

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, June 19, 1986 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 236
Environment Conservation Act

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 236, the Environment Conservation Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill recreates the former Environment Conservation Authority. It would reinstate the independence of the Environment Conservation Authority to allow an impartial board to retrieve its authority to protect Alberta's environment without interference or influence from the minister. Such a board could truly act as an environmental ombudsman to protect the environmental interests of our citizens.

[Leave granted, Bill 236 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table copies of the annual report for the year 1985 of the Alberta Environmental Research Trust.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and the rest of the Assembly 50 grades 5 and 6 students from the Eckville elementary school. They are accompanied by their teachers Mr. John Walker, Evelyn Lockhart, and Clair McGimpsey; parent Barb Posti; and I would suggest that Larry Staples is their bus driver. They are seated in the public gallery, and I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. HERON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 26 grade 6 students from Muir Lake community school, accompanied by their teacher John Ryan and parent Mrs. Gunderson. The students and teacher are seated in the public gallery, and I ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. R. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure today to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 45 grades 6 and 7 students from Lacombe Christian school, located in Lacombe constituency. They are accompanied today by their teachers Steve Stulca and Norman Brandsman. Hopefully, they are seated up above

me here in the members' gallery. I ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Member for Sherwood Park, it's my pleasure to introduce 36 grade 6 students from Madonna community school located in Sherwood Park. I know the Member for Sherwood Park is very proud of these students, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Members of the Assembly it's my pleasure to introduce in the Speaker's gallery this day two board members of Alberta Hospital, Edmonton, Mr. Alan Castle and Ms Rita Thompson, and also four persons representing the Filipino community in Calgary, Mr. Eric Lazo, who is also a commissioner of the Alberta Human Rights Commission, Mr. Peter Ulanday, Mr. Felix Clarin, and Mr. Clem Tigley. I wonder if they would rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly

MR. ALGER: Mr. Speaker, I'm privileged today. The reason I hesitate is that I'm trying to move my guest from the members' gallery to the Speaker's gallery, but I'll leave him where he is now anyway. I'm privileged today to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Legislature, a man who has been in the service of the people for longer than I care to remember. He's the chairman of the Senior Citizens' Advisory Council and is doing a magnificent job in that department and hopefully will continue to do so until he's 108. My colleague from Cypress-Redcliff and I would like to have the members offer this man a cordial welcome to the proceedings in this Legislature. My associate is standing in the members' gallery, and I would ask you at this point to give Ray Clark a very hearty welcome.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Public Safety Services

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, at approximately 3:50 p.m. Wednesday, June 18, 1986, an aircraft was sighted at the 7,000 foot level approximately 3.5 kilometres north of Fortress Mountain in Kananaskis Country by an Alberta government helicopter. A positive check of the site identified the aircraft as the missing Cessna with the remains of pilot Ken Wolff and wildlife biologist Orval Pall at approximately eight last evening.

No information was released until next of kin were notified. A media briefing was conducted by Canadian Armed Forces personnel at search headquarters late last evening. The Canadian aviation safety board has begun an investigation, and the medical examiner's office is on the scene. The search forces have been disbanded.

The sympathy of the government is extended to the families and friends of the victims. The government expresses its sincere thanks to all air and ground volunteer civilians to all Alberta government personnel, and to the members of the Canadian Armed Forces involved in the search and rescue operation. Our hearts are heavy with the memory of the tragic losses incurred in the three air crashes this month in our province.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for all members of the opposition in also extending our sympathies to the

families and friends of the victims. I know words are not nearly enough at a time like this, but I hope it is of some comfort to the family and friends that all Albertans, I am sure, share their grief.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if the Chair might take it as unanimous consent that the appropriate messages of condolence be extended to the families of these two victims.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Economic Outlook

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier, in the absence of the Treasurer. I'd like to deal with the statement in the budget speech, if I may: "The average unemployment rate for 1986 should be down somewhat from last year's level of 10.1%." The Conference Board, at the latest western business outlook conference, suggested that it would grow to 12 percent next year by their figures. They may be doomers and gloomers, but my question to the Premier is: could he indicate to this Assembly why the government's forecasts seem to be out of step with other forecasts, and would the Premier undertake to table in this Assembly the studies upon which the budget predictions are based so that we in the Assembly can assess them?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, to the first question, forecasts are just that, forecasts. As the hon. Leader of the Opposition would know, many people make judgments and come up with different answers.

In reply to the second question, Mr. Speaker, I'll speak to the hon. Provincial Treasurer upon his return — he couldn't be in the House today — and see whether he has that material that could be tabled.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to either the Premier or the minister of economic development. Is the government's prediction about a drop in the unemployment rate based on an assessment that out-migration will increase significantly over the last year? Could either hon. member give us an idea of what the government believes that trend will be?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the matter of the number of people who would leave the province would obviously be part of any assessment. Many, many came to the province during more promising economic times. But that's also something I'll draw to the attention of the Provincial Treasurer when he sees if he has statistics that can be presented to the Legislature.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Another aspect of this particular conference, Mr. Speaker, dealt with the price of oil, which we've been discussing here. Most predictions range from \$7 to \$20, but the Conference Board predicts about \$12.50 U.S. over the next two years, which I'd point out is less than half of last year's level. However, the budget predicted only a one-third drop in energy revenue for next year. My question to the Premier is: could he tell this Assembly how the government came to the conclusion

that there would be only a one-third drop in energy revenue in the next year?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's obviously something that the Provincial Treasurer would want to respond to. Having the Conference Board make predictions of things being worse is almost the best news you could have. Their record has been that they're wrong more often than they are right. While we don't want to take any great comfort from that, nevertheless I'd draw to the attention of the Leader of the Opposition that that's an historical fact. It's a case of making a prediction, and everyone knows how tough it is to make a prediction that happens to be correct.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that maybe the government's figures haven't exactly been right over the years either, but that's beside the point. It wasn't only the Conference Board. Let me point out one other thing the chairman of IPAC, Mr. Howard, predicted that as many as 67,000 energy-related jobs could be lost over the next two years.

Flowing from that, if IPAC thinks it's this serious, my question to the Premier again is: is the government now prepared... [interjection] This is the question, hon. member. Is the government now prepared to push the federal government to renegotiate the Western Accord to get a new energy deal for Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the member of IPAC who made that statement said it "could be," and then he went on to describe conditions under which it could be: all very, very negative. He was trying to describe the absolute downside. That is a series of speculations that we really can't respond to. They are all speculations.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Premier. In light of the statement yesterday of the Minister of Energy that Alberta supplied eastern Canada with oil at \$56 billion less than fair market price during the 1970s, what plans does the government have to get some of this returned to the western economy if it does not plan to proceed to negotiate the Western Accord and the deregulation of natural gas prices?

MR. GETTY: The figure of \$56 billion, which is an estimate, is the amount below the world price that western Canadian provinces shipped resources to other parts of Canada — sort of, I guess, the cost of being Canadian. Mr. Speaker, we will be discussing with the federal government a variety of proposals which we think would give a long-standing ability to help our energy industry when they are having problems with international prices being so unstable.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question to the Premier. It's with regard to the projected reduced royalty revenues and as well with the deficit projected in the 1986-87 budget. Could the Premier indicate what plans are in place in terms of any major borrowings outside Canada to bring in revenue to meet that deficit?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as in the case of an earlier question, that's a very appropriate question to ask the Provincial Treasurer when he's in the House. I will mention to him that it was raised by the Member for Little Bow. He should deal with it when he returns.

Transfer Payments

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to focus on another part of provincial revenues that we haven't discussed, and I'll ask the first question of the Premier, in view of the fact that the Treasurer is, I expect, discussing federal transfer payment cuts in Victoria today. Given that we've been talking about a huge deficit — we can argue how big that's going to be, but it's huge by anybody's standards — what concrete action is the government taking to prevent the loss of an estimated \$530 million in federal payments to Alberta over the next five years?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, when the Provincial Treasurer returns, he may want to supplement anything I say now. This is a matter that was dealt with at the first ministers' meeting in Halifax in November. Several of the provinces felt, as we did, that one of the major problems facing Canada is the huge federal deficit. All provinces are urging the federal government to do something about reducing that huge federal deficit, yet when the federal government makes some moves to try and reduce that federal deficit, immediately cry, "Don't do that, because it happens to impact on us."

In Alberta we agree that that huge federal deficit is a tremendous problem for Canada, and as Albertans and Canadians we believe that if there are ways in which we can help to reduce that federal deficit, we will take some part of sharing among other provinces the ability to reduce that deficit. The only condition we requested — and we are watching to see if it's followed up on — is that the federal government move not only in this way but also in reducing those areas of expenditure directly within its control.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. A point of clarification to the Premier. These are people programs, so it will affect ordinary people the most. Is the Premier then suggesting that we are prepared, as government policy, to accept this burden, this shifting away from the federal deficit, that provincially we're prepared to accept these cuts in programs even with our own deficit as bad as it is?

MR. GETTY: The hon. Leader of the Opposition should know, Mr. Speaker, that it is not a cut; it is a reduction in the rate of growth of these payments. In fact, our revenues go up quite dramatically between now and 1991. Nevertheless, we are prepared to assist in reducing what we think is a tremendous problem for Canada in that large federal deficit. We think all Canadians should share, and we as Albertans are prepared to share.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, one other way they could do it is to change the taxation system to help share with that. My point to the Premier is simply this: that he is suggesting it is acceptable that we'd cut back on people programs in this province. The second part of that: recognizing that that's de-indexing, it is still \$530 million dollars less that we would have over the five years. Would he confirm that's approximately the figure that we would be missing under the federal program?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there's an argument about the exactness of the figures, because it is a decline in the rate of growth, and that rate of growth is built on taxes and

other things. But there will be a decline, and it will be somewhere in the figure of several hundreds of millions of dollars. There's an argument as to how much it is.

There's also an argument that because the federal government is increasing its taxes and de-indexing and as we are in fact part of the taxation system, we are therefore increasing our share of the taxes and reducing the amount of reduction. However, Mr. Speaker, I have made no comment that we were prepared to reduce our programs to that amount.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. He hasn't said that \$530 million isn't correct, so we'll go on that assumption at this particular time. It's still a lot of money. How then will we make up these programs? What contingency plans do we have within the departments that there will not be a cutback in people services? Will we just add \$530 million to the deficit?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, between now and 1991 or 1992, the hon. Leader of the Opposition will just have to wait and see.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Premier, because most of our programs must be projected five to 10 years in advance, are these shortfalls in income from transfer payments protected in this budget, and how are current programs in health and education covered?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, more and more of the questions are those that should appropriately be directed to the Provincial Treasurer, but I would just say to the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar that in this budget we have preserved the excellence of the programs she mentioned and in fact increased the funding for them.

Municipal Employment Program

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs Mr. Minister, the Alberta municipal partnership in local employment program — I have to be careful with the title, sir; so inappropriately, the acronym for this program is AMPLE — was introduced by the government and repeated in this budget. It's based on per capita grants to municipalities over time. As unemployment continues to soar in this province at an unacceptable level, particularly in urban centres, does the minister not feel compelled to restructure this program to make direct job creation a requirement?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, that would be a conditional grant instead of an unconditional grant to the municipalities. I think the official and widespread position of all municipal councillors and councils is that they seek more unconditional funds. We are responding to that.

MRS. HEWES: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, again to underline unemployment is critical. Will the government now reorganize the financing schedule of the program to make the funds available in one to two years instead of over seven to nine years as is projected? Make them available now when they are desperately needed, not over eight to nine years.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, the proposal is that the funds are part of a program which will probably take about

eight years to complete. The funds that the municipalities would like to have in this year, based on the estimates of the funds which will come to them in the upcoming year, are funds that for capital projects they can borrow for now and do the work now.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, can the government guarantee a quick start-up for the program this year when the jobs are most desperate instead of a slow start-up in '87 as you have described to us?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I've answered that question and said that the cities can, if they're ready with their projects, commence them this year.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, has the minister sat down with the mayors of the cities of Alberta to review these proposals relative to earlier submissions from the cities and from the FCM?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have had no such meeting yet with the mayors of the cities. However, I do know the views. The program is supported in the municipalities and has something to do with the position of the federation of Canadian mayors in that it deals with infrastructures.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The federation of municipalities have a program called Work, Work, Work. Mr. Minister, does this province have a policy to kick in to this program, as well, to assist the municipalities in their development of infrastructures and so on?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the federation's proposals would involve the three areas of government: federal, provincial, and municipal. At the present time the FCM proposals are being considered by provincial governments and the federal government. My hope is that we will indeed, as all of the 11 provincial and federal governments in Canada, respond very quickly to these proposals. However, not every consideration that is necessary on the federal/provincial basis has yet been concluded.

Meat Packers' Strikes

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Could the minister tell the Assembly whether it is government policy to consider it an unfair labour practice for an employer not to rehire employees after a settlement has been reached in a strike?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an unfair labour practice once a settlement is reached after collective bargaining not to take back employees who have continued to be employees during the period of the strike or lockout.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The practical applications of the answer given by the minister are certainly pertinent to the current situation at Gainers. As I see it, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Labour has just interfered in the outcome of the disputes inquiry board recommendations. My question to the minister: is it the policy of the Department of Labour or the Minister of Labour to make comments which can

affect the recommendation of inquiry boards in a general sense and as well as in this specific sense?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, in no way did I interfere with the process of a disputes inquiry board by my remarks just now or my remarks yesterday and previously.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. As the minister has indicated that there have been comments made within this Assembly now and also outside the Assembly, which I would think would have weight and an influence on the events of that dispute, my question therefore to the minister is...

MR. SPEAKER: With respect, your question is dealing in a general area. You have not named a specific situation. The minister's response was in a general area. Please continue with your question.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, would the minister undertake not to intervene in the Gainers' dispute — this is in a specific case — until the recommendations of the disputes inquiry board are made?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I won't make that undertaking absolutely. In the past there have been windows appearing during this dispute, and we have taken advantage of those windows. If suitable windows occur in the future for any other initiative that may help to settle this strike, preferably through the collective bargaining process, which we support on this side of the House, then we might well take advantage of such windows.

MR. DAY: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Labour, so that I can respond to questions from my constituents in Red Deer North. Can he give us any details on the settlement at the Fletcher's plant in Red Deer?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I don't have the details of the settlement that was achieved during that collective bargaining process I just mentioned, but I am aware that the settlement has been accepted virtually unanimously by the employees of Fletcher's who voted. The indications are that the plant will be operating at full capacity probably Monday of next week.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, to the minister on a supplementary. Is it an unfair labour practice to provide temporary employees with permanent employment if a collective agreement can not be reached, as is the case with Lakeside Packers in Brooks?

DR. REID: My understanding is that at Lakeside Packers a settlement has not yet been achieved, and the people who are currently working at Lakeside Packers are therefore working as temporary employees. If a settlement is subsequently achieved at Lakeside Packers, then people who were working previously and are still technically employees of Lakeside Packers would get first refusal of any jobs that would be available.

Telephone Pornography

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications. Is the minister aware that Alberta Government Telephones is participating in a dial-a-sex message, where you dial a

number and get this red-hot sex message, and AGT bills this to your telephone bill? I guess we even have some kids phoning, and the parents get a little hot when they get the phone bill and find out what this is all about.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, if I may respond, it has been brought to my attention that there are numbers which could be phoned which are alleged to offer auditory comment of the nature that the hon. member raises. I have no personal knowledge of whether or not they're red hot.

I also would like to make it clear that the services that AGT provides are telephone or communication services. As I understand, that means there are two parties involved, one offering the comment, if a telephone subscriber wants to phone through. I understand that any such provision is coming from outside the borders of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, we conclude with the fact that it's obviously a voluntary initiative on the part of the telephone subscriber to participate in that.

MR. SHRAKE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. After the angry phone calls and a petition from a church congregation that I got, I wonder if the minister would consider using his good offices to encourage Alberta Government Telephones not to knowingly participate in a scheme where there is pornography available over the telephone.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, let me be a little more clear. There's a practical question or two involved in this. First of all, there is an obligation on the telephone companies to provide communication services. In the event that those services are used for profane, obscene, or abusive language which interferes with the user enjoyment of the system, that's a problem obviously, because that depends upon where one is coming from and the position or attitude of the subscriber. Then Alberta Government Telephones can disconnect or remove the equipment, and there is potentially a fine. The difficulty in these circumstances is that we're talking about equipment that originates messages beyond the borders of the province, and therefore it is not practical to do that.

There is a second problem, however, which I would draw to the attention of hon. members, and that is the question of censorship. There are severe prohibitions and restraints upon a telephone system as to its interference in the private messages between parties. So even if we could achieve the practical question, we would always be faced with, I think, the more important issue of whether we would be interfering in some manner with free speech and the responsibilities of the telephone system in a censorship manner.

MR. SHRAKE: A final supplement, Mr. Speaker. If children are phoning these numbers, do the parents who receive these Alberta Government Telephone billings at the end of the month have to pay for the kids' having made these calls?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is, yes, they do. The subscriber is responsible for the manner in which the telephone is used. If this continues to be a problem, perhaps we can advise all subscribers to that effect. Parents are also responsible for the actions of their children. This is a voluntary initiative originating from the subscriber's phone. That's where the responsibility should best be accepted.

and I think, Mr. Speaker, it's a fair request to make of parents.

MR. PIQUETTE: To the minister. Doesn't AGT already police obscene phone calls? Wouldn't this policy also apply to these incidents where young people are placing phone calls to these phone numbers?

MR. YOUNG: I'm not really sure that I understood all of the question. Perhaps the first portion of it could be repeated.

MR. PIQUETTE: Doesn't AGT already police obscene phone calls between parties as a present policy? Wouldn't this policy also be taken into account when we're talking about young people placing phone calls to these agencies that are very often obscene in nature?

MR. YOUNG: To respond further on the matter to the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche. I would point out that there are severe restraints as to what telephone companies may monitor. Certainly telephone companies do not have the right to be interfering or bugging, if you will, telephone conversations. So without complaints being received there really is no way of knowing that a conversation is of the order that the hon. member describes. I would point out that even if an originating number were known to be providing that kind of service, it would be a simple matter to change the number for the service. I really have great difficulty with wanting to go further in this direction. I think we would be getting into the very item that I mentioned earlier, that of censorship and interference with free speech and appropriate use of the telecommunications system.

Eastern Slopes Policy

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Energy, if only so that he won't be shocked if I don't address it to him. I might mention that this is a matter of some overlapping jurisdiction and it may be an appropriate matter for the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, who I see is absent. I hope that some member of the House will feel free to answer this very important matter.

To the Minister of Energy at this stage. It relates to the recent Shell sour gas well approval adjacent to Waterton National Park. Can the minister tell the House, in light of the major shut-in gas supply and the abundance of gas prospects throughout the province, why the government is going to allow Shell Resources to drill a natural gas well in this sensitive area after it turned down two prior applications for environmental reasons?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker as the hon. member knows the ERCB is involved in making decisions with regard to such matters and this particular decision was made with a number of criteria outlined in what the company has to do or conditions it has to fulfill in proceeding. I'm sure that all those who intervened were heard in the case and that the ERCB took those into account in making their decision.

MR. CHUMIR: I'm sure that will be of great comfort to the House, Mr. Minister. Perhaps I might address this to the acting minister of lands and forests and in his absence it would appear most appropriately to relate to Environment. The Eastern Slopes policy of the government in 1977 designated the very site of this proposed well for prime protection, which meant no drilling or other heavy industrial

activities. What was the public interest which impelled the change in this Eastern Slopes policy in 1984?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, as the acting minister I'd be pleased to accept that question as notice and draw it to the attention of my colleague for his response when he returns to the House.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, to the acting minister again. Perhaps when we hear the answer in the House, we might also have an answer to this question. The change in 1984 was undertaken without public hearing. In light of a very great deal of public concern over this matter, will the government undertake to delay the drilling of this Shell well while the matter of the Eastern Slopes policy is the subject of a public hearing, which it so well deserves?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to draw that question to the attention of my colleague as well.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to supplement the answer in that the ERCB came to their decision primarily, as I mentioned, taking into account environmental concerns. They thought that the well could be safely drilled with minimal impact on the environment or disruption to commercial interests or recreational use in the area but that future developments, if the well is successful, would be subject to further applications to the ERCB and public review.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, I believe that this would be most appropriately addressed to the Minister of Tourism. He may wish to refer to the Minister of Recreation and Parks because I have here a letter of February 28, 1986, from Mr. Trynchy, who was then the Minister of Recreation and Parks and wrote that his department recognized the tourism values of this area and its potential for a future park. Can the Minister of Tourism tell this House how he considers that the presence of sour gas wells in this area will enhance its potential for tourism?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, we are always watching with concern areas that may have the potential for tourism development. Shell's Jutland plant, north of Waterton National Park, is one that the Department of Tourism is aware of. As the Minister of Energy has responded, the ERCB has made a decision on it and, as I understand, held public hearings. Any further concerns that come from that, of course, we will review and respond to in due course. The Minister of Recreation and Parks may wish to supplement that answer.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Energy. Could the minister advise the House what impact would take place in the 1990s in terms of employment in the Pincher Creek area, particularly the 250 employees of the Shell Waterton gas plant if exploration does not take place to extend their natural gas fields?

