

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, June 24, 1986 2:30 p.m.**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 253****Victim of Crime Levy Act**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce two Bills today. The first is Bill 253, the Victim of Crime Levy Act.

This Bill will add a levy on fines given to persons convicted of offences under enactments of the province or the federal government. The minimum levy would be \$25 and the maximum would be 25 percent of any fine, not to exceed \$1,250. No levies would be payable where a conditional or absolute discharge has been given or where the offence is one in which a court appearance can be waived on payment of a prescribed fee.

[Leave granted; Bill 253 read a first time]

Bill 250**Profit from Crime Act**

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, the second Bill is Bill 250, the Profit from Crime Act, which would permit a victim of a crime or, if there is no victim of a crime, the Attorney General, to apply to the court to declare profits from a crime as such. Once so declared, the Attorney General shall hold such moneys in trust to be used to compensate victims of that crime.

[Leave granted; Bill 250 read a first time]

Bill 241**Religious and Ethnic Holidays Act**

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 241, the Religious and Ethnic Holidays Act.

This Bill would amend the Employment Standards Act to allow an employee to take as a holiday any day of special ethnocultural or religious significance to that employee, inasmuch as the employee would be required to either make up the time or take time off without pay.

[Leave granted; Bill 241 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the first annual report of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation for the year ended March 31, 1985.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table two annual reports: first, the annual report of the Department of Eco-

nomie Development for the year ended March 31, 1985, and the annual report of the Alberta Opportunity Company for the year ended March 31, 1986.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to table the 1984 annual report of the Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission. In addition, I would also like to table the fourth annual report of the Alberta Petroleum Incentives Program Fund for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1985.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table three annual reports: number one, the annual report of the Alberta Association of Architects; secondly, the annual report of the Association of Professional Engineers, Geologists, and Geophysicists of Alberta; and thirdly, the annual report of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today as well to table two annual reports for the fiscal year 1984-85. The first is the Alberta Art Foundation report and the second, the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, it is a sincere pleasure today for me to be able to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Assembly, 34 students, along with their teacher and parents, from St. Mark school in the grand constituency of Calgary McCall. These are grade 6 students and will soon be venturing into new opportunities in another school, we hope. They are here today with Mike O'Brien and parents R. Koski, R. Ernani, T. Mitchell, E. Koch, and F. Edwards. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. GOGO: For some 11 or 12 years we in Alberta have had the good fortune of sponsoring the Legislative intern program. It's been without question a great success for not only the members of the House but for the individuals involved. Seated today in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, are this year's Legislative interns, many of whom will be leaving shortly. We wish to wish them well in their future endeavours. I'd like to introduce them. If they'll rise as I read their names, perhaps at the conclusion the Assembly can indicate its response to their service here in the Assembly: first of all, Brad Marks, Aniko Szojka, Brad Faight, Gary Sandberg, Thorsten Duebel, Caryn Duncan, Jennifer Keenan, and Rhonda Jansen. I would invite members of the Assembly to give these people a good send-off.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of the Legislature, some very interested and concerned Albertans that were quite involved in the last election campaign. These people are here for two very basic purposes: first of all, to observe their MLA in action here in the Legislature; and secondly, to prepare themselves and pick out their seats for the 1990 campaign. I'd like a number of our candidates and interested persons who are guests to stand and be recognized by the Legislature.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, it's a real privilege for me to introduce 28 grade 6 students from the Breton elementary school. They asked me what a minister does, and I told them that some of us are still trying to define that. Hopefully,

very soon we'll have a better definition. Would they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I too have the pleasure to introduce to you, and through you, 48 students from our constituency who are from the St. Theresa elementary school, with their teachers Connie Poschmann and Donna Irons. They are in the members' gallery, and I would ask these students and teachers to rise so that they might receive the traditional warm welcome of this Chamber.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce a gentleman, a constituent of mine. But he has a closer connection to this Legislature in that he is the father of the new Member for Red Deer North: Mr. Stockwell Day senior. Would he rise and receive the welcome.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

DR. BUCK: I rise on a point of order. The point of order is the question of ministerial supplementing of questions after the question period. It seems to me that when a question is asked and the minister comes back after question period, it doesn't afford any opportunity for the person who asked the question to possibly ask one or two supplementary questions. Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to consider that possibly those supplementary answers be given at the start of question period so that the person asking the question could ask a supplementary further on, because it seems that the person makes a statement, which is almost like a ministerial statement, without an opportunity for the questioner to ask a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: I realize that the information I was given yesterday did happen to go on for some length, and as you have pointed out, it does present a difficulty with respect to asking any questions. I wonder if the hon. Member for Clover Bar would mind if I raise from *Beauchesne* citation 369, that

A question of privilege or point of order raised during the oral Question Period ought to be taken up after the oral Question Period, unless the Speaker considers it to be an extremely grave matter.

I would hope that in future points of order and points of privilege will come at the end of question period. However, I've listened carefully to you, and I will take the matter under advisement and deal with it in the course of the next 24 hours.

Direct Billing for Medical Services

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. The Alberta Medical Association is advising Alberta doctors that patients from Ontario seeking care should be billed directly. My question is: what steps is the minister taking to discourage the use of tourists visiting Alberta as pawns in a dispute in Ontario?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it has always been my understanding that doctors in any province in Canada are entitled to bill directly patients who come from another province, either as tourists or visitors. The situation in Alberta as it rests today is no different than it has been for some length of time. The doctors can either bill the

health care plan of another province directly or bill the patient directly. As far as I'm aware, that is not any offence to the Canada Health Act.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. Would the minister not agree that this is a relatively new development, though, that previously it was done between the plans and that this is different? Will the minister look into this and see for sure that the portability requirements of the Canada Health Act are being fulfilled?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, according to the information that I have, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is mistaken in his belief that this is something new. In fact, doctors in this province have for some length of time been able either to bill patients from other provinces directly or to bill the other provincial health care plan. In other words, nothing has changed that I'm aware of

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary. Maybe they were doing that, but the vast majority were done specifically from plan to plan, and they weren't directly billed. There is now a memo from the Alberta Medical Association saying that they should in all cases directly bill. In view of the fact that this certainly doesn't help the tourism industry, would the minister take it upon himself in this House to look into this matter and suggest that this is an unacceptable practice?

