Banff-Cochrane, and we thank him for bringing it to the attention to the House.

Department of Social Services

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, is it appropriate to continue with Ministerial Statements?

I am pleased to announce government support for Senior Citizens Week in Alberta, June 15 to 22. Encouraged by the Provincial Senior Citizens' Advisory Council, communities throughout the province are holding special events in honour of older citizens. The theme of the week is "active seniors in the community," and the purpose is to increase awareness and understanding of our older citizens and to highlight the positive contributions that they have made and continue to make to our provincial life. Our senior citizens built this province and are continuing to contribute in many ways through their service to others, young and old, enhancing our lives through their rich experience.

I urge all Members of the Legislative Assembly to join with their constituents in expressing appreciation this week to Alberta's older citizens.

In recognition of the role that senior citizens have played in all aspects of community and provincial life, we have developed in our province a range of benefits and services for seniors which are the envy of Canada, benefits and services developed to ensure that senior citizens in Alberta can live in dignity and independence. These include renters' grants, reduction of property taxes, utility rebates, home improvement grants, no premium payments for medical and hospital benefits, coverage for hearing aids, eyeglasses, dental care, medical and surgical supplies, prescription drugs, ambulance services, a newly expanded home care program, and subsidized apartments and lodges for seniors, and for those needing special care, there are nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals where the costs to the persons receiving such care is minimal. Finally, Alberta, through the Alberta assured income plan, ensures seniors a minimum income that is the highest among the 10 provinces in Canada.

This government is committed to policies and activities designed to assist senior citizens in maintaining their independence and participation in community life. To ensure this happens, the Senior Citizens Bureau will now be managed under the attention of a Member of the Legislative Assembly. This will assure that the bureau is responsive to the needs of senior citizens and also assure that the government maintains full consultation with the many active senior citizens' groups. The Senior Citizens Bureau, the first such provincial office in Canada, was established to co-ordinate and provide information on all matters concerning seniors and to assist in planning and co-ordinating programs for them.

Our provincial programs for senior citizens emphasize and will continue to emphasize independence and dignity,

self-help, and voluntary and community initiative and responsibility. In this way, Alberta will continue to be a place where persons in their later years are able to contribute to the life of the family, the community, and the province.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in rising to reply to the ministerial statement, I don't think anybody in the Legislature will disagree with government support for Senior Citizens Week in Alberta, June 15 to 22, at least none of us better if we want to be re-elected in four years.

I want to say to the minister that nobody is saying that the government hasn't done some good things with senior citizens. In fact, during the election many of them said, "Concentrate on the unemployed and others, because we're relatively well-off." I think that we've missed the point that many seniors aren't relatively well-off, and the highest rate of poverty in the province and in Canada generally is often among elderly women specifically. That's well-documented.

We'll face problems in this province in the future because we have an aging population, and we're going to have to look at many new, innovative ways of dealing with this problem. I might point out that Canada has one of the highest institutionalization rates in the world, and Alberta has one of the highest of the provinces. That's very expensive, besides not giving the element of choice.

I welcome the fact that we're having a Senior Citizens Week, and flowing from Senior Citizens Week, I would hope that we have some new, innovative policies coming out from the government. I'll say this, Mr. Speaker: if they can't think of them, the people in the Official Opposition will be glad to help them out in this area.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as mentioned in the April 3 Speech from the Throne and also today by the Minister of Social Services, the Senior Citizens Bureau lies within the large Department of Social Services. We believe attention to the bureau by an MLA would be of assistance to our seniors. Therefore, I wish to advise the House today that the MLA responsible for the bureau will be the hon. Member for Highwood, Mr. Alger.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Fantasyland Accident

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the first question to the Minister of Labour. It follows up on the announcement about the terrible tragedy at West Edmonton Mall. To get into the study a little more, could the minister be a little more specific about the magnitude of his investigation of this accident and, furthermore, give us some idea when a report on it might be made public?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the difficulty is that this is an extremely large and complex piece of machinery if one looks at the whole ride concerned. The magnitude of the investigation referred to by the hon. Leader of the Opposition is that it will be as full and as thorough as it has to be. How long it will take I cannot predict. I will have to look at the results of the inquiry and any recommendations, because of course it may involve matters that would come under criminal or civil prosecutions and lawsuits. I would not want to prejudice those.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that the roller coaster was inspected and deemed safe even a day before the tragic accident. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly if this was a routine inspection done on Friday by the chief inspector, or was there some special reason for this inspection?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, all the matters of the operation, the installation of the roller coaster, and everything else will be addressed by the inquiry.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there's an inquiry. I think it would be helpful, though, if we knew the circumstances going into it. Surely as Members of the Legislative Assembly we are entitled to some information about this.

To go into the department in a more general sense then, Mr. Speaker, amusement rides like roller coasters are deemed to be fixed conveyances, I believe, as defined by the Elevator and Fixed Conveyances Act. My question is: are inspectors of such rides in fact experts in engineering and design of amusement rides as opposed to being primarily familiar with elevators, and will that be part of this investigation?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it is the intention to have that aspect as well involved in the inquiry by the board that will be set up.

MR. MARTIN: This could be years. The minister himself just said, Mr. Speaker, that it could be a long time before we have this information. This is information that should be part of the department, and I would ask the minister to take it seriously. If it comes up that these things weren't there, that'll be part of the inquiry. But surely that information should be public at this point.

Let me ask one last supplementary on this, Mr. Speaker. I would perhaps make this a question, see if it would be a concern; I suppose a bit of a representation. Is it the intent that this ride will not be reopened at least till this inquiry has made public its suggestions?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the ride concerned will not be reopened until it is determined as far as is humanly possible that further operation will be safe.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If it's in order, the Liberal caucus would certainly like to express and add to yours their regrets to the families and those who were bereaved in this most unfortunate accident.

To the minister. Seeing that government departments are involved in licensing and inspection, can he give any assurance to the House that any investigation will be of an independent nature so that there will be no question at all as to conflicts of interest?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, under the Public Inquiries Act the board that is set up will be as independent as we can make it and, if at all possible, will include people with the expertise to be involved in the investigation of a highly technical occurrence.

Labour Legislation Review

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the second question first of all to the Premier. The throne speech on Thursday seemed to commit the government to the introduction this session of amendments to the Labour

Relations Act. Could the Premier be a little more specific and tell this Assembly when the government intends to propose them?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think we would want to have as thorough a review of the labour legislation as possible. It should involve travelling throughout the province. It should involve input from citizens, management, labour, and members of the Legislature. So I think that my answer would be that any recommendations as to amendments would come after a very thorough review. It's very difficult to know when that would be completed.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, just so we can get some handle on it, because it's been a major issue. There are certain things I don't think need studying; I've made that clear. Because it was part of the throne speech, which says the necessary amendments will be proposed, can we take it that there will be some amendments brought back to this House this year?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that's entirely possible. But I don't want to mislead the hon. member, because we will want them to be well considered and the necessary amendments to make the legislation responsive to the needs of Albertans.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, then, to the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. Given that we talked about Gainers in the House on Friday — but the violence isn't limited to Gainers. As we know, it happened lately dealing with labour disputes at Fletchers and at Slave Lake and Fort McMurray. Has the minister consulted with his counterparts in, say, Manitoba or Quebec, or any other province for that matter, about their legislation that seems to lead them to settle labour disputes much more peacefully than we do in this province?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the department and myself have reviewed the legislation in other provinces. The similarities are considerable and the differences are slight.

MR. MARTIN: We went through this. I guess the minister didn't hear my speech the other day, Mr. Speaker, but I'd be glad to take him outside and go through the laws so that he can understand them better. My question is simply this: in view of the circumstances with some serious labour disputes in the province, can the Minister of Labour at least give an undertaking to this Assembly that the government will introduce amendments in this session that will protect the jobs of members of a bargaining unit on a legitimate strike? Yes or no?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I'm not prepared to give a yes or no answer. The situation is such that the labour Act is a very important statute. It relates to the relationships between all employers and all employees, organized or not. For that reason, any changes should be made keeping in mind the balance between the two groups concerned.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. It's relative to remarks in the throne speech. Could the Premier indicate what format will be used in terms of the review? Will it be a legislative committee, an all-party committee, or just the minister with the staff of

the department travelling the province? Could the Premier indicate the format at this time?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd be quite interested in the views of the members of this Legislature regarding the makeup of this review. My initial thoughts are that it should be as broad as possible, perhaps all-party plus public citizens. The Minister of Labour and myself have been discussing it. We haven't made a final decision, because we would like to hear from members of the Legislature should they wish to express their views on the matter.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. It seems there's a little dancing around here as to when this report will come in. Could the Premier assure the House, in spite of the minister's reticence, that there would be a report before the fall sitting or, if not the fall sitting, before when there would have been a fall sitting?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I can only say to the members of the House that it would be as soon as possible. But we will want and will insist on a thorough review. This is a very important matter, and we do not feel that it is something that should be rushed unduly but rather considered thoroughly and then presented to the Legislature.

Industrial Research Assistance

MR. TAYLOR: Given the importance of research and technology to the economic development of Alberta, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications — that's quite a name. Could he tell the Legislature of any plans his department has to replace the \$71 million his federal cousins just cut off the federal government's industrial research assistance program?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. leader of the Liberal Party I would suggest that it isn't the responsibility of the provincial government to replace budget adjustments that are undertaken by the federal government. With respect to that particular program of the federal government, there is some discussion still under way, but I am not at all sure that the \$71 million to which there was reference was in fact eventually to be directed at this province or any other province in particular.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. That's an interesting answer in view of the upgrader proposal that he put forward. Have you had time, Mr. Minister, to make any estimate of what the cost will be to the businesses in Alberta from the federal government's proposed cut of \$71 million to industrial research? After all, we've heard you often say that this is going to be one of the major diversification methods of the province.

MR. YOUNG: As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is talking about a proposal of another government. That seems to me the subject of considerable speculation and a decision which isn't taken within this Chamber. If he has a specific in mind, perhaps he could detail that and I could follow up on it. But to talk about a large sum of money in that general manner, given that it's a decision that may be made by a different government, is not something that should be the subject of debate here.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Am I to understand the minister clearly, that he's

going to wait for the axe to fall before he does anything, that they're not going to do anything to try to balance out this effect against many of the small businesses in Alberta involved in industrial research? Has he no idea of the cost, no idea of the jobs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is having some difficulty with the question, because unless someone here has documentation to say that that kind of cutback has indeed taken place, we're dealing with a hypothetical situation. That's one reason the minister is having difficulty responding, but it's also one reason the Chair is having difficulty with whole the question. Perhaps you could rephrase the question that you know the document is indeed to be true.

MR. TAYLOR: In point of view the announcement that the federal government would be cutting their funding to small business research by \$71 million. Has the minister no idea what effect that will have on Alberta, what effect it'll have on the small businesses working in research and telecommunications in Alberta?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I can advise the hon. leader and the House that I was at a ministers' meeting last week. There was also a meeting in Winnipeg last week hosted by the federal government and dealing with a potential science and research policy for Canada, which was, as I understand from the reports I've received from officials, a general seeking and exchanging of information. With respect to the dollar question, it may be that my colleague the minister of economic development may be able to supplement my answer, but in neither one of those meetings did the proposal that has been suggested as a possibility come to my attention.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, without getting into this \$71 million program referred to by the hon. leader of the Liberal Party, I think it's important for the leader and other members of the Assembly to refer back to the throne speech and the recent weeks when the government announced a three-quarter billion dollar program for small business in Alberta, which I think is reasonably positive with respect to assisting small business. The final part of the hon. leader's question was with respect to what the provincial government is doing to respond to the needs of small business. I think that's a pretty significant response.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary to the answer that was provided earlier, I'm not sure I understood what the minister was saying. Did the federal minister meet with his provincial counterparts to talk about their programs for technology and research and economic development and not indicate to you at that time that they would be cutting back on those programs?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, to help the hon. member, I can respond that my ministerial meeting had to do with telecommunications and was only incidentally involved with discussions in technology, apart from telecommunications. The meeting in Winnipeg was of a more general nature and had to do with a science policy that might be eventually put in place by the federal government as a guide to that government. It was not a meeting which I attended, since the meetings tended to overlap somewhat. It wasn't possible to be in two places.

I would indicate, however, Mr. Speaker, that I think hon. members should consider whether our programs in

Alberta should be driven simply by the initiatives of the federal government. It's my own view that the initiatives we take should be ones that we think are most appropriate to this province, and in that respect, I look forward sometime, probably in the throne speech, to being able to detail some of those for the hon. member.

Agricultural Development Corporation

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. I want to congratulate her on her new responsibilities. In former Legislatures she's wished to add something to some of my remarks; today she has the opportunity of answering some of my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the hon. minister whether it's the intent of the minister, through the review of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation, to expand, contract, or eliminate ADC as a program of government.