DR. WEBBER: Well, I think the hon. member makes a good point. I guess that answers the question. As I mentioned, in taking into account environmental concerns, the ERCB has strict guidelines that will be in effect to reduce any potential blowout in the area. As well, Shell's emergency response plan and its drilling plan are subject to ERCB approval before drilling starts. There will be no drilling

during the peak summer tourist season, and if there is uncontrolled flow, it would be ignited immediately for public protection.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, in light of a virtual absence of any direct testing on the health effects of sour gas well flare-offs, which I believe has never been done in the province, could the Minister of the Environment explain on what environmental grounds the ERCB made their decision to okay that well and if there are plans for that type of testing in future so that they can have sounder environmental grounds on which to refuse that kind of development? [Some applause]

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much. I really appreciate that Mr. Speaker, I must ask my parents to watch.

Mr. Speaker, in response to the supplementary question from the Member for Edmonton Glengarry, he requests an explanation of the reasons that are outlined. The report is rather lengthy; I sincerely hope that the hon. member has had a chance to read the report in question, that has been put out by the ERCB. The hon. member will know that the report identifies submissions made by a whole series of groups of people on behalf of provincewide groups, local groups, environmental groups, and the like in the area. A careful and close scrutiny of the report that was issued by the ERCB would indicate the basis in which the ERCB did make its recommendations with respect to the environment. I've had an opportunity to review the report. I recognize that very, very stringent and strong requirements have been asked for by the Energy Resources Conservation Board with respect to this particular well, and I believe that protection is there.

Social Services Estimates

MS MJOLSNES: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Minister of Social Services. The budget tabled Monday night proposes a 4 percent decline in overall manpower authorizations and a 4 percent decline in permanent full-time positions in the Social Services department. Given the continuing economic crises, high unemployment, and record demand for social assistance, can the minister outline the policy considerations which have led to this decision at this time?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, a very important question raised by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder because it obviously, in the hon. member's reading of the budget, leads to some confusion. I think that hon. members who were in the House previously will recall some questions about the manpower and numbers of people who actually work for the department and our efforts toward the downsizing, if you will, of the department in actual numbers who work for the province of Alberta as opposed to either the private sector or community organizations.

For the hon. member's information, the percentages really lie, with respect to the cuts that there will be, with the numbers of people who will no longer be employed by the Department of Social Services but will in fact, if they're successful, be working for a lot of community organizations that will be offering group homes and other types of community care for individuals who are presently in the kinds of places we normally call institutions. This is really where the greatest impact in the manpower — lesser amounts if you will — comes into play.

MS MJOLSNESS: A supplementary to the minister for clarification. Is the minister stating that it is now this government's policy to shift the responsibilities of her department to the already strained voluntary charity community?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think that it would be appropriate to say at this point in time that we are very proud of our community organizations. The community organizations have made requests to do much of this work, look after many of the community activities themselves, and believe that they are in a much better position to respond to the needs. Obviously, many of the people who are involved in these organizations may be parents of individuals who have formerly been in institutions around the province — this type of situation. They have been great advocates of a return to community living all across the province. They don't see the role of the province of Alberta as being responsible for their young people, only in a nominal sense and, on the other hand, not in the sense of having direct control over these people's lives. By looking at the budget, I think the hon. member will realize that the province and the citizens of Alberta continue to bear the greatest proportion of the cost with respect to this kind of care.

MS MJOLSNESS: To the minister. Does the minister have any mechanism to assess the degree to which continual reductions in social service position allocations reduce the ability of the department to respond to increasing public needs?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, I'm not being very clear, because the hon. member continues to ask the same question. The reductions are not in the area of direct services that we provide to the people of Alberta. The reductions basically are the areas where people are no longer in the direct care of the government of Alberta but are in fact in the care throughout the province of organizations that are now being funded by the province of Alberta.

MS MJOLSNESS: To the minister again. In every year since 1981-82 the government has underspent the amount the Assembly has authorized for social allowance payments. Will the minister assure this Assembly that this practice will end this year and that the poorest in our society will receive the full amount voted for them by the Assembly? Yes or no?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, basically what I must do is obviously respond to the preface of the question as opposed to the question and suggest to the hon. member, who I know is well intentioned, that she possibly should be getting some better advice than the advice that's been given to her by another one of her hon. colleagues. [interjections] I think the Leader of the Opposition can keep his cool for a little while.

Mr. Speaker, obviously the budget begins to be formulated every year the summer before the fiscal year begins. In other words, in the fall of 1986 planning will commence, which is obviously very much needed, for the budget of 1987-88, and in doing that planning there are a lot of projections. We've had a lot of discussion in this House here about projections. Projections are used to look ahead and say what in fact will be required the amount of money that will be required, the number of social services recipients we anticipate will be on the rolls in that next budget year.

On that basis, the hon. member should be aware that projections are literally put into the budget so that there will be some sense that the people of Alberta can have of what kinds of dollars will be spent. The hon. member will also know, after she has been in the House for a while, that if there are more people on social allowance than have been planned for, the allocation will be made by virtue of a special warrant. So in fact there is nobody who is not receiving social allowance benefits who fits the criteria, because of budget allocations.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In the move to transfer from institutional care to community care are the minister and her department planning or in the process of contracting with existing nonprofit organizations or is the minister contemplating setting up new private operations for profit in Alberta communities?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, thus far the majority of our work has been done on a contracting basis with community organizations already in existence.

MR. SPEAKER: We have come to the end of question period. This comes as a great surprise to me because it means that I am starting to enjoy this a bit more up here.

The Chair has recognized the Member for Red Deer North, and I wonder if we might have the unanimous consent of the Assembly to entertain a brief series of questions from that member.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? I didn't hear any opposition. We'll carry on. The Member for Red Deer North, please.

Social Allowances

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is also directed to the Minister of Social Services though this is not a supplementary question. In view of the settlement at Fletcher's and the ongoing dispute at Gainers in Edmonton, could the minister please explain why she maintains a policy which insists that social allowance benefits not be provided to strikers while at the same time allowing some benefits to be given to some of the alternate workers at Gainers?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Member for Red Deer North. This information was brought to me this morning. The question was raised basically asking what the policy was with respect to unemployed employables who had in fact achieved some sort of employment. My information is that apparently we've had a policy in place for some 20 years that will give shelter and food to unemployed employables for a period of time until they receive their first cheque at whatever employment they have achieved. This is a general policy, Mr. Speaker. There is no vetting of where it is that the people may be employed. That kind of judgment hasn't been brought into the policy historically. I think it's also important to note that the policy with respect to strikers does have in place the provision of food for the families of strikers should they request that particular assistance.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary but the final supplementary on this issue.

MR. WRIGHT: When it happens, as it has happened, that a scab so employed is on assured income — AISH, that's to say — what mechanism is in place to make sure that the appropriate adjustments are made to that assured income supplemental?

MRS. OSTERMAN: For the information of the House, Mr. Speaker, we are talking here about people that I understand, in the specific situation that has been raised, are employed legally, and obviously that is something that we must be assured of, and whatever adjustment would be made to anybody in that category are also made in this situation.

MR. SPEAKER: May the hon. Attorney General reply to a question which he took as noticed on Monday of this week?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Pork Industry

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Vegreville asked a supplementary question the other day, and I took it as notice, with respect to the subject of the Attorney General's department commencing prosecutions relative to the Pork Producers' Marketing Board and the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act. It is not the policy of the Attorney General's department of this government to commence prosecutions without complaints having been received by the department. Therefore, whether or not any future alleged violations of the Act would be prosecuted would depend upon a complaint being made to the department and an appropriate assessment of the facts and circumstances of each individual complaint, and subsequently based upon evidence uncovered by a proper investigation.

MR. SPEAKER: One final comment with respect to question period. Again, we have seven members of the Assembly who were not able to participate in question period today. I would like to encourage all parts of the House once again to try to adhere more closely to that interesting word "brief" in terms of both questions and answers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: May we have the consent of the House to revert to introduction of guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (*reversion*)

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to introduce to you, and through you to members of this Assembly, 45 grade 6 students from Grace Sheppard elementary school at Hines Creek in my constituency, the finest constituency, I might add, in the province of Alberta. They are accompanied by their teachers Norm Crampton and George Dixon, and parents Darlene Krahn, Anne Luka, Rudy Riewe, Sharon Lochhead, and Ron Lundgard. They are situated in the members' gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional welcome of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: I take it that all members of the Assembly realize that the Chair is not prepared to entertain any motion at any time as to which constituency is the best in the province.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the questions and motions for returns on the Order Paper, I'd like to advise that the government is prepared to deal with a good number of these today. However, I would move that questions 132 and 137 and Motion for a Return 145 stand and retain their places.

[Motion carried]

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

131. Mr. McEachern asked the government the following question:
For the taxation years 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984, in each case, what was the amount by category of all tax exemptions, deductions, credits, exclusions, and deferrals pursuant to Alberta tax legislation?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the hon. Provincial Treasurer, this motion is not acceptable to the government. It is impossible, without the greatest effort of almost impossible magnitude, to obtain the information requested in the question.

136. Mr. Piquette asked the government the following question:
In each case, what were the monthly landing and take-off totals for each local airstrip in which Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund moneys have been invested for the period since the airstrip's opening to March 31, 1986; and, in each case, what was the amount of money invested from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund in the airstrip?

138. Mr. Ewasiuk asked the government the following question:
With regard to foreclosure actions undertaken by or on behalf of the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation and its successor corporation against Albertans, in each of the fiscal years 1983-84, 1984-85, and 1985-86, what was
(1) the number of such actions commenced,
(2) the number of such actions that reached the stage of solicitor's formal demand for payment,
(3) the number of such actions that reached the final order stage, and
(4) the number of such actions in process on the last day of the fiscal year?

139. Mr. Ewasiuk asked the government the following question:
What was the total cost of all advertising purchased by the Crown in right of Alberta for each month from March 1 1983, to May 31, 1986, inclusive, in each of the following media:
(1) television,
(2) radio,
(3) daily newspapers,
(4) weekly newspapers,
(5) periodicals and magazines,
(6) other print publications, and
(7) billboards?

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I've been in touch with the hon. member who asked the question, and I understand he agrees to two minor changes in the question: the change

in date to April 1, 1983, and the combining into one category of subcategories (5) and (6). With those conditions we accept the question.

head: **MOTIONS FOR RETURNS**

140. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) the names and official position designations of all government of Alberta employees working in offices outside Canada, listed by location of office, as of May 31, 1986;
- (2) the position held by each person in (1) immediately prior to his/her current position;
- (3) the number of years of service with the government of Alberta for the persons listed in (1);
- (4) the official salary ranges for the positions designated in (1).

[Motion carried]

141. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

- (1) for each employee of the government of Alberta working in offices outside Canada, listed by location of office as of May 31, 1986:
 - (a) the travel each employee has taken in his/her capacity as an employee of the government of Alberta, working in offices outside Canada, and the cost of the trips itemizing travel, lodging, and meals;
 - (b) the purpose of the travel and a complete list of the persons or groups of persons with whom each employee met;
 - (c) the names of all other persons, including family, friends, secretarial staff, or any other person or persons accompanying each employee on any trip;
- (2) the total cost to the government of Alberta to operate each office outside Canada for the fiscal year April 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I note that there are some amendments to be introduced by the government and they are acceptable to me.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to Motion for a Return 141, I have amendments to propose, copies of which have been given to the mover. I will read them into the record. With respect to paragraph (1):

delete "May" and substitute "March".

With respect to paragraph (1)(a):

delete all words and substitute "all travel paid for by public funds (excluding travel within the country in which they are based), showing total costs in each of the categories of transportation, lodging, and meals for the period covering April 1, 1985 to March 31, 1986".

Paragraph (b):

delete all words and substitute "the destinations, dates of departure and return, and the purpose of the travel for each trip".

And (c):

delete all words and substitute "list of persons accompanying the principal traveller at public expense".

Mr. Speaker, these amendments are proposed to be consistent with motions which have been accepted by the

government in previous years, and therefore we hope the wording for such motions will be uniform. That is the purpose for making the amendments today.

[Motion as amended carried]

142. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

Details of all travel paid by public funds for Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, members of Executive Council and Executive Council staff, staff of the Office of the Premier, and the personal staff of all ministers for the period December 1, 1985 to April 9, 1986 inclusive, showing for each trip:

- (1) the itinerary and dates of departure and return for each trip;
- (2) a list of persons accompanying the principal traveller at public expense;
- (3) total cost of each trip, including transportation, meals, accommodation, and entertainment;
- (4) the mode of transportation and the class of ticket;
- (5) the hotel or other accommodation used and the per diem rate;
- (6) the cost and description of all entertainment paid for by Alberta public funds.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, there are some minor amendments being introduced by the government which I support.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would move the following amendments to Motion for a Return 142. I'll table copies, and a copy was made available to the mover of the motion.

- (1) Following the words "Details of all travel," add the words: "(excluding travel in Alberta)";
- (2) delete "December" and "April 9" and substitute "April" and "March 31" respectively;
- (3) in (1), delete "itinerary" and substitute "destinations";
- (4) in (3), delete the word "entertainment" and substitute "hosting";
- (5) in (5), delete all words and substitute "the purpose of the travel";
- (6) in (6), delete entire clause.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the amendments is to make this motion consistent with motions accepted by the government in previous years and to provide for a uniform question. The information asked for in the motion of course, will not be altered in any way by the amendment, with the exception that the eight days in April of this year will have to come at a later date.

[Motion as amended carried]

143. Mr. R. Speaker moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:

An itemized account of all costs involved in the approval of the Kananaskis Provincial Park amendment regulation to change the name Kananaskis Provincial Park to Peter Lougheed Provincial Park as provided for in the passage of Order in Council 793/85.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to accept the motion and to provide a full response.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. That's well done.

[Motion carried]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the government has accepted Motion 142, which has exactly the same information requested by the hon. Leader of the Opposition in 144, I wonder if the hon. member would be prepared to withdraw that particular motion.

MR. MARTIN: If I may, Mr. Speaker, if I can get a point of clarification, because there are some deletions that came to Motion 142, as I understand. We asked for "itinerary", and we're now to delete "itinerary" and substitute "destinations." Could the minister then, for my purposes if I'm to delete it, explain why we want to delete "itinerary" and substitute "destinations"?

MR. HORSMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. For the hon. Leader of the Opposition, that was to avoid listing stopovers en route to destinations and not for any other purpose — just to avoid the necessity of indicating that the plane may have stopped in Regina and Winnipeg, et cetera.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I will think it over, but I will accept it for the time being anyhow.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has to have a decision on this. If you're going to think it over and accept it for the time being . . .

MR. MARTIN: I said I will accept it now. If I don't like it, I'll write out another one.

MR. SPEAKER: May we have unanimous consent of the House that the placer of the motion be able to withdraw his Motion for a Return?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion withdrawn]

146. Mr. Sigurdson moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
A copy of the preliminary report of the private-sector consulting firm hired to do an external evaluation of the job creation and training programs of the Department of Manpower, identified by the Minister of Manpower at page 928, *Alberta Hansard*, 20th Legislature, Third Session, May 10, 1985.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table an internal report by our Department of Manpower called Evaluation of Job Creation and Training Programs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair thanks the minister for his generosity and alacrity. But first, does the Assembly agree with the motion?

[Motion carried]

147. Mr. McEachern moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing:
All audited annual reports of Syncrude Canada Ltd. provided to the Crown in right of Alberta in accordance with the

Crown's role as an equity participant in the Syncrude project for the years 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1985.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would consider withdrawing the motion in view of the fact that the information was tabled yesterday.

MR. McEACHERN: Covering all those years? Okay, thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly give unanimous consent to the withdrawal of the Motion for a Return?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[Motion withdrawn]

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

202. Moved by Mr. Stewart:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to consider adopting a leadership role to encourage departments of government, Crown agencies, hospital boards, and other public institutions to purchase goods and services, and in particular new products, from Alberta businesses whenever reasonably possible, in order to expand the economic and employment opportunities within this province.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, before I begin debate on the motion I am sponsoring this afternoon, I beg your indulgence in some preliminary remarks. Rising for the first time as a member of this Assembly must, I am sure, be regarded by all members, both seasoned and rookies, as a very special moment. It is difficult for me, as presumably it was for the veterans, to express in words the personal feelings that such a moment brings. For a person such as myself who has been involved in the political process in a variety of ways for many years, it is especially meaningful. The feelings that I have are those of pride, gratitude, and a sense of responsibility and obligation: pride in the institution of our parliamentary system, the traditions of our democratic process and of the country and the province in which we are privileged to live; gratitude to the people of Calgary North Hill for the privilege of being their representative in this Assembly and to the many people along the way who, through their encouragement, support, and personal effort, made this opportunity a reality; a sense of responsibility and obligation to fulfill in a meaningful way the trust that has been given to me by the constituents of Calgary North Hill.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that feelings of a similar nature were experienced by yourself as you assumed the duties and responsibilities of your new office, and I do want to sincerely congratulate you in that regard. Being a new member, I greatly appreciate the guidance and support of all members of this Assembly. There is a wide range of views under the dome, but I sense that we are all here to serve our constituents to our fullest capabilities as best we see fit.

Mr. Speaker, the motion before us today urges the government to consider adopting a leadership role in encouraging the purchase of Alberta goods and services whenever reasonably possible. It is estimated that the public-sector

purchasing market in Alberta for all three levels of government is worth about \$3.8 billion a year to the private sector. Although to a large extent public goods and services are already purchased locally, it is incumbent upon this government to ensure that Alberta enterprises are benefitting to the greatest extent possible. It is particularly appropriate to review our purchasing policies during this period of economic contraction, when jobs for Albertans are uppermost in our consideration.

This motion also prompts us to scrutinize our purchasing policies and to decide whether Albertans are receiving the fullest advantage possible from the use of public funds. As a publicly-elected body, it is our job to ensure that taxpayers are receiving the best value for their dollar. In the past this has led to an open-door policy where all tenders were treated alike regardless of their place of origin. This policy has since been refined to a point where all things being equal, Alberta products will be chosen.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear as to some personal basic beliefs. Firstly, as a Conservative, I believe in the private enterprise system and the concept of a market-driven system. Second, I endorse the efforts being made by the ministers to reduce interprovincial and international trade barriers. Thirdly, I support in principle the existing policy of this government which, as mentioned, is that Alberta suppliers are favoured when price, quality, and service are equivalent and no legislative or regulatory preference exists. How then can I propose this motion which one might feel is contradictory to those beliefs?

Mr. Speaker, I think there are some extenuating circumstances that lead to this motion today. First, the price quality-, service-equivalent policy breaks down when in some instances the source of suppliers is controlled by required registration on a source list or by maintaining control of the degree of participation of suppliers. Secondly, it also breaks down when specifications call for particular brand names and comparable products from Alberta companies. Although meeting such specifications, certain suppliers are therefore out of the competition before it starts. A third difficulty is that the assessment of competing products and services based on quality, support service, compliance with specifications, et cetera are very subjective criteria, particularly if there is really no track record between the purchaser and the supplier. Fourthly, economic priorities of the day also must be considered as affecting the implementation of the policy, and it is natural to have an open-door policy during periods of rapid economic growth. However, in periods of economic contraction, protection from competitors based in other provinces is sought by many suppliers.

A further difficulty arises by virtue of adoption by other provinces of public-sector purchasing preferences favouring their provincial suppliers because it cuts out Albertans' participation in some instances and leads to demand for retaliatory measures. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, a policy of all things being equal, Alberta products and services will be chosen runs into difficulty when all things aren't necessarily equal. The white paper Proposals for an Industrial and Science Strategy for Albertans raised for general public debate the issue of our government's purchasing policy, and by introducing this motion today, I hope to generate some debate in the Assembly.

The white paper pointed out that all other provinces have some form of preference policy, as does the federal government. These various policies exhibit many different approaches to public purchasing. British Columbia, for instance, has a preference of up to 10 percent for in-

province suppliers and 5 percent for Canadian suppliers for all contracts under \$200,000. Several provinces only allow in-province bids on projects where there are three or more available local suppliers. Both of these examples have likely gone further than I would like to see Alberta's purchasing policy go, but that is what we are up against.

The arguments against a preferential purchasing policy have merit. Preferred treatment means more trade barriers and possible retaliatory action at a time when we are seeking to reduce those interprovincial and international barriers. However, despite our purchasing policy, in fact we already have preferred treatment such as benefits passed on to businesses operating in Alberta; low taxes input costs and financial assistance are some of those examples.

Mr. Speaker, a price edge given to domestic suppliers is only one alternative. It is an alternative about which I do have some reservations because it begs the question of how much of a price advantage would be deemed fair.

Mr. Speaker, the difficulties on both sides of the question are there, and I have attempted to recognize them in the wording of the motion. I would direct your attention to certain key words and phrases in the motion. Firstly the phrase "adopting a leadership role" attempts to address an important step in establishing public awareness of buying Alberta products and services. One of the roles of government is to provide such leadership. Secondly the word "encourage" is used. I'm not proposing mandatory provincial preference legislation, we have plenty of government regulation already. Thirdly the motion recognizes the difficulty in individual circumstances and the phrase "whenever reasonably possible" is therefore essential. Fourthly, the motion attempts to underscore the economic circumstances of the day and our government's priorities in economic development of this province by expressing the need to expand our economic development opportunities within this province.