MR. M. MOORE: Once again I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is mistaken in his belief that something different is now occurring. In fact, it's been accepted practice right across Canada for physicians to bill patients directly when they come from another province, as opposed to billing their plan. According to my information it's occurred throughout this province on a regular basis, so nothing has really changed. There's no crisis in the medical care system in Alberta; in fact, everything is working well.

MR. MARTIN: It's my understanding that this isn't happening in other provinces, and it has to do with this dispute in Ontario. My question is: is the minister saying that as far as his department and the minister himself are concerned, this is acceptable practice, that tourists from Ontario should be directly billed even if they have limited means?

MR. M. MOORE: In fact, Mr. Speaker, the incidence of doctors billing patients directly in other provinces does occur. The Alberta health care insurance plan, for which I have some responsibility, does in fact pay Albertans for services provided in other provinces that are direct billed to those individuals. So nothing is changed there either; that's always been a practice that has occurred. A physician has a right under the plan, in this province or anywhere else, as I understand it, either to direct bill the patient from another province or to bill the plan directly.

Health Care Insurance Plan

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to direct another set of questions to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. They flow from questions I asked the minister on Friday, I quote his statement:

Indeed, there can be situations existing in this province or any other where certain services would be billed directly, not covered by health care insurance, or extra

billed, and you might still [probably] meet the terms of the Canada Health Act.

My question: could the minister be a little more specific and tell the Assembly what services that the province now offers fall into this type of category he's talking about?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, we are presently in the process of some negotiations with both the federal government and the Alberta Medical Association relative to matters involving extra billing and the outstanding dollars available to Alberta from Ottawa that are being withheld because of the Canada Health Act. While we're in those negotiations it's not my intention to elaborate on what's being discussed, except to say that there are certain matters involving insured services under the Alberta health care insurance plan that are not required by the Canada Health Act and could be categorized, I guess, as non-medically required services, that we have some consideration of moving to a category outside of the Alberta health care insurance plan. They involve for the most part quite nonessential matters, such as cosmetic surgery.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question to the minister. I find this offensive, that the only discussion that is going on in an important thing like medicare is between the minister and the medical profession. Surely the rest of the people of Alberta and this Assembly of democratically elected people should know what those discussions are. My question is: is the minister now prepared to tell us this? The people of Alberta want to know.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, when we've had an opportunity to complete our discussions with the Alberta Medical Association and the federal government and when I've had an opportunity for full discussion of those matters within the government caucus, there will be full opportunity for members of the Legislature to debate whatever decisions we come to.

MR. MARTIN: In all due fairness, the government caucus doesn't represent all the people of Alberta, and this is changing medicare. The minister talks about cosmetic surgery perhaps no longer being covered. My question: how does the minister intend to determine what types of cosmetic surgery are crucial to the health and well-being of Albertans and which are not?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the process of coming to some decision on these matters simply has to involve discussions that are private between myself, in this case, and others who have a direct interest, like the Alberta Medical Association. The process also has to involve some support from my colleagues in the government caucus before I elaborate on what we've chosen to do in the Legislative Assembly.

If there are amendments required to any legislation to accommodate the kind of decision we reach, then the Bill will be tabled in the House for first reading, and there will be an opportunity for discussion. If there are changes with respect to the fiscal plan of the government of Alberta because of decisions we make, again, those matters can be debated during the course of estimates of the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. So there will be full opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for the hon. Leader of the Opposition in his role to comment on whatever decisions

we do reach, but the member will simply have to wait until there is an opportunity for him to do that.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. I find the minister's answers unacceptable. Medicare is not a private club between him and the medical profession in this province and you can debate it after the fact.

To be specific, because there are a lot of people concerned about this, can the minister assure the Assembly that Albertans need have no concern that this government will remove chiropractic and physiotherapy services insured by the Alberta health care insurance plan?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's not my responsibility to ensure the hon. Leader of the Opposition of anything. We're in the process of negotiations. I've said in this House that our aim is to make sure that the federal minister is satisfied that Alberta has met the spirit and the intent of the Canada Health Act. The process of that is to negotiate with the Alberta Medical Association and with the federal minister and consider all the avenues that are open to us. I have no apologies whatever to make for following that line, and in due course the hon. member will be enlightened by what we've been able to agree to.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the hon. minister. In view of the fact that the Chiropractic Association has released new sheets saying that over a quarter of a million Albertans avail themselves of chiropractic services, can he give some sort of assurance to the people of Alberta that he's not going to bargain away chiropractic services in order to get doctors to do away with extra billing?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I have not made any comments whatever about this matter, and I take no responsibility for either the Leader of the Official Opposition's or the Leader of the Liberal Party's suggestion that something is being bargained away. If they want to continue with that line of thinking, that's entirely up to them, but there are literally hundreds of items covered by health care insurance that either one of the hon. members could suggest tomorrow that somebody is bargaining away. Quite frankly, what we're trying to do on this side of the House is create a situation where Albertans can continue to have, as they've had for a good number of years, the best health care plan in Canada, bar none, in spite of the Canada Health Act.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister of hospitals. Is the government considering a review of the premium rates in the province of Alberta, in light of some of the problems that may be on the horizon or that they're facing at the present time?

MR. M. MOORE: As far as I'm aware, Mr. Speaker, on every occasion that the Provincial Treasurer and the Treasury Board review the expenditure and budgetary requirements of this government for a new fiscal year, matters of that nature are considered.

Social Services Staffing Levels

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Social Services. Concerns continue to be raised by Alberta social workers facing unmanageable and unacceptable workloads, even facing violence now. Can the minister confirm that over the last eight weeks, four out of six child care

investigators at her department's Fort Road office in Edmonton have quit because of unreasonable workloads?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, that's a matter of some detail in a district office that I can provide the hon. member by checking with my department.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister maybe confirm that the number of investigations performed by child care investigators in the Fort Road office have been as high as 400 in one month, a total of over 66 cases a month for each of the six investigators?

MR. SPEAKER: The difficulty with the line of the question — it is really in such detail that it probably has to come onto the Order Paper under a motion for a return. Perhaps you can phrase the question in another way.