MRS. CRIPPS: I thought you'd never ask. Mr. Speaker, to the member. I don't have any preconclusions on the decisions and recommendations that that committee will take. ADC has been in operation for 14 years, since 1972, and conditions have changed over that 14 years. I expect the review will be a total review of the role and mandate of ADC.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Under the new Alberta farm credit stability program farm lending has shifted more to the banking institutions. Could the minister indicate whether that would be a trend supported in terms of ADC?

MRS. CRIPPS: You're asking me again to prejudge the decisions and recommendations of the committee. At the present time the \$2 billion under the farm credit stability program is in addition to the \$1 billion already in long-term credit through ADC.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The new Alberta farm credit stability program has the 9 percent interest rate. Is it the intent of the minister to reduce all ADC loans under all conditions to 9 percent?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, right now all the farm loans through ADC have been reduced to 9 percent. We have the commercial lending loans at 12 percent. At this point in time, I've not had a chance to review those loans, so I can't answer that specifically.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the associate minister, Mr. Speaker. In the new funding for the stability program is it contemplated that funds would be primarily set out for operating capital, or will there continue to be the inflationary program of lending money to farmers to buy more land?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, may I indicate that it is our hope to involve ourselves in lending for both those purposes.

MR. PIQUETTE: Due that she mentioned that there is a committee to be formed to investigate the whole aspect of ADC, we'd like to ask the minister for more information about how that committee will be selected so that it will

take into account all the different viewpoints of the agricultural committee.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, the makeup of the committee is not totally determined at this time, but I can assure the member that the committee will be meeting with groups and farmers from all over the province. I'm sure that all the views will be well represented and taken into consideration.

Landfill Sites

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a community health-related question to the Minister of Community and Occupational Health. About a mile south of the city of Calgary there's a commercial landfill project that was recently moved into operation. As a consequence, a great many residents in the suburban lake communities of Lake Sundance and Lake Midnapore have raised with me their serious concerns initially about the likelihood of seagulls being attracted to the landfill sites and then migrating to the community lakes of south Calgary, resulting in a substantial health risk of parasitical infection for those thousands of Calgarians who use the lakes. My question is: as the minister responsible for the Public Health Appeal and Advisory Board, can he advise the Assembly today if the Board is prepared to deal with this public health issue?

MR. DINNING: I've heard from the hon. Member for Calgary Fish Creek as well as from a number of his constituents, and I can advise you today, Mr. Speaker, that there are some three appeals before the Public Health Appeal and Advisory Board. These appeals ask that board to withdraw Browning-Ferris Industries' permit to operate the landfill site in the location mentioned by the hon. member. It is expected that the appeal will be heard by the board in Calgary on Friday of this week. At that time, all interested parties will have an opportunity to make representations to the board.

MR. PAYNE: A supplementary, if I may, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly when he expects to be able to report back to the House the results and determinations of the Public Health Appeal and Advisory Board?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I would expect that following the Board's deliberations, they should be able to reach a decision on a very timely basis, and I would expect such a decision to take place some two to four weeks, at a maximum, following their deliberations.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. While he is investigating the bad health hazards of open pit disposal on the edge of the city, could he extend his investigation to my constituency? The city of Edmonton is starting to dump some of their garbage out in my constituency — not just defeated Tories either; this is real garbage.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, it's not a problem that I've heard until today. I appreciate the representation from the hon. member. Perhaps he and other concerned citizens might make their concerns known to the local board of health in the area, and that board of health might hear those concerns.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, this is an item that the city of Calgary had to take to court in order to direct the Public Health Appeal and Advisory Board to re-hear the appeal. As a supplementary to the minister I would like to ask: what steps will he take to ensure that Browning-Ferris Industries does not continue to use the site until this entire appeal process has been concluded?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, as I understand from the information I've been able to gather on this matter, the original appeal by the parties, including the city of Calgary, asked the board and the Court of Queen's Bench to assess the earlier decision. At that time the request was not made that there be a stay of the operation of that landfill site. As a result, the court did not rule on a matter that it was not asked to rule on.

Pork Industry

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Is the minister able to update the Assembly on the status of the dispute between the Pork Producers' Marketing Board and Gainers Inc., what has otherwise become known as the hog wars? Is the truce still on, or does the minister have any indication that Gainers is still of the view that they do not wish to purchase hogs through the board in the future?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, let me respond initially, but I'm sure the hon. Minister of Labour would like to have an opportunity to respond on a fuller basis. I can indicate to the hon. member that 7,000 hogs were sold today, from the communication we did receive from the Pork Producers' Marketing Board, at a price of \$77.15, and they were happy they could move that amount of hogs today.

MR. FOX: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am happy that hogs are finally moving to market and at a somewhat better price. My question, however, concerns the status of the hog war situation. Do you have any indication from them or have you had discussions with them about whether the truce will end soon? Will it flare up perhaps as soon as the labour dispute is over?

MR. ELZINGA: As I would hope the hon. Member for Vegreville would be aware, the Minister of Labour is responsible since that does fall under his jurisdiction.

MR. FOX: A supplementary to the minister. I'm referring again to the so-called truce in the hog wars between Gainers Inc. and the Pork Producers' Marketing Board. There is some legitimate concern on behalf of producers in the province that as soon as this labour dispute is settled, Gainers will turn their by now famous negotiating techniques towards the producers. Can you assure us that the truce will last well into the future and that some new mechanism has been found that satisfies both parties?

MR. ELZINGA: As the hon. member is no doubt aware, had it not been for the intervention of the Premier of this province, we wouldn't have had it solved at such a satisfactory solution when it was originally being discussed with Gainers and the pork board. It was because of direct intervention by our Premier. I have had no concerns relayed to me by those involved with the pork board that there might be a breakdown of communication as it relates to

what is presently in existence and is going to be in existence for some 39 months.

MR. FOX: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. We'll withhold our congratulations until we're sure that it has indeed been solved.

A supplementary to the Attorney General. Can you assure us that in the future violations of the powers of the Pork Producers' Marketing Board, as provided under the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act, will be prosecuted?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice. I'm not aware of particular violations that have been alleged.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair would like to point something out. It's a pitfall for all members of the Assembly as we first come into question period. Would you, please, direct the questions and the supplementaries through the Chair. You'll find it's a bit more helpful perhaps if you look in this direction, and then we won't fall into the habit of addressing members across the floor of the Assembly as "you this" and "you that" but "the minister" and "the member." Could we adhere to that practice, please.

Small Business

MR. ALGER: Mr. Speaker, from former questions my answer is almost provided, but subject to the reorganization of cabinet in the last few weeks, may I ask the Premier to advise the members of the Assembly under which portfolio small business is now being served?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as mentioned often in the Legislature and in the Speech from the Throne, small business is an extremely important part of this province and one which our government supports very strongly. The responsibility for small business lies with the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

MR. ALGER: A supplemental question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The throne speech did indeed announce the small business assistance program, which hundreds of small businesses are looking forward to. Are there any other programs pertaining to the assistance of small businesses planned by the minister?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, our priority in the department with respect to small business will focus on the small business term assistance program. There are a number of other areas that we're examining, but for the time being we're focussing on implementing that program as soon as possible.

Sales of South African Liquor

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Solicitor General. Today is the 10th anniversary of the Soweto massacre in South Africa. As a sign of respect for the anniversary that this occasions and the great suffering that has burdened the people in South Africa, can the minister assure the Assembly today that all products of apartheid will be removed from the ALCB shelves in this province?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to respond to the Member for Edmonton Mill Woods. The matter of trade

has traditionally been the jurisdiction of the federal government. We presently have our buying policies under review.

MR. GIBEAULT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that our federal minister for external affairs indicated last week that they will no longer continue buying anything from the Republic of South Africa and also indicated that they would encourage the provinces to take the same stand, can the minister tell us what policy considerations may be delaying implementing a similar policy in the province?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned previously, our policies are presently under review.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the minister indicate to the Assembly when that review will be completed and when he can report back to this House, particularly about the situation with liquor products in the ALCB?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary from the Member for Edmonton Mill Woods. I'm glad you dealt with that with alacrity. The Chair recognizes the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche, followed the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark.

Lubicon Band Land Claim

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, the entire world has many concerns about the Lubicon Lake Indian people. I want to ask the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, who did not have time to meet with the visitor from the European Parliament, whether he will make a commitment to make every effort to support any agreement reached between the federal government and the Lubicon Lake Band in the process of negotiation about to begin, which is intended to settle the band's outstanding claims.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, there are many parties involved in this issue. The federal government is now involved in the bilateral discussion process. Eventually, of course, the federal government will have to discuss with the province of Alberta the matter relative to the land in question, which is Crown land and therefore owned by the people of Alberta. In addition to that, of course, there are people of Metis origin who are residing on the land which is subject to the claim made by the Lubicon peoples, and those peoples' views will also have to be taken into consideration. So it's not a simple matter of saying yes or no to the hon. member's question. Certainly the responsibilities which are the government of Alberta's will be carefully considered in relation to the people who live within this province and in relation to our responsibilities under the Natural Resources Transfer Act of 1931.

MR. PIQUETTE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister indicate the position of the government regarding the public release of the report on the Lubicon situation which was prepared by Davie Fulton?

MR. HORSMAN: The matter has been commissioned by the federal government, Mr. Speaker, and is not in any

way under the control of the government of the province of Alberta.

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, what mechanism does the minister have in place to monitor the effect of oil industry activity in the Little Buffalo area on the traditional way of life of the native people there?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, that was one of the subjects that was undertaken for review by the former minister of justice, Mr. Justice Fulton; I still refer to him that way, but I realize he has retired from that position. That, of course, is a matter that has been reviewed, and with respect to current activities in the area, those matters relative to exploration within the province of Alberta are under review by the Department of Energy and the various agencies.

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Tilborg, who will be reporting back to his group of European Parliament, indicates that there is extreme concern in many areas of Europe and in the United Nations about the people of Lubicon Lake. I want to ask the Premier what information he has received indicating how Alberta's reputation and image have been tarnished by this unresolved situation.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I have had no information that Alberta's image is being tarnished by this matter.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister of intergovernmental affairs. Has anyone in his department prepared an estimate on the dollar value of oil and gas produced from under the lands that it has been suggested we return to the Lubicons?

MR. HORSMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, that is not part of the responsibility of my department. Granted, certain of the responsibilities formerly carried out by the minister responsible for native affairs have been transferred to the Department of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I am not in a position to advise the Assembly at this time whether or not that information is available.

Government Purchasing Policies

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Is he aware of the initiatives being undertaken by the departments of transportation and public works with regard to 12,000 tons of soil cement which may be let to an American firm, Ideal Cement, for the construction of Alberta roads?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that tenders have been called for road-surfacing material, but I am not aware of those tenders being awarded. Perhaps the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services has that information. I do not have that information.

MR. MITCHELL: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister of economic development aware of the number of jobs which could be lost as a result of this initiative?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that the tender has been awarded.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: I would ask the member to remember that we're dealing in the hypothetical once again, which was an issue raised earlier in the day. Would you take care with the framing of your question, please.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, could I ask whether the minister of economic development is taking steps to co-ordinate the activities of various government departments which bear upon the economic development and jobs for Albertans so that they can be focussed for greater effectiveness?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, we have for a number of years been very active in encouraging purchasing of local goods and services. This has been a priority of the government in terms of major and minor contracts, and it continues to be a priority. We do not, however, have a provincial preference interprovincially in terms of allowing contracts to be awarded. With respect to the specific, my information is that that contract has not been awarded. It has been advertised, the bids have been received, but it is still being dealt with by the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. MITCHELL: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could I please direct this to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services?

MR. SPEAKER: I'm not certain the minister is in the House.

MR. MITCHELL: I'm sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: But there must be an acting minister. Carry on, please.

MR. MITCHELL: Could I please direct this to the acting minister of that department? Could he assure the House that he will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that that contract is not let to an American firm, if at all possible, so that jobs will not be exported from Alberta to the United States?

MR. WEISS: On behalf of the minister, I'd be pleased to take that question under advisement.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if there's a gap here in the policy of the provincial government, in that tomorrow a motion is going to be proposed by a backbencher that we buy Alberta first. Is this the reason that such a matter should appear on the Order Paper, that the government does not have a buy-Alberta-first policy?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the hon. member's contribution to the debate tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: Clearly anticipatory. Even I can figure this one out.