Mr. Speaker, you will note that the motion includes a specific reference to new products. Manufacturers frequently note how difficult it is to get new products off the ground. Government can greatly assist in providing contracts to companies with new prototypes. This would provide necessary seed money and would help bolster the private sector's confidence in these Alberta-made products. I believe this is an avenue worth pursuing.

Mr. Speaker, many positive things have been done by this government to encourage Alberta business and I would like to recognize that, because there are many important initiatives in the area of purchasing policies. One way to ensure that Alberta companies are encouraged to compete for government contracts is to inform the public about the opportunities that do exist. The pamphlet *Selling to the Alberta Government*, put out by the procurement division of Public Works, Supply and Services, should be required reading for all businessmen, and the publication *Alberta on Line Purchasing Directory* is a co-operative effort between Economic Development and Public Works, Supply and Services. This is an excellent list of every Alberta public entity and a description of what is purchased. It also includes the key contact people in each department and agency. These publications fit in very nicely with the intent of this motion. I hope that it is our government's mandate to continue to get the word out across Alberta that we are indeed open for business. The Department of Public Works, Supply and Services has also tried reverse trade shows where the private sector is invited to see what we do purchase. While this has a limited benefit, it is a positive move.

The government of Alberta, Mr. Speaker, has already done a lot to encourage Alberta businesses: the tax envi-

ronment, small business loans, Vencap, SBEC, Alberta stock savings plan, et cetera. The procurement branch of Public Works, Supply and Services has also worked very closely with the private sector, and most government orders are being filled by local suppliers. Our procurement policies have been fairly sensitive to our local suppliers. A policy since the late 1970s has been that major projects, either government or private-sector, must include a percentage of Alberta-based services, design and construction sourcing, where possible. A net benefit to the province must be exhibited by any major project before the minister of economic development can approve a permit.

Another positive development has been to contract services out to the private sector. Many services that were once supplied by the bureaucracy are now being opened up for competition by the private sector. I urge the government to continue to be sensitive to the economic, social, and cultural implications of their purchasing policies. Government dollars are an important player in our marketplace.

A greater access to our public-sector purchasing market by Alberta businesses would have many positive effects. It would create jobs and help develop a skilled work force. It would add support to our government's campaign to have Albertans think of Alberta products first. It would have positive spin-offs to other support industries, for manufacturers and service organizations. It would generate more economic activity, creating more profits, more corporate and personal spending, and a greater corporate and personal income tax base.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure there is a wide range of views on how governments should spend taxpayers' money in the purchase of its goods and services. Is it wiser to buy the cheapest goods possible, or should other factors be weighed when making purchases? I certainly look forward to hearing other members' views on this issue, and I encourage all members to support this motion and urge the government to continue to do all that is reasonably possible to keep our public purchasing market accessible to Alberta businesses.

Thank you.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, this is my first speech in this Assembly. I am also somewhat bemused, like my hon. colleague from Edmonton Strathcona, as to how this does not exactly qualify for my maiden speech. However, there are a few points I would like to make on this particular debate this afternoon. The comments I've been working on in my maiden speech I will save for a later date, perhaps this week or next.

I understand also from the traditions of this House that this being a nongovernment motion, it's an opportunity to see what kinds of opinions and feelings there might be by various members on both sides of the House. Being a nongovernment motion, while it was moved by a government member, it also provides us an opportunity to perhaps provide some nonpartisan political comment in relation to this idea.

First of all, I'd like to commend the hon. member who shares a boundary with me on the north side of Calgary Mountain View for the motion he has made this afternoon. It's in keeping with some things that members of this party have advocated previously, and we're pleased to see that some of these ideas are being not exactly resurrected but floated for possible future action on behalf of the provincial government.

I would like to provide some possible input in terms of my particular portfolio as a critic in the area of free trade, because this particular motion might well be considered under an umbrella of what is termed nontariff trade barriers. I understand there are no tariffs between provinces, but there are interprovincial barriers to trade, within which this government participates.

I think it might be worth while to enumerate a few of the support programs and barriers to trade that exist between Alberta and other provinces: for example, the Alberta border price, which has traditionally kept Alberta gas prices for industrial users here lower than for users outside the province. This was considered crucial to the development of our petrochemical industry in the face of the proximity to market of Ontario plants. This advantage will end with dropping prices and gas deregulation, as I understand it, in a few months' time.

Another example is the ethane feedstock subsidy, which was implemented by a minister of this government in 1984. This program is supposed to allow ethane feedstock to be at market prices. The budget update supplements this program by another \$10 million, for a total of \$42.4 million this year.

The third area: a waste importation moratorium. There is currently a very justified moratorium on importation of hazardous wastes into Alberta. There is, in fact, a trade in waste, so here is another example of another barrier.

One that has been debated at some length in this House over the last several months is agriculture drought relief. Some \$800 million was allocated for various agricultural programs related to drought relief last year, including per head payments for cattle, et cetera. One could argue that the financial muscle of this province being used in this particular way provides an undue benefit to our producers in Alberta. I would not in any way, shape, or form argue that it was undue, because they certainly did need the help.

Fuel and fertilizer subsidies: these are significantly subsidized in Alberta. In fact, this party campaigned in the Spirit River-Fairview by-election for a program that was eventually implemented by this government.

We could go into the whole area of energy incentives. Billions and billions of dollars are spent annually in new programs. In the last few months we've seen somewhere in the order of \$600 million announced. These are being spent on incentives for our energy sector. On the other hand, there is no buy-Alberta-first program or procurement policy, so one could see this money being used to procure products made in other provinces, made in the United States. Perhaps, in the face of new U.S. tariffs, American steel might end up being used by our Alberta companies even though they're being funded or granted incentives by the Alberta taxpayer.

The small business equity corporations, Vencap, and now the Alberta stock savings plan: they're all programs that provide extra benefit for Alberta business. We've also seen in the election campaign, in the Speech from the Throne, and in the budget various loans, guaranteed loans, and grants to, for example, Procter & Gamble in Grande Prairie and Syncrude in order to do engineering work on their expansion. All of these, Mr. Speaker, could be interpreted, much like a buy-Alberta-first procurement policy, as barriers to interprovincial trade.

I think in many ways these are programs that are well justified; these are programs we make in Alberta to support Alberta business, Alberta taxpayers, and Alberta job creation. They're all very worthy programs. My question that I would

like to raise to the government this afternoon — and I want it to think very seriously about what this means in terms of the negotiations presently under way for bilateral free trade with the United States — is how many of these programs that are on the table for negotiation would no longer qualify or be acceptable under a comprehensive, bilateral free-trade program or agreement with the United States?

Sometime in the next few weeks and months I think we need clear statements from the government as to which of these made-in-Alberta programs they would be prepared to give up as part of those bilateral trade negotiations taking place with the United States. Because if they are being given up in those negotiations, rather than give them up as part of some bilateral arrangement with the United States, maybe the first step is that we should see what could be done by negotiating these matters as a Canadian nation.

The first ministers meet frequently to talk about these matters. We've had some questions directed to the government as far as what participation the provincial government is prepared to take in those bilateral trade negotiations. When the first ministers from across Canada get together, is discussion as to how interprovincial trade barriers are being eliminated between the provinces in this country ever on the agenda? Why don't the first ministers start talking about trade liberalization within Canada if they feel that such trade liberalization is a worthy objective with the United States? Do they sit down and ask each other how we can remove some of these barriers between provincial governments?

I noted with some interest this little brochure which was tabled in the House some days ago. In this brochure — in fact, on one of the first pages — there's a statement that Alberta exports an estimated \$14 billion worth of goods. It goes on to break this down into exports to the United States, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. There's no mention made of exports from Alberta to the other nine provinces in Canada. Apparently, according to this brochure, 100 percent of all the exports from Alberta in 1985 were to jurisdictions outside of Canada, which is obviously not true. We do export a considerable amount of our provincial product to other provinces in Canada, but to try and find where that goes and how much it is — it's a considerable amount as far as I can tell.

I've been doing some research just within the last day, and the most up-to-date figures appear to be for 1979. The total value of manufactured goods — only manufactured goods, Mr. Speaker — was in excess of \$2 billion in 1979. That did not include exports to the province of Manitoba, Yukon, or the Northwest Territories. That did not include exports of oil, natural gas, timber, grain, or meat to other provinces in Canada. These were simply the value-added manufactured goods to the rest of the country.

There's been so much work, discussion, and consideration given to negotiations with the United States on trade liberalization. I wonder why we haven't given similar attention to the very important trade that goes on within this country. I would take this opportunity to state to the members of the government side of the House that the programs which have been put in place that I made earlier reference to are very important to the well-being of this province, the well-being of this country.

But to what extent will those programs be allowed to remain in place as part of the negotiations on bilateral free trade which are presently going on with the United States? Remember that the shakes and shingle countervailing tariff recently placed by the government of the United States was

related to stumpage charges in the province of British Columbia, something over which the province of British Columbia had exclusive jurisdiction. What programs of support over which this government has exclusive jurisdiction in Alberta are possibly up for grabs at the negotiations table with the United States?

It's of very considerable concern to me, Mr. Speaker. I think that over the next few weeks we need a clear statement from this government in terms of what policies and programs it is prepared to put, and allow to be put, on the negotiations table with the United States and which ones, such as the buy Alberta procurement policy, it is not prepared to have placed on that negotiation table.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, before I proceed with my comments on the motion before the Assembly, I want to extend my congratulations to the Member for Calgary North Hill on his contribution this afternoon. I can appreciate the trepidation he must have felt giving his first speech in the Assembly, I well remember my own feelings as a new member. But let me assure him that his performance and contribution this afternoon bodes well for the future for his constituents, and for this Assembly. I also listened very carefully, as we all did, to the Member for Calgary Mountain View, and I would like to wish him well too — not too well, mind you.

Motion 202 before us calls upon the government of Alberta to adopt a policy of using public purchasing practices as an instrument for promoting employment and economic growth. It calls upon our government and our agencies to show a leadership role for other public bodies and to buy Alberta — as the Member for Calgary North Hill said — whenever reasonably possible.

The Member for Calgary Mountain View referred to a publication tabled by the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs entitled *Beyond Alberta's Borders: The Trade Challenge*. In his selective remarks he left the impression that no effort was made, or is being made by this government to talk about the efforts of our private-sector industries not only throughout Alberta but beyond elsewhere in Canada, and in our Territories. The quotation that the member gave is clearly from a section of the booklet which refers to international markets for products and services, and the table clearly indicates that.

In introducing this motion the Member for Calgary North Hill has demonstrated his concern for Alberta's labour force and our industries, both of which have been experiencing difficulties in recent years. There are many factors beyond the control of this government which are placing Albertans in positions of economic stress, and it is our role, if not our duty, to use whatever tools are available to help Albertans to create economic opportunity and growth. However, it is also the responsibility of our government to adopt policies we believe will best serve the people of this province.

Therefore, this responsibility prompts me to express some misgivings about Motion 202. I do so with the support of my own constituents of Banff-Cochrane, who gave careful consideration to the government's white paper initiatives on the economy and on economic initiatives and in fact rejected an Alberta-first policy notwithstanding that other provinces have taken that position. Preferential purchasing policies exist in many jurisdictions, be it a price edge or a buy-domestic policy. In fact, we are virtually alone in Alberta in our policy of when equal, buy Alberta and in our decision not to take that extra step and impose conditions

which favour Alberta products or Alberta services. I think to understand this decision, we should look at other jurisdictions that have preferential purchasing policies.

The federal government recently conducted an examination of its policies, including the ability of those procedures to meet their stated regional and industrial objectives. We've seen that review; it's commonly referred to as the Nielsen report. The Nielsen report found that, firstly, no one associated with the procurement process has a clear idea what industrial benefits government is trying to achieve. Secondly, the report noted that the government's expectations have tended to become unrealistic and indeed misdirected. Regional distribution, technology transfers, and investment benefits have been much lower than expected. In fact, existing policies may be inadvertently signalling that short-term benefits are preferred over long-term benefits. Thirdly, trade irritants have been created. And finally, and perhaps sadly, no one in government has a strategic governmentwide plan for the use of procurement as a lever to generate long-term and lasting benefits.

Going beyond the outlines of the problems that were encountered by the study, the report presented some remedial actions. For example, it suggested that the federal cabinet should meet regularly and review procurement programs. There should be ongoing consultation with industry. There should be some initiative to gather information about procurement, about commodities being imported from abroad, and about potential Canadian suppliers. If we balance the questionable results of the existing federal policy against the potential costs of improving them, I think we can get an idea of the need for caution in adopting a provincial preferential purchasing policy.

I think this need for care goes even further. When it is clear that not one province has any hard evidence demonstrating that the economic objectives of their policies are being met — in fact, preferential purchasing is ambiguous — I would venture to suggest that such policies may be harmful, Mr. Speaker. Government purchasing at all three levels, as we've discussed in the debate today, amounts to \$60 billion per year. The free flow of a large proportion of that money is limited by preferential policies. For example, Alberta producers do not have access to a good chunk of what Ontario spends procuring government supplies and services. It can be argued that \$60 billion makes procurement a valuable development tool, but it's only the jurisdiction that you live within that receives the benefit. Such preferential treatment provides a major obstacle to the development of interprovincial and international trade.

Historically one of the most trying aspects of our Canadian federalism has indeed been the lack of free movement of goods and services between provinces. Fortunately, at a recent conference in Belleville, Ontario, economic development ministers addressed this issue, and a pledge was secured from the participants to identify and reduce existing barriers. I think it's clear, for example, that when British Columbia gives local suppliers a 10 percent pricing edge, it restricts the ability of our producers to enter that market.

We in this province have also been one of the strongest supporters of the current free trade initiative. Former Premier Lougheed was one of the earliest proponents of the talks that have begun with the United States. Premier Getty has made it clear that he too supports these discussions and their ultimate goal. As the spokesman for the 10 provinces, Premier Getty is committed to ensuring that provinces' interests are fully taken into account in these discussions.

I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that we remember that Canada and Australia are the only industrialized nations

in the world that do not have access to a market of a hundred million or more people within their own boundaries. Canadian businesses, including those in Alberta, are limited in their potential for growth by international trade barriers. We've felt the retaliatory effects of moves by the American government due to perceived unfair trade practices, subsidies, and so on. I think we must be very careful that we do not take actions which will invite similar reactions. We don't want to weaken the stance that we've taken on the issue of free trade.

Mr. Speaker, on a more provincial note, though, surely we must keep in mind that we are dealing with taxpayers' dollars. We have a responsibility to ensure efficiency within government, to pursue cost-effectiveness as far as we can. A preferential purchasing policy would impose extra costs on government. Whether we adopt a price edge or require buying Alberta, unless few or no suppliers in Alberta exist, we would have to spend more money on the equipment or the supplies or the services. Perhaps the economic benefits to our citizens would justify the costs. Perhaps money could be saved elsewhere because of increased employment or economic activity. But again, as I've indicated, there was no evidence from any other jurisdiction to support such a conclusion.

Surely we as legislators should be asking how we feel the opportunities available for Albertans can best be expanded. What policy should we be adopting to create new employment or further diversify our economic base? How can we promote more healthy industries in our province?

There are many schools of thought on this question, and I believe Motion 202 has given us the opportunity today to discuss these kinds of questions. We can choose to have a great deal of government intervention. We've seen Crown corporations advance national ownership. We've seen import quotas to protect domestic industries. We know what subsidies and low-interest loans do as far as facilitating new businesses, but perhaps at the expense of existing businesses. We must use care that policies do not create artificial economic environments.

I share the beliefs of my colleague the Member for Calgary North Hill and the members of my Conservative caucus. We have a belief in the free-enterprise system. We feel that natural advantages should be promoted and that the creation of unnatural ones distorts our economy and ultimately harms our development. The jobs we add to our labour market by adopting a preferential purchasing policy could be overwhelmed by the jobs we may lose. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that a policy of preferential treatment such as exists in other provinces will not be good for Albertans.

Thank you for letting me join the debate on the motion today.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mr. Stewart on an insight that I think has been sorely lacking in his government to this point.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the member please refer to the member by constituency. Thank you.

MR. MITCHELL: I would like to congratulate the member, whatever his constituency's name — Calgary North Hill — who moved Motion 202 for demonstrating an insight that I believe has been lacking in his government and that I believe reflects an attitude in that government that goes beyond simply this limited policy of buy-Alberta-first. More

broadly, I am concerned that we have a government that is not acting with the intensity and the focus required in these kinds of times to do whatever we have to do to broaden this economic base, to diversify and stimulate this economy so that we can provide long-term employment stability at a time when this province and the people of this province desperately need it. This buy-Alberta-first measure, if properly implemented, would be a step in the right direction.

The fact that we don't have some kind of admission that this government should be spending its money in Alberta for Albertans, for Albertans' businesses, to create jobs for Albertans, is not an isolated omission. During the time I've been here in this House, I've seen a number of things in this House alone and in this province that worry me. In a broader reflection of this issue, consider the soil cement issue that was raised in the House on Monday. Fortunately, the government responded in a way that secured that economic benefit for Alberta rather than exporting that economic benefit to the United States. I'm not certain that it would have acted in that manner, because I believe that the decision was basically in an irrevocable, irreversible bureaucratic process had not the political level been brought to bear.

I look at a similar reflection of that attitude in the Alberta stock savings plan, in which we have been hell-bent to export Albertans' investment dollars to other provinces. Not only are we intent on exporting them, but we're actually paying companies out of our own revenues in order to achieve that more effectively and more efficiently than it might occur all by itself. When I look at these kinds of examples, I say to myself, "It is the responsibility of this government to reflect the attitudes of Albertans." I know for a fact that Albertans are a very, very generous people, but I think there is a difference between scratching your back and tearing it apart. I think Albertans would appreciate their government exercising some discretion in the manner in which they express Albertans' generosity across this country and around this world. It's not just the soil cement issue and it's not just the Alberta stock savings plan. It goes beyond that to Gainers.

Currently Gainers is in the process of negotiating to build a plant in Saskatchewan, a plant that will create 600 jobs, the related economic development opportunities, the related economic development activity, and the jobs that that will in turn create. It's not going to be created here in Alberta, where our families, the families of our constituents, and the people we represent are who need jobs and economic opportunity. It's going to be created in Saskatchewan, and that's a very, very generous offer for us to make. I think we should be pursuing a way to bring Gainers back to Alberta and to build its plant in Alberta to create the kind of long-term employment stability that's required in this province now and well into the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair hesitates to interrupt on this procedural, hon. member. The time limit for debate under this item of business has concluded under Standing Order 8(3). For the information of the member, he would then be the first to speak when the motion comes back for debate in the Assembly.

head: **PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS
OTHER THAN
GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS
(Second Reading)**

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

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present Bill 201, the Quality Child Day Care Standards Act.

This perhaps will be one of the most important Bills to be presented to this Assembly, because it deals with our most precious resource, our children. I'd like to review the contents of the Bill with this Assembly so everyone is clear about what's contained in the Bill.

This Bill lays out very specific staff/child ratios to enable the best possible care of our children in day care settings. It also outlines the requirements for training of directors and child care workers within a child day care centre. In addition to this, it also describes the requirements in terms of both indoor and outdoor space, as well as with the importance of a healthy and safe environment for a child.

Why do we need a Bill such as this? Let me explain. There are numerous reasons why parents use our day care centres in this province. Some parents have a choice whether or not to use our day care facilities for their children, and others have no choice at all. Whatever the reason a youngster is put into a day care centre in Alberta, one thing remains positively clear. While the young child is in a centre of care, he or she should be guaranteed the best care possible.

Over the past two decades we have seen the Canadian family go through many changes. In 1961 approximately two-thirds of all families in Canada consisted of a wife, who was a full-time homemaker, and a husband, who went out and earned the family's earnings. By 1981 this arrangement had drastically changed, with only one in six families following this pattern. In 1981 both parents were working in half of all the families, and one in 10 families were headed by single parents. Of course, five years later in 1986 the figures have changed even more.

For instance, one in two single-parent families headed by women have incomes that are far below the poverty line. Many are forced to go out and seek employment to help provide income for their families. It becomes an economic issue and one of survival. It's also important for that parent to maintain contact with the labour force and to ensure continued use and upgrading of skills. These are other reasons why they must go out and get a job. A person in this circumstance has no choice but to put her child into some kind of child care centre. Both she and her child have the right to be guaranteed absolute top-quality day care, and this Bill would ensure this type of care.

Gone are the days when parents have a choice whether or not they put their child into a day care centre. Most families do not have access to their relatives, nor do they have access to neighbours to take care of their children. Day care centres are a fact of life, and they are here to stay so we must deal with them.

As I have said, there are many reasons why parents decide to utilize our day care facilities. Being a single parent is only one example. Regardless of the circumstances that influence that decision, I repeat that every parent has a right to know that when he or she puts their child into a centre, that parent is satisfied their child will be taken care of in the best possible way. Of course, every parent

loves their children dearly, and their children's welfare is of great concern at all times.