MR. TAYLOR: I submit, Mr. Speaker, that it is of some importance, because we are losing social workers right at the time we need them most in our society. If we wait for the hon. minister on the Order Paper, it could go on for months. Can the minister ensure the House that her department is taking steps to ensure that a sufficient number of child care workers, income security workers, are on staff to adequately perform the functions in the Fort Road office?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Again, Mr. Speaker, while I can't speak to a specific district office, the hon. leader of the Liberal Party will be aware that as a result of questions raised in the House over the last few days, in fact I had asked all six regions for an assessment of the workload, particularly of the frontline workers.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I must confess that I don't see why she can't say that at least adequate numbers have been retained. But maybe the minister could tell us why she has been delaying a request by the Alberta Association of Social Workers to meet with her in an attempt to resolve the problems currently being encountered by social workers in this province?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, when I have an opportunity — with respect to the number of requests for meetings, it would probably range in the hundreds — I certainly will. As a matter of fact, I believe that meeting is scheduled for early September.

MS MJOLSNESS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if the Minister of Social Services is prepared to take action and when this action will be taken, depending on the results of this information that's coming forward from these regional offices.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Some action has already been taken, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in the House earlier with respect to a question. That is in the Calgary region. Action with respect to the Edmonton region, which I believe to be one of the most critical areas, is imminent.

Farm Credit Stability Program

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture, and it's with regard to the new funding for agricultural programs. On June 16 the Associate Minister of Agriculture indicated that the \$2 billion available

to farmers under the Alberta farm credit stability program is in addition to the \$1 billion already out in long-term credit through AADC. Can the hon. minister tell the House whether existing AADC loans will be subtracted from the \$200,000 limit in the Alberta farm credit stability program, thereby reducing the maximum amount a farmer is able to apply for?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, let me in responding to the hon. member indicate at the outset that it is our hope to have legislation before this House very soon as it relates to the farm credit stability program and indicate to him, as we indicated during the election campaign, that there will be no stacking of the programs. There will be a limit of \$200,000 available to the farming population on a per farm basis — \$600,000 in the event that there is a corporate structure in place — but there will be no stacking. If an individual has a \$150,000 loan from ADC, they can get an additional \$50,000 under this program. The reason for that is so that it will have a broad acceptability to all farmers. We're not limiting it or allowing it to be stacked so that it will have a greater participation of farmers in Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Provincial Treasurer. It's with regard to the comment made on April 4 by the hon. former Treasurer of the province. He indicated that the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, particularly section 10, the marketable securities, would be one of the sources of the \$2 billion. This section presently has \$1.3 billion in it. I want to ask the Provincial Treasurer whether the government intends to use this section of the fund, and if so, what precautions have been taken to assure that no loss will be incurred to the province from such practices as cashing bonds or other securities prior to maturity date, such as the loss that took place in 1981 of some \$60 million because of cashing a bond at an inopportune time?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I believe that over the past few days in question period since the election we have attempted to present to the House a rough outline of our plan for financing the farm stability program, the 9 percent long-term debt program. At the present time it's our intention to fund that program by borrowings of the government to put in place this remarkable \$2 billion program and, of course, the \$750 million long-term financing program. We will finance that by long-term borrowings of the government. As I indicated before, it is our intention in the short term to ensure that this program is up and running, to draw upon the available sources to us, including the money in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, to ensure that the program does get up and get going. But to be very clear, this 9 percent long-term financing program will be funded by borrowings by the province from other traditional sources.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Provincial Treasurer. In the current budget some \$25 million has been set aside for the program. Could the Provincial Treasurer indicate whether all the borrowings that will take place — all of the other moneys necessary, the \$1.9 billion — will be borrowed on the open market? If not, how much of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund would be in that mix?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I think it's essentially the same question that was asked just a few minutes ago. You

have drawn across the trail some other items, which perhaps could be described in the estimates during debates, which will be coming up very soon, except to say again that we will borrow the money and put in place this program to make it operate for both small businesses and for the farm sector as well. We may have to on a short-term basis use the existing resources available to the government, including the liquidity of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund and the liquidity of the General Revenue Fund. But we will borrow from a variety of sources, traditional markets, the required funds to put these two programs in place.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, but the hon. member has had his three supplementary questions. Indeed, the Treasurer was right; it was the same question asked for the second time, and it really does precipitate debate with respect to our estimates. The hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking followed by the member for . . . I happened to be glancing down at the wrong time, did I? I see. I recognize the Member for Vegreville. A supplementary.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary to the hon. Minister of Agriculture concerning the \$200,000 limit on the funding for this program. I've had a number of submissions from individuals and farm groups expressing concern that the limit might not be adequate. Has the minister any plans or process with which this limit can be reviewed after the program has been in place for some time?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Vegreville, during the election campaign just past, whereby we received overwhelming support from the rural population of this province, we indicated that we were going to set the limit at \$200,000, and it was quite widely accepted. I should share with him at the same time, though, that all programs within our department are constantly being reviewed so that they are very responsive to the agricultural sector.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Provincial Treasurer and possibly to the Minister of Agriculture. Last week the Provincial Treasurer assured the House that he would investigate the possibility, when talking with the banks and financial institutions, of whether some of these loans could be in the form of preferred shares — in other words, a dividend where the farmer would only be paying 5 or 6 percent and taking advantage of the tax laws that allow a dividend to be issued. Has he had time to talk to the financial institutions to see whether they would put in place preferred shares rather than loans, which mean a 5 or 6 percent interest rate?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to debate fundamentals of finance, but it's my recollection that if it's a dividend and you pay a return to the borrower by way of dividend, it's not deductible for tax purposes. Although we're not encouraging the farming community to incur losses, I would suspect that they would rather have the deduction than have a dividend payment.

Federal Farm Credit Review

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. How does the federal farm debt review board's projected plans relate to Alberta agriculture, our farmers' position, and this government's present direction?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to the federal farm credit review board, let me share with the hon. Member for Vermilion-Viking that we as a government are in favour of anything that is beneficial to the farming population. We haven't seen all the final details or the final thrust that the federal Agriculture minister would like to take, but we do have some concerns in that in the event that it does go too far, it could inhibit credit availability to our agricultural sector, and we wish to put that one concern forward.

DR. WEST: A supplementary. Does this review board intrude on any provincial jurisdictions or agencies such as the Agricultural Development Corporation?

MR. ELZINGA: In responding to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, let me indicate that we are presently assessing that. But I would like to underscore that presently we, within our provincial jurisdiction, do have enterprise counselling through ADC, plus we do have counselling services through our department, so that in the event that the farming population does face difficulties, we do offer expert counselling to help them relieve themselves of these difficulties.