The Member for Edmonton Glengarry. Hopefully these will be a quick series of questions. The Chair would then recognize the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

Sour Gas Health Study

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Community and Occupational Health and is occasioned by the Pincher Creek sour gas health study, which was recently tabled. A number of residents in the

area have voiced concern that although the study was obviously of a very high quality, it did not address their specific concerns that they have been voicing for decades. Could the minister outline the considerations which led to the choice of Raymond-Stirling and Carstairs-Didsbury as control group areas for comparison purposes in design of the Pincher Creek sour gas health study?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I would begin the answer by stating that we've got to remember that the original purpose of the study was to determine whether the residents in the index area — the Pincher Creek area, the Twin Butte-Willow Creek area — were healthy, whether they were experiencing any greater ill health than any other residents in the province.

In so doing, the design team that designed the study attempted to find a number of comparison communities in the province, and they came up with the Raymond-Stirling area in that it was an area that had all the similar demographic characteristics as the study area except that it was missing the gas plant that was found in the study area. In the case of the Didsbury-Carstairs, Crossfield-Irricana area, it shared somewhat the same conditions, except that it did have the gas plant in the vicinity. On that basis those two comparison communities were found and were used during the study.

MR. YOUNIE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister have any information he can share on scientific testing of the control group areas prior to the commencement of the health study in order to determine if the areas in fact do receive lower levels of sulphur emission than the Pincher Creek test area?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, perhaps my hon. colleague the Minister of the Environment might wish to respond further to that question. But as I understand it, the monitoring of environment conditions in that area and in all areas around the province is done on an ongoing basis.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, just to supplement my colleague's response, these inventories are taken periodically. The confirmation that Dr. Spitzer provided to us the other day with respect to this is basically — his conclusion was that the study that was undertaken in the area was a very conclusive one, and no further follow-up was required or necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, the Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: A final supplementary?

MR. SPEAKER: I realize it's your second supplementary, but I have an eye on the clock. We're running out of question period, so if I might beg your indulgence, please.

MR. YOUNIE: Given that the control group areas chosen are relatively close to a number of sour gas wells in southern Alberta and the Pincher Creek area, can the minister explain the process which led to their being chosen as comparison areas, as to communities which are not exposed to sour gas at all?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I don't profess to be a technical expert on this matter. But the design team, backed up by both a citizens' advisory committee and a scientific

advisory group that has some eminence around the country and I gather around the world, determined that these comparison communities were the best that could be found, sharing similar conditions and similar characteristics, in southern Alberta. As a result, they were found to provide the best comparisons for the area that was under study.

MR. YOUNIE: In view of the fact that the study pointed out that most of the similarities were demographic and in view of the fact that there has not been in-depth testing of the areas to determine that there is no sulphur emission or sulphur pollution in the Raymond-Stirling area, I am wondering what information the minister has on the reliability of the two control areas? In other words, is there any scientific information available on how meaningful the comparison with these two communities is, given sulphur emission levels there?

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I'd remind the hon. member one more time that the purpose of the study was not an eight-week study. It was a study to determine the health of the people in those areas over a period that dated back to 1957 and of the residents who lived in those communities in 1957, in 1970, and have lived there since. So we're not looking at an eight-week study; we're looking at the effects, the health of the people in that area over a very, very long period of time and assessing the impact of whatever circumstances and how that affected the health of the people in the area over that long period of time.

MR. SPEAKER: I would mention that we've gone a few minutes beyond the end of question period and one other member of the Assembly was recognized. I will attempt to recognize the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar early in the question period tomorrow.

head: **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege today in this First Session of the 21st Legislature to be able to recognize through you and other Members of the Alberta Legislature the Level Land academy. This is a small country school in the heart of the Three Hills constituency that enjoys just a very excellent academic education. I had the privilege of visiting with teachers and students back in the winter when delivering the encyclopedias.

Today there are 10 grades 6 and 7 students. They are accompanied by their teacher Ron Joch, parents Roy and June Dubyna, and Lorna Joch. I would ask them all to rise in the members' gallery and receive the warm welcome of the Legislature.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, the hon. Member for Bonnyville, who regrettably is unable to be in the House

today, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you 45 grade 6 students from the Notre Dame elementary school located in the Bonnyville constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers José Lapointe and Gérard Lavigne, along with their parents Bernadette Papp, Jane Tellier, Léo Rondeau, Marie-Claire Champagne, Dianne Sylvestre, Ardis Coulombe, and Rejean Ducharme. They are seated in the members' gallery. I would ask that they receive the cordial welcome of the House.

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

Moved by Mrs. Koper:

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

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

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

[Adjourned debate June 13: Mr. Gogo]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity today to participate in the throne speech debate.

First of all, I would like to add my congratulations along with other members of the House to your election as our Speaker. It's obviously a sign of confidence by the members of this Assembly. Secondly, I'd like to compliment Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for delivering in such a forthright way the speech which we're about to debate. I'd also like to congratulate the Member for Calgary Foothills, the mover of the throne speech, and the seconder, the hon. Member for Ponoka-Rimbey, who did such an excellent job of putting in perspective not only the throne speech but perhaps the intent of the throne speech.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take just a moment to welcome the new members to this Assembly. I find it's an extremely exciting place. It may appear at times to be complicated. There's no question that we're here as a result of the political process, and too often many of us find it, or think we find it, complex, complicated, and sometimes very technical, but in the final analysis it's really just a question of elected representatives representing people who have enough confidence in them to send them here. I don't mean to make light of the process, but oftentimes when one looks at a Bill, it appears to become very complicated. I'd simply point out that we're all human. We do our best to represent our constituents. After all, I think common sense has to be the byword of the day.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the best way of pointing that out is a recent incident in my constituency where a group of grade 1 students was taken on a vocational training program to the local police station. They toured the station and saw the cells and some of the communication equipment. As they were about finished — they were at the front desk — the desk sergeant asked if there were any questions. One seven-year-old looked at the 10 pictures he had on the wall and said, "What are they for?" The police sergeant said, "Well, they're criminals, and we're trying to catch them." The seven-year-old said, "Oh, you're really trying to catch them?" The police sergeant said, "Yes, we are." The seven-year-old said, "Well, why didn't you just keep them

when you took their pictures?" The more you think about that, it's not unreasonable. Oftentimes in this House we become very complex when all we're attempting is to do the province's business in the interest of our 2.3 million citizens.

Mr. Speaker, on April 3 we saw, with the new Premier, the throne speech. It pointed out very clearly the directions in which the Conservative Party had hoped to lead this province for the next several years. Then on the 10th we heard a budget, which was the dollars to implement that throne speech. On May 8, that question having been put to the public of Alberta, the public spoke. The results of their views are what you see today. The government of Alberta, the Progressive Conservative Party, has been re-elected; they're here today. Surely that's an indication of what the voters in Alberta believe in terms of a proposition put to them through both the throne speech and the budget. I think anybody who believes in democracy — and if you don't believe in democracy, you have no business being here anyway — has to endorse that process. So I hope that for the next five years — because the Constitution says we must do it again within five years — all of us as members of this Assembly are not only going to get along; we're going to represent our constituents in the best way possible.

As the Member for Lethbridge West, Mr. Speaker, I've been honoured to have represented them for these past 11 years. I deem it a great honour and privilege, and I deem it a pleasure today to be able to represent them in my place in the House and address the issues that are put forward in the throne speech. We in Alberta are very fortunate, if you stop and think a minute, compared to any other jurisdiction in Canada. When you consider that we have less than one in every 10 Canadians resident in this province, not bound by water, which I think is another uniqueness of this province, and you look at the resources the government puts forward to implement programs, and when you consider Manitoba with half our population with a budget of \$3 billion — we presently have one of heaven knows what, but we'll find out tonight for sure. Certainly it's in excess of \$10 billion. I believe that's a very serious commitment. Mr. Speaker, of the government of Alberta in implementing worthwhile and meaningful programs, certainly on the basis of their cost.

The freedom we have certainly came high. We saw in the capital city last week, right here in Edmonton, some 7,000 members of the Canadian Legion brought together from across Canada to celebrate many of the victories they'd gone through together, remembering those who had fallen for the freedoms we have here today. So we should never treat lightly either the democratic process or the freedom and ability to stand in this House and speak our minds. That's why, Mr. Speaker, as members know, in our *Standing Orders* we're all immune from prosecution for anything we say under this great dome. That doesn't mean we're free from prosecution from our colleagues. That means we're free from prosecution from the law.

When one looks, Mr. Speaker, at the priorities set forth — I'd like to comment on several of them as indicated in the throne speech. Agriculture. I'm sure no one can argue, has to be the top priority in the province. One only has to look at the history of the past 80 years to see how our province was built. The hydrocarbons, the oil, and so on were things that came later.

Senior citizens: it was already mentioned by the Minister of Social Services today that we're celebrating Senior Citizens Week. I'm sure that with 170,000 or 172,000 senior

citizens, many of them have paid the price for us to be here today. So it's only appropriate that the throne speech and its budget — it's a throne speech regarding senior citizens. It's only appropriate that we spell out those programs and certainly a commitment by the government for the home improvement program to carry on for another three years.

The most important issue to me and to many of you, I'm well aware, is the question of jobs for Albertans. Fourthly, I think the priority on energy, Mr. Speaker, is very appropriate.

I would like to make mention of the question of rights, Mr. Speaker, because we're going to hear a lot about it in the next three or four months. It was the Lougheed administration early in 1972 that passed the Alberta Bill of Rights and the companion Bill, the Individual's Rights Protection Act. That has not only withstood the test of time since then — and frankly, many people did not feel we needed a Charter of Rights and Freedoms as long as we had that legislation. Many other provinces have emulated Alberta, and I would certainly commend each of the new members, if they've not done so already, to look in the statutes and read the Alberta Bill of Rights, which protects all of us as long as we're in this province.

In terms of the priorities, Mr. Speaker, as regards Lethbridge West, obviously the number one issue in my riding is the question of unemployment. As I mentioned, I've been the member for 11 years, and over the last 18 months the most common problem raised with me as the member is unemployment. People seem to believe that government has a magic wand and can eliminate unemployment. I recall when the unemployment insurance fund of Canada worked, until the government of Canada said that when it goes over 4 percent, no longer will premiums be a factor — the treasuries of Canada will pick up the difference. Here we are today with about \$1 billion a month unemployment. Surely none of us want that to happen here in Alberta. I'm very pleased that the hon. Member for Calgary Montrose, the new Minister of Manpower, made a statement last week where he said that the only acceptable level of unemployment to him is zero. I think it's very refreshing to have a member of the cabinet make that statement. I'm looking forward, as I'm sure members are, to that minister making recommendations to government of ways to reduce this very serious unemployment problem.

Mr. Speaker, my experience, as I talk to a constituent, has been that it's one thing for an 18- or 19-year-old who has never had a job, but it's quite another for a person 45 years of age with three children and two cars who had a job for 20 years and then, for no reason obvious to him, no longer has a job because the company he worked for no longer exists. You obviously can't have the government guarantee that that company will be in existence. We're not only part of the Alberta and Canadian scenes, but obviously we're part of the world scene.

Surely no one can expect us, as a government in this province representing 10 percent of Canadians, to be able to control the world scene. What we can do, Mr. Speaker, is have an understanding and an empathy for those who go through this traumatic experience. You can visualize sitting down to the dinner table; you've probably got a youngster 16 years old packing groceries at Safeway after school and a daughter who may babysit, assuming she meets the qualifications nowadays. The father comes home after looking all day for a job and has to sit at that dinner table. You can imagine the emotional trauma he goes through, the loss

of dignity when kids say, "Dad, haven't you got a job yet?"

It's a very, very serious problem, and I think it's reflected in many ways. It's reflected in the beer parlour, in arrests, and in mental health. It's very serious. Let's not give it lip service. Let's do what we can to assist the hon. minister in coming up with some viable alternative to ending this serious unemployment problem.

Let's also understand, Mr. Speaker, that Alberta has the cleanest air and water in Canada. In terms of environmental standards, we're second to none in the country. We're not like Montreal that pours raw sewage into its rivers. You may not be able to drink the water in the North Saskatchewan, but it's not because of sewage; it's because of the chemicals we put in to eliminate the sewage. But let's understand that the price tag of employment may well be a reduction in the very high environmental standards. You can go to many parts of the world where there is no pollution at all, but there's no employment either.

I recall eight or nine years ago at Wabamun, Calgary Power, as it was known then, had to spend about \$85 million in environmental standards to bring on more power supply — until the environmentalists got involved; that added another \$25 million. The fact that the environmentalists were professors with tenure at the university had nothing to do with it, but the net result was that it cost us some \$113 million to \$118 million to bring that new plant on stream, which we're paying for today. None of us wants to be a Pittsburgh; I understand that. But we must recognize that sometimes to have employment, industry, and commerce — because we can't ship all the dirty jobs to somebody else — we are going to have to compromise in areas of environmental standards. I hope members can appreciate that.