In this province we currently have the weakest staff-qualification requirements in the country. You need absolutely no training whatsoever to operate or work in a day care, none whatsoever. You're supposed to be 18 years old, but I know of day care centres where the workers are younger than that, and you're supposed to have a first-aid certificate, but that's it. This just isn't good enough. These are people who work with our children, and we are trusting them to take care of our children. I suspect Storyland Valley Zoo has more requirements for their workers before they allow them to take care of their animals.

What about space? I've gone into day care centres, and I've seen children crammed into very small areas and into small rooms. There are lineups for the bathroom. As one mother said to me, she would hate to be the 15th three-year-old in the lineup for the bathroom in some of these places. There is oftentimes not adequate room for them to play, inside or outside. I've seen many day care centres where you see very, very small outside facilities, small enough that I probably wouldn't put two or three rabbits inside of those and feel comfortable with that.

Admittedly, we have some decent standards on the books when it comes to staff/child ratios in this province. But the question is: are these regulations being enforced? There are only 21 licence officers in Alberta. That's one for every 50 centres. How can they be expected to monitor these centres? What this means is that a licence officer can only visit a centre approximately once every three months.

I was recently in a centre where I asked the director of the day care how many children were there. Incidentally, there were cribs lined up. There were very young babies in there, as small as three months old, and children up to about four or five years old. I asked how many children were in this particular day care. She said, "There are 52 children altogether." Because it didn't look like there were very many people working there, I proceeded to ask her, "Well, how many staff do you have?" She said they had three staff working there for 52 children. I suggest the centres are not being monitored closely enough. Perhaps the government should look into hiring more licence officers so that they can effectively do their jobs.

We know the standards are extremely low in this province. As a matter of fact, they're the lowest in Canada. I want to tell you a little bit about what can happen, first of all, to parents when top-quality day care centres are not available to them and then what happens to the children involved. Quite frankly, parents pay a tremendous cost when quality day care is no longer an option to them. Many mothers are forced to leave the labour force, never to return, so that they can be with their children. While they're at home, they continually worry about where they will be economically if their husbands ever decide to leave them or if their husbands perhaps die.

Others have professional training and cannot afford to take a leave of absence from their jobs, as it would virtually be impossible to update their knowledge. They spend hours trying to find sitters and alternate child care arrangements, thus becoming totally frustrated and exhausted. Others are forced to change jobs so that their hours coincide with their children's school hours. Obviously, the stress is severe on many parents. The Bill I am presenting would ease much of the strain that many parents are feeling due to the low standards throughout the province in the area of day care.

I agree with the Minister of Social Services when she stated that she worries the government has inappropriately taken options away from parents. They have done this by having such low standards of day care in the province that parents don't always have an option. This Bill would guarantee that options are returned to parents' lives.

Now what about children? We have research that tells us that children need an environment that is loving and stimulating and one in which they can socialize with others and receive encouragement and understanding. Good child care must respond to the developmental needs of the children.

Young children in a day care setting are in their most formative years. The effects of poor-quality day care can be many, and they may surface any time during a child's life. This is why it is so vital that we have trained staff working in our day care centres. When children are not given adequate stimulation and nurturing during their younger years, they enter school and often experience many difficulties, resulting in costly remedial programs. They may develop social and psychological problems resulting in their breaking the law. They may be unable to succeed in school or at a job. These are all documented findings. These results have very serious implications on the cost to taxpayers in terms of health care, education costs, and judicial costs, not to mention the social costs to these children themselves.

With Alberta facing a huge deficit this year — and I know this government is looking for ideas on how to decrease it — I urge that all members of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, accept this Bill on quality day care standards. I have explained many serious concerns I have with allowing the continuation of the operation of day cares without adequate standards. This Bill addresses the need for stimulating healthy, safe environments for all children placed in a day care. It sets out standards for staff/child ratios that are conducive to meeting the needs of children.

In this Bill we have laid out specific training requirements but also have included a phasing in period, which would give people working in the child care industry the necessary time to complete the training. I cannot emphasize enough the absolute necessity for having trained staff working with our children. I've explained what can happen to children if they are not placed in the hands of very, very capable and qualified people.

I'd like to read a letter that I received from a parent. This is a young mother, a single parent, and she had many experiences with day care. I think the letter supports the need for Bill 201, and I'll share it with you.

I am a single parent with two children and I am writing to you to complain about the daycares here.

My youngest child, Pam, is two now and she has been in three daycares since the age of 6 months. I was able to stay home with Kevin, my son, until he was 2 but then he and Pam both were put into daycare when I had to return to work.

The first daycare I used had one older woman as a director and all the others were teenagers. It seemed as if everytime I arrived to pick up the kids, another new face greeted me. Pam was just a baby then and going through her "making strange" stage and she was very upset most of the time. I asked the director why she had so much of a turnover and she told me that the pay was low, once the girls found another job, they were gone. I finally had to move the children to another daycare.

MR. STEVENS: On a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton Calder, please sit on a brief point of order.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I was just going to ask if you would give consideration to perhaps advising us as to the length or the use of material from constituents, as thoughtful and helpful as they might all be, so that each of us could hear the words of the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member's point of order on the matter of reading from documents is indeed accurate, but the Chair was trying to be gracious with a new member to allow her to carry on with reading it but also hoping that she would come to the end of her paragraph almost immediately. Thank you.

MR. MARTIN: On a point of order. If I may go on the traditions of this House — that's why I'm so surprised — very often we have allowed, within a limited degree, the ability to read a letter or something like this. This is not unusual. It has happened on both sides of the House, and I think we've traditionally allowed some flexibilities as long as it doesn't go on forever. I would hope that we would continue this tradition.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the member please continue.

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I'll summarize what's in the letter. This particular mother had concerns in many areas of day care. One of her children wasn't taken care of in terms of medical attention when he needed it at the day care centre. Her other child was given food that, as it was explained to the child care workers at that particular day care centre, she was not supposed to receive, and the problems just go on and on. She points out in her letter that the last day care centre she took her children to — she called up the day care licensing branch to find out if they could recommend to her any day care centres in the city. They said they couldn't recommend a day care centre over another because all the day care centres met the standards they had set out. She was really concerned with what those standards were because she felt that so many of the day cares are being inadequately run.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I urge all members of the Legislature to support this Bill. Our children should be our number one priority, and their well-being is at stake.

Thank you.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to participate in the discussion of Bill 201. The hon. Member for Edmonton Calder has brought forward a Bill that the member feels very strongly about. But in her introduction of this Bill she made some comments I would like to take issue with.

Mr. Speaker, maybe with the exception of one other member in this Assembly, I have been in more day cares in more areas of this province than anybody else in this Assembly. I've been in day cares and group homes from as far south as Lethbridge and Medicine Hat to as far north as Fort McMurray and other areas in the northern part of the province because of my three and a half years on the Social Care Facilities Review Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the day cares in this province vary greatly in service, buildings, and the people running them. We have a distinct mix of those funded by nonprofit organizations and those run by people who are in business to make a profit. To some people in this province the word "profit"

has become a dirty word lately, and I don't really see anything wrong with the word "profit" if you are providing a good service.

I've been in day cares that are private businesses and which provide service second to none. They provide good food, facilities, and care. I very much wish that one could use names and praise people, but I'm not able to do that because of confidentiality of the committee I've been on, so I'll just have to describe areas. I've been in day cares that have been run by nonprofit organizations and the people have been well-qualified. The day care service provided in some of those facilities hasn't stood up to the ones that have been less qualified. Mr. Speaker, I often wonder if qualification is the whole answer. I've been in day cares where you can walk in and feel the love the workers in there have for the children. That's what I call a good day care, because they are giving the service and the love to those children. If my understanding of our day care regulations is right, according to staff allowances, at least in the last comparison that I saw our per child ratio is better than per child ratios of other areas. Our per child ratio is lower, especially in the smaller children.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard of such things as options being taken away from parents. I have talked to day care operators over the last three and a half years. Are they able to get parents' participation? They can't get parents' participation no matter what they try. How do they take the option away from them when they won't even take the option to start with? How do we instill in them their responsibility to go check out that day care no matter who runs it? Go check it out, have a look at it, and decide if you want to put your child in there. I know of nonprofit day cares that are run by a few people and the rest of the parents won't even become involved in it. It becomes a terrific load for those few to run it so that the service is provided. Often their children aren't even in the day care, they're gone. But the other ones coming in won't take their responsibility. I don't know how we can legislate that.

Mr. Speaker, I've talked about my concern for the Bill. I would like to urge others to review the Bill, take into account the concerns I expressed, and then make their decision about supporting it.

Thank you.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the motion and to congratulate the Member for Edmonton Calder. I agree that what we need in Alberta is a comprehensive, publicly funded child care support system. I support community-based or municipally operated nonprofit child care programs which are universally accessible, affordable, and of high quality.

Mr. Speaker, let me identify what I mean by universally accessible, affordable, and of high quality. Universally accessible means that every child who is in need of care should receive care. Affordable to me means that no one should be denied care because they cannot afford it and the same high quality of care should be available to every child who needs it. I would identify high-quality care as care given by trained child care workers in a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment. A quality child care program should meet all the developmental needs of the child: social, emotional, physical, and intellectual.

It is my submission, Mr. Speaker, that the most important component of a high-quality program is the trained staff member. This is followed by a child/staff ratio and the

amount of physical space available per child. The nutritional needs of a child in a full-day program is also important. Development of high-quality, affordable, nonprofit child care programs for preschool children in Alberta came to a halt when the province took over the funding and regulating. This resulted in the city of Edmonton only adopting a maintenance position, retaining support for only 13 nonprofit day care centres. For these 13 centres the city supplements provincial funding to enable them to provide a higher standard of care. As it is under provincial jurisdiction, a centre only has to meet minimal provincial standards to be licensed. Funding is available through a combination of operating allowances paid to any licensed centre, and subsidies are made available to parents on the basis of an income test.

However, Mr. Speaker, provincial funding in the form of parent subsidies and operating allowances to centres is provided without regard to the centre's actual operating costs and without regard to a substantial variance in the quality of care provided. I see the need for standards equal to those that the city of Edmonton provides to be accepted and applied as a condition in both licensing approval and funding in Alberta. Public money is now being spent to support private profit at a time when every available dollar should go towards making high-quality, affordable child care available to all who need it.

Any monitoring that is being done is only to ensure compliance with the low standards I previously mentioned. The operating budgets are not being reviewed during this monitoring process. Dollars are being spent on programs whose budgets are not financially monitored. The government money provided may exceed the cost of operating the child care centre. For example, Mr. Speaker, if an operator pays minimum wage to unqualified staff, the difference becomes the operator's profit. Conversely, if a program attempts to meet high standards with only provincial funding and parent fees for revenue, parents may end up being surcharged. Such programs potentially exclude users on the basis of their ability to pay. Many middle-income families are faced with the choice between paying for high-quality care for their children at greater financial hardship to their family or using inferior care which is readily available and which they can afford. The present parent-subsidy system creates a hardship for persons who are ineligible for a subsidy but who cannot afford to pay the full high cost of quality care.

Let us look at the social reasons for this high cost of child care. Approximately \$20 million of the \$50 million cost of child care in Alberta in 1985 and '86 is for family subsidies. If the minimum wage were not so low, if wages for working women generally weren't so low, of course if the former spouses did not default on support payments, but most importantly, if unemployment were not so high, that \$20 million could be reduced. Further, child care is still viewed as a welfare program. Low-middle-income and middle-income families who cannot pay full fees and who are ineligible for subsidies are falling through an ever-widening gap. They are forced to place children in inadequate programs whose costs come within their means.

Mr. Speaker, tax money would be better spent on child care subsidies rather than on income tax schemes. We are subsidizing those profit programs at the expense of the development of high-quality child care. I believe that profits add to the cost of child care programs and that standards are generally lower in nonprofit — that is, commercial — centres. Despite a provision in the Canada Assistance Plan to limit reimbursement of child care expenses to dollars

spent on nonprofit programs, the province of Alberta forgoes 50 cents on the dollar in federal cost sharing on every dollar spent on profit child care programs. Over 90 percent of the day care programs in Alberta are commercial programs. As in medicare transfer payments, the province is willing to forgo substantial sums of money to maintain its support for the private sector.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, child care programs should be carefully monitored. This should apply not only to their finances but, just as importantly, to their standards. Families using programs which are funded with tax dollars have the right to expect that their children will be well cared for.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, although I have not seen the details of the Bill presented, I wish to speak in support of the principle of the Bill put forward by the hon. Member for Edmonton Calder. In presenting the Bill, it's recognized that there have been many changes in family structure in society in our province and our country. There's also a recognition of a tremendous increase in the number of single-parent families, where we find a father or mother in sole support of one or more children.

There's a recognition, too, Mr. Speaker, of changes in family life within that structure; that is, the changing role of women. People have increasingly said to me in recent years: why do women work? Why on earth do women want to go outside their homes and work? Of course, the reasons women work are the same as the reasons that men work. Women work for money. They work to support their families, whether they are the sole support or with another member. They work for personal satisfaction and growth. They work for self-esteem. They work to contribute to their world. They work for the same reasons men do, and in accepting responsibility in our society for child care systems, we recognize those changes in family life which have occurred. Whether we profess to agree with them or not, the changes have happened.

In many cases, both parents must work. In some cases, both parents wish to work, and that's a right I support. But there is an urgent need in this province for quality day care provisions, whether that day care is provided publicly through a municipality, whether it's private nonprofit, a private-for-profit operation, or a private day home. Mr. Speaker, there is a need for quality in those services so that we're not just talking about a babysitting service. We're talking about children who are spending eight to 10 hours in a particular kind of institutionalized facility that has to be well organized, well constructed, and has to provide a positive growth environment for children.

In its wisdom, Mr. Speaker, this government has done a number of studies in past years, notably one that I am familiar with and I expect a good many members on both sides of the House are familiar with. It was done by Dr. Meyer Horowitz, then dean of education at the University of Alberta and now president of the university. It was a well-received and documented study with a number of excellent recommendations. For reasons that I don't understand, the government did not implement the recommendations but chose a totally different path, although that study revealed and reflected the wishes of Albertans, many of whom had children in day care and many of whom were simply interested community people who wanted safe environments for their children.

We need to have quality day care that provides not only safety but positive social encounters and learning experiences for children. The government chose to introduce mechanisms

at that point for subsidized day care that allowed for private-for-profit centres. As has been stated, the great majority of day care centres now in fact are private-for-profit operations. Private-for-profit centres are not intrinsically bad, and as has been suggested, many of them are well operated and probably provide excellent care. But the situation that continues to grow and develop in the province, Mr. Speaker, is one where we have increasing numbers without proper regulations, standards, and monitoring. This is exactly what's wrong with the present system. It is not workable, and it has to come to an end.

To be sure, when we talk about standards we're talking about the physical arrangements that allow an appropriate type of indoor and outdoor space. We're talking about eight to 10 hours of child care and about the need for proper instructional materials that are understood and have been guided by trained staff people and consultants for the use of these children. We're talking about the child/staff ratio. I would challenge any member of this House, Mr. Speaker, if they think that the present ratios are satisfactory to spend 15 minutes, if they can survive it, in the 3-year-old group of a day care centre. Go and spend your time there and ask yourself if all you need is a warm, loving heart, which we have for our children. Ask yourself if the numbers of staff to children are adequate and if you could survive, or if it would be appropriate for you to survive, without proper training.

Mr. Speaker, those are the circumstances that are presently in place. We are allowing good people with kind hearts who have not secured the training to be in child care centres throughout our province. One must be more than fond of children to provide the kind of environment, background, and care that's necessary.

The nutritional requirements for children in day care, Mr.

Speaker, are of paramount importance to me and to many parents and community people. Many of the children come from homes that are dependent on services such as the food bank to keep meals and bread in the household. They come to day cares in the morning without adequate nutritional breakfasts. Those day cares must be prepared to provide snacks and lunches that make up for the difference in proper nutrition, which we know has an enormous effect on not just the physical growth and development of children but their mental development as well.

We've already heard about the absence of adequate monitoring of the centres. Once or twice every year in our province we have a centre closed that someone has reported or has caught up on, centres that have again been allowed to operate, perhaps not unsafe for the children but no more than babysitting services. Yet, Mr. Speaker, in Alberta we have excellent educational programs for child care workers where they can receive more than adequate training to take positions in these centres.

Mr. Speaker, one of the issues of day care centres that doesn't often surface is the need for support services for parents. When the new rules went into effect, these were removed — the extra financial support that is allowed to provide consulting services to the day care where parents express other needs. We have to understand that many of the families who must use day care are families who are in desperate circumstances, or those that you and I might consider rather desperate. From time to time they need a great deal of help in budgeting, in counselling on family matters and resolving family disputes, in job-related matters and advice, and certainly in parenting skills. Many of them express a desire for that. These consultant activities are no

longer available to our day care centres as a matter of course, and they should be. I have not heard whether or not these are mentioned in the Bill and whether they would be reinstituted. They certainly should be, and if they are not, I will undertake to make an amendment to build them in.

The support services I have talked about are very necessary for many parents with children in day care, and they're no longer available to them. They should immediately be reinstituted as a backup to train staff, who shouldn't and can't be expected to provide counselling outside of their field of competence.

Mr. Speaker, very recently there was a national commission on day care through our province, and I know a great many organizations and associations presented briefs to that commission. We should look forward to the results and recommendations of the commission. Hopefully, we'll have them before decisions are made on this Bill.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that parents in the communities of Alberta have a right to confidence in child care. We certainly expect it in our school system. We should have a right to it in our preschool systems and in our after school care for children as well. This province has the opportunity to be a leader in this most critical and necessary service. I suggest our record to date has been abysmal. We're the lowest in Canadian standards, and my colleagues and friends in other parts of the country are simply appalled that a province that has been foremost in so many activities should not consider this matter a great deal more important. For reasons beyond my comprehension, Mr. Speaker, this government has chosen to leave the growth and development of children, a very vulnerable part of our population, open to potential indifference and risk. I suggest that it's time for a change and that we in the government should be committed to children and not lagging behind in our responsibilities. I look forward to seeing the contents of the Bill.

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, when this government makes an investment of \$57 million per year, I feel it's very important to express the strong commitment of this government to quality day cares in Alberta. There are day cares in this province that have been recognized as outstanding. I feel it is important that we are not debating the existence of day care right now. No one is denying the need for quality so I would like to concentrate directly on the Bill.

The hon. Member for Edmonton Calder asked why we need a Bill like this. Truly, after the discussion I am still wondering. The purpose of this Bill remains quite unclear to me. It appears that it is intended to be added into the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act and that the current day care regulations would continue. However that is not stated explicitly, therefore, it's not known whether a new day care regulation or amendment to the existing ones would be made. Furthermore, the proposed Bill appears to apply only to day care centres whereas the current legislation is much broader and includes requirements for nursery schools and family day homes as well.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, if the current regulations are maintained, adding these amendments from the Bill would result in a great deal of duplication and conflicting content. In addition much of the content of this Bill would be more appropriate for amendments to the current day care regulations, whereas many of the items under discussion this afternoon — for instance, the requirements for the facility, the furnishings, the equipment, the programming standards, the staffing requirements, indoor and outdoor play space —

should be more appropriately addressed in an amendment rather than incorporated into the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act.

Currently, Mr. Speaker, section 3 of the Bill discusses the staff/child ratios. Alberta's staff/child ratios and maximum group sizes rank among the best in Canada, and the proposed changes would have a minimal effect upon the quality of care offered in the day care centres in Alberta. Furthermore, section 3.1(4) proposes a restriction on the composition of the mixture of ages in groups. For the group outlined in the Bill, this would be required under the current day care regulations as well. There would still be two staff members required. So it doesn't appear that this change either would add anything more to the current requirements.

The issue of staff training was addressed in detail. In a very direct and powerful way our government has two initiatives that answer the problems addressed in this regard. First of all, the Member for Cypress-Redcliff has already pointed out that qualifications don't necessarily lead to improved performance. Through the licensing requirements there is a major emphasis on programming, and the results of the programming are very carefully observed. So, Mr.

Speaker, I feel this is an extremely important part of our initiative right now. Most day care centres do have qualified or certified people who have taken courses. With the emphasis on a comprehensive content that is contained in the licensing of these facilities and programming standards — and furthermore, the department is developing an instrument that will help in the assessment and focus on the quality of the staff and child interaction during the course of the day care facility.

Mr. Speaker, that's one initiative. I believe the second one is by far the most important, and that is supplying parents with the very best information possible in order to make decisions about the care of their children. Parents want to and must retain the primary responsibility for their care. The government has prepared a small pamphlet on choosing day cares. It talks about what a day care is, how you choose, and other considerations and special things you should be thinking about when you're looking for care for your children. It also tells you in detail how to look for a service. You don't just take what someone says. You telephone, you visit, you ask questions, and you tour the facility. There is a checklist included of things to look for and ask about. The publication encourages parental involvement in every way, and this is the key to quality day care centres.