Secondary Education

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, Wednesday last the Minister of Education told us that she wants to be very comfortable with all matters raised by the public before putting a new School Act before the Assembly. I want to ask the minister whether she is taking the same careful approach with implementation of the secondary education policy, and will she be reviewing the deadlines in the action plan published this January?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: In answer to the first question, Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes. I think it's important to note that on the secondary policy implementation, in terms of its effect on the program this fall with students and teachers, there are only two changes taking place. One is to move the passing grade for grade 7 and above from 40 percent to 50 percent. The second change is to move away from B options, which are deemed to be less important than the other optional subjects that are currently in place. So yes, I will certainly be careful and am reviewing the implementation, but those two changes I do support, and they will go through this fall.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In view of the fact that the minister will be reviewing the secondary education policy, I'm wondering if she will be looking into the public concerns that have been produced in the early streaming of students based on achievement rather than ability. What safeguards can the minister outline which will protect against this?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I share some concerns about the streamlining in terms of the way it's been described to me by representatives of the public. I'm certainly looking at the matter. I intend to appoint a public advisory committee made up of major groups within the education process in Alberta, including teachers and trustees and members of the public, to ensure that that implementation moves along well as we proceed with the 10-year program that's already outlined for it.

MS LAING: A supplementary. The department's required component of courses will be 80 percent, according to the

secondary education action plan. Will the minister be looking into what reasons the department has concluded that local teachers and jurisdictions must be so limited in determining what is needed by their students?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I believe there's a very strong mandate for the implementation of the new basics program, which is basically what the hon. member is asking. Those basics require that the core subjects, as they're called, receive 80 percent of the time. I support that, and I think it's a very important part of the secondary policy committee.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, the April Speech from the Throne indicates that the secondary education policy will put greater emphasis upon the mastery of attitudes. Would the minister assure us what process will be used to determine the attitudes which will be required and the mechanisms used to evaluate whether a student has mastered these attitudes?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, that subject is one that I intend to have the policy implementation committee look at very carefully, and I believe they will do an important review of all the matters raised by the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Ponoka Rimbey, a supplementary on this issue?

MR. JONSON: I'll pass for the moment, Mr. Speaker.

ACCESS

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications. It concerns ACCESS, the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation. I've been informed that the regional office of ACCESS in Lethbridge is being closed. If this is true, could the minister advise the Assembly as to why?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, in response to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West, there were originally four regional offices of ACCESS. They were primarily for the purpose of assisting teachers directly in schools by showing them the various technologies and products that were available. One was closed almost two years ago. The other three are being closed in August. They are being closed following a survey of teachers that was done, which apparently showed that about 75 percent of those responding reported that they were now able to get the same kind of information and assistance directly through their school boards. I think it's an acknowledgment of the substantial change which has occurred in the type of teaching resources which have become very generally available on a local basis and has made this service no longer necessary. I should indicate that two phone numbers have been established for the public and for the use of teachers. They are 1-800 numbers, so there is no charge, unlike the 1-900 numbers for which there is a charge to the customer.

MR. GOGO: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. For 14 or 15 years ACCESS came under the aegis of either the Department of Education or Advanced Education. It's now under a new portfolio, technology. Could I ask the minister whether this indicates a shift in priorities of ACCESS and the role of ACCESS from one of education to one of technology or broadcasting in Alberta?

MR. YOUNG: Not really, Mr. Speaker. The ACCESS board has on it representatives of educators and in addition has a special panel — I guess one could call it a panel or a committee — of educators who identify priorities in terms of the materials they would like to have produced or resources they would like to have available. That is very closely considered. I think there is a very, very strong and close direction to educators.

MR. GOGO: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, if I may. I believe it was January '85 when ACCESS launched a major television network across the province in terms of content. Is the government or the minister giving any consideration that the very intelligent debates in this Legislative Assembly be broadcast through Alberta via the ACCESS network?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I heard the complete question. I missed a few words when I was trying to listen to the hon. Member for Lethbridge West. However, I do recall that there was indeed a review of the cost of televising the deliberations and pronouncements of this august Assembly and that it appeared to be a very expensive undertaking. That's the reason it was not done at the time, as I recall. I would be quite pleased to have the situation reviewed, if that is a high priority of this Assembly.

MR. GOGO: If I could just throw it in, I don't know whether it's a high priority of this Assembly, but I think it should be a high priority of the government to see that Albertans are well informed as to deliberations of this House.

Natural Gas Deregulation

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Energy. The government agreed in the Western Accord to total gas deregulation, which means a free market between buyer and seller. Would the minister not agree that it is a built-in and fundamental exception to total gas deregulation where a 15-year supply of gas is required to be reserved for Canadian use so that it can't be sold into the competing United States market?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the decision of the National Energy Board to come up with what I believe the hon. member is referring to, the 15 — which is a ratio between reserves and production — as opposed to having a 25-year surplus test previously, there has been concern expressed in the industry that the new ruling of the National Energy Board is such that they have some real concerns about it, particularly when the reserves are calculated differently than what the previous situation was. It was expected that the National Energy Board would be looking at forecasted reserves. So, in fact, the ratio of 15 might turn out to be the equivalent of 21 or 22 years under the previous test. That particular concern has been raised by a number of people. It's a concern that we have and one we intend to follow up on.

MR. SPEAKER: Not another question of opinion, please. A supplementary.

MR. CHUMIR: I also have been hearing concerns from the oil and gas industry about the effects of deregulation. Does the 15-year surplus supply not mean that Alberta gas producers get all the disadvantages of low prices when there

is oversupply and none of the benefits of higher prices when there is a shortage of supply because of the lack of competition into the United States market?

DR. WEBBER: What was the question the hon. member had? He made a statement, but I didn't hear a question.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed. Next supplementary, please.

MR. CHUMIR: Why did the government agree, if there is unhappiness amongst the oil and gas industry with respect to the requirement to have a reserve of natural gas for Canadian supplies? If this affects the total free market, which was supposedly agreed to under the Western Accord, why did the government enter into such an arrangement under the Western Accord, if that does not reflect the free-market system?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the U.S. market is what the producers in this country want to have access to. The industry and both levels of government, in entering into the agreement, wanted the same objective. As the hon. member knows, we've had a surplus and have a bubble of gas supply in the United States, and the market conditions at the present time are much lower than they were in the past. It is anticipated that when the bubble works its way through the system, we'll have higher prices in the United States. So we want to have access to that market. In the process of deregulation that was the objective.