I was a little bit disturbed last week, Mr. Speaker. I want to put it out now. It touches on the Gainers' situation. A collective agreement existed between two people, and you cannot have a collective agreement unless both sides agree to it, as members well know. It's not union, not management; it's both, because without agreement there can be no collective agreement. One side or both sides broke that. We now have violence in the streets. We have all kinds of problems.

The Minister of Labour, in a good and fair attempt to resolve that problem, has appointed a dispute inquiry board. Surely the role of government is to set the economic climate and to prevent danger to people. By appointing that board, it's his intent to try and get those people together again. Yet what words did we hear in the House last week? We heard some history of the dispute inquiry board — Lethbridge, 1912, with the coal miners' strike. What wasn't mentioned was that the first police strike in Canada was also in Lethbridge, and the public was forced to hire private detectives. They were successful, too, I might add.

The thing that disturbs me is the inference by a member making the statement that it is a total and absolute waste of time. Surely that's no matter that people should treat so lightly. It's a very serious matter, and surely it's the government's intent to cool down the emotional issue by using this board. I, for one, don't think it's appropriate to use terms like "a total and absolute waste of time" in appointing that dispute inquiry board.

The other comment I want to make: there has been reference to the employee relations Act, the famous or infamous Bill 110. Bill 110 was repealed by this Legislature on November 13, 1984, because members of the government

caucus went to their ridings — for those of you who don't recall what that Bill was, it concerned spin-off legislation, where people could create new non-union arms of companies. Most of you should remember that, as I recall some of your comments. The government caucus went out to their ridings. They came back and they had a caucus. They said they couldn't have Bill 110, and the government repealed it.

So don't ever infer that the government doesn't listen, because government is a collection of MLAs who have responsibilities to constituents, the same as everybody in this House. So the inference that was made in this House the other day about Bill 110 should not be made. I hope people will look over *Hansard* and perhaps have a discussion and second thoughts about the comments they made within this House.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a comment on some areas I think are important to my constituents. Many members send out questionnaires to the constituents because that's what the job is all about. What do your constituents think? There are three or four major concerns that I have. They're not in the throne speech, but I think they are concerns that should be raised.

First of all, one concerns security deposits, or damage deposits, that members may be familiar with. That is under the Landlord and Tenant Act. There is a Bill on, the Order Paper — I won't take long on it, because we'll probably deal with it — whereby the Landlord and Tenant Act allows a landlord up to a month's rent in terms of a security deposit. The law also says that when that tenant leaves, they are to get that deposit back. There is about \$100 million in damage deposits floating around this province. They are not in trust funds. They are in cash flows, and they present some unique problems.

An apartment building in my riding with 120 suites went bankrupt. It happens every day in Edmonton, so perhaps you don't notice it so often. But in my riding we don't have many, and when they go bankrupt, we know about it. The mortgage company sold it to a new owner. The new owner immediately demanded and received another damage deposit, because upon bankruptcy there is no provision for refunding that damage deposit. It's interesting to know, in terms of the constituents, that 74 percent say that damage deposits should be in trust accounts; 22 percent say that the new owner in the building should be as liable as the old owner of the building. That's a very major concern. I don't think it's restricted only to Lethbridge West.

Secondly, I notice a Bill introduced today on the question of extra billing. That's the area of health care. Frankly, I don't know of many Albertans who agree with extra billing. I've opposed extra billing since I arrived in the Legislature in 1975. But it's not a simple problem, Mr. Speaker. It's a very complex problem, because if you look at an ophthalmologist who receives a professional consulting fee for seeing a patient, it doesn't matter whether he's been an ophthalmologist or an oculist for 30 years or 10 minutes, he gets the same fee. It doesn't matter whether he has a million dollars of equipment, like the ophthalmologist in Calgary who does eye work, or whether you use the local hospital at taxpayers' expense. There is no difference.

When we deal with the whole question, Mr. Speaker, I really think we're going to have to consider two basic factors. One, if you're a teacher in the province of Alberta and you're living on January 1, each year for 10 years you get an increase regardless of proficiency, because we don't have competency testing in this province. In other

words, if you live as a teacher, you get more money every year for 10 years. If you live as a nurse, you get an increment every January for five years. It's like longevity pay. It has nothing to do with merits. Yet when we come to physicians, for some reason you can be a physician for 25 years and you get the same fee as someone who has been a physician for 10 minutes. I've talked to many doctors. I think there is a lot of merit in terms of adequate compensation for physicians in attempting to recognize the length of time a physician has been practising.

What concerns me, though, is that through the budgetary process we continue to escalate — and we're now over \$2 billion; I think it's \$2.3 billion — the curative process of medicine. If one were to add up the \$2.3 billion and divide by the number of Albertans, you get \$1,100 or \$1,200 in health costs per Albertan every year. One is reminded of Mr. [Laurence Peter], the famous author of *The Peter Principle*, who said a neurotic is a person who builds castles in the air and a psychotic is the person who lives in them. But it's the psychiatrist who collects the rent, and we shouldn't forget that, because we seem to build into a system where we have universality of a system and the only way you can really feel you're getting your money's worth is to overutilize the system. I have studied various studies on user fees and extra billing. Quite frankly, in my view it only provides an increase in morbidity. It does not resolve the problem; it only puts off going to see a physician until the problem gets worse, and then the state ends up paying more. My views on that question are fairly well known.

Speaking of physicians though, Mr. Speaker, I do think we're going to have to look very carefully at a system where they're trained at state expense. We have 16 schools of medicine in the country. We have two in Alberta. We have less people than B.C. and they only have one. There are four in Ontario, but if you add them all up, it's about \$400,000 in terms of physician training for that period, and they're quite free to go wherever they want. I've often thought that if we're going to incur \$400,000, they should owe us \$400,000 and we forgive them \$100,000 a year for each year they're here, or maybe a little more if they're in Fort Chipewyan.

In other words, we have a very serious problem in remote areas of this province with physicians, as members well know. We have hospitals without physicians, and I think the college has a role to play in this to see that under the health profession Act and the Medical Profession Act, physicians in this province go where they're required. Without sounding coercive, I think we should sometimes consider, with regard to financing their education, a system whereby there could be a trade-off. If you want to go to school at government expense — the army does this all the time in their officer training program — you simply pledge a few years back in service.

Mr. Speaker, what I find particularly encouraging is the appointment of a young chap in this House, the new Member for Calgary Shaw and the new Minister for Community and Occupational Health. He brings not only a fresh viewpoint, but I think his influence has already been obvious. It's extremely fortunate that the Pincher Creek study — or it's known as the Pincher Creek study — was brought to a conclusion since he was appointed minister.

I feel very strongly, Mr. Speaker, about the role of prevention as opposed to the curative role. When I look at my experience in this House — I spent some seven years with AADAC. Many members will know that in 1979, 7 percent of Calgarians knew what AADAC meant. Today

more people in Alberta know what AADAC means than New Yorkers know who the President of the United States is, and that has come a long way. Teenage drinking is down. Life-styles are being altered. People are being influenced of their own accord. They're responding to their own sense of responsibility after being informed. So when I look at the 18 percent increase in home care budgets, I'm very encouraged, because that clearly is an alternative to the curative process in a hospital.

Hospitals in my community are \$9,000 per month, and we all know that because of a lack of either home care, nursing home beds, or auxiliary home beds, they're in the acute care hospital. That figure seems to quadruple depending on the institution you're in, so I strongly endorse an 18 percent increase in the home care budget.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention health units, as they exist. I think they do a tremendous job within our communities, particularly in making young parents aware of the child restraint device Act. We brought a Bill in here a year ago January; it was in place for five years in the Lethbridge health unit, called the buckle-up-baby program, where the health unit gave car seats to new mothers for the first nine months. I think it's a very exciting program, and the health units are to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, I have two final concerns. I wish our new Solicitor General, the Member for Camrose, well. I look at our jail system and what I see frightens me. We have in Alberta people incarcerated on a per capita basis perhaps as high or higher than any province in Canada. Canada, as a country, is at the top of the list in terms of incarceration. We have exciting programs, I know, as alternatives. We have, for example, a voluntary temporary absence program. We have the fine option program where people can work to pay off their fines, but we still have many people incarcerated. In my community, in a new \$25 million jail it costs \$31,000 a year, and the student/teacher ratio is about 2 to 1. Our school system is about 31 to 1. The part I find quite disquieting is that 4 percent of our population in Alberta are native people but 28 percent of the inmates are native people. That's obviously not right. Very clearly, we have to look at some other way of dealing with these people who are incarcerated, particularly for those who are there for minor offences such as breaking and entering and convictions of drunkenness. There is no question in my mind that the public is entitled to be protected, but it is a different matter to put someone in jail to protect the public as opposed to a punishment for what I deem to be somewhat of a minor crime.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, a matter I feel very strongly about. We look at the throne speech and see agriculture not doing badly: since 1971 over \$3 billion outside of budgetary dollars every year. I don't know what province has received \$3 billion in any industry. As we have about 30,000 farmers or farm families — you add the doctors and lawyers and we've got about 60,000, but just keeping it down to the farmers — I think there's a limitation on what government can do. I've never met a farmer yet that wanted a subsidy. I've never met one yet that mailed the cheque back either.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we have great difficulty dealing with agriculture within our own jurisdiction. We have to work — and that's why the former Minister of Agriculture spent so much time in Ottawa — with other jurisdictions, because we're part of not only a national but an international scene. I read where last year the Canadian Wheat Board total sales were \$4 billion. We are known as the agriculture centre of the world, and yet in Canada our

gaming expenditures were \$4.2 billion. Our society is changing, and changing rapidly. If we're as committed as we say we are to the family farm, there's no question we have to spend more time and devise more programs that are going to help retain those people on the family farms.

The final point, Mr. Speaker, is on the question of family. It's mentioned once in the throne speech in the context of agriculture. We as a society always say how important the family is. It's the basis of our society. It's what built our society. It's the foundation of which our society — we have all kinds of terms for family, and yet what do we do? What do we do to assist a situation where three out of every five marriages goes to divorce courts? We don't even push mediation instead of the adversarial process of divorce. We spend some \$57 million in day care to encourage people to go to work; that's \$5 million a month. I don't know what it's going to be tonight; I haven't heard the budget. Some \$250 million for single-parent assistance. Do either of those motivate people to stay within a family unit? Have we done anything meaningful to prevent divorce? I think if we said that the first person in the family to leave had to take the kids, we'd reduce divorce, but we don't. We're on this rights issue from the '60s with Dr. Spock and the rest: do your own thing. If you don't feel right, see a doctor, but never be responsible for your own decisions, never be responsible for your own children. It's only the last two years that the Attorney General got through a reciprocal act of maintenance payments coming back as a result of a court order. It took us a long time.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should spend some time and energy in terms of studying families and how we can help. I know the Member for Calgary Currie feels strongly about this, as do others. So I would hope that in the next four years we'll find time within this Assembly not only to maintain what we've already got going but to spend some time analyzing and understanding how we can help make families in this province stronger and stay together longer so that the future indeed will be bright.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I hardly know if you can call it a maiden speech for somebody approaching 60 after 20 years of trying to get in the House, but whatever the male equivalent of a maiden speech is, this is it. As a fellow southern Albertan and someone that's quite interested in the classical poets, probably one of the first things you were weaned on was Tennyson's *Ulysses*. I remember Ulysses said that he was a part of all he had met, and I am the same way.

In a maiden speech you're supposed to give deference to the constituency that elected you, but seeing that I've run in more than one constituency, I felt that I had to go back and look over the constituencies that formed me. Although I was born over half a century ago in Alberta, I've had a great deal of effects and a great deal of outside influences on my thinking within Alberta.

First of all, there's Cypress, which unfortunately is represented by a Conservative, but a very good individual. The Cypress constituency which you and I started out in many years ago, Mr. Speaker, is a constituency which does much to mold character. You have to travel for miles to see a tree. Being able to crawl up on that windmill on a clear day and see Chicago is something that gives you a sort of depth of vision that you can't acquire in other places in Alberta.

On from there to Calgary. I had the chance to run in a constituency in Calgary a couple of times. Calgary is, of course, a very dynamic constituency. When it wasn't spending American money, it was spending Toronto money. Nevertheless, it was a great place to live and raise a family.

I might mention that I made a brief sojourn in the meantime and I lived for a while in Peace River. The first two children in my rather large family were born in Peace River. I know the effects of Peace River water, and I can understand why the late Mr. Grant Notley thought that one of the greatest joys of his life was to locate alongside the Peace and be able to look up and down the valley. I lived there for a couple of years also.

Finally, I notice that the Minister of the Environment isn't here. I used to give him a bad time when I ran in the Barrhead constituency. I argued that the province, before his party had come to power, had many crystal-clear streams and really only his leader was the one that was capable of walking on water. But now the streams have been so polluted that nearly any of us could walk on water. There again, the Minister of the Environment is representing Barrhead.