Another point that was brought up in the Bill was an increase in the net indoor floor area and outdoor play space. This represents a major upgrading of requirements, Mr. Speaker. We currently appear to be on the national average as far as the provision of both indoor and outdoor space, and there appears to be no precedent that I can see for the 18 square metres per child that is proposed in the Bill. This is eight times the space that is presently needed. Furthermore, the current licensing manual provides a comprehensive content on the measurement of floor space.

Mr. Speaker, community programs are currently working on developing a licensing manual and assessment techniques that will help. It's rather encouraging, too, to know that the social care facilities review presented several recommendations in their report last year that was submitted to this Legislature that are being reviewed by the community day programs.

All in all, Mr. Speaker, it is important to emphasize the parental choice. I've talked to very many parents, and they

are the monitors of the quality of the day care. They would not dream of leaving their children in a spot where they weren't properly attended to. The importance of our day cares cannot be overlooked in any of the debate, particularly since the taxpayers of Alberta are supporting the need for facilities where the growth and development of young children is of prime importance.

Mr. Speaker, through the Alberta social services and community health day care branch there is a day care facts sheet available that gives all of the details. The objective of the day care program is to make child day care accessible and affordable to all families who require it. I maintain that this government is doing that. Furthermore, I feel that our licensed day care centres, the staff, the departmental responsibility, along with the work being done by the social care facilities review are ensuring that we are delivering a quality service.

Mr. Speaker, there are 568 licensed day care centres in Alberta and 63 day care homes. The expenditures for the '85-86 estimate are well over \$57 million. There are 11,989 children receiving these benefits and subsidies. Our day care service may not be perfect, but I feel the Bill does not help. There are other issues of a broader scope that need to be addressed as well, and I feel our efforts should perhaps go to other issues, such as the role and responsibility of parents in choosing, supporting, and monitoring the day care services that they use and the effects of child care, particularly group day care, on young children. There are other issues, and I feel perhaps this House should divert its attention to the program that exists and its development.

In investigating these broader issues, the government would be instrumental in soliciting input from both parents and professionals in order to determine current and future directions. Mr. Speaker, I think that would be a preferred way for our House to move. I would encourage all members to defeat this Bill and work together with the government on promoting the facilities we now have.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of this Bill. I speak as an educator, a child psychologist, a parent, and a former user of day care. I've heard from both sides of this House that there are in fact good day cares and some that aren't so good. I would say to you that if your child is in one that is not so good, then there is one too many. We have to be concerned for each and every child in day care as we would be concerned for our own children. Second-best day care is not appropriate for any child.

We also have heard about the concern of parental involvement and responsibility. If you're the single mother of four children, you do not have time to run around and assess five or 10 day cares to see if they are adequate or treat your children properly. In fact, you're busy trying to earn money to support your children. You do not have time and must therefore depend on standards, boards of inquiry, and monitoring.

I would say that we must recognize the value of day care. The first five years of a child's life are the child's most important years. They set the way the child will develop and the kind of human being that person will grow into. It is a time when the child develops a sense of self, a sense of competency, whether in fact the child can trust the world, and whether they become autonomous and initiating individuals. The foundation for the personality of the adult is laid in the first five years of life, and we are deeply concerned about what happens to our children in the

schools. We must be equally concerned about what happens to our children in day care and nursery schools.

Yesterday the Minister of Social Services expressed concern about what happens to children in group care. I would suggest that if she was really concerned, she'd be present today to hear this debate. I would also suggest that she ensure that there be adequate standards in terms of the child/staff ratio, environmental and educational resources, and the qualifications of staff to ensure that children receive the best care possible. I'm certain that a loving attitude towards children is certainly necessary in child care workers, but it is not sufficient to meet the needs of the child. The child care worker must have knowledge of varying developmental patterns of children and how children think and relate to themselves and to their world. If they do not understand that, then they are unable to appropriately deal with different children that work through different developmental patterns and experiences.

I also think that when we look at what happens in day cares we have to see how the workers work with conflict, how children interact with each other, and how children interact with their environment. For example, I heard of a day care in which, after a three-year-old child had built an intricate tower of blocks, the workers said, "Time to clean up your mess now and put everything away." Think of what that does to the child's sense of self and self-esteem. We also have to look at how workers deal with conflict between children. Do they send them out of the room until they've settled down? Do they teach children about problem-solving techniques, how to live and share with each other, and to know another person's experience in this world?

If we're going to ensure the best kind of care for our children, I believe we must have low child/staff ratios so that the unique needs of each child can be met and an intimate relationship with the child can be developed. In fact, our child care workers are on the front line for picking up the indications of neglect and abuse in children. Child care workers need to work closely with children to know that and to deal with what is sometimes disruptive, violent, and irritating behavior and see that it is in fact an indication of the unmet needs of that child, be that neglect or abuse.

MR. SPEAKER: I hesitate to interrupt the member, but in view of the hour, I wonder if she might be willing to entertain a motion to adjourn.

MS LAING: So moved.

[The House recessed at 5:30 and resumed at 8 p.m.]

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 18: Mr. Bradley]

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to continue where I left off yesterday afternoon in terms of some of my comments. I was commenting on some of the remarks by the Member for Edmonton Strathcona and the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark.

Finally, for the Member for Edmonton Strathcona, he mentioned his interest in solar research. He'd be very interested to know that the provincial government will be building a solar and wind research facility in the constituency of Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

I want to turn to some of the remarks made by the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark. He made some interesting observations with regard to financial institutions. With regard to the Treasury Branch, perhaps he's not aware, but it is a depositor-based financial institution. It doesn't have government funds in it; there are assets of some \$2.5 billion in the Treasury Branches.

He also made comments that the government should look at the green paper tabled by the hon. federal minister Mrs. McDougall. I don't know if he had an opportunity to look at the position and policy statement made by this government, but I would recommend to him looking at the position and policy statement enhancing the Alberta capital market in terms of what the initiatives of this government have been to look at strengthening the financial institutions and the capital market in western Canada, particularly Alberta.

Then the hon. member went on to discuss that he didn't like ministers of this government — and maybe I should quote from what he said. He said:

On many occasions I've heard ministers of this government defend Alberta and their government programs by saying that we spend more money on these programs than any other provincial government in this country. I don't want to hear a government in Alberta saying that.

He goes on to say:

I and the people of my constituency want to hear this government say that we spend less money... than any other government in this country.

Mr. Speaker, as a representative of his party, is he suggesting that we should not continue to have our high level of expenditures for hospitals, education, and social services? Is he suggesting that we should spend less money in those very important areas where we're providing very important services to the people of Alberta?

Then, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark made some comments with regard to economic diversification and suggested that perhaps this government has not done enough or in some way had failed with regard to economic diversification in the province. I think we have a very good record there, a very good success story and I'd like to review some of the things we've done in this government over the past number of years.

We put in place a tax regime which is advantageous to investors in this province. I've heard the hon. Leader of the Opposition on occasion rail against what he perceives as disparity between personal income tax and corporate income tax, but we've made some deliberate moves. We've reduced the income tax rate in this province with regard to manufacturing and processing income from 11 percent to 5 percent. That is a very deliberate move in terms of making this province a more advantageous place for investors to look at. With regard to the small business rate for

manufacturing and processing income, that's been reduced from 5 percent down to zero.

In terms of looking at investors, we've also put forward the small business equity corporations program, the Alberta Opportunity Company, Vencap, and the Alberta stock savings plan, all initiatives looking at attracting and making Alberta an advantageous place to invest. In terms of research in other areas, we set up the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research. We are bringing first-class world medical scientists to Alberta, and there is going to be a spin-off effect from having that critical mass of research scientists in that medical area. We have the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority, a world-class group of people looking at our heavy oil and oil sands. There has been a tremendous spin-off from that in terms of Alberta's position in a worldwide sense, in terms of having the expertise and the research done here in developing heavy oil, oil sands, or oil shales. We're called upon all the time from all over the world in terms of that cutting edge research we have built up there. We have funding for the Farming for the Future program, and we have the Alberta Research Council.

In terms of the high technology industries, in this province there are now some 10,000 people employed in the high-tech industry. Just in the high technology electronics area we have in this province — some through government assistance and initiatives — the Centre for Frontier Engineering Research; LSI Logic; the University of Calgary supercomputer, one of three in Canada; the Alberta Microelectronic Centre; Alta-Can Telecom Incorporated; the Alberta Laser Institute, a telecommunications research centre established in 1985 between Bell-Northern Research and the University of Alberta; a microchip design and fabrication facility; Electronics Industry Information Centre; Electronics Test Centre; Chembiomed, a company which was formed to manufacture commercial chemical products for medical use, including blood typing agents using clone cells and synthetic complex sugars.

We have the Bell-Northern Research Ltd. laboratory. We have Northern Telecom Canada Limited, NovAtel Communications, Nortech Surveys, Myrias Research Corporation, Global Thermoelectric power systems, and General Systems Research. These are all very important areas of high technology in this province.

From where we were in 1971, we now have 52 percent of the petrochemical industry in Canada located in this province. That's got to be diversification. One could go on and list many of the very different types of products in terms of the petrochemical industry in this province, but it would take some time to go over that very exhaustive and extensive list.

We also have done some interesting things in the forestry sector. The Pelican Spruce Mills Ltd. facilities have oriented strandboard, utilizing our aspen. We have the Blue Ridge plant, a medium-density fibreboard plant, and the recently announced Millar Western pulp mill in the Whitecourt area, which is going to be utilizing our hardwoods and our aspen in terms of pulping, which is really a significant breakthrough, given the amount of aspen forest we have in this province.

In the food processing industry, we see Hostess Foods at Taber; Richardsons Foods in Claresholm; Banner Gelatin at Olds, in vitamins and pharmaceuticals; Krahn's Dressings in Calgary; and Alpha dairy's Medicine Hat cheese plant. There are a number of other things that have happened in the food processing industry with the Canada-Alberta Nutri-

tive Processing Assistance Agreement. We have vanadium extraction from the spent catalyst at the Syncrude plant, and we have Plasti-Fab Ltd. in Calgary using expanding polystyrene.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been very extensive diversification, in my judgment, in this province. Also, we've always had a difficulty transporting our products out of this province in terms of the freight rates. We've set up Alberta Intermodal Services, which is giving us a break on containerized products. We also have AC Electronics for light-rail vehicles. This was an agreement with Siemens of Germany to adopt alternating current technology to light-rail vehicles constructed as a prototype for testing in Alberta and to transfer this technology to Alberta upon completion of that project.

We've had some interesting research with regard to coal water fuel, an effort to determine suitability of Alberta coals and to determine if it could be pipelined from a preparation plant located in Alberta.

There are a number of other initiatives, but there are some statistics I'd like to go over in terms of economic diversification in this province. In the period from 1971 to 1985 there was a 50 percent increase in Alberta's share of the total Canadian manufacturing output. That has to be very significant. The value of manufacturing shipments increased from \$2 billion in 1971 to \$16.1 billion in 1985. The average annual rate of growth of our manufacturing shipments has been an increase of 16 percent over that period versus the Canadian average of 12 percent. From 1971 to 1985 there was a 45 percent increase in employment in the manufacturing sector.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we've done quite a bit in this province. We can be proud of our record in terms of diversifying the economy. It has been a major effort, and I think this government has done a very good job. That's not to say there aren't more things we should be looking at, but I think the record I've just enunciated speaks for itself in terms of diversification.

Mr. Speaker, I'd now like to make some remarks on my constituency, which I had intended to do before the remarks from the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark and the Member for Edmonton Strathcona spurred me to talk about some other subjects.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Pincher Creek-Crowsnest is a very diverse one. It has mountains and foothills and prairies. It has a very different economy in terms of what goes on there than most constituencies in the province. To some degree it's a microcosm of what takes place in the province. There has been forestry, coal mining, recreation industries, logging, natural gas processing plants located there and, of course, the backbone of Alberta, the agricultural industry.

We've had some difficult economic times, particularly in the Crowsnest Pass area of the constituency. We've seen a decline in coal mining. We've also seen, because of the forest resource but also because of economic conditions, some very serious problems in terms of the logging industry, with two sawmills not operating at this time. We did have a telecommunications manufacturing plant in the Crowsnest Pass operated by Phillips Cables, but unfortunately, due to the declining need for that product in terms of Canadian and international markets, that plant recently closed. These were all major employers of people in the Crowsnest Pass, and there is a significant unemployment problem there.

I'd like to review what has perhaps happened in the coal area, because that was where the major employment has

been in the Crowsnest Pass, an area which is in significant difficulty not only on the Alberta side but also on the B.C. side. In 1978 Coleman Collieries was operating at full steam and had about 650 employees. Over the period from '78 to '83 that company reduced its work force, and the mines finally closed. It was a significant loss in terms of the economy of the Crowsnest Pass.

Fortunately, at the same time, on the British Columbia side of the border there were some major new coal mine developments proceeding, with Westar resources, the Greenhill mine, the Byron Creek Collieries, the Line Creek mine, and the Fording Coal company. That seemed to take up the slack in terms of employment. A number of residents in the Crowsnest Pass were able to find employment on the British Columbia side of the border. But with declining oil prices, the British Columbia coal mining industry has seen some very difficult times, and there have been a number of layoffs on the B.C. side of the border and that has of course affected my constituents on the Alberta side.

Recently, in April, Byron Creek Collieries announced a 60 percent reduction in its work force, laying off some 110 people. About 60 percent of those live in the Crowsnest Pass, Alberta, side of the boundary. Recently the Line Creek mine announced a further 100-man reduction. We've seen a number of people laid off over the past few years and recently, and it's a very significant concern in terms of the economic outlook of the area.

What has caused these layoffs, Mr. Speaker? It has been basically world economic conditions. There has been a decline in the oil price, which has slowed down or reversed conversion from oil to coal, and that's been a major factor. There's also been the world economic recession. In terms of the Japanese steel market, which is a major purchaser of metallurgical coal, there has been a decline in steel production which obviously has also affected the shipments for metallurgical coal. So there's a very competitive marketplace out there. At the same time, there has been an increase in coal mines throughout the world. So the companies who are operating, who employ my constituents, have experienced reductions in volumes and in price, and in order to meet that competitive marketplace, they've had to lay off a number of their employees and become more efficient.

There have been some brighter things happening in the coal area, though, in the last period of time Manalta Coal, which is Canada's largest coal mining company, which is headquartered here in Alberta, bought Coleman Collieries assets and formed a company called Chinook Coal. I've met with them, and they've advised me that they are committed in the longer term to reopening coal mines on the Alberta side of the border. But to do that they would have to ensure that the market is there, and it would make a long-term project for them.

Other coal properties in the area are owned by Home Oil and Consolidated Coal. They've had the plan to mine coal at Grassy Mountain, but world economic conditions have forced them to shelve those plans. There have been at least two occasions in the last ten years when they have dusted off those plans and it looked like they were going to proceed, but again world economic conditions intervened.

One of the interesting aspects about coal in terms of what I hear from my constituents is why aren't we shipping more coal to the marketplace in eastern Canada? There have been a number of studies done. Basically, transportation freight rates have been a major concern. It's much more expensive for the users of coal in eastern Canada to buy

western coal because of the higher transportation costs. There are some advantages to them in using our coal. It has lower sulphur content, and it would reduce the acid rain problem. There have been a number of task forces set up by the Alberta government, one with the Ontario government, in terms of looking at increased use of Alberta coal in the Ontario market. Another one set up by the Environment minister is looking at the use of low-sulphur coal and what benefits that would have to Canada.

I've looked at this question of coal and how we could become more competitive and open up new markets for western Canadian coal and Alberta coal in particular, and in particular coal in the Crowsnest Pass. There has been some very interesting research taking place in terms of upgrading of coal, removing some or most of the impurities increasing the heat value of coal per volume shipped. These are called coal beneficiation processes I've called it coal upgrading I think there is room for us in Alberta to look at coal upgrading facilities, which could make us much more competitive in terms of not only eastern Canadian markets but also offshore markets particularly in terms of thermal coal. Some of the statistics I've heard from this research is that you can get as much as three times the heat value per unit shipped of volume. You can remove the ash and the other impurities, and it's not that significant a cost in terms of the coal upgrading process. I think now is the time for us to look seriously at this type of initiative which could make us much more competitive in terms of the eastern Canadian and world markets. We'd be able to do that, I think, without having to subsidize freight rates.

I've discussed the coal industry and the economy of the Crowsnest Pass, Mr. Speaker and certainly we have some structural problems there in terms of the Crowsnest Pass economy. It's going to require the efforts of individuals municipal officials the provincial government departments and agencies, and the federal government to look at the economy in the Crowsnest Pass to see where we can go from here in terms of the longer term because there is a significant level of unemployment there and I think we have to look at the future of this community and what we can do to ensure its continued viability.

Mr. Speaker, there are some employment initiatives taking place in the constituency at this point in time which will employ some of my constituents. The Oldman dam project is going to create significant employment opportunities over the next period of years. We've encouraged local employment in terms of the contracts for that specific project and I'm hopeful that it will pick up the slack in the intervening years prior to either new coal mining coming on or some new industry being able to be located in the Crowsnest Pass. We also will be removing the Blairmore coal slack piles. That will not only improve the esthetics of the community in the Crowsnest Pass but will also provide opportunities for local employment.

One of the other things we can look at in terms of future industry in the Crowsnest Pass is the tourism industry. We have significant historical resources. The province has invested in the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre. I'm advised that although it has only been open a little over a year this weekend they expect to have their 100,000th visitor to that centre which is very significant for a facility that's only been up and operating this short period of time. We also have the Leitch Collieries interpretive centre.

There are some other things taking place in the community. The businessmen in downtown Coleman are looking at improving the business community, looking at the historic

aspects of that coal mining town to see whether it cannot be restored to its 1920s coal mining community theme. I think there is a unique opportunity there in terms of Alberta to do that. Given the nature of that community, we could make that area into a major Canadian tourism attraction. I don't think there's the type of mix anywhere else in this province or in western Canada that that community has in terms of bringing together historical resources and also looking at the tourism opportunities. Of course, in the southwestern Alberta region we have Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, which is proceeding, a major investment by Alberta Culture, Fort Macleod and their downtown historic scene, the Cardston Remington collection, Waterton park, and the developments that will be taking place at Westcastle. So there are some great opportunities there.

One other issue I'd like to comment on, Mr. Speaker — I recognize that perhaps I've gone on at length — was raised in the question period today. It was with regard to the ERCB hearing regarding Southcastle and their approval of an exploratory well by Shell Canada Resources. One of the things that I recognize in terms of trying to ensure that there are continued employment opportunities for my citizens is that there are resources in the area which can be utilized, whether they be natural gas resources or logging. It seems that the same groups come and attack every proposal we have which will provide some employment for my constituents. The first was after we had the disastrous pine bark beetle infestation in the Crowsnest forest. It was at Scarpe Creek. The Alberta Wilderness Association said that that is the last piece of wilderness in that southwestern corner of the province and we've got to do something to preserve that. So the Alberta government looked at that, and what we decided to do was to leave all those dead trees in the Scarpe Creek valley, which is one valley up from the Jutland valley. We left those trees, we didn't log them.

Then there was a proposal to log in the Hidden Creek area, and that was the last wilderness area in southwestern Alberta. Now we have this very important exploration program by Shell to extend the life of the Shell-Waterton gas field to ensure that about 250 people in my constituency are employed into the 1990s, and now that is the last pristine wilderness left in southwestern Alberta. I'm not sure where the next wilderness is going to be, Mr. Speaker, but it's very important to my constituents that exploration be allowed to extend the life of that particular gas field.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I have spoken at length. There are some other remarks I would like to make, I am sure I will have other opportunities in the House as the days go on.

Thank you.

MR. GIBEAULT: I am pleased to respond this evening to some of the initiatives that were contained in the throne speech of last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, but before I do so, I hope you will allow me to offer my congratulations as well on your election as Speaker and to say that with the attributes you have demonstrated over the first few days, the first few days I've been sitting in this Chamber, I suspect those talents will stand us all in good stead as we address the many public issues that will come before us in the months ahead.

Mr. Speaker, while I think there were some worthwhile elements in the throne speech, I have to say that overall it does not give me very much cause for optimism. The riding I represent, Edmonton Mill Woods, is a young and vibrant community. I think I typify that in my young age

of 33 years. Many of the people who have moved to Mill Woods are young couples and families who believe that that's a community where they can establish some roots, own their own home, raise their own family in a safe and prosperous and growing community.

It's a community that's composed of many people from different nations around the world. They probably have the most active and dynamic community leagues in the city of Edmonton, if not the province, and the community leagues in Mill Woods have continued to play and will continue to play in the future a very central role in establishing educational and cultural and recreational facilities for the people of our constituency.

Many people in our community donate very many hours to the community leagues and the various services that they offer to the constituents in Edmonton Mill Woods. I think, Mr. Speaker, that that's an impressive indicator to me of the kind of level of caring that people in our constituency have about their own community and the kind of community they want it to become for their children and their children's children. These are the people who elected me as their representative in this Legislature, and for conferring upon me that honour, I want to express to them my deepest appreciation.

I held my first general constituency meeting in Mill Woods on June 11, Mr. Speaker, just prior to the throne speech, for the express purpose of giving my constituents an opportunity to express to me their concerns about the provincial government. They gave me an earful, and that's not the first meeting. That will be only the first of many, because it's my intention to try to represent the community of Mill Woods, to have a regular meeting prior to every session of the Legislature to gather their concerns and, as well, to have a meeting after every session to report back to them as to what has been accomplished.