We have a number of steps to accomplish before we will be satisfied that deregulation will work. We've had a couple of decisions from the National Energy Board, one on the surplus tests and the recent one with respect to the take-or-pay provisions. Our own ERCB will be having hearings related to the surplus tests as well. So we have a number of steps to follow up on, but we are still looking at November 1 as the date of implementation, recognizing that we want to make sure that Alberta producers are not going to be disadvantaged because of the regulation.

MR. CHUMIR: The government wanted access, and the industry wanted access to the U.S. markets. Nobody is happy with the National Energy Board's decision. Oil and gas prices are collapsing. Why is the government not ready to ask for a delay in deregulation of gas prices, as was suggested by former Premier Lougheed, who was one of the authors of the Western Accord?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, certainly there are those who are suggesting that we do delay beyond the date of November 1. There are also a number of people in the industry, including some of the umbrella organizations, who are saying that we should proceed to work towards that date and, if we can't accomplish what we want to accomplish by that date, for us to consider moving beyond that deadline. I intend to have discussions with my provincial colleagues in Saskatchewan and British Columbia and also the federal minister to assess the situation and then decide whether or not we should proceed at that time or delay.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Minister of Energy. In this deregulated environment, what specific steps does the minister intend to take to ensure that the vital interests of Alberta gas consumers, homeowners, and the petrochemical industry are protected?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of who the member wants to consider, is it the Alberta consumers? Is it the producers? In the province of Alberta, we have an unregulated market, in terms that sales can be made and purchases can be made in Alberta. Agreements can be reached between the producers and the consumers. That's the whole intent of deregulation, so that we can have a marketplace, so that people can look around for the best deals possible.

Calgary General Hospital

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. I would like to ask a question in regard to the present status of the upgrading of the Calgary General hospital.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, in early 1984 the government granted approval for Calgary General hospital to plan for a capital project that would substantially upgrade the existing hospital. I believe it was in January 1985 that it was indicated to the hospital that that project should be contained within limits of \$100 million for the total upgrading. The board of the Calgary General hospital in March of this year submitted the parameters of their project to the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care, with an indication that the total project would cost in the neighborhood of \$140 million. That total project as was submitted then is currently under review by officials in my department.

MRS. MIROSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. When will this review be completed?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would expect that the review would be completed by the end of August.

Fort Saskatchewan Correctional Centre

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the Solicitor General and ask if he's had the opportunity to find out why a \$600,000 tender was let for renovations for the old Fort institution, in light of the fact that we're building a new \$44 million correctional institution in Fort Saskatchewan?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I should have been more adept yesterday at referring the hon. member to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, who has jurisdiction on tendering. If I may, he may wish to respond to it now.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, the \$609,000-plus contract that the hon. member is referring to is a contract that was awarded in February 1986. It will be completed in August of 1986. The purpose is to comply with the fire marshall's requirement on the existing institution and some building code requirements so that we can continue to operate the facility safely for at least two years.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Can the minister of public works indicate what consultation took place between the minister's department and the citizens of Fort Saskatchewan as to the selection of the site of the new institution?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, consultations took place between the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services and, of course, the Department of the Solicitor General, that we

were doing the project for. Consultations also occurred between those two parties and the elected representatives of the city of Fort Saskatchewan. Public hearings were conducted on the development permit by the city of Fort Saskatchewan. So as near as I can determine, there was full opportunity for input.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Can the minister indicate what the future is of the present institution when the institution is vacated to move into the new area? What will become of that property at the present site?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, that has not yet been finalized. The city of Fort Saskatchewan has expressed an interest in the land on which the existing institution is located. Discussions have been occurring between officials of the city and members of my department. I have a meeting at 7:30 tomorrow morning with the mayor of Fort Saskatchewan and some of his official staff dealing with that exact matter.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister actually going to go ahead with that cost to taxpayers' money, in view of the fact that the constituency did not vote for a government member?

MR. SPEAKER: The time for the question period has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

137. Mr. Fox asked the government the following question:
With regard to foreclosure actions undertaken by or on behalf of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation against Albertans in each of the fiscal years 1982-83, 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?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the government will accept question 137, and I would move that question 132 and Motion for a Return 145 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: Could we ask for a bit of order in the press gallery, please. Thank you very much.

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

203. Moved by Mrs. Koper:
Be it resolved that the government investigate ways to encourage private businesses, in conjunction with their employees, to establish employer-supported child care centres.

[Adjourned debate June 17: Mrs. Koper]

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, in resuming debate on Motion 203, I would like to briefly review what has been previously said on the topic of employer-supported child care. The need for quality care was first examined and is based on the increased participation of women in the work force actually making career choices to stay working. As well, the structure of the family in our society has drastically changed. Only 13 percent of families in Alberta are composed of husband and wife teams with only the male being the breadwinner; 52 percent of families receiving income had both the husband and wife working.

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. member. Members of the Assembly and persons in the galleries, could I ask you, please, to turn down the volume and be more quiet so that we could give the member the attention she deserves. Thank you.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, on the point that you've raised. I remember that in Members' Services we were discussing the upgrading of the sound system. Either I am getting deafer, Mr. Speaker, or you're getting deafer or the members are not speaking as loudly as they should be, because the system seems to be grinding down, not going up. I don't know if it's a technical problem or if we're not speaking into the microphone.

MR. SPEAKER: Or we're all aging rapidly together.

MRS. KOPER: Mr. Speaker, I shall try to speak more directly into the microphone.

When I left off, I had mentioned that 52 percent of families receiving income had husbands and wives both working. In addition, the fastest growing segment of the work force in Alberta is mothers of preschool children, 63 percent of working women in Alberta. As women return to the work force, employers are becoming far more aware of their potential to contribute to the quality of their employees' lives. Furthermore, consideration of their employees and their family problems is beginning to have an impact in the area of management and productivity in businesses.

It was also noted formerly that there were gaps in the present delivery system of child care services; for example, many parents work shift work and need some flexibility in hours. There is the problem of when children are sick and need extra care at home. Accessibility to child care centres was mentioned and, for very young children, places either near the work place or near the home. So the need does exist for counselling and information for parents so they make wise choices in where their children are cared for.