Now I come to Westlock-Sturgeon, which will have to be the love of my life. Although I had paraded my talents before many other constituents in Alberta, Westlock-Sturgeon and I have started a love affair that I hope will last for years and years. Maybe Westlock-Sturgeon was a little bit like myself. It was the rump of many other constituencies that have been discarded and not listened to over the years, so there was a natural marriage between us. We took the people that had been left over from Redwater, Athabasca, Barrhead, and St. Albert and we went together. I think we're going to have a good relationship through the years.

It's a very interesting constituency. Many people think of it as a rural constituency, and rural it is. Certainly the Sturgeon River valley . . . Those that are familiar with soil and soil analysis — the Minister of Agriculture will back me up on this, I'm sure — know that the Danube valley, Black Sea, Blindman valley, and some parts of the Niagara peninsula are the only areas in the world where you get the same type of soil that we get in the Sturgeon valley.

Unfortunately, under this government it's planned that the city should grow and march out like ancient Athens over the countryside. It has ignored land policies and the preservation of what's really valuable. It should be as unthinkable for this government to permit a building or parking lots to occur on numbers 1 and 2 soil as it would be to dig up Jasper Avenue to make a coal mine. And I assure you, Mr. Speaker, being a geologist and mining engineer, there's probably much more coal in value under Edmonton than there actually is in some of the other areas of the province. We wouldn't think of digging up the city, yet we will put in landfill projects and we'll put in parking lot projects over numbers 1 and 2 soil. It was often said of the past government that their idea of a wilderness was a Safeway lot without yellow markers on it. This type of thinking has to come to a close. We have to do something more than just let our soil disappear.

Also in our constituency, the pioneers, the Francophone pioneers of Morinville, Vimy, Pickardville, the French-speaking people that came out here from Quebec in the 1890s, established a way of life in the community and farming community that is interesting to go out to see today. It's barely the only place outside Quebec where you see the tall, single spires of the churches throughout the community. If you ever have a moment to drive north of Edmonton, get off this idea of getting — mind you, now

that some of these roller coasters are closed down, maybe you'll get in a car and drive out north of Edmonton and take a look at my constituency and the towns that have been started by the Francophones. Also, I have the very pioneers in this area: the Indian reserve at Alexander. I find a certain kinship with them, because my father used to often brag that half his ancestors came over on the Mayflower to eastern Canada and the states and the other half were here to meet him. That half that were here to meet him I find gives me a bit of empathy with the Alexander Indian Reserve.

Now if we go on, Westlock-Sturgeon has its problems though. It's a unique constituency. A lot of the problems are not of its own making. It's something that I see was not addressed in the throne speech: for instance, commuters. The commuters live — actually I've just mentioned to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the Assembly what a great place it is to live, and I'm not the only one that's found that out. Many Edmontonians, after working in the heat of the day in the offices here, retire to my constituency. Yet we have an antiquated tax system which this government insists on preserving, whereby only the land is given the money to supply the education, recreational, and cultural facilities. Occasionally if you can go cap-in-hand to the minister responsible, you may get an additional grant. However, one of the things that has to be looked at if the people are going to commute from these communities is that there has to be a share of the income tax generated by these people going back to these communities so that the local council cannot be considered the local grinch. They can be considered people that have the wherewithal and the money coming from taxes outside of property taxes. I'm talking about income taxes and maybe a certain portion of the oil and gas income going to these municipalities so that they have the chance to set their own priorities and set the quality of life for the people living in them based on more than just plain property tax.

Also in the constituency, the whole question of diversification comes up, because if you have a commuting population coming into Edmonton, you have farmers. It would be nice to develop some secondary industry or diversify into the service industries, which we know, if you look at your surveys, now supply maybe 50 to 60 percent of new jobs today. Small firms that employ less than 20 people employ up to maybe 80 percent of the new jobs. So small industries that are the brain industries and doing service work could be locating out in this area.

What do we have: an antiquated phone system. I know the Premier was very proud when he came out to my constituency during the election to announce they're doing away with party phones. I don't think he realized that even old socialist Saskatchewan did that 28 years ago — 28 years behind Saskatchewan, and we announce we're getting rid of party lines. A wonderful idea indeed . . . [Laughter] Shows you there's life on this side yet. But to go on from that, the phone system there is oriented to phone Edmonton. You can phone Edmonton from most places in the constituency without a toll. But try to phone over from the other side. If you try to phone from Morinville to Gibbons, you get charged money. If you try to phone from Gibbons over to Villeneuve on the other side, 15 miles away, you get charged, but you can all phone Edmonton. What's it say? It shows that we have allowed the idea that only Edmonton and Calgary can be the commerce centres to develop, and we're forgetting entirely that something as simple as phones can be oriented to take business away

and slow down the setup of small business in these communities.

Education: I attended two school board meetings out there. Our school boards get an increase of 2 percent. Anyone that's read anything at all about the creation of jobs in a modern-day society knows that in the service sector you have to be educated. You have to know how to grant a service or be trained to grant a service before you can get into the service business. And what better way to be trained to grant a service than education? So education, the very lifeblood of jobs for the last part of this century and the next century, gets short-circuited by this government time and time again. We have an antediluvian, 1890 attitude toward education. If you want to go on to get the large professions or whatever it is, there may be money in the universities, and you can expect to make it back in income tax down the road, but the idea of plowing in money at the grade 1 to grade 12 level for some reason or another seems to have slipped our minds. It doesn't seem to have entered our minds that that's the way we train our people to supply jobs and create income down the road.

Also, in my constituency and across the province we have the agricultural problem. Agriculture in the west was developed plainly and simply on cheap land and cheap energy. We did not have cheap labour. We didn't have the wetbacks coming across the river or the coolies and their work come in. We didn't have that. We're a long way from markets, and we also had the fact that we only had one crop a year. The long, cold winters raised large families but not many crops. The point is that as time went on we developed an agricultural process here that depended on cheap land and cheap energy. And what have we done? We've destroyed that base more than anything else.

Agriculture needs a full, new rethinking process. We have to get the costs of land down — if not necessarily the land itself, the cost of the farmer staying on the land. We have to work out systems in this Legislature whereby farmers can stay on the land cheaply — maybe long-term leases, maybe lifetime leases that are renewable again to the heirs and associates. But the huge amount of money a farmer is asked to lay out today for a piece of paper that gives him title goes far beyond what is reasonable. So we've done away with cheaper land and cheap energy. This has to be the joke of a lifetime.

We come to energy. We piled tax on tax on tax while the boom was on to run the farmers' costs. Energy to farmers is not only fuel; it's fertilizer and all the things that are associated with the hydrocarbon industry. We piled tax on tax, royalty onto royalty, and told the farmers, "Oh well, don't worry." Now that energy prices are crumbling, the last place they're crumbling is at the farm gate. We've made some great efforts to try to reduce energy prices, but Alberta fertilizer can still be bought cheaper in the state of Montana than it can be in Alberta. Something very fishy there. I know the government will come back and say it's due to this or it's due to that; they're dumping down there, and everything else. But the fact is that fertilizer made out of our natural gas is still cheaper in Montana than it is here.

If we look into the other areas of agriculture, we have financing, cheap money. Our government talks about cheap money, 9 percent money. Somehow or another they're six months to a year behind time. Nine percent is the prime rate that the larger corporations are paying. Why can't agriculture have access to money — and after all, it's passed through in the food costs — at the same rate that dividends

are paid? Any of you in the corporate financial world knows that dividends bear a rate of around 5 percent, half prime plus one, half prime plus a half. Yet we talk about full interest, a full debenture interest. It makes no particular sense that somehow or another we have got a mind-set that ties the cost of farm loans to the cost of loan interest. Why not look at it as a dividend? Why not look at it as a preferred share? That's a form of financing that's available to the major corporations and utilities, yet we tell the farmer, no, he's got to be paying 9 percent. He could be looking at five, and if it's a very reasonable one, we could go a step further in farm finance.

I don't know how many of you people are aware, as I certainly am because some of my businesses have not been doing that well lately, that if you're a troubled company — and heavens knows many farmers are troubled farmers — you can go to Ottawa and get a ruling that you are troubled. It costs you maybe \$150,000 or \$200,000 in legal fees, but you can get it. When you get that, you pay half the interest rate. You pay a dividend rate. Why can't we use the muscle and brains, if I may use the term loosely, that may be present on the government benches to devise a scheme to get that same type of privilege to our farmers that oil companies and other companies in trouble can get if they pay the legal fees and go there?

We have many other areas. We have research, the whole question of jobs, the whole food industry in the agricultural industry. I like to use "food," because when you say "agriculture" 50 percent of the city slickers turn off their hearing aids right off the bat. If I ever get to be Premier, I can tell you right now that there won't be a Minister of Agriculture; there'll be a minister of food production, because that makes the boys sitting downtown here, lined up at the big IGAs, wearing their cowboy boots out to the Saturday night frolic, pay attention. Agriculture turns them off, but the food industry . . .

And what are we doing to build the food processing industry? Because just as there have been a number of revolutions in agriculture in the past — you might say that in the west we switched from the fur trade to the ranching trade before the turn of the century. We went from the ranching trade to large grain farming in the '20s. I submit that there's a whole new revolution out there. The cancelling of the Crow rate, basically saying that raw products now pay the same as finished products, really didn't have much to do with us. In other words, it now becomes economical to process, because the old idea of shipping out unprocessed goods to where they would be processed, out on the coast or Korea or somewhere else, doesn't have that freight advantage anymore. We can be doing a lot of processing here, and there seems to have been very little investigation about that at all.

We talk about meat packing, which has been much the centre of interest, but we haven't looked into everything. From my constituency we have the Morinville carrot. Before you grin, I'd like you to know that the Morinville carrot is a delicacy that's known around most of western North America. If you ever pay more than \$20 for a meal and if it has some nice carrots in it, they probably were Morinville carrots. We actually specialize in raising carrots. That's just one of the ideas going on there. There's a whole new field of product and research. Yet when those farmers wanted a measly \$70,000 and came to this government and asked for \$70,000 to experiment with new types of equipment to dig and process the carrots, the money wasn't there. But poor old Shell Oil staggered in the other day with the

elbows out of their sleeves and got something like \$3 million to haul our tar sand out, not to evaluate it in Alberta, not to evaluate it in Canada, but to haul it all the way to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to be experimented on, and we're paying three million bucks for that.

This gives you the sense of priorities, what I think has gone wrong with this government, Mr. Speaker. Somehow or another they have forgotten their roots. They have forgotten what really makes this province go, and they're going for the will-o'-the-wisp of any international buccaneer that comes in and suggests a \$30 million or \$100 million scheme or some multi-megaproject that's going to create jobs, that's going to get things under way, rather than getting down to the very basic understanding of getting small business under way, agriculture under way and doing much more help in research with the people involved in what we have going.

Certainly we need diversification, but not the type of diversification we're talking about here: a megaproject here, a megaproject there. I take blame as well as anyone. In the past, before I was elected, I used to work for some of these megaliths. As a matter of fact, I'm the founding engineer of one of the big tar sand projects up north. I know the gimmick. You go in there, you talk to the government, and you get them started. Then every four years just before an election you go in sobbing and say, "Look, we're not quite making ends meet. We need to have this; we need to have that." Once you get that megaproject in there and get established anywhere in this world, you have the government by the throat, and you have to be continuously putting more and more money into it to keep it going.

I'm not against megaprojects categorically, but I think we have to look very carefully at them. The very fact that this government is going to have to put up \$70 million to help finish the payroll at Syncrude just till the end of December is a good idea of what these things can start costing you in the long run. Whereas diversifying in a multitude of small businesses scattered in a number of areas, thousands of people using their imaginations, thousands of people using their ideas to go into a different type of project — that's a much more stable future than getting together with some of the big, high-minded PhDs and large corporations of this world to put in a giant project that you can go out and hang your name or your medal on and say that it was dedicated by such and such. Mr. Speaker, this is one of the things we have to look at.

I know there are many things that have to be covered in the throne speech. I think of women's rights and problems. We haven't even got equal pay for equal work, let alone anything else in that area. Regulation of business: it seems you can get almost anything through a prospectus in this province, get the answer we heard here the other day that that's really not law yet. But they're going out raising hundreds of thousands of dollars on conjecture that this government will be, as it has been in the past, a sucker for any high-flying scheme that comes in here, and it goes through the consumer affairs department with very little if any consideration. Also, there is the whole question of social programs; members of my caucus will be talking about that.