The constituency of Mill Woods, as I said, is a very cosmopolitan one. We have people from around the world who have chosen to make it their home. Just in my own block my neighbour to my immediate left is a Chinese family, to their left there is a family who comes from Greece, and beside them is a family that comes from Korea. I appreciate that that gives me an opportunity to really get a sense of different perspectives and visions of the world that I might not otherwise have, living in a very homogeneous community.

It's a community, Mr. Speaker, that has a very strong sense of its own identity. The people identify with Mill Woods. It's a community that's a little bit separated from other parts of the city of Edmonton by an industrial area, and people have a very close affinity for their own community. But I'd have to say that with all the people who have come to live in Mill Woods — and there are many, as I said — many of them have come from regimes that do not enjoy the kind of democratic rights that we do here in this country. There are people, for example, who have come from Chile, a very sizable community, as refugees. They elected a democratic government there and through the brutality of the military were forced to flee.

I have to say that we've heard from the present government a lot of nice things about multiculturalism, Mr. Speaker. By and large, that has just meant a lot of opportunities to hear cultural activities of singing and dancing, which I enjoy as much as the next person, but if we're serious about something like multiculturalism, it seems to me we have to go beyond that. The people of my community, whether they are new arrivals, people of colour, or people like

myself who were born in this province, are offended that this government cannot take the initiative to join the boycott of the other provinces against the products of apartheid.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that the people in Edmonton Mill Woods are a very industrious people, but many of them are suffering very severely from the problem of unemployment. The situation is causing people to lose their homes in many cases. It's causing tremendous family tensions. It's causing a great deal of anguish, in short I was encouraged recently when I heard the Minister of Manpower quoted as saying that the only acceptable level of unemployment was zero percent. That was such a refreshing change from the remarks of his predecessor.

However, in the throne speech there were virtually no initiatives in terms of new employment programs, so I'm left to conclude, Mr. Speaker, that that was only so much rhetoric. I'm looking forward to the Minister of Manpower following me. Hopefully he will be introducing some new initiatives that I can go back and tell to the carpenters and pipefitters and tradespeople of all kinds and others that are unemployed so that we can give them a little bit of hope. I have to say that unless that's forthcoming, the performance of the government really has not been adequate and satisfactory whatsoever. These are skilled and experienced people, Mr. Speaker, people who have been working for years, people who are proud of the fact that they can support themselves and their family without handouts from anybody. Also, there are a lot of young people in my constituency who are looking forward to working and making a contribution to our society, yet the economic opportunities simply are not there.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest that the government go back to the drawing board and come back and present some bold and new initiatives. If they're short on ideas, they're welcome to borrow ours, because we didn't copyright any of them.

I'd have to say that while we in Mill Woods have some of the newest schools in the province, as a new community we have dedicated staffs and involved parents and some of the keenest students anywhere. I've been to some of them already, and I hope to have a chance to meet the staff and the students of the rest of them in the not-too-distant future. There is, however, no elementary school yet in the Daly Grove community even though there's been a survey by the parents to show the definite need for such a facility. There is also a need for another junior high school in our community. This has been a long time in coming, and there are no plans for that yet. So I would like to suggest to the Minister of Education, who I see is not here — perhaps she'll read my comments in *Hansard*, but I'd encourage her to take another look at the regulations regarding new school construction, to ensure that the educational needs of the students in all our communities are met.

Another area of concern to the people in Edmonton Mill Woods is the question of taxes. People in our community can read as much as anyone the regular reports in the press of the loopholes that the wealthy people in our society are using, time after time, to escape paying their fair share of the taxes. And when I looked at the Budget, Mr. Speaker, I noticed that the government is planning to collect 13 percent more from individuals in '86-87 than they did in '85-86 and 15 percent less from the corporations. The government seems to be determined to make an unfair situation even more unfair.

In terms of housing, Mr. Speaker, in Mill Woods much of it is mortgaged by Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation.

I discovered during the last election campaign that Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation in some areas of my constituency and particularly Ridgewood and Burnewood, two of the newer communities, is almost a dirty word. It seems like this provincial agency which was set up to meet the housing needs of people in this province is doing at this time as much as it can to force people suffering from the economic recession and from unemployment out of their homes. There are many examples of that. There's one fellow, for example, I know who is a professional engineer. He's been out of work for a number of years. Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation is unwilling to accept the meager housing allowance that is allowed him from Alberta Social Services, so he's in a situation where a modest mortgage payment is not entirely able to be met. Alberta Home Mortgage seems to be intent on throwing him out of his house rather than trying to show some sort of flexibility to allow him and his family to stay in the community until such time as the economic situation improves.

Another issue of concern to the people in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of another landfill site in our area. While this is a decision that has to be resolved by the [municipal] government, I have to say that the provincial government has been aware of this and has done nothing at all in its throne speech to indicate that they're willing to assist the municipalities like Edmonton that have to deal with the situation of solid waste management. So I would encourage the respective ministers to come forward soon, because the issue is pressing in Edmonton, with an alternative to indicate that they are willing to show some leadership with the municipalities, some co-operative work. We've got cost-sharing programs with roadways, with social services, and a number of areas with our municipalities. Perhaps the time has come to show some leadership in terms of the cost-sharing alternative with municipalities for modern, contemporary, state-of-the-art, environmentally safe alternatives to landfills.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Edmonton Mill Woods is largely composed of working people, and many of them have recently told me of their concern with the shabby labour laws of this province. We've alluded to some of those before, but the people of Mill Woods have come to see them in particular in light of the recent Gainers strike and we've had some discussion of that before. My constituents want laws that are balanced, laws that are not stacked in favour of unscrupulous employers. They want laws that prevent scabs from stealing their jobs. As they joined the thousands of other people that demonstrated their concern here last Thursday, they want action on those laws now.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that the women in my constituency are deeply disappointed by this government's attitude towards women. They've appointed a token women's council headed by someone who has no involvement in the women's movement and whose major concern seems to be having a "strong man" on the council. This only serves to bring ridicule on us as Albertans. If the government were really concerned about addressing the problems facing women of this province, they'd bring forward solid proposals on day care, pay equity, and affirmative action. These are essential. We are never going to have political and social equality for women until we have economic equality.

Mr. Speaker, a number of constituents have advised me of their deep concerns for world peace and about living in the shadow of the nuclear threat. They're concerned about themselves, of course, and their children and their children's

children. It's hard to be optimistic and upbeat, as the government always encourages us to be, when we have this hanging over our heads. They want their governments to be working toward a safer, more peaceful world for all of us. They told me that they have felt betrayed by our provincial government working in collusion with the federal government in allowing the testing of the horrible nuclear weapon system, the cruise missile, over this province. It's inconsistent to me for this government to be decrying on the one hand picket line violence and on the other hand to be endorsing the testing of the most violent weapons ever known in this land.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude my comments this evening, I have to say that one of the reasons I offered myself for public service was because of a sense of social justice. I was seeing many, many people being hurt by the policies of this government. I saw policies that forced families to beg for food at food banks. I've had an opportunity to work in developing countries in Africa. You see the Canadian equivalent of beggars on the street in many of those countries, and it's a disgrace on all of us. I could not stand by idly and hope that someone else would take some action about that situation.

Now that the people of Edmonton Mill Woods have placed their trust and confidence in me as their member in the Legislative Assembly, I want to dedicate myself to working with my colleagues here to make our province one that is looked up to for its enlightened social and economic policies. I challenge all the members of the House to work with me in ensuring that changes are made that will put Albertans back to work and that we in this province can develop a reputation as the number one province with the best track record in dealing with people with justice and dignity.

Thank you.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Speaker of the House. I don't do it out of any sense of obligation, I do it because I think you will conduct yourself in a fair and evenhanded manner. Certainly you have lived up to that at this point. I might say that there's only one tougher job than yours, and that's mine. I might also say that, as you know, if I had to guess as to who the next Speaker would have been, I'm sure it would have been you.

It is with great pleasure that I rise today, Mr. Speaker, in response to the Speech from the Throne. As the first Member for the new constituency of Calgary Montrose, I take great pride in assuming the responsibility as their representative in this Assembly. Therefore, I believe it is important to reflect with the members here today on our role as members of the Legislative Assembly, but first I would like to share a little history with you.

There are four generations of Ormans to live in Alberta, and I have deep roots in this province. My forefathers immigrated from Ireland to Alberta to avoid religious and political persecution. They came here to enjoy Alberta's beauty, and they came here to enjoy Alberta's bounty. They came here with a commitment and a determination to build a better place to live and raise their children. Along with many others, Mr. Speaker, they accomplished their goal. Alberta is a magnificent place to be, and it does not stop here. It is our duty to carry on that commitment. It is a commitment to be made by us all to carry on the tradition of welcoming new Canadians to our province and encouraging them to contribute to the building of Alberta's future.

I would like to now turn to the issues that surfaced during the election campaign, the issues that surfaced in my riding of Calgary Montrose. The thorough campaigners here today will have spent a significant amount of time door knocking. As the successful campaigners here today know, there is no mistaking the issues on the doorsteps of their constituency. I've learned a valuable lesson door knocking, Mr. Speaker, and that lesson is not to guess about the issues in that riding. No amount of political savvy will substitute for standing on the doorsteps and listening to the residents. We should door knock on a regular basis, because the issues today may not be the burning issues of tomorrow or the next year. Effective representatives cannot door knock every four years and expect to be in touch. Our role and responsibility is to listen and to respond to our constituents' concerns and bring their views to this great Assembly. If we are in touch with our constituents, we do not need to be influenced by others on the doorsteps of this Assembly.

I would like to share some of the current concerns expressed to me door knocking, and I'm sure they don't significantly differ from those of other members here tonight. The number one concern in the constituency of Montrose is jobs, keeping the ones they have and finding the ones they don't have. Everyone realizes that the state of the economy is tied to the state of our base industries, energy and agriculture. These industries today are affected by an unfortunate downturn in the world prices for hydrocarbons and food products. But those facts do not make it easier for the unemployed. There is no silver lining in the unemployment statistics, Mr. Speaker.

First and foremost is the desire of the Montrose constituents to move away from the reliance on Alberta's two base industries, energy and agriculture. There is no suggestion that we abandon the foundations of our economy, and there is no suggestion that the initiatives in the throne speech of this new government will not remain, as we are committed to the sectors and to diversifying our economy. The new Whitecourt pulp and paper mill, the upgraded mill at Grande Prairie, and the Aldersyde magnesium plant are three excellent initiatives by this government, and rest assured, there will be more. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, with jobs a major concern, I look forward to all members' support for initiatives by this government and the Department of Manpower to facilitate job creation and retention.

I would now like to turn to some of the local issues, Mr. Speaker. Good representatives know that local issues can sometimes be as emotional as the broader economic issues. At the beginning of my nomination campaign, the need for a new high school was a most important issue. Due to the good graces of this government, that new high school is now a reality, and it reflects the responsiveness of this government's needs to young Albertans in this province.

Speaking of young Albertans, Mr. Speaker, an important and emotional issue is the quality of day care facilities. In my constituency of Calgary Montrose, where there is a high incidence of both parents working, a concern exists for the care of children in their parents' absence. I listened with great interest this afternoon to the debate on the issue of day care facilities. It is my commitment as the representative for Calgary Montrose to monitor the shaping of day care policy in Alberta.

Another current topic in Montrose is the need for a northeast park. Northeast Calgary is the only quadrant of the city that does not have a recreational park. In today's society we must make available time from our schedules

to spend with our children. It is not asking too much to have a park for recreational time spent with our families. There is no greater joy or responsibility, Mr. Speaker, than spending time with our families and our children.

I would for the moment like to return to the issue of this province's economy, particularly the energy business. Door knocking did tell me that the constituents of Calgary Montrose in one way or another are dependent a great deal on a healthy oil and gas sector. If the members were present here Tuesday evening last, they would have heard my remarks about our responsibility to a healthy energy and agricultural sector. Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, the responsibility of this sector belongs not only to the province, not only to the municipal level of government, but to the federal government as well. In this regard, I do not believe that the central government is doing all they should.

The lifeblood of the small producer is equity investment. Equity investment, for the most part, comes from taxable dollars looking for a home. To ensure the health of the small oil and gas entrepreneur, we must ensure that taxation policies of both levels of government are equitable when competition is stiff for investment dollars. Right now, Mr. Speaker, it is inequitable. Briefly, and by way of example, the tax regime for the mining industry offers greater tax benefits through a super depletion, a feature stripped away from the oil and gas investment by the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau. What is the result of that? We must ask Albertans to accept a deficit budget. The members for Edmonton Meadowlark and Edmonton Norwood have many ideas about the return to Albertans of that \$57 billion we talk about I ask: where were they when their federal cousins were voting in the petroleum gas revenue tax, the very instrument that syphoned off billions of Albertans' dollars? It's no wonder the members opposite cringe at the reference to past history. They may forget, Mr. Speaker. Albertans won't. It will be a frosty Friday before I listen to NDP and Liberal policy on energy matters.

Our current problems in the natural gas business will not be cured by price stabilization. Our problems will be cured by free competition for a market share, both in the United States and in Toronto. The adjacent border price is an obstacle to that end, and it should be removed. We ask for no special consideration, not a welfare state for the energy business, as the Member for Edmonton Strathcona might suggest, just fairness and equity in the marketplace. I do, however, share the view that serious consideration should be given to total deregulation of natural gas, particularly with the imposition of the adjacent border price. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, let me assure the House that we on this side of the Assembly will be measured and deliberate in our judgment and make the best decision for all Albertans.

I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that I may have moved from the original context of my comments, and I make no apology. The treatment of Albertans by the Liberals and the NDP is an extremely emotional issue here and one we will not soon forget. As Albertans we simply want to build on that legacy of our forefathers, and that restated is to make Alberta a good place to live where equity prevails. Thank the good Lord for the Peter Lougheeds of this province who stood up so firmly for Alberta's rights.

I will conclude, Mr. Speaker, by reminding the members here today that we are merely proxies in this Assembly. It is our role to be in touch with our constituents, know the issues, and be aware of their sentiments during the decision-making process. It should be our commitment to work hard,

be dedicated, and be responsive to the needs of the people who sent us here. They have done their part. Now it is up to us to do ours.

Thank you.

MR. McEACHERN: It is with great pride that I rise to make my reply to the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate you on your appointment and look forward to exploring this new-found democracy together with yourself and the members of this Assembly. I'll get back to that theme about new-found democracy in Alberta later. I wish, through you, to thank the people of Edmonton Kingsway for electing me as their member in this Assembly. I have to admit it took a little persuasion. I had to run three times: 1979, 1982 and, finally, a third time lucky in 1986. I started door knocking in Kingsway in 1977, so this is really the culmination of a 10-year program by myself and a large number of my supporters. I thank them very much for that and all the people that voted for me. I would like to also say to all the people of Kingsway, however, whether they voted for me or not, that I intend to work very hard to look after their concerns, whether they be individual concerns or community issues. I also want to say through you, Mr. Speaker, to all the people of Alberta that I intend to be a hardworking member of this Assembly and to try to keep in touch with the concerns of all Albertans.

I may be from an urban riding, but I was born and raised on a farm in the south Peace River district, so I know and understand the problems that many of the rural Albertans have. Mr. Speaker, the residents of Edmonton Kingsway also understand the problems of rural Alberta. As I was door knocking through the last 15 months or so before this campaign, the issue that seemed to get the most attention — barring the one for the need for more opposition, which I'm glad to say they got — was the understanding and sympathy they had for their country cousins. That tells me two things one, that most of the people in the cities of Alberta, and particularly in Edmonton Kingsway, are just a generation or half a generation off the farms, and the other thing it tells me is that they know and understand the neglect that the farmers of this province have felt under 15 years of Tory rule. A sudden notion in the last year, when they've got an election coming, that somehow farming is a number one priority doesn't change that. So agriculture is now our number one priority. Most of the programs announced over the last year have been ad hoc stopgap programs. Okay, some of them are necessary. The farmers certainly needed the help, I don't begrudge them the money. The one supposedly long-term program is the 9 percent, \$2 billion, low-interest loan program.

Let's take a little look at that program. I know the details aren't all out yet, but I've been trying to read what's available on it and trying to figure out where the government is going with it. There were some questions to the minister the other day, and he sort of half answered them. I don't know where you get the \$2 billion. Certainly this government had no intentions of giving farmers \$2 billion. But usually when they announced it, they forgot to say that it was over 20 years. But the budget says it's \$25 million. Twenty-five million dollars times 20 years is only half a billion dollars, not \$2 billion. Besides, I don't think that's the way they meant it. Are you trying to say that commercial banks are going to lend farmers \$2 billion in one year, two years, 20 years? Is \$25 million going to finance that? Just where is that program going?

There's a fundamental flaw, of course, in the whole thing. What commercial bank is going to loan farmers money,

with the prices of farm produce the way they are? If the farmer is in trouble and needs money, a commercial bank isn't going to give it to him, the Alberta government isn't going to give it to him. The \$25 million won't go anywhere. So I think it's a sham, Mr. Speaker. I really think that if the people in rural Alberta had understood just what a cheap scam the whole idea was to buy votes, they would've voted out all the Tories and we'd have had this whole House filled up with New Democrats.

The budget was brought in the other night, Mr. Speaker, so of course I can't resist making a few comments, being the critic of the Treasury. The budget, of course, is right in line with the Speech from the Throne. I find it really hard to believe the bravado with which the minister of the Treasury announced all the things that were in the budget. In fact, it was downright bragging about these wonderful things that were in the budget, but the facts in the budget don't bear that out. A \$2.5 billion deficit? Probably underestimated. Before the year is done, \$3 billion, \$3.5 billion? The economic situation in Alberta is terrible. We have high unemployment and very few prospects in the oil industry. I don't see where the bravado and bragging is warranted. We're in economic trouble, and this government doesn't seem to have learned anything about that.

This thing about the price — you keep saying that the floor price won't rescue the oil industry. I would like to say that this government has spent most of its time — its main and central economic theme over the last 10 years has been to get world prices for our oil. Those bad guys in Ottawa wouldn't give us world price, right? Our former Premier fought for world price for this commodity for this province, right? Wonderful. We got it in June 1985, and a few months later OPEC killed us. We're dead, we're dead in the water. It's obvious. The conference board and the C. D. Howe institute both said that we're in real economic trouble, and if you guys haven't realized that yet, you'd better start waking up. It would seem to me that a less vicious fight with Ottawa would have been in order, a more calm approach. I remember that whenever the Premier of Alberta was about to negotiate with — if you could call it negotiations between those two — Mr. Trudeau on oil prices, Notley used to give him the advice you're going to lose the fight, because the federal government has the right to set the price.

So why don't you try to get some quid pro quo? Why don't you try to get some trade-offs? Why don't you argue that the federal government had better see to it that CN and CP fix up the rail system of this country, buy some hopper cars, fix up some of the elevators, and get our wheat to market on time. But there was never any negotiation on a range of issues. It was always on straight ideological right to have world prices. Now we've got it, and now we're dead. Because make no mistake, the Saudi Arabians can produce oil at such a cheap price that there isn't one company in North America that can compete with it. Why in the world would any nation like Canada that has oil of its own put itself at the whims of a cartel like OPEC, dominated by one country that can outproduce it in oil? A major energy resource like oil cannot be left at the whims of — it's not a free market, it's a controlled market, and it's set up in a way that will kill the Canadian oil industry. I'm getting dry. This is hard work.

That fight, Mr. Speaker, between the Alberta government, a Tory government — you keep trying to lump us together with the Liberals. We didn't have very much to do with the Liberals in this era. It was Pierre. [interjections] No,

no, the big fight was between Pierre Trudeau, the Liberal leader of this country, and Premier Lougheed, the Conservative Premier of this province. We were the only party, while they were having their big fight, that sat down and developed the national energy program that was backed up by all the democratic parties across this country, whereas you guys couldn't even agree with your own federal counterparts and neither could the Liberals across this country.

In any case, Mr. Speaker, that fight got out of hand. It became a contest between two big egos and it got in the way of co-operative federalism, one of the promises of this government when they came in in 1971. For instance, the Liberals bought votes in Ontario by bashing Alberta, we all know that. The Premier of this province always needed a big mandate to fight Ottawa at every election, and so all the local issues got ignored. Small businesses you paid lip service to them but gave them nothing. Farmers you didn't even pay lip service to them, you just neglected them for 10 years. Ordinary people, social services your basic philosophy was to hope to God they'll keep quiet. If there was some noise, you'd throw a few bucks at them at election time and say, "We need a big mandate to fight Ottawa," and it kept down the democratic process in this society until now. Thank God things have changed.