The terms "employer-supported day care" or "work-related day care" describe a broad range of programs that may be made available by an employer to employees only or to employees and the families in the community and may be defined as the following: a program established by and/or having some ongoing involvement with a sponsoring employer or employee group for the purpose of meeting the child care needs of parents in the employ of the sponsor. Mr. Speaker, employer-supported child care measures can take on forms other than group child care and on-site care and may vary all the way from an employer offering purely moral and counselling support to employees for the idea, to centres that are totally funded by the employer.

Most work-related child care programs in Canada are delivered through group child care centres at or near the work place, and this can best be described as on-site care. Employers provide capital costs or space and work with employees to generate the program, and basically the facilities that meet day care regulations are supplied by the employer. A good example is in Edmonton, where the Canada Place Child Care Society is planning to open a day care centre in Canada Place. The space has been provided, and with grants and employee contributions this society will offer a program very close to us here in the Legislature.

However, parents may not want or need a service in the work place nearly as much as they need help in finding, selecting, or paying for child care in the community. In 1984 there were only 17 employer-supported programs in all of Canada, and they basically represented 3 percent of the licensed child care spaces available. As I pointed out before, most of them occur in health care institutions or educational institutions and are operated at arm's length by a society, with very heavy involvement of the parents. Very few are associated in any way with private corporations. Sizes vary from 15 to 80 children. The common factor is that the occupancy rate is very high.

In Alberta two work-related day care centres presently exist, one of them in Calgary at Bethany Care Centre and the other in the Edmonton Hospital Workers' Child Care Centre. Both report a high degree of satisfaction from both employers and users of the centres. The Edmonton Hospital Workers' Child Care Centre has not only established a centre caring for the children of employees that work in health care institutions and the community surrounding; they have also established a network of family day homes all over the city so that parents can leave their children in family-like settings close to their own homes. The society also has gone even further and provided training to these day home workers, Mr. Speaker, to ensure the quality of care given to children enrolled in the program.

A study done on these health-related day cares in Alberta found that while management was not particularly aware of any benefits as to productivity, the employees found that the program was highly important for their continued employment. They reported less stress and greater happiness with working hours. Although supervisors didn't notice the change, the employees felt that they were far more productive because they weren't worried about their child's safety and they were close to them. The parent employees were one hundred percent satisfied with the program and definitely would use it.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, one knows that there are benefits that can accrue to children, to their families, and to employers when such a co-operative project... There are other means of encouraging such employer-supported child care that basically copy models. One of them copies a model used in the United States; that is, new tax incentives could be encouraged which would allow the employer to include approved child care to the employee as a benefit. With a work force composed of single parents, older people, younger people, two-earner families, single women, and single men, trying to satisfy that wide range of workers with a traditional set of benefits is almost impossible. So to the core benefit programs of health insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, employment insurance, the vacation package, and pensions, we could consider other perks. Some are commonly given now, such as holiday vacations. What was the other one I was thinking about? Profit sharing and how employers use unused vacation

days. The cost of day care could be considered as a requisite for doing business, and child care could become a deductible expense for either employer or employee.

Another alternative could be for a business or a corporation to negotiate a discount with child care centres throughout the city and provide a greater choice of locations throughout the province for parents in placing their children. There is a voucher program that could operate where the employer subsidizes day care in the way expense accounts and accommodation have long been paid for by businesses.

Mr. Speaker, employer participation may be as simple as counselling; it may get more complicated, to capital cost, space. It could be incorporated into the tax plan. There are many other possibilities too, and I hope they will be considered in the debate. But the most essential ingredient is to ensure the quality of child care. In this regard I would like to table three documents that I believe are important information for all hon. members and for parents in general in discussing the issues of day care: first of all, the day care regulations under the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act; a day care fact sheet that tells exactly what the support of the province is to day care; and a parents' guide to choosing a day care. I feel these are important tools in ensuring the quality of the care.

This government has made a deep commitment to ensure that Albertans and their families needing child care have care that is accessible and affordable for their children. I would ask all hon. members to please consider this motion and think of creative alternatives whereby employers and their employees can be introduced to programs that may meet the needs of working parents in a better way.

MS LAING: I would like to speak to this motion, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the recognition of the need for day care and, in some cases, for on-site day care, particularly for young children, so that the mother/child bond can in fact be maintained. For instance, if a mother with a young child is nursing the infant, that can continue. I think that is a very worth while and laudable recognition of the mother/child bond and the need to maintain that.

I would be concerned, however, that some of the caring for the child would not then mean that standards or the amount of staff present would be reduced. I think it is very important that the mother would be there in a support role in order to maintain the relationship with the child. I am concerned that these may be considered private, profit-making enterprises. My reading of the research is that some profit-making day cares are in fact excellent, but the probability that they are excellent is less high than those that are nonprofit. Therefore, I have real concerns about the privatization or the profit-making side of this.

I'm also concerned that subsidies or tax dollars would be used to maintain profits in that area. I think we must be sure that if it is required or suggested that employers must have day care facilities on site, they [do not] in fact then turn away from hiring women with children. Again, that is a concern I would have.

Thank you.

MR. PAYNE: I must admit, Mr. Speaker, that my initial intention as I approached this motion was to do so from the perspective of what's best for the children. I suspect that a good number of our members who will be participating in this motion debate today will approach it from that perspective, and I appreciate that all of our members would in all likelihood regard that perspective as the priority.

There is one other perspective that I'd like to make a few comments on, Mr. Speaker, and that's what the implications of this motion are for business in Alberta. However, before doing so, I want to express my extreme disappointment at remarks made in the Assembly in recent days by the opposition with respect to day care standards in Alberta. For the record, I would like to state in the simplest but firmest terms possible that in the vitally important area of day care standards, this province is indisputably the leader in this nation. Might I add that our opposition members would be well advised to reconsider their knee-jerk and regrettably predictable response to our day care achievements.