I'll have much more to say on energy in the future. But energy is a complicated subject, and I can't help but remember the way the Tories sat there patting each other on the bum like a bunch of football players last year when they introduced the program of the energy accord. They

said, "We're going to free market." At that time, April '85, I put out a news release that within a year we'd rue the day we moved to a free market. But no, they were blinded with the sense of greed. They thought that somehow or another the price was going to \$100 a barrel. They didn't even take a moment: they didn't even take the time to put a clause in there saying that if the price went the other way, we could ask for the \$40 billion to \$50 billion we had already incurred in supplying the east with cheap oil. We could ask for that expense account back, we could ask for that credit back. No, they didn't put that in.

When they said that they could compete with anybody in the world — they're waving their arms; "We don't care: we're going for the free market" — it reminded me of the story of the mouse that crept into the bar late one night, sipped a little liquid on the floor, stood up and waved his tail in the air, and said, "Bring on your damn cat." And that's what happened. Sheik Yamani brought on the darned cat, and we can't compete anymore.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a part of the sins I am trying to point out to the public that our government has committed. Therefore, I believe Albertans have lost confidence in this government. I know the last speaker said that they won. That was because the election campaign was so short. Another three weeks and you'd have been silting over here, and someone else would have been sitting over there. However, you were lucky enough to survive. You got a three week reprieve, Mr. Speaker. I say that the public has lost confidence in them.

I'd like to propose an amendment to the Speech from the Throne. I'm moving that the motion for an address to Her Honour the Hon. Lieutenant Governor on today's Order Paper be amended as follows, by adding at the end of it:

but regrets the absence of any indication that the government intends to introduce the means to adequately deal with the unemployment of Albertans and the agriculture and energy crisis.

I have copies, Mr. Speaker. Wait a minute: I nearly had my luncheon menu in there with it.

MR. SPEAKER: I appreciate the fact that the leader was fumbling with his notes. It made me feel better about my own effort the other day.

According to Standing Orders, item 19(2), it is indeed in order for this amendment to the original motion to be placed, so I recognize the member who so moved, if he wishes to briefly make further comments in this regard.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'm rather a novice at that. Is it possible for me to adjourn the debate? I have to speak further on that part?

MR. SPEAKER: Other Members of the Assembly who wish to speak to the amendment? Perhaps we could pause for a moment while the pages distribute the amendment.

I'm advised by the Tabic officer that the leader of the Liberal Party still had five minutes remaining in his original comment time on the reply to the Throne Speech, so that could be in order before we go on to the matter of the amendment. It's being challenged. [inaudible] primarily with the throne speech, please.

MR. TAYLOR: I think, Mr. Speaker, I have smote them hip and thigh, as they say, and the amount of time . . . That would be gilding the lily. I think I have said enough. I'd like to thank you.

MR. R. SPEAKER: On a point of order. To clarify for the House, could the hon. Mr. Speaker indicate whether we're going to debate the general throne speech in tandem with the amendment, or will we deal with the amendment and then come back to the general speech?

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of order, we were trying to ascertain whether or not there were three minutes left with respect to the mover of the amendment's further comments on the throne speech debate. The understanding of the Chair is that he has kindly waived that three minutes. Now that the amendment has been placed, we must of course speak. Any members in the Assembly may speak but just according to the narrow parameters of the amendment which has been placed.

I assume that all members in the Assembly have now received the notice of the amendment. If I may read the end out loud:

but regrets the absence of any indication that the government intends to introduce the means to adequately deal with the unemployment of Albertans and the agriculture and energy crisis.

It's with respect to that narrow amendment that the Chair is willing to recognize speakers. Failing that, there'll be a call for the question with respect to the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion on amendment lost]

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, it's a great pleasure to participate in this my first debate in the 21st Legislature. I'd like to begin my opening comments by recognizing what I believe is the unanimous support of the decision of the appointment of you as the Speaker. We share a great confidence in your new role and certainly congratulate you on your new role. By natural extension your nominator and the second person to support that nomination, the Premier and the Opposition Leader, of course deserve good recognition for their very fine choice.

In speaking to the Speech from the Throne, what I have to say first is that what's really important is what wasn't in the Speech from the Throne. It's not that it was perfect in what was there, but I spent a lot of time knocking on doors in the riding of Edmonton Highlands. As many of you know, I did that for about a year and a half prior to when the election was called. I didn't just talk; I also listened. What I heard in our communities, which are culturally diverse, is that people do hold some values in common, and they look to see a government reflecting those values. I would say that primarily the two concerns that were uppermost were fairness and a pursuit of a stable economy. They've been looking for the last several years to the government to provide the environment in which those values are well represented.

In terms of fairness, probably the number one issue that arose was taxation. There are many different ways of looking at taxation. One, for example, is corporate taxation versus personal income tax. There are many people in this province who would perpetrate the myth that because we haven't got a sales tax in Alberta, we are in fact the least taxed people in the country. Ordinary people know that's not true. They know that the vast bulk of the revenue that comes from a taxation base as opposed to a royalty base is generated by individuals, those people who work — the 88 percent, anyway, who can find work — those people who purchase

services from the government, those people who pay property taxes, those people who engage in transactions upon which taxes are levied. They know that the public accounts show this pretty clearly. It doesn't take long to add it up.

But there are still other ways of looking at taxation. For example, homeowners in particular, because they actually see the tax bills — renters don't see them, as you know — understand that their property taxes have really escalated in the last dozen years. I was pleasantly surprised to find that they also understand why they've escalated. They know that the provincial share of funding for education in Alberta has dropped; therefore, the people in the municipalities have to pick up the difference in the tab. They understand that. It may seem like an academic point to a lot of people. What does it matter? You pay money out of this pocket or you pay money out of that pocket. What they understand is that it isn't exactly fair that you can earn on a progressive scale a fair amount of money but not be asked to kick in your share on the basis of income tax. You may own property that's reasonably close to each other in terms of value and pay almost a flat tax. It isn't fair. People understand that.

In terms of fairness, they understand something else too. They understand that they pay many times over for what is all too often mistakenly called the privilege of medicare. But the privilege of medicare does not come with equal access. The amount of money that a person has to be earning in order to qualify for the provincial subsidy to pay for health care premiums or to have them paid entirely by the government is incredibly low, well below the poverty line, whether you are looking at a single person or a family. I don't believe there's a riding in this province which doesn't have people in it who live below the poverty line but who don't qualify for that subsidy. People recognize that it's not very fair.

They recognize much more profoundly that extra billing is not very fair. It's a rare occasion indeed to listen to a member of this government acknowledge that he does not share in the government's upholding of this privilege, shall we say, which is not recognized as a privilege by the Canada Health Act and by most other provinces in the country. I made notes, and I actually deliberately went through my campaign notes to see what issues came up and in which order. This was a big issue, not just during the campaign period but in the year and a half leading up to the campaign in which I was a candidate knocking on doors.

I'll tell you something else that came up that surprised me. I took the issue seriously at the time, and so did the Official Opposition leader. But a lot of people remembered it. That was when thousands of Albertans got access to medicare cut off. They lost their blue cards. They were told their blue cards were no longer valid, and if they didn't have the up-to-date stamp on it, that's it: no rights. Maybe you can go in and beg for a hospital to attend to you, but aside from that don't expect a physician to recognize you as a legitimate person with legitimate health care concerns and needs. They remembered that. I was very surprised by this and very happy. When they told me that they were going to vote New Democrat, I think it was sending a message that they don't want to see that kind of atrocious, arrogant measure taken by any government ever again. It's not considered fair, and they know it.

They also know that their money, which is in the charge of the people in this room as the stewards of public money, has not necessarily been used in the best interests of the

public. I've heard a lot of arguments for the reasons why we had to bail out a few chartered banks. Perhaps we ought to look at it from another point of view. If we really believe that it was imperative to do that, why didn't we believe that it was imperative to find measures to protect the people whose money was invested in the several mortgage companies which collapsed because of the collapse of this economy? I met people who lost their life savings. I'd be very surprised if half of you didn't. It must be true. I met them, and a lot of my riding is an inner-city riding.

There is little doubt that another major concern in terms of fairness in this province, one in which the public seems to be leading the trend and the government seems to be kind of trailing, is the matter of pay discrimination suffered by women. I can assure you that people aren't just looking for another review. They know what the facts are. They know that women in the work force working full-time make on average 64 cents for the male-earned dollar. No one can account for it; it doesn't make sense. You can be doing identical jobs and still suffer wage discrimination on the basis of gender. Affirmative action programs are very good, but ultimately we can't all be in those high paying jobs. There is only one solution. It's a solution which I note I've never heard in a positive manner from any government member; that is, equal pay for work of equal value, otherwise known as pay equity.

I recognize there is a problem in even saying those words in any positive fashion, because once you've done so you've recognized how real the problem is, and then it may be incumbent upon you to act upon the responsibility that goes with knowing how deep the problem is. I'm particularly proud to belong to the one caucus in this province and across this country which does recognize the problem and which is prepared to stand behind what we know is the solution.

The member who spoke one before me referred to child care in Alberta. I'm not sure what the inference was supposed to be. Maybe it was supposed to be that we women aren't supposed to go out and get work. Whether or not that's the case, the fact of the matter is that we have an outrageous record when it comes to standards for child care facilities. I've always been amazed at how anybody can ever argue that you have to have a four-year university degree to teach children who are six years old but all you have to do is be 18 years old to be with someone who is five years old — six years old less a day. I don't understand it; it makes no sense. It's a rare event. In advanced nations we understand that child care is very important. Child care is important to the women who go out to work to help make ends meet, and it's important to the quality of the future that we have, the people that we're raising. It's as important as education. These issues do come up at the door. I wouldn't be surprised if they came up at the door for you too.

I think we all concur, however, that the number one problem in this province is unemployment. I live in a riding — pardon me, I represent a riding; I actually live a block outside of it for now. I represent a riding which is comprised of many different socioeconomic groups and is rich in cultural diversity, as I mentioned. But there is one thing for sure: there are lots of unemployed people in the riding of Edmonton Highlands. They're not just in the Boyle Street area. They go all the way over to 50th Street. They're all over the riding, although there is a heavy concentration in the Boyle Street area.

People don't expect miracles, and they were glad that we were honest in our campaign when we didn't offer

miracles. We told them: "We'll do what we can. We're not going to give you heaven on earth, but we'll do certain things as laid out in our major campaign literature called *Make it Happen!*, and we will get Albertans back to work, thousands of them — not necessarily every single one of them. But in the meantime we will also do what we know to be right and responsible, and that is not penalize the people who don't have work."

A lot of people who don't have work can never have work. We recognize that. A lot of people who don't have work would like to have work. But that's no reason to send them to the food banks. That's no reason to underspend money authorized by this Assembly for payment of Social Services grants. We approved the money. Well, I didn't; I was up there. But a lot of you people approve this money year after year, and it doesn't get spent. You know who gets caught in the contest between departments to see who can underspend by the most? It's the people who need the services the most.

These people get \$105 a month, \$125. Their rent is paid, sure, but what does that matter if they're living in two rooms that you or I wouldn't pay \$75 for? We're spending public money at a rate of \$290 a month for some of these rooms. Surely we can look into serious housing programs to take care of the housing needs of these people and not literally be throwing our money away. Someone is lining his pockets. The people who have to live there know it. They don't like it; they don't think it's fair; they don't think it makes sense. I spent a lot of time in the Boyle Street area.

Ultimately, of course, they are looking for employment, and they're looking for meaningful employment, not temporary provisions that will give them \$3.80 an hour for six months, just enough to get them qualified for unemployment insurance so that they can go back into those queues and get themselves a grand total of \$450 a month to live on. They're looking for a diversified economy, one in which we haven't got all our eggs in one basket — which we did primarily over the years — the energy sector: one in which we look toward developing and enhancing secondary production related to the natural resources which we are lucky to have. That's what they'd like to see.

They also want to know about the trust fund. Funny thing, I've sat here listening to the trust fund hearings and going over the recordings of them. I can tell X million dollars locked up in whatever provincial agreement. But they want to know: where is the cash? Why aren't we spending it? Why aren't we using it for a real purpose, a development tool? They don't use those terms, it's true; we use those terms. But that is what people say. Why don't we use it to make Alberta a more diversified economy? Why don't we use it when we really need it? Why, for several years, did the government say that it's for a rainy day, when they were drowning? That's what they want to know. That's the kind of thing that ordinary people look for in a Speech from the Throne. Of course they don't read it; they read the reports from it. But that's the kind of direction they would like to see.

So a stable economy and a fair society are possible but only possible with political will. I think good government has to reflect the people's will and lead, be forward thinking, be progressive. The Speech from the Throne, which opened this 21st Legislature, is more worrisome in what it didn't contain. Things like talking about co-operating with the food banks isn't exactly getting at the issue. These are the sorts of things I think we need to ask for from a government

which is being responsible, which is reflecting the public will.

In the event that it doesn't happen, Mr. Speaker, I close by noting that as a member of the Official Opposition caucus, I know that all of us will do our best to present those alternatives in the coming years.