I take no pleasure in the fact that we got clobbered on oil prices, but a bit of prudent planning would have avoided it. So now our economy is in tremendous chaos with no plans on the part of the government as to where to go or what to do with it. We have got a \$15 billion or \$3.5 billion deficit this year. If we have the same next year and the year after, how long is the heritage trust fund going to last? We're in a very difficult situation, and I take no joy in that whatsoever. But the word "chaos" brings to mind — and I'll just digress for a moment, if I may — a story. I guess it was because Grant sort of saw where we were going that he liked this story so much, but he used to tell this joke quite a lot when he was electioneering around the province. It seems there were these three men — one, a doctor, the second an engineer, and the third a politician — arguing about which belong to the oldest profession. The doctor said "Oh, God took a rib from Adam and fashioned Eve. That was an incredible medical miracle. Obviously medicine is the oldest profession." "Oh, no, no," said the engineer "Out of chaos, God created the world, and obviously he created the world before he created Adam. So forget it. That's an incredible engineering feat, and engineering is obviously the oldest profession. The politician kind of quietly said, "Yeah, but who do you think created the chaos?"

I remember Grant saying in a more serious vein, but along the same line in a sense, that he really was worried that the New Democrats would never come to power in this province until the Tories and their multinational friends had milked it dry of its best resources. I don't think he had any idea how fast we were going to get there. We're nearly there now.

If you look at the prospects for the next few years in this province — I take no joy in this, but I think I have to warn the people of Alberta that this is where we are heading. We will see in the next very few years, higher personal income taxes and more tax breaks and incentives to big business, mostly in an ad hoc, short-term manner that will have little positive effect. The trickle-down theory hasn't been working for the last ten years, it isn't going to start now. We will see drastic cuts in social and educational and health programs. We will see a huge borrowing

of money at 12 or 13 percent to finance large deficits while much of our money is tied up in the heritage trust fund and pulls in 8 or 10 percent because much of it is tied up in a way that we can't get it out. We will see a sales tax, increased property taxes, and more tax loopholes for the rich so that they can supposedly gather pools of capital to invest to get the economy moving again. Really, it's time we had some demand-side economics and not supply-side economics. We are in a situation of disaster, and we have no sense of direction or purpose or where we're going to go, according to the budget of this province.

I want to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to speak of one of the programs suggested by the government that I think has great potential, and I hope it works out better than my fears for the agricultural one. That's the \$750 million in long-term loans to the small businesses of this province. I don't know exactly what the terms are going to be, but I hope they work out all right, and I'm hoping the government will look to the small business associations around the province, like the 124th Street business association in Kingsway and the east Edmonton business association; there are many others. Those people, I'm sure, have some ideas that would help to make sure that the legislation works. I fear that we're going to get presented with a *fait accompli*, and I'm a little worried about the terms. But this program does have the potential to help to diversify the economy. It is high time that we started to get our small businessmen moving and help those small and local businesses and depend less on foreign multinationals that have controlled our society for so long.

One of the things that I like about the direction we at least seem to be heading with that program — even though I don't know the details, one thing does seem to be clear that we're not going to have a lot of contracts made with people on vague terms that are not settled yet. I say that because of the Alberta stock savings plan and because this government has many times in the past handed out money to individuals and corporations without first passing the legislation to enable them to do that legally; I'm not sure that's the right word. The MLAs of the province are supposed to control the purse strings; that's what we're elected for. It upsets me incredibly when I find the government running off with government warrants in a big way. I'm going to get back to that in a heavier way later, but I'll just say that on this small business plan at least, it seems that the government is intending to do it the right way: pass the legislation first and then have people apply.

That's different from what they did with the mortgage deductibility plan, for instance. I remember knocking on doors in the '78 and '82 campaigns and finding that people had received a cheque, in some cases two cheques, on the day the election was called, when in fact the Legislature hadn't been sitting and hadn't passed that, and that's wrong. I don't think this government should operate in that way.

Mr. Speaker, the leader of the New Democratic Party took great care during the election to make sure he put forward positive proposals for this Assembly and for this province so that we wouldn't be perceived as being negative, and that's not an easy thing when you're in opposition. It's easy for the public to just perceive the negative sides of it. Often the mike is gone before you get a chance to propose your alternative. So I want to put forward at least a couple of quick alternatives at this stage.

We would have fought for world prices for our oil too. We did; Grant Notley backed the Premier on that fight for world prices. But we wouldn't have put all our eggs in

one basket, and we would have negotiated a broader range of issues at the same time, knowing that the federal government had the clout to do what they were doing. One of the things we would have asked for would have been parity pricing and a sound transportation system for our agriculture instead of selling out the Crow rate and not getting a transportation system that works so that we end up having to buy hopper cars ourselves, build a Prince Rupert terminal, and now subsidize the freight system for our farmers, which is what this government did. We would have of course put together a comprehensive made-in-Canada oil policy that would have allowed us now to ask for a floor price, something that this government doesn't seem to be able to do. Oh, I think they could do it. They should be red faced and embarrassed about it. Certainly all the ill will — we built up tons of ill will with that fight. Now the Premier of this province should paint his red face white and go down to Ottawa to his partner in the Conservative Party, the Prime Minister of this country, and say to him "We need a floor price." I think the reason the Premier doesn't do that is that the multinational companies don't want it. They can let all the exploration industry die in this country and still make money because they can import it from Saudi Arabia and sell it to us at the same high prices we are paying now. But ask the small companies what they think. Just ask the small exploration companies that create most of the jobs what they need. In fact, the Premier often reminds the rest of Canada that they owe us billions of dollars. And there is precedent. Back in the early '70s Ontario was buying our gas at a higher price than world price.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder just how long this government can go on with its ad hoc, short-term approach, the giveaways of taxpayers' money, and where it will lead us. It's difficult to see any light at the end of the tunnel unless we develop some long-term strategies. We've got to get those two basic industries healthy.

There are many differences between our party and the Conservative Party, as everyone knows. A very little story illustrates, I think, that difference. A few years ago Grant Notley was sitting on the heritage trust fund committee and he suggested that the committee should set up an economic council of Alberta to first do an inventory of our resources and then go on to develop policies to suggest to government to help get the economy moving. Just as soon as he mentioned the inventory of our resources, one of the Tory MLAs said, "No, no, Grant you can't do that; that's communism." So what that really tells me is that Tories are saying that you've got to work in the dark that you can't know any of the facts or the basic things that are happening in your society you've just got to react ad hoc to pressures that other people are putting on you. That's wrong, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't get us anywhere. But I submit that that's where this government has been since 1971, and that's where they are still trying to be even now when it's too late to do very much about it but I guess we've got to try.

Mr. Speaker, during the several elections that I've been involved in, I've found myself having to try to explode several myths that the Conservatives and others like to perpetuate. So I want to take a few of those up now. One of them is the term "less government." Everybody likes less government. Mr. Speaker, a nice comparison. In 1982 the Saskatchewan government, which was CCF or NDP almost continuously from 1944 to 1982, had 18 civil servants per 1,000 population. Guess what it was in Alberta after

11 years of Tory rule? It was 28. We have the second most bureaucratic government of the provinces in the country, only Quebec is worse.

Another expression that used to get to me, and a thing that the Tories like to say government shouldn't interfere in the economy. Right? That it's wrong to interfere. What is taking \$14 billion out of circulation doing if it isn't interfering? It's an incredible interference. The question is what you do with it, how you have interfered with it; not whether you will interfere. You will; you do interfere. Even if you do nothing, you interfere. The municipal, provincial, and federal governments together make up about 40 percent of the gross national product. It is not possible to not interfere any more, with the myriad of taxes, social programs, and business involvements that governments have these days. So even if you stay still where you are now, that is a decision that is conscious, and there is interference going on. So the question about whether or not you should interfere is nonsense. It's on whose behalf you interfere. Tories interfere on behalf of multinational corporations and ignore local people, small people, the issues of farmers and ordinary people until election time.

Another expression that bothers me considerably is this word "incentives." We always have to have incentives, but it's always used for the rich, for the big corporations, for big businessmen. I don't mind some incentives for small businessmen. It's about time we had some in this province. But how come you never think about incentives in the context of the working poor, people on social assistance, and people at the lower end of the scale? The incentives for those people, suggested by you people, are almost always either nonexistent or negative we'll cut you off if you don't go to work and do this, that, or the other thing. We expect people to work for \$4 an hour when social assistance will get you more than that, and then we wonder why they don't want to work. I'm not saying lower social assistance, don't fool me. But you've got to have some kind of sliding scale and give those people an incentive so that if they do go to work, they can improve their economic position.

So let's have some incentives built into the whole field. In fact, perhaps it's time in this society now — and I'm really serious about this. I think the Liberals and Conservatives are both ready to talk about this too. It is perhaps time we started to talk about a guaranteed annual income scheme and replace this incredible array we have of hit-and-miss social assistance, taxes and tax loopholes, and the mess we've got right now. Robert Stanfield campaigned on that in 1974, the Liberals have talked about it in recent years, and it's something that we've talked about for several decades.

Mr. Speaker, near the start, in the introduction, I skipped over one thing I meant to do, so I'm going to change direction just slightly for a minute. Most people spend a lot of time talking about their riding, and I'm not going to say a lot about mine, except to say that it has something in the neighbourhood of nine or 10 senior citizens' homes. This is Senior Citizens Week so I would like, through you, Mr. Speaker, to wish that all the seniors in the homes, not only in Kingsway but perhaps in all of Alberta, have health and happiness, particularly in this Senior Citizens Week.

Now I want to get back to the real business of talking about Conservative and New Democratic economic policies and that sort of thing. One other diversion, I guess. It's a very important one, so I shouldn't get back to the economic policies so soon.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a teacher, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention something about the Conservative education

policies, particularly the back to the basics. I'm delighted to see that the Minister of Education is back in the Chamber. At a time in our society when we are becoming more and more diverse and more highly technical, to go back to the basics is wrong. We have more leisure time now, more time for recreation, and more time for the arts, and this government is really saying that we're just going to go back to the basics in our classrooms. It's the wrong timing to do that. It seems to me that it's an excuse to cut back on the funding of education so that school boards will have to pick up more of the money.

I attended an awards night at Ross Shep the other night, and I was really proud of the students crossing the stage, of their accomplishments and their development. After all, I had taught a number of them. But there was something else that bothered me as well, and that was the students who weren't there. Where were they? What were they getting out of the education system? Just very quickly, another aspect of the education system that bothers me some of our schools are too big and too factorylike. My wife and I went to the awards night at one of the small private schools that is a result of dissatisfaction with the large and rather factorylike schools that we sometimes run in this province. We were really impressed with the love and affection shown between the teachers, the students, and the parents. Obviously, something in our public system is missing at times, and I pass those concerns on to the Minister of Education.

I've got two items I want to get to very quickly at the end. One of the things that really bugged me in the campaign — this is getting back to the differences between Tories and New Democrats. What were we doing in this province building a Kananaskis park, a \$40 million project that turned into a \$218 million project, while many of our people in our cities were lined up at food banks? What are we using our tax dollars for in this province? Let's get our thinking and our priorities straight. That got me a lot of mileage in Kingsway, make no mistake. It was one of my favourite themes.

The other thing that I said I would get back to — I'm sorry the Premier has left — is the use of government warrants. This government could've called the Legislature in February and passed a budget for this province. There was no need for this government to plan to spend nearly half a year's budget — \$3.5 billion to \$4 billion, plus the nearly \$1 billion already promised — between June of '85 and April 10 by government warrant, a procedure which is meant for emergency procedures only. I say to this government if you ever try that again in another election, there are enough of us that we will raise such a hue and cry throughout this province that you'll be turfed out of office. It will serve you right.

Mr. Speaker, we've got a much more thriving democracy now, I think, in this Legislature than we ever had before. I just say to the Conservatives if you go on with the kind of theme that was in the budget and in the Speech from the Throne thinking that you can run this province on a corporate style or a kingship style of government forget it. You're into a democracy, and if you don't adapt to that and don't learn to love it, you're going to go down the tube like a bunch of dinosaurs.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, it is with a feeling of humility and honour that I rise to make my maiden speech in this Assembly. Of course, my first remarks must be to congratulate you on your election to the Chair, and

the hon. Member for Lethbridge West and the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight on their election and proposed election as your deputy and as Deputy Chairman of Committees. I know you will bring honour to this Assembly in the discharge of your duties, in the conduct of its business, and the maintenance of its traditions.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend congratulations to all the members of the Assembly who were elected in the recent general election, and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on behalf of all Albertans in the ensuing period of time.

A few days ago the Minister of Agriculture in his maiden speech noted that it was his first speech in this Assembly. Though he had experience at the federal level, his speech was hardly a traditional maiden speech. I guess I'm in somewhat the same position. Maybe the Minister of Agriculture and I can never be maidens, I don't know if a maiden can be a maiden twice. In any event, it's a thing to conjure with.

I am fortunate to represent many of the same constituents that I did as a member of the House of Commons, and I want to thank all the constituents of Drumheller for the honour of being their representative in this Assembly. In particular I'd like to thank the constituents who worked hard and provided me with the necessary encouragement and assistance to make my election to this House possible.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Drumheller is really a microcosm of the province of Alberta. I heard reference earlier this evening that there are two basic industries, agriculture and energy. I guess maybe they were referred to the other way around by that speaker, but I would suggest to the members of the Assembly that there are really three basic industries in our province now, that is, agriculture, energy, and tourism. With this in mind, I will direct most of my remarks to those areas of the throne speech which deal with those vital areas.

First of all, agriculture. I've heard many other speakers address themselves to the importance of agriculture in their constituencies. It's almost like previous remarks today about a certain constituency being the best constituency in the province. I certainly agree with you that it would be counterproductive to get into that type of debate. I do believe that most members — even the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway acknowledged that there was a feeling in his constituency for this basic industry. I would suggest that it is no more true in any other constituency in the province than in Drumheller that agriculture is basic.

We have a large range of agricultural enterprises consisting of ranching and dryland farming, irrigated farming, dairy farming, mixed farming, and grain farming. That has been the foundation. Some of the most productive grain farms in the country are to be found within the boundaries of my constituency. The area has produced many world wheat kings. Probably 80 percent of farming in Drumheller constituency is dryland farming, so you can imagine the difficulties we've suffered over the last two years as a result of the shortage of moisture. These economic hardships have placed many of my constituents in a very difficult position, but not all of them, because basically it's not a new area, like the northern part of the province. We have established farms, but there is the problem with passing the farms on to the next generation, and there is a great amount of debt that is causing problems. That debt is one of high input costs that combined with low commodity prices and unfavourable weather conditions to produce a multitude of finan-

cial stresses and strains, and in many cases it comes down to a question of survival.

I think the statistics speak for themselves. Alberta's farm cash receipts for the first quarter of 1986 are down 13.9 percent from the year before, and this is combined with an increase in farm input costs of 2.4 percent for the same period. There is a squeeze still continuing. In 1985 the value of farm capital in Canada as a whole totalled \$115.3 billion dollars, and that was down 6.3 percent from 1984. So we aren't alone. But because of the climatic conditions we've had for the last two years, I think we are worse off than the national average. The index of farm prices in agriculture for the last month was down 7.6 percent from a year ago.

Those are really frightening statistics, but the Alberta government — and I want to say that we appreciate this — has responded to these problems and has done so in a responsible and measured way. The keystone of that program is the farm credit stability program, which I'm surprised my hon. friend from Edmonton Kingsway couldn't seem to understand, because it seems quite clear to me and to my constituents. He says that we're dealing in a democracy now, I would think that we are in a democracy. The people of Alberta heard the program, they understood the program, and as a result they gave over 50 percent of the vote and three-quarters of the seats to the Progressive Conservative Party. I think that is some type of endorsement, and I don't think it was based on the misunderstanding of any program.

MR. TAYLOR: The other half stayed home.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Well, maybe the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon will produce some type of amendment to our electoral laws that — I've proposed amending the Municipal Government Act in plebiscites. I don't know, maybe that might give him some protection. In any event, I think 51 percent of the vote is a clear and decisive message of the electors of this province that they are reasonably satisfied with what they have seen before and what is being proposed for the future.

MR. TAYLOR: Just keep thinking that way.

MR. SCHUMACHER: We aren't just going to keep thinking it, we're going to do something about it and the first thing is going to be this \$2 billion farm credit stability program. There's nothing mysterious about it. The fact is that the province of Alberta, because of its great credit strength is going to borrow the money at reasonable rates of interest and lend it out at reasonable rates of interest over a long term to the farming community of this province. My hon. friend from Edmonton Kingsway said what's this \$25 million that's being budgeted for? I'm just wondering whether he can grasp the concept that that is going to be an estimate of the difference between what the money is costing the province and what the users of that money will be paying for it. To me there's nothing mysterious about that. Maybe he will read my remarks, I'm sorry he's not here to hear them.

In any event, that program is going to produce up to \$200,000 per farm family unit for up to 20 years at 9 percent or less. We don't know, it depends on conditions. The main thing about it is more the stability aspect rather than the rate, because at least the people will be able to plan on a certain regime and not be subject to the uncertainties and vagaries of the financial markets. For the farmer

at Rumsey or Standard or Lyalta and assorted other communities throughout my constituency, this statement of support by the provincial government comes at a critical time for them, and they're appreciative of that program.

I'm excited also about the review of the Agricultural Development Corporation and the hail and crop insurance plan. The throne speech outlines the government's commitment to an exhaustive and comprehensive consultation with the farmers and the whole community on both these reviews. I think that the record of this government has been very good about consulting with the people before putting in measures that affect their well-being and future, and I'm happy to see that it's being continued. I think the consultative process is most appropriate, and I hope that I can be involved in being part of that process together with other constituents of the Drumheller constituency.

I'm also happy to note that the government is changing the funding formula for drainage and erosion control projects under the Alberta water resources grant program, which would provide 85 percent of the funding. The stated intention of this is to improve rural water management and increase our agricultural land base. There has been concern in the past about our agricultural land base diminishing as a result of our metropolitan areas expanding. It's certainly my experience and my background that gives me a great deal of interest in extending our agricultural land base by considering water problems and projects. Like the hon. Minister of Economic Development and Trade and the hon. Minister of Energy, I was born in Hanna, and we are used to dryland countries. But in the olden days when that area was first settled, there was a much larger population there. Whether through the fact that it was virgin land or different climatic conditions, there was enough water and moisture to raise bumper crops. Then the '30s came along and the area became depopulated. We know that at one stage of our history that was a very fruitful and productive area of our province. All it needs is water. I'm particularly interested in anything that has to do with expanding our agricultural output and our agricultural land base.

Speaking of water, that's one thing that we do lack in the Drumheller constituency, as far as recreational water or expansion of irrigation. I would like to see plans made to increase the use of Fish Lake and Deadhorse Lake and the Red Deer River for recreational purposes and for irrigation projects.

I know from reading past history that governments got into trouble in this province whenever they considered the possibility of interbasin water transfers, but I would hope that this concept would not be completely forgotten. The reason I think it shouldn't be forgotten is that when my father was finished being a farm machinery dealer and a car dealer at Drumheller, he decided that he would become venturesome and took out a homestead near Valleyview. As a matter of fact, he passed away on that homestead, and I think he was very happy that that was the manner of his passing. One of the problems he used to complain to me about was that he could never get the crop in in the spring because it was all wet. It was all flat, and there was always trouble getting rid of the moisture. It seems to me that it would only be sensible to have some drainage there, get the water off the land, and send it down south where it could be used and be more productive in the north. I don't know whether there's anything to that or not. I would think that there could be, and I'd sure like to see it considered in the future.

Mr. Speaker, if I could turn to the area of energy. Of course traditionally and historically Drumheller valley was

the beginning of our energy industry in this province with the coal mining industry. We still have the coal but no industry in the coal mining area.

MR. TAYLOR: The Tory government wrecked those in the '30s too.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Oh, I wouldn't say that. Anybody with any reasonable outlook would recognize that natural gas wrecked it, being much cleaner and cheaper and easier to handle, but the days of coal will come again. It's there, and it's nice to have that in a person's hip pocket.

In any event, energy is certainly the second pillar of our provincial and my constituency's economy. We've got a nice oil field right around Drumheller, the West Drumheller field, and lots of gas out in the Wintering Hills. There's a good sprinkling of gas and oil all over, and I must say that the industry is suffering. We've had a very successful and active geophysical drilling company located at Carbon, a big employer. I think they are very happy about the programs that the government has brought forth to see them through the remainder of this year. We are also pleased that the government has reiterated its long- and short-term support of the energy industry. The \$500 million in assistance should maintain the economic viability of many of the small and medium-sized companies in my constituency.

The third pillar is that of tourism, and of course that has been recognized officially by the government in the throne speech this year with the establishment of a new Department of Tourism. We are quite excited about that in the riding. It isn't just Drumheller. The Trans-Canada Highway traverses the southern part of the constituency, through the town of Strathmore, and there are things that could be done there. Strathmore would certainly like to see something happen in the development of a western irrigation museum, because that's one of the early areas of irrigation in the province. It would be a method of attracting people to stop along the highway for a moment to see that part of our heritage.

In Drumheller the museum industry was started in the early '50s with the formation of the Drumheller and District Fossil Museum Society. There's only one living subscriber to the articles of association of that society, and that gentleman's name is Leo Pluto. He's well over 80 years old now, and he's still active in the affairs of that society. The difficulty that we have at the moment is the great success of the Tyrrell Museum. That museum, of course, is named after Joseph Burr Tyrrell, a pioneer geologist and explorer, who found the first dinosaur bones in this province in the Drumheller area in 1884. Our new museum, created at the cost of some \$30 million, was opened on September 25, 1985. Since that time — and we haven't gone through any high tourist season yet — there have been well over 200,000 people attend that museum. Unfortunately, it is having a little overpowering effect on some of our other attractions, but I'm sure that will work out, as they're only the problems of success and not the problems of failure or depression. I think most people like to have those kinds of problems to deal with.