Regrettably, Mr. Speaker, time doesn't permit an exhaustive overview of those achievements, but let me cite a few for the record. First, Alberta has 48 percent more day care centre spaces per capita than Manitoba, its closest rival, and 87 percent more than Ontario. Second, Alberta has more child care spaces on Indian reserves than any other province in Canada except Ontario. Third, Alberta's child/staff ratios are among the best in Canada; only British Columbia has child/staff ratio requirements which in general are stricter than those in Alberta. Fourth, Alberta unquestionably has the strictest group size requirements in Canada. Fifth, Alberta's per capita day care spending is higher than that of any province except Quebec. Sixth, the cost to parents for day care is lower than that in most other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I wish I had more time and perhaps another forum to elaborate on this admittedly brief but impressive list, but I hope I have made the point that no one on either side of this House need be ashamed or embarrassed about this province's day care standards. They're the best in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I'd now like to return to the perspective I mentioned earlier; that is, the implications of on-site day care centres for business in Alberta. In all candour, coming from a fairly right-wing riding and a fairly right-wing background, I initially approached my research with some skepticism. Frankly, from my preliminary research it would appear that the implications for business in Alberta are positive with respect to on-site day care centres. First of all, what's the trend? The best data I could get is from the United States, but I think the trends there in all likelihood are being paralleled here in Canada. In 1978 — and these are United States statistics — there were only 100 business organizations involved with day care. Some six years later, in 1984, that number had grown to 1,500, and according to a recent issue of *Harvard Business Review*, there are now 2,500. If you were to plot that trend, that curve on a graph, I'm sure you would appreciate that it's going practically straight up. Why? There is a growing body of evidence that company-sponsored day care pays off in a number of benefits that affect the balance sheet positively.

As mentioned last week by the sponsor of this motion, the Member for Calgary Foothills, a study of the Texas Woman's University showed that a \$50,000 investment in a day care program on site can save some \$3 million in employee turnover, training, and lost work time. At Nyloncraft Inc., a 450-employee company in Indiana, 85 percent of the employees are women, most of them single parents with young children. After implementing an on-site day care centre, Nyloncraft realized improved morale, absenteeism declined to an extremely low 3 percent, and turnover was substantially reduced. Nyloncraft discovered that its child care centre produced an unexpected benefit: it helped sell

the company to potential customers who were visibly impressed with Nyloncraft's progressive approach to the day care issue.

Continuing the theme of what the implications for business are, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to refer to a study in 1980 by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. The report indicated the results of a nationwide survey of employer-sponsored child care centres. Again, because of the limited time available, I can only skim across the highlights of that report, but there were six conclusions that I would like to share with the members of the Assembly today.

First, there was an increased ability on behalf of those sponsoring employers to attract employees. Prospective employees, those in the job market, simply felt that those kinds of establishments were better places to work even if it meant a lower wage or salary. Two, lower absenteeism; three, improved employee attitudes toward their work; four, favourable public relations or publicity to the employer; a lower job turnover rate; and improved community relations.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it might be useful to you and to the members in the Chamber this afternoon to point out that there is quite a range of employer-supported day care options available to employers. First, the obvious one of course is to provide day care privately at the worksite wherein a commercial operator provides day care which is financially and administratively independent of the employer; secondly, a private day care centre near but not actually at the worksite; third, a workers' fund, to which the sponsoring member alluded earlier today, to provide child care — a number of organizations have done that quite successfully; fourth, a day care counsellor in the workplace assists employers in locating child care services; five, employer cash allowances for child care — the employer offers regular cash allowances to employees with children to offset the cost of their day care arrangements; six, work-related family child care in which the employer organizes supervised family day care homes to accommodate employee needs; seven, a voucher system is one possibility wherein the employer purchases vouchers from a day care centre and issues them to employees on varying criteria; and eight, industrial family care workers, in which employers hire care-givers who are available to go into the home of an employee who requires short-term or emergency child care.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting for a moment that that's an exhaustive list, but I think it is sufficient to indicate to all the members today that there really is a wide range of options available to those employers who indeed detect this balance sheet and/or humanitarian benefit and decide to proceed with one or more of these options.

The motion reads:

Be it resolved that the government investigate ways to encourage private businesses . . . to establish employer-supported child care centres.

I will leave to the sponsor — perhaps in her concluding remarks — and to other members ways in which government can do so. But one that I would like to make a fleeting reference to, Mr. Speaker, is to explore possible tax incentives for employers who support work-related day care. Such incentives could cover relief from property tax to special credits for capital and operating expenditures. These might apply whether the employer support is directly to a company department or through the establishment of a nonprofit entity, to which would permit greater involvement by parents.

Once again and in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge that obviously the most important perspective in evaluating this motion, or indeed evaluating any child care-related motion, is the perspective of what's best for the children. There are of course many perspectives from which to evaluate the motion, but from the perspective of business alone I am more than prepared to add my support to this excellent motion.

Thank you.

MS MJOLSNESS: I stand, Mr. Speaker, to debate this motion and to point out some of the concerns I have with it. Before I do so, I'd like to comment on something that the Member for Calgary Fish Creek has said. I would ask him to read any documents put out by any organization or agency that has any dealings with day care, and he will find among his readings that Alberta does not, in fact, have outstanding day care standards; we happen to have the lowest standards in Canada.

I can appreciate and understand the difficulties that the Member for Calgary Foothills experienced as a working mother, and I commend her for being so concerned with the whole area of day care and for putting forth some very excellent information in regard to day care. I'm deeply moved by the fact that so many members from across the floor are so concerned about what's best for our children. The member has recognized the importance of quality day care by stating how important it is in the early years that we give our children adequate care. After all, of course, this is a time when children develop a personality and a sense of self-worth, and we set the foundations for them to become well-adjusted, trusting individuals.

We seem to agree on all of this, among other things, and we recognize the importance of quality day care; yet the Member for Calgary Foothills spoke out against the Bill presented to this Assembly that would guarantee that high-quality care to every child placed in a centre. This, quite frankly, confuses me and is my whole concern with this particular motion.

It seems to me that this government does not support the notion of guaranteed quality care for our children and parents, yet they are entertaining a motion to move into new areas of child care. It is all fine and wonderful to seem progressive and caring and suggest that we investigate new alternatives to day care in addition to what already exists. However, I caution this Assembly that before we start investigating additional options to child care, we must recognize and accept the weaknesses that now exist in our present system and work toward correcting them. It's only after we do this that we should investigate new areas of day care. If we neglect to do this and subsequently start moving into new areas of day care, I'm afraid that the weaknesses now present in our system will simply be transferred into these new centres and consequently we will have less adequate day care than we have now.