Thank you.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member for Westlock-Sturgeon indicated, it's not necessarily our maiden speech, but it is my first speech in this House. May I, sir, extend to you the traditional congratulations on behalf of the residents of the constituency I represent, Sherwood Park, and also extend my warm congratulations to the Deputy Speaker designate and also to all members of this Chamber that were recently elected. Even though there's a number of us that do come from different parties, there is no doubt in my mind that we all have a common purpose and a common good that we hope to fulfill, even be it with a different philosophical slant.

I, too, wish to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to indicate my deepest thanks to the residents of Sherwood Park for their vote of confidence and trust and to indicate to them that I'm going to do everything within my power to live up to the trust that has been placed in me to do a thorough and strong job of representing their needs and desires in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, if I might, I'd like to reminisce a bit, as this is my maiden speech in this Chamber, and indicate what an honour I feel in having this opportunity to work with all the members. After having served for close to 12 years in the federal Chamber, I can share with you that it's rather refreshing to come to a sober-minded House such as the Alberta Legislature, whereby we're not involved strictly in partisanship. I'm sure we're all involved together to try to cure some of the common ills that do face our society.

It wasn't an easy decision for me to leave federal politics, because it was a role that we felt we were contributing significantly to. But as in all decisions in life, there were many reasons that prompted it. I felt that we could contribute, and I could contribute to maintaining the substantial role that this province has played in our Confederation, the substantial role that our Premier is presently playing also, as it relates to our trade negotiations.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in a question that was put to me by the hon. Member for Vegreville on Friday in the Chamber, I hope to work with all Members of this Legislative Assembly. I hope to work with all members in approaching my new responsibilities in agriculture with vigour, whereby hopefully we can turn the challenges that are facing agriculture into opportunities. I believe that if we deal with openness with this very important sector, we can turn those challenges into real opportunities for our agricultural sector.

If I could philosophize for a moment, Mr. Speaker, I've always felt that our first responsibility as elected politicians is to the people that have elected us. We've heard on a number of occasions, and it was raised again by the leader of the New Democratic Party: what were we going to do for the hog producers? I feel we have an obligation first and foremost to listen to the various sectors as to what they would like to see us do so that we can be responsive to their concerns. Looking back over my term in politics, I like to feel that that is what I have done, and I'm going to strive to continue with those tendencies in these new responsibilities I have.

What I shall do is share with you a few thoughts as they relate to my own constituency of Sherwood Park and indicate that we have had discussions to date with the municipal officials whereby we can contribute to a greater degree to increase economic activity in the county of Strathcona. As a good many of you are aware, with the recent annexation some of the industrial land tax base was lost, and they are looking to this provincial government to increase their involvement whereby we will have a broadening of that industrial land tax base. They are also looking for increased medical facilities and a number of other things, and we hope to be very effective in representing their concerns here.

On that note, sir, I'd like to commend the member I have succeeded, Mr. Henry Woo, who did a superb job in representing the constituency of Sherwood Park. If I can, I'd like to publicly indicate the deepest thanks on behalf of the residents of that constituency for his outstanding service.

I imagine it's much the same for all of us when we enter public life. We question whether what we believe in will coincide with what our electors wish. I truly have a positive vision and a positive view of what this great province can offer to its people. I have a positive view of our own constituency, whereby we as a people and we as a government are going to meet the challenges that are presently facing us. I also hope that the beliefs we hold very dear to our hearts, our traditions of family and our respect for our beliefs in God and our community, would be compatible with what our constituents wish. I entered politics at the time because I cared deeply about people, as I'm sure we all do. I believe there is no greater contribution one can make than to give oneself to the service of others. I'm sure that all of us members share that sense of sacrifice that makes this province such a great province, because those are qualities that make all communities rich, and we can be truly thankful that there are so many of them in this province of ours.

Mr. Speaker, if I can, I would like to deal briefly with a few issues as they relate to our agricultural portfolio and indicate in a very public way that I look forward to working very closely with the Associate Minister of Agriculture and deeply appreciate her kindness in dealing with me as a new member. There is no doubt that together we are going to meet the challenges that face our portfolio.

On that note, I would like to indicate my deepest thanks to the Member for Macleod, the present Minister of Tourism, for the counsel and wise advice that he has given me since I assumed this responsibility. My deepest thanks to the hon. Member for Macleod for his gracious giving of that badly needed wisdom. I thank him very sincerely, through you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my mother and father immigrated to this country from Holland. They immigrated to this country because this was a country of hope and opportunity. I'm sure many of us can point back to our heritage. He involved himself in a small independent feed mill after working in the dairy business for a number of years. My brother and I had an opportunity to be involved in the hog and cattle industry prior to my election. I underscore that for the sake of the leader of the New Democratic Party, when he questioned how many farmers there were in the constituency of Sherwood Park. I would indicate to him that the agricultural sector relates to every resident of Alberta. One out of every three jobs relates directly back to agriculture. We all suffer in the event that agriculture does not do well. In the event that it does do well, we all profit.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to reinforce the commitment that the Speech from the Throne gave and the commitment that our Premier has given in making agriculture a number one priority. We have a budget — and the specific figures will be forthcoming this evening — of somewhere in the vicinity of half a billion dollars. There are presently just over 1,300 individuals employed within the Department of Agriculture, and we on this side of the House recognize that presently our farmers are experiencing some short-term difficulties. But we also recognize that there is an underlying strength within our agricultural community, and we have acknowledged that there are rising input costs. Land prices are falling.

It's interesting to note too — and I'm going to have to indicate when I have the opportunity to go to Westlock — that the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon is advocating government ownership of farmlands. It's going to be interesting to see how his constituents react to his suggestion today in his participation in the Speech from the Throne whereby he's advocating that possibly governments should own the land and the farmer should lease it back from them.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the difficulties that our farming population is facing. Because of that a number of programs have been introduced under the former minister. What I would like to do is highlight just a few of them. That's not to say that we can't do more, because we are going to do more, recognizing the difficulties that the agricultural sector is facing. But to highlight just a few of the very worthwhile programs that have been initiated by this government, a very significant program is the 64 cents per gallon of gasoline or diesel fuel reduction for the agricultural sector. This is a significant reduction of input costs for our agricultural sector. The farm fertilizer price protection plan is another significant reduction for input costs. We participated with the federal government in the tripart stabilization program; that is another safety net.

Mr. Speaker, we have the feed grain market adjustment plan, which takes into account the distortion that the Crow benefit payment does. We're grateful for the report that came out on Friday as it relates to the western grain agencies' thoughts on what should be done with the Crow benefit. Under that program alone there have been some 45,000 claims with a payout of some \$48 million.

Mr. Speaker, under the associate ministry we're going to have a complete review of our hail and crop insurance. There's going to be a thorough review of the Agricultural Development Corporation, and just to ease the minds of all farmers, there is going to be progress as usual with the Agricultural Development Corporation. The hon. Member for Little Bow asked the question today in the House. We wish to assure him and the farming population that the ADC is going to continue to function as a lender for our farming population. As our associate minister pointed out today in the House, those interest rates were dropped to 9 percent except for those involved in agribusiness. As was reviewed in the Speech from the Throne, under the associate ministry fall those two very important areas and, in addition to that, the weather modification commission and the Surface Rights Board.

Mr. Speaker, recognizing the great responsibilities that are placed on us, I do so with great gratitude and extend an open invitation to all members and all commodity groups to make sure that in the event that they have concerns that relate to their specific sector, our door will always be open to hear their concerns, whereby we as a group can combat

the various problems that are facing our agricultural sector. I consider it a deep privilege to have this opportunity to serve and to indicate that we have a new era in this province, a new era whereby we outlined during the previous throne speech what we wish to do to the people of Alberta. There is some criticism being directed at it by members of the New Democratic Party, but what we are doing is living up to the commitment that we made to the Alberta people. That is one thing that is consistent with this party. It lives up to what it indicates it is going to do. We can be proud that we see a resumption of what was presented prior to the election, whereby we are bringing forward the policies that we campaigned on during that electoral period.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Alberta themselves have sensed in our Premier a freshness and openness and honesty to deal with the issues. Our Premier is a healer. He's not in the process of pitting the worker against management or the urban dweller against the rural dweller. We want to bring Albertans together so that together we can reach a consensus. I am reminded of what was said by a great Canadian, whereby we have a responsibility to protect the rights of all minorities. There is no greater obligation on the part of us all, to ensure that at all times, no matter what one's background, we have the opportunity to live in conditions of fairness, justness, and equity. I'm truly proud to have the opportunity to serve under an individual who sets that standard for his life.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side are going to continue to work to develop on alliance with our government, with labour, with management, whereby together and only by working together we can achieve our common goals. We're also going to work for greater excellence in our health care, the greater opportunity for our handicapped, and equality for all.

As a new member in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, it would be my hope that we would all share a common vision of confidence for this great province, for the great people of this province, whereby we share the common good and our common economic benefits, whereby we do work together to achieve common goods for all Albertans.

Mr. Speaker, with your consent I would move leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the motion by the hon. member?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion carried]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, there is one motion on the Order Paper that if members agree can perhaps be dealt with before 5:30. It's Motion 1, with respect to the naming of the hon. Member for Lethbridge West as the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. I understand the Standing Order number is wrongly specified in the motion. It should be Standing Order 55. With that amendment. I move Motion 1.

[Motion carried]

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

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I have received certain messages from Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, which I now transmit to you.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

MR. SPEAKER: Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ended March 31, 1986, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor transmits an estimate of a certain sum required from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund for the 12 months ending March 31, 1987, for the purpose of making investments pursuant to section 6(1)(a) of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act in projects which will provide long-term economic or social benefits to the people of Alberta but which may not necessarily by their nature yield a return to the trust fund, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly.

Please be seated.

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

2. Moved by Mr. Johnston:
Be it resolved that the messages of Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the estimates, and all matters connected therewith, be referred to the Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

3. Moved by Mr. Johnston:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly do resolve itself into Committee of Supply when called to consider the supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

[Motion carried]

4. Moved by Mr. Johnston:
Be it resolved that the messages of Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the 1986/87 estimates of proposed investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, capital projects division, and all matters connected therewith be referred to Committee of Supply.

[Motion carried]

5. Moved by Mr. Johnston:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly do resolve itself into Committee of Supply when called to consider the 1986/87 estimates of proposed investments of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, capital projects division.

[Motion carried]

6. Moved by Mr. Johnston:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly approve in general the fiscal policies of the government.

head: 1986 BUDGET ADDRESS UPDATE

MR. JOHNSTON: On April 10 of this year the 1986 Budget Address was presented by our former colleague, the hon. Lou Hyndman. That evening the Premier and certain members opposite praised Lou Hyndman for his efforts as a dedicated member of this Assembly. I, too, want to thank him for his service to the people of Alberta and his stewardship of the public finances over eight budgets.

The fiscal proposals presented in April continue to represent the government's fiscal strategy. It is a balanced strategy that found the approval of the people of Alberta because it

- assists our vital agriculture and energy sectors,
- encourages job creation,
- strengthens Alberta's economic base, and
- maintains top-quality people programs.

Accordingly, tonight I am reintroducing our fiscal framework, updated to include developments since April 10.

First, I want to address what is foremost on the minds of most Albertans: the economy.

Alberta Economy

It is clear that the uncertain world oil situation has many Albertans worried about their future.

Alberta has an open economy. International developments in our key commodity markets affect us directly. The decline in world oil prices will temporarily dampen Alberta's economic growth this year. Nonetheless, with the economic momentum built up in 1985, I think real output of the Alberta economy will hold at last year's level.

The rapid employment growth that Alberta experienced in the second half of 1985 and the first quarter of 1986 means that employment over the year should average slightly above the 1985 level. Alberta will continue to be among the leading provinces in terms of the number of persons employed as a percentage of the total working age population.

The average unemployment rate for 1986 should be down somewhat from last year's level of 10.1 percent. Unfortunately, it is likely that the monthly unemployment rate will inch up as the adjustment to lower world oil prices works its way through the economy in the months ahead. Our fiscal plan for 1986-87 takes this into account and is designed to help support employment.

Aggregate personal disposable income is projected to increase slightly faster than inflation. The growth in income is attributable to employment gains and moderate wage increases offset in part by higher federal income taxes. Personal incomes in Alberta after provincial taxes will continue to be the highest in Canada.

Consumer spending will continue to be a positive factor in Alberta's economic performance in 1986. In real terms aggregate consumer expenditure should increase moderately this year, although not as fast as in 1985. Per capita retail sales in Alberta will continue to be the highest in Canada.

Oil and Gas

The area of most uncertainty in Alberta's economic outlook is capital investment, particularly in the petroleum sector. We are all aware of the announced cutbacks in exploration budgets. Many oil companies are in a holding pattern leading up to the next drilling season. If, as we expect, there is an oil price rise in the fall that appears sustainable, energy-related investment will rebound.