In the area of tourism as well, I would like to make a suggestion to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities, that he give favourable consideration to the extension of Highway 56 south from the Trans-Canada Highway via Lomond to Coaldale and then on to the U.S. border. I, as well as my opponent from the Representative Party, was privileged during the election campaign to participate in a

cavalcade promoting that highway. While it doesn't directly go through my constituency — it's primarily concerned with the hon. Member for Little Bow, I guess. That's where most of the area is.

AN HON. MEMBER: He isn't in his place.

MR. SCHUMACHER: I'm sorry he's not here this evening. I'm not speaking of this parochially. This is good for the province. And for those Edmonton members over there and around the Chamber, it's good for Edmonton, because it would make a much faster economical route from the U.S. border to Edmonton than through the congestion of Calgary and things like that. They might stop in Calgary and spend their money there. They'd come directly, but we hope they might leave a little at Drumheller on the way through. That's tourism.

Also, economically speaking, there's hopefully going to be expanded trade, transportation, people hauling our goods to and from. Why not make it more efficient and economical for a major trade route in our province? I think it's a very important thing to consider, and I'm looking forward to helping bring the minister down to that area to look at it. I know my hon. friend from Bow Valley is keen on this project too. The people who live in Lomond, I think, would appreciate it, and we would like to help them out. They've been suffering a long, long time.

DR. BUCK: Getty said, "If you don't vote government, you'll never get a road."

MR. SCHUMACHER: I don't think that was ever intended. I think he's being misinterpreted.

DR. BUCK: No, he just has foot-in-mouth disease; that's all.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Oh no.

Mr. Speaker, those are the three main economic things for the constituency. Now if I might spend a moment or two on some of the other areas that I've received expressions of concern about and that I am concerned about also. The first concerns health care. In the constituency of Drumheller there are two major population centres, the town of Strathmore and the city of Drumheller. The town of Strathmore was fortunate to receive a new hospital, which opened in February of 1985. It's a fantastic institution, just the most beautiful place. A person would almost feel like going to the hospital to be in as nicely designed, constructed, and operated a facility as exists there. It consists of an acute care facility and a nursing home. It is one of the prototypical models, and I guess like all prototypes things can be subject to some improvement, although on looking at this hospital, it's hard to see where it could be improved, except in one area, that's the area of physiotherapy. The designers of that prototype really didn't allow enough room for the efficient and proper conduct of a busy physiotherapy facility and that is causing a great deal of difficulty.

The other part of the problem is that the hospital has been very successful. It is getting over 80 percent occupancy. It was not felt that auxiliary care was necessary at the time of constructing the hospital, but now the hospital is being used to a certain extent for the purpose, and auxiliary care patients are in the active area. Therefore, I would like to urge the minister to consider an auxiliary care facility in

conjunction with improved physiotherapy facilities for that hospital.

In Drumheller we have an area that has outgrown the area in which it sits. Parking is a problem. The auxiliary care facility is almost falling down, and we need some redevelopment there. I'm sure these things will be worked out, because this government has proven to be responsive to the needs of its citizens.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would say that I have been receiving messages lately that my constituents hope the review of our labour legislation will really be a review to check the fine-tuning of the legislation and not result in any change in the balance between employers and employees. They feel that the present balance is proper.

I think the throne speech charts a good course. It outlines good, responsive programs. I suggest to the Assembly that this government is up to the task of carrying out those programs, and I look forward to being supportive and energetic and using the best of my ability to help the government in meeting that task.

Thank you very much.

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to be given the opportunity this evening to address this Assembly as the representative from Edmonton Calder constituency. I congratulate you on your new role. I can appreciate the responsibility that you have undertaken and as a new member myself in a new role, I can share some of the feelings you're probably experiencing.

I'd like to start off my maiden speech by talking a bit about my constituency, and I'd like to take this opportunity to invite the members to come and visit us. We're in the north part of the city. It's a very special riding as my constituency has a very unique history to it. Many years ago Calder was a rural community and at that time was called the village of West Edmonton. It had its own mayor and police constable. In 1908 plans were initiated to build the railway through the area and a large portion of the land was subdivided. Then in 1917 the village of West Edmonton, as it was called then officially joined the city of Edmonton and became the Calder community. Of course since that time many communities have sprung up in the constituency, and as a result of the recent boundary changes we have inherited a lot of farms and farmland.

We are very fortunate in my constituency to have a large number of senior citizens who reside there. As a person from a small town in Alberta — I grew up in Coronation — I can appreciate the value and enrichment that senior citizens bring to a community.

I have lived and worked in my riding and have had the opportunity to talk to many many constituents. One of the most serious problems that we're facing in my constituency is of course unemployment. This was told to me again and again throughout the election. We've heard a lot of figures in terms of unemployment we hear them all the time. But I think it's important that we keep addressing this problem because these are people who have families to support, people who have graduated from university and are not being given an opportunity to use their skills. These are people who have worked for 20 years and suddenly find themselves without a job. And these are young people who have watched all their dreams diminish as they are unable to find any work.

We're well aware of the economic impact that unemployment has on this province, on Edmonton, and on my constituency. Of course, unemployment costs us billions of

dollars — we all know that — in things like lost productivity, lost earnings, unemployment insurance payments, loss of tax revenue, not to mention the high cost of stress-related illnesses. I have a concern that as the number of unemployed in this province . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, please, hon. member. Three of your colleagues have not taken their seats in the Assembly, and I would request that they do so, please. Thank you.

MS MJOLSNESS: I have a concern that as the unemployment figures across this province continue to escalate over a long period of time, there seems to be a feeling out there of complacency and acceptance. We begin to sort of accept this whole notion that high unemployment is there and that work is a privilege and not a right. I say to you that this is a very dangerous attitude to take. There were no new job-creation programs outlined in the budget, and the implication from that budget was that we accept the current levels of unemployment and be prepared for increases in that level. Well, as New Democrats we will not accept that level of unemployment, and furthermore we will keep reminding this government that they have a commitment to those people who don't have jobs. I also urge the government to at least show some interest, to accept some of the responsibility in terms of job creation. During the election and before that we as New Democrats laid out very innovative programs, very creative programs, in terms of unemployment and job creation, some of which the government has borrowed from us. We realize, of course, that government doesn't have all the answers all of the time, but at the very least they should show some leadership when it comes to job creation, when in fact so many people are suffering.

I have paid quite a bit of attention to the issue of unemployment, because it does affect a number of my constituents. But something else that I am very concerned about, however, and that deeply disturbs me, is the number of people — and it's growing all the time — that are living in poverty in this province. We are one of the richest provinces in Canada, and yet we see people living in poverty, the numbers are growing all the time. Although my particular riding may not have as many people living in poverty as some of the other ridings, nevertheless they are there, and we know that unemployment is the number one cause of poverty today. However, interestingly enough you don't have to be unemployed in this day and age in this province to live in poverty. At the beginning of the recession Alberta had over 150,000 working poor. I know that in my riding there are many people who are working day in and day out trying to make ends meet, and in many cases, regardless of the fact that they are working hard, they are headed for a life of poverty. It's clearly a serious problem, and it's escalating all the time. As the problem increases, so do the victims who become part of a life of living in poverty.

My background is as a teacher. I am an elementary school teacher, and over the years that I have taught, I have encountered many children that have come from living a life of poverty. In one school I had a little boy who used to come to school in the middle of winter — and we all know how cold our Alberta winters can be — in a skidoo suit that was too small for him. Because of this, he was unable to stand up straight, he had to walk hunched over.

I had another case in another class where a little boy's mother was a single parent. She happened to be not what you'd call well-off, and her little boy had to sit extremely close to the blackboard, because she could not afford to

buy her little boy a pair of glasses so that he could see properly.

Another example. During this election I was able to talk to a grade 6 student in my constituency who was talking about how his class got to come to the Legislature and take a tour. I asked him why he hadn't gone, because I could understand by the way he was speaking to me that he hadn't been able to go. It turned out that his mother is a single parent also, and she could not afford the money it cost that child to go on the bus, so in fact he was unable to go on that field trip.

These are just a few examples of the kinds of things that I've experienced. When we see things like this happening right here in our province, one of the richest provinces in Canada, it disturbs me greatly. I think this is absolutely, totally unfair. We must provide people with adequate levels of assistance if they are to maintain self-respect and dignity.

Last year as lineups grew at the Food Bank, it's important to note that this provincial government didn't even spend all of the money it had allocated for social allowance. This was brought up this afternoon in this Assembly, and I think it's a real shame.

Another area that greatly concerns me is the lack of commitment and the lack of acknowledgment in the throne speech towards the whole area of prevention. If we're ever going to make any gains whatsoever in the area of prevention, we have to have a strong commitment on the part of this government to do something about it. Many of these people who need these prevention programs are suffering. You might ask what do I mean when I say prevention programs? Well, for example, at the moment in this province, there are literally hundreds of children that are either being physically or sexually abused, and the damage that this does to a child is absolutely devastating. Oftentimes, this devastation will carry over into their adult lives. With prevention programs, we can begin to eliminate this abusive behaviour from being passed on from generation to generation.

There are women and children in my riding that have been subjected to this kind of abuse, and it is so important that the government make a commitment on this issue. To continually throw money here and there — little bits of it, I might add, and usually after the problem has happened — just isn't good enough. It costs taxpayers millions of dollars in counselling costs, police costs, child welfare costs, and court costs, not to mention the tremendous cost to the victims. The time is long overdue to begin to plan and implement and fund an extensive prevention program as well as treatment programs in the area of child abuse.

Then there's the whole area of family violence. Again, we can recognize the importance of prevention. If we are ever going to alleviate the problem of family violence, again we have to make a serious commitment to the area of prevention. In the throne speech there was an increase in funding for the women's shelters in this province, which I think is a very excellent step in the right direction, but the money was not sufficient to enable these shelters to do the job they are suppose to do.

I use these two examples when I'm talking about prevention in my maiden speech tonight because they happen to involve two groups of people, women and children, who often don't have a voice and who time and time again are victims. Tonight I have expressed some concerns that I have, and these are some of the important issues that instigated me to seek office. In our ever increasingly complex society, it's more important than ever that as New Democrats we continue to speak up for those in society less fortunate than

ourselves. It's this one component among many others that makes me so proud to be part of this New Democrat caucus and also part of this whole movement.

In closing, I'd like to quote from a speech that my friend and, I might add, idol the late Tommy Douglas made in Manitoba:

The day will come when we will build a society in which social justice and economic equity and human brotherhood will cover this earth as the waters now cover the sea and if it doesn't come in your time and in my time it will come in the time of those who come after us, and I urge you to continue to work and to continue to sacrifice to the principles upon which our movement was built and it will grow and grow 'till the perfect end'.

I would like to say that we will continue to sacrifice and we will continue to fight for the things that we think are right.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my constituents for giving me the honour of representing them in this Legislative Assembly, and I look forward to fulfilling my role as their MLA.

Thank you.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this throne speech debate. I trust there's no standing order that prevents one from speaking twice in one day. Actually, it's my Scottish ancestry, I believe I felt that if I could speak twice in the same day and get it all into one *Hansard*, it might save some costs in distribution.

Mr. Speaker, I very briefly offered my congratulations to you on your election to that position, however I would like to come back to that very subject. One gathers that traditionally in a maiden speech words of congratulation are expressed to Mr. Speaker, and while that tradition is laudable in itself, it seems to detract somewhat from the desire to extend truly sincere congratulations, which in your case, Mr. Speaker, are so warranted. I join other members in expressing the confidence that we all have in your ability, integrity, and sense of fairness, which will ensure the conduct of our proceedings will be in the highest of traditions I have had the opportunity of knowing Mr. Speaker and his lovely wife, Lois, for some time, and I know that each of them will bring to their respective responsibilities personal characteristics of the highest order, and while we will no doubt miss your valuable contribution to our caucus, all members will benefit from your service to our province as Speaker of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to extend my congratulations to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West on his election as Deputy Speaker. I know that he is very well qualified to fulfill that important position, and I know that likewise he will have the full confidence of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we are so very fortunate to have as the representative of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, in the person of Her Honour, one who has exhibited throughout her life in public service personal characteristics of the highest standard. She has served this province in both municipal and provincial government, as a member of this Assembly and as minister of the Crown. Throughout that time she has maintained an enthusiasm for this province and its people and an energy that puts the rest of us to shame. She fulfills her responsibilities of office with gracious charm and at all times maintains her genuine feeling for people and her sense of humour.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that it is also a tradition in a maiden address to say something about one's constituency, and tradition or not, I certainly wouldn't let this opportunity go by without expressing the pride I have in Calgary North Hill. I am indeed fortunate to represent such a fine constituency and fine constituents, people who exhibit each day high standards of citizenship and enterprise. We are the hub of that greater area of that city of Calgary known as the North Hill, but the real North Hill is the very constituency that I represent, and the rest are peripheral.

Mr. Speaker, Calgary North Hill has long-time residents, people who take pride in their homes, and in many cases seniors who value their independence and ability to manage on their own, and while, as I said, many of the citizens are long-time residents, the constituency is in a state of transition. Many younger families are moving in, renovating older homes, and in many cases rebuilding those residences completely, which adds of course to the attractive residential areas. Many of the new structures are situated on some of those old 25-foot lots with a style and architecture that is certainly a credit to the community at large. With that influx of younger families comes a new generation, bringing the community implications of schools, day care traffic, shopping convenience, et cetera. The transition provides a certain vitality to the area and ensures that the community will remain one of the most desirable places to live and raise a family in all of Calgary.

Mr. Speaker, scattered throughout the constituency and particularly concentrated along the main arteries are numerous small businesses, particularly retail of course. In addition, many more businesses are located in the industrial/commercial areas in the northeastern section of the constituency. To me those businesses are as important to the health and vitality of the area as the residents themselves. Small business is the key to a successful economic climate, and I am proud that Calgary North Hill has many enterprising and energetic businessmen who through their risk-taking and foresight, provide jobs and opportunity for thousands of others.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps my greatest reason for pride in my constituency is the senior citizens. We have the highest percentage of seniors of any constituency in Alberta. While the provincial average is 7 percent of population our constituency has over 17 percent of its population in the 65 and over category. This probably results in between 30 to 40 percent of the adult population of our area being senior citizens. As I have mentioned before many of these people are long-time residents maintaining their homes and contributing to their communities.

Many others are residents of the finest senior citizens complexes and lodges that you would find anywhere. One of the greatest complexes is the Confederation Park Senior Citizens Centre in the heart of the constituency and bordering beautiful Confederation Park. One cannot talk about Confederation Park without recalling the substantial contribution of the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight then alderman of the city of Calgary in making that a reality and also the significant assistance of my predecessor Roy Farran the MLA at that time.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday last I had the honour of attending an occasion at the senior citizens centre marking Alberta's first Senior Citizens Week and acknowledging the contribution and dedication of so many volunteers who make that centre a beehive of activity. The centre and its staff of volunteers are a credit to any community and deserve our recognition and assistance wherever and whenever possible.

In April of this year alone 6,790 seniors passed through the doors of that centre to partake in one activity or another. The centre maintains an active membership of nearly 1,400, and it is growing in its numbers and effectiveness daily.

Mr. Speaker, while previously alluding to this being Senior Citizens Week, I do not want to pass over its significance so lightly. I would also like to acknowledge and compliment the hon. Minister of Social Services for establishing the first ever Alberta Senior Citizens Week. As members may be aware, Senior Citizens Week was initiated by the Senior Citizens' Advisory Council, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ray Clark of Bow Island, who was in the gallery earlier today. The area was supported by a number of provincial organizations interested in the well-being of senior citizens, and I'd just like to list them, because they did participate the Alberta association of Gerontology; the Alberta Council on Aging; the Alberta Interfaith Coalition on Aging; the Alberta Pensioners and Senior Citizens Organization; the Alberta Senior Citizens Sport and Recreation Association; Canadian Pensioners Concerned, Alberta division; and the Royal Canadian Legion.

The theme of this Senior Citizens Week is active seniors in the community. Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of a better or more timely theme, because so often we are guilty of regarding our seniors as people who are on the shelf, as it were, and so long as we provide food and shelter, we have fulfilled our social obligation. If we think of our seniors in that way, we are, to coin a phrase that I recently learned in this Assembly, dreaming in technicolour. Our seniors represent a vast human resource, which if harnessed can be a significant and positive force within any community. I am proud to say that I have a father who is vital and active at the age of 94, and I am blessed with the opportunity to still learn from him. Seniors are a part of our community and can be and indeed are making a substantial contribution to our community, and we are all the much richer as a result.

Mr. Speaker, before leaving my description of the many attributes of Calgary North Hill, I would like to recognize two gentlemen who have made a significant contribution to Calgary North Hill and to this Assembly. Of course, I refer to my predecessors, Mr. Roy Farran and Mr. Ed Oman. Both are dedicated citizens who are a credit to our city and to this province. Both enjoyed the respect and admiration of Calgary North Hill constituents, and I trust that, God willing, I will be able to make at least a portion of the contribution each has made.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn to the Speech from the Throne as it pertains to my constituency and my home city. I welcome and applaud the initiatives of the government in recognizing and responding to the current problem confronting each of our two major industries. As we city folk recognize the adverse economic effect on each of us which results from problems within the agricultural sector, many of us are still novices in fully understanding the complexities of that agricultural policy, but all of us do recognize the need to focus greater attention upon the long-term stability of that important industry.

I believe it is well acknowledged that the oil and gas sector of our economy has a positive long-term outlook. The Minister of Energy has addressed certain short-term initiatives to address the problems of that industry, and we all trust that those initiatives will prove helpful to the industry and to the thousands of Albertans who are directly affected. In developing those measures, it is my understanding that the minister has been in close consultation with

the industry, and I certainly endorse that approach. I trust that that type of dialogue will continue as we monitor the ongoing effectiveness of those measures. In particular, Mr. Speaker, I must express my concern for the many independent smaller producers and explorers who find that the downturn in world prices of crude oil have a particular adverse effect on their operations. I urge the minister to maintain close contact with that particular group and to be prepared to consider further initiatives, if such are appropriate, to ensure the continuing vitality and viability of those smaller companies.

While our attention is quite properly focussed upon our primary industries of agriculture and oil and gas, I think it is appropriate to recognize the substantial progress that has been made in other sectors of economic development and the further initiatives that have been indicated in the Speech from the Throne to broaden the economic base, particularly in the areas of tourism, forestry, and technology. I recall attending town hall meetings in Calgary with my former M.L.A., the then Minister of Economic Development, the hon. Hugh Planché. Inevitably the question of economic diversification came up, and I was always amazed to hear the minister expound with great enthusiasm upon the exciting things that were in fact happening in this province that give promise of even greater economic balance and stability in the years ahead development in the areas of computer technology, modular housing, software products, scientific research, and petrochemicals, to name but a few. I endorse the policy of building upon our economic strengths, and I know that under the direction of the new minister we will see substantial economic development within this province that will provide employment opportunities and ensure that our young people will have a wider range of opportunity to pursue their career goals within the borders of this province.

While there are those who would cry doom and gloom, I look forward to the future of our province with great optimism. Certainly key areas of our economy are hurting, bringing with them the agony of unemployment, and that must certainly be addressed. However, other segments of our economy are moving well and are creating new opportunity. I applaud Mayor Klein for giving the positive side of the story in his recent eastern junket, and I congratulate organizations such as the Calgary Chamber of Commerce for exhibiting a positive attitude as, I suppose, is best illustrated by its slogan: yes we can.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most significant events ever to occur in our province will happen in February 1988. I refer of course to the Winter Olympics. What an opportunity for this province. That opportunity is not a 16-day event. It is a long-term and lasting one that encompasses construction of world-class facilities and the employment that goes with it: tourist dollars, not just in 1988 but with world-class events on an annual basis from 1987 onward; career opportunities in sports medicine; sport and facility management; development of expertise in coaching, training, and the schooling of officials; and many other spin-off opportunities related to recreational sports, as well as of course the development of the elite athlete. I trust, Mr. Speaker, that we will capitalize on this window of opportunity to develop co-operatively with the Olympic organization initiatives that will be of lasting benefit to the people of Alberta.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, may I say how proud I am of the accomplishments of the past governments of this province and of the leadership of our former Premier and of the solid foundation which has been created and upon which

we will continue to build. I am proud to be a member of this new government with a new leader and Premier. I am proud of a renewal that has taken place with new and capable persons assuming positions of responsibility. As a new government and with the confidence of the people of Alberta behind us, we will meet the challenges that lie ahead.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, seeing the hallowed hour that we're at now, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the motion by the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking for adjournment of the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, if any? The motion is carried.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we would propose to call Motion 7 first. That is the motion which suggests the appointment of the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight as Deputy Chairman of Committees, and if there's time after the Assembly has dealt with that, then we would go on with the debate on the address in reply.

[At 10:20 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]