Moderating the present situation in the energy industry are the major activity-oriented programs introduced by this government. Last June we announced a phasing down of royalty rates, new royalty holidays, and an increase in the royalty tax credit. In April of this year we further increased the royalty tax credit, which is designed especially to help small producers. Mr. Speaker, we also introduced the exploratory drilling assistance program. Earlier this month we announced three more programs to assist the industry: the development drilling assistance program, the well servicing assistance program, and the geophysical assistance program. Through this comprehensive package of programs, we have improved producers' cash flow, stimulated drilling, and protected jobs.

The current problems of the oil and gas industry are a concern for Canada as well as Alberta. Energy self-sufficiency must continue to be the goal for Canada. We must not allow current low prices to reduce our development of new conventional and nonconventional energy supplies. Otherwise, we will be leaving ourselves vulnerable to foreign producers. We therefore call on the federal government to help assist this essential industry through this period of price uncertainty by eliminating the discriminatory petroleum and gas revenue tax. We also invite Ottawa to work with us to examine ways to back up Alberta's energy initiatives.

Alberta has some major comparative cost advantages which will allow the industry to weather current difficulties and put it in a strong position as the oil market recovers:

- our oil-lifting costs make oil production economic even at low prices, and
- our relatively low conventional finding costs mean that our exploration activity will be maintained at higher levels than elsewhere in North America and that Alberta will be a priority area in the search for new oil and gas supplies.

Agriculture

As with the oil industry, the outlook for Alberta agriculture depends heavily on international developments. Substantial agricultural subsidies, such as those by the European Economic Community, have kept world farm product prices artificially low. Recent retaliatory action by the United States in the form of their 1985 farm Bill has further depressed grain prices.

As price takers in the world market, Alberta grain growers have already seen declines of 19 to 27 percent in Canadian Wheat Board initial payments. Federal/provincial co-operation is needed to help our grain farmers. Premier Getty and the western Premiers have called for a major deficiency payment by the federal government.

Our farmers and ranchers are receiving support in these times through this government's massive agricultural action plan. We are assisting in two basic ways:

- first, through income maintenance by establishing a safety net of stabilization and insurance programs, and

- second, through cost reductions of the major farm and ranch inputs: credit, fertilizer, and fuel.

This government's support, coupled with a return to normal crop yields, is projected to result in improvements in net farm income in 1986.

Confidence in Alberta's Future

Where does all this leave the average Albertan concerned about the future? First, we must not let short-term developments cloud our view of the long-term fundamentals. While there will likely be some fluctuations around recent low oil price levels over the next few months, we believe that there will be a firming in oil prices toward year-end and that we will soon be over the worst. Oil is a depleting resource and current price levels are stimulating worldwide demand. Alberta is in a prime position to take advantage of firmer markets.

The longer term prospects for agriculture are also promising. Our farmers can compete internationally, and the world will continue to demand more agricultural products. We must continue to develop and apply new technology, liberalize trade, and market aggressively.

Second, while Albertans cannot be fully shielded from international developments, no other government is doing more to protect its citizens from the uncertainties of world markets.

Third, there are some encouraging economic signs: lower interest rates, improved economic conditions for our major trading partners, and a much improved fiscal regime for the petroleum sector.

Finally, Alberta's human resources are a fundamental strength. We Albertans have a staying power to see ourselves through this unsettled period and the talent to tackle the challenges ahead.

Expenditure Plan

In April we tabled an expenditure plan suited to the economic circumstances. We proposed \$10.7 billion in budgetary expenditure and \$205 million in heritage fund capital projects spending. Tonight I am reintroducing those proposals and providing a roadmap document which translates them into the new departmental organization.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I am proposing net additional budgetary spending of \$149.5 million and increases in heritage fund capital projects of \$31.2 million. This additional funding of over \$180 million will further meet the needs of Albertans. Combined expenditure in 1986-87 is now estimated to be 5.3 percent above last year's forecast.

In summary, our expenditure program for 1986 has the following main thrusts:

- assist our key agriculture and petroleum sectors.
- stimulate job creation,
- broaden our economic base, and
- maintain quality people programs.

Before I go any further, let me confirm that there are no tax increases or new taxes in this budget. Mr. Speaker, this was our commitment to the people of Alberta, and it has been met.

Albertans are fortunate to have the most enviable tax environment in Canada. Albertans have the lowest personal income tax rate in Canada and pay no retail sales tax, unlike other residents of other provinces. As well, our citizens do not pay a gasoline tax. Alberta businesses also

benefit from the most investment-oriented tax climate in Canada.

While some other governments increased taxes in their budgets, we feel that Alberta taxes must be held level to encourage investment and consumption and thereby stimulate employment.

Priority Support for Agriculture and Energy

Agriculture and energy are Alberta's twin building blocks for the future. The fortunes of resource-based industries tend to be cyclical, a fact which has been largely forgotten over the past decade. Unfortunately, we are in a period where both our key sectors are in a cyclical downturn. This government has marshalled its financial strength to provide the needed support.

In agriculture we have launched a massive action plan to support our farmers and livestock producers. In total this year's budget for agriculture is \$595 million, up 86 percent from the comparable budget figure for 1985-86 and more than double the amount of two years ago.

The highlights of our action plan for agriculture include:

- enhanced crop insurance and disaster assistance,
- red meat stabilization,
- feed grain price adjustment,
- the doubling of the subsidy for farm fuels, and
- the Alberta farm credit stability program.

I would stress that our innovative farm credit plan will provide fixed 9 percent low-cost financing for terms of up to 20 years. This will allow our farmers and ranchers to plan their credit costs with certainty. The statutory funding requirement for the interest rate relief is estimated at \$25 million in 1986-87.

Mr. Speaker, for a description of the programs directed to agriculture, I would refer members to the separate budget document, *Our Commitment to Agriculture*, tabled on April 10.

In addition to the programs listed here, the heritage fund will provide \$30 million in 1986-87 as the first part of our initiative to ensure that rural Albertans can obtain private telephone lines. The total project cost is estimated at nearly \$500 million. It will generate numerous jobs in rural Alberta.

In energy the size and scope of our initiatives underscore our commitment to maintain a healthy industry and, above all, to preserve jobs.

- One year ago we announced a phasedown of royalty rates and increased incentives.
- In April of this year we further increased the royalty tax credit at an estimated cost of \$100 million and established the exploratory drilling assistance plan at a budgeted cost of \$300 million.
- Later that month we assisted the oil sands industry. An \$85 million loan commitment was agreed to with Syncrude for engineering work on the proposed expansion. We also provided a \$23 million royalty adjustment for Suncor.
- Also, in April we announced \$13.5 million in royalty relief for Husky so engineering work could continue on the heavy oil upgrader.
- Earlier this month we brought in a \$200 million package to bolster the geophysical, drilling, and well-servicing segments of the petroleum industry.

Through the initiatives taken by this government since last June, we have provided a fiscal regime and support plan which will safeguard our industry and stimulate jobs today.

Jobs for Albertans

The unemployment level in this province is a paramount concern of this government. Jobs are essential to how people feel about themselves, their families, and their communities. There is no replacement for long-term, productive employment.

This government, working with the private sector, has done more than any other to help provide meaningful employment. The record speaks for itself:

- In 1984 we undertook a unique 30-month, quarter billion dollar enrichment for job creation and training programs. This year \$178 million is budgeted for nearly two dozen programs, many directed at youth unemployment.
- The combined capital program of government departments, the heritage fund, the capital fund, and Crown corporations will total over \$2.8 billion and will maintain or create thousands of jobs.
- The new \$500 million Alberta municipal partnership in local employment program and the new \$10 million heritage fund municipal recreation/tourism areas program will help to create work across Alberta.
- As well, our various programs to encourage small business to foster research and technology will help generate employment.

Broadening and Strengthening Our Economic Base

Long-term jobs will result from the government's efforts to expand Alberta's economic base. Our strategy is to build on strengths. Our small business sector is a definite strength. Small businesses are the economic innovators and prime creators of employment for Albertans.

To assist small businesses in obtaining long-term, fixed rate financing, the government announced on April 21 a \$750 million loan program with interest rates fixed at 9 percent for terms of up to 10 years. In 1986-87 this program is estimated to require \$15 million in statutory funding. Through this program we have removed the risk of interest rate fluctuations to give our small businesses a new measure of stability.

We also propose to add \$7.7 million to the budget for the small business equity corporations program. This will reinstate sufficient funding authority to meet our legislated total commitments of \$50 million.

The private sector is the key to further diversification and long-term employment. Loan arrangements have been made with Procter & Gamble Cellulose Ltd. for upgrading its pulp mill in Grande Prairie and with Millar Western Industries Ltd. for a pulp mill in Whitecourt. In addition, the government has agreed to provide a loan guarantee for a magnesium plant near Aldersyde.

A strong financial sector is another important element of economic development. To follow through on our commitment to a healthy provincial credit union system, the government, under existing statutory authority, will provide a \$30 million advance to the Credit Union Stabilization Corporation.

Research, tourism, and forestry are strengths of the Alberta economy. The new departments of Technology, Research and Telecommunications; Tourism; and Forestry, Lands and Wildlife will spearhead the government's diversification thrust.

Quality Services and Facilities for Albertans

Albertans are fortunate to have access to the widest range of top-quality people programs and facilities in Canada.

For this fiscal year we are budgeting \$2.6 billion for health with no increase in health care premiums. Highlights include planning funds for the Northern Alberta Children's hospital, start-up money for western Canada's first heart and heart/lung transplant program, and a major increase to the family and community support services program.

Education funding is budgeted at \$2.5 billion in 1986-87. Our basic grants to school boards and postsecondary educational institutions will increase by 4 percent. Student financial support will remain the best in Canada. Other highlights include the funding for the New Basics curriculum, matching grants for the revised Advanced Education Endowment Fund, and planning approval for new college facilities in Grande Prairie and at the Lakeland campus in Lloydminster.

To help those Albertans who are disadvantaged and who require special support, we propose \$1.2 billion in funding for a comprehensive range of social service programs. This will include major funding increases for the severely handicapped and day care.

This government has a steadfast commitment to Alberta's elderly. We will continue to provide them with unmatched health, shelter, and income assistance. Major initiatives this fiscal year include enhanced funding for the seniors' home improvement program, the home care funding program, and nursing home quality improvements. In total we will provide approximately \$830 million in support for our elderly so they can live in dignity.

Revenue

In the April 10 budget forecasting revenue accurately was likened to hitting a moving target. It has proven to be an apt description. During the time the budget was being finalized, the spot price of the marker crude west Texas intermediate dipped as low as \$10 U.S. per barrel. In May the price ventured into the \$17 U.S. per barrel range. These fluctuations have been large and unpredictable.

We continue to feel that picking a single price in today's volatile environment would not be productive. Therefore, we are working from our basic assumption that resource revenue will be about one-third lower than last year.

Since April 10 announcements have been made which affect resource royalties and which should be reflected in the revised financial plan. I am lowering our earlier revenue estimate by \$242 million to reflect the royalty relief for Suncor and Husky and the June 4 package to help the geophysical drilling and service sectors. Our updated resource

revenue estimate is now 39 percent below the 1985-86 forecast level.

Combined revenue of the General Revenue Fund and the heritage fund is now forecast at \$8.7 billion, which is 17.5 percent lower than the forecast for 1985-86.

Financial Plan

The amended revenue and expenditure estimates for 1986-87 result in a combined deficit of the General Revenue Fund and the heritage fund that is now estimated at \$2.3 billion.

The deficit is in part being financed by drawing down a portion of the assets of the General Revenue Fund. Net assets at the beginning of the year exceeded \$900 million. We have also reactivated a Treasury bill program to complement our promissory note program. In addition, in May we offered \$200 million in Alberta bonds for sale in the Canadian market. Future borrowings will take place when and where market conditions are most favourable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this budget provides a balanced strategy for these uncertain times. It provides priority support for our vital job-producing agriculture and energy sectors. As well, jobs will be stimulated through the government's capital spending, special employment programs, and diversification efforts. All this is achieved without any tax increases.

The budgetary deficit this year is large and cause for some concern, but it is manageable given Alberta's unique financial strength. We enter 1986-87 with an accumulated budgetary surplus of over \$900 million and \$12 billion in income-earning assets in the heritage fund. Our per capita debt level is by far the lowest of any Canadian government.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans have the skills and determination, the abundant natural resources, and the financial strength to carry this province to the growth, years that lie ahead.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the last time I got up on a budget, the Premier went out and called an election. I take it that I can beg leave to adjourn debate this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, would those in favour please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Members opposed please say no.

The motion is carried.

[At 8:29 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Tuesday at 2:30 p.m.]