Many of us in this Assembly have expressed some very serious concerns with the current day care system in Alberta. We're concerned about the lack of training for staff, the space allocations for our children in these day care centres, and the total environment that they're exposed to. Is that child being intellectually and emotionally stimulated? Are that child's individual and special needs being met? Yes, we're also concerned about the high percentage of private day care centres. We happen to have the highest percentage in Canada right now. True, there are some excellent private day care centres; no one is arguing that fact. But when a

province has a majority of day cares in the hands of private operators, then profit becomes the number one motivator. When profit is the number one motivator, our children become a commodity.

We have had several members from across this Assembly bragging about how many millions of dollars they pour into day care. I'd like to know where the majority of this money is going. Is it in fact being utilized to improve the day care centres, or is it merely going into the pockets of the private day care operators? Also, is the money being utilized to benefit our children in those particular day care centres? I think that when you have profit as the number one motivator, the children in that particular facility become secondary and the overall quality care of those children also becomes secondary in many cases.

I'd like to remind members that day care is not and should not be a business; it's a social and educational service that we provide to our children. So with these concerns in mind, I must reiterate the fact that before we move into new areas of day care — although I do realize that we must expand our child care centres to meet the needs of those who, for example, work shift work or weekends or whatever — before we investigate new areas of child care, I urge the government to first raise the calibre of the day care we have right now in the province.

The final point that I'd like to make pertains to one portion of the motion:

that the government investigate ways to encourage private businesses ... to establish employer-supported child care centres.

If the government is going to investigate the whole area of private business getting into day care and establishing day care centres, I wonder why the public sector would not have been included in this motion. We know that a large portion of the population in Alberta works for either the federal or provincial governments, and these people should not be ignored in the Bill, as it intends to do.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Assembly to consider strongly the concerns that I've raised. Although I don't disagree totally with this motion and in moving into new areas of day care, I think it's imperative that we raise the level of quality of day care before we move into any other day cares.

Thank you.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I'm always pleased to see the initiatives of members of this House to promote improved child care in Alberta. Last week I spoke at some length in support of a Bill that was introduced in regard to standards. I won't repeat myself on much of that, and I do accept the fact that this province spends more money than most in day care services. That's a matter of record.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that it has not been my experience that Alberta in any way is a leader in child care standards. I mentioned the other day that we have recently had a federal day care commission touring our country. We should all look forward with interest to the report of that commission, because I think it will reveal some of the frailties and shortfalls in what is happening in this province and in other provinces relative to the care of children who, we have to remember, are a very vulnerable clientele. There is an urgent need to change and improve the standards in this province, and that has been attested to in many different ways by different organizations and groups.

When the province first got very strongly into the business of day care, they appointed a commission under Dr. Myer

Horowitz to investigate what was needed, and Dr. Horowitz with some very important colleagues did an excellent study. The province did not agree with the recommendations and put in place recommendations that were quite different. I don't comprehend, Mr. Speaker, why they bothered with the commission under those circumstances, but that in fact is what happened. That commission and others since then have stressed the need for training for child care workers. We do have in our province a number of excellent training centres for child care, but this has not appeared to convince the government or the department that the child care workers' training standards are insufficient in Alberta.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

The child/staff ratio also comes under considerable scrutiny. There is no question about the problem of accountability, particularly in centres that are operated for a profit. They are not required to account to anyone as to their bookkeeping. A private, nonprofit centre, on the other hand, does in fact have a community board, and the staff and the bookkeepers must account to them and that community board to the family and community support services in the municipality as to how the money is spent, what the relative pay scales of the workers are, and what their training is.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we have the problem of monitoring of child care centres by other than consumers. I think we should remember that when parents visit they go twice a day. They go once in the morning to leave the child and once in the afternoon or evening to pick up the child. I'm not sure how many centres would welcome 30 or 40 parents dropping in throughout the day. I suppose we're going to find that out. But that monitoring by parents is a very cursory one at best. The parent is in a hurry. Often there are other children waiting. I believe there needs to be a very stringent system of accountability for how the immense subsidies that we make, how the money is spent, and the monitoring of the actual care of the children by professional people other than parents.

Mr. Speaker, some years ago the hon. Member from Taber-Warner introduced a plan — I'm sorry he's not in the House, because I think it was an important one — to increase over time the staff training of child care workers currently occupied in day care. I thought this was a very good and important program. It was going to allow private, for-profit centres to increase the training of their staff and yet not handicap them in any way. For some inexplicable reason that important idea and important proposal, which could have been accommodated, was discontinued. Hopefully the review of standards will take place, as it is urgently needed in this province. There are municipalities all across Alberta that have begged the province to do it, and I hope they will respond to that.

A couple of words of caution, Mr. Speaker. I do believe that parents need options as to where they place their child, in what type of centre, and to be sure, it might be more convenient and easier for the parent to visit if the child were in a day care centre close to the parents' place of work. But we must also remember that the majority of parents who have their children in day care live on the periphery of our municipalities and they should have appropriate choices. They may not choose to take a small child, usually on public transit, for a half or three-quarter hour trip in the morning and a half or three-quarter hour trip at night in rush hour. I believe that while the idea of day care centres at the place of employment is a good one, we

still have to keep the options open for parents as to which is more convenient and safest for their child.

We also need to work with our municipalities who, through zoning bylaws, bonusing, and development permits, can give incentives to builders and developers, people in construction, to put day care centres in at the point of design. This allows much more leeway and flexibility as to the placement of the centre to provide that there will be outdoor play space rather than a dozen or more little children linked together with a rope going off on their outing, as we sometimes see. I believe it's important to work with municipalities, and I would hope that that is part of the proposal that we see here, because I think municipalities would co-operate in this regard. I think it's also important to work with developers, to offer them incentives to place these kinds of centres within their developments.

Mr. Speaker, just a final word. I would hope that in studying this important resolution the government will determine the numbers of workers in government, wherever they work, who use or need or could make use of day care services, and I would further hope that if we are going to encourage employers in this regard, the government shows leadership by building in a day care centre here and in other places of employment where large numbers of parents have indicated that they have use of such a centre. I think this kind of leadership on the part of the government would indeed pave the way for many other private owners and employers to do the same thing.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a few comments in this debate. I think that the motion has some merit. I have some reservations about it.

I would like to first compliment the Member for Calgary Fish Creek on the great variety of suggestions he brings forward, because I certainly think we should consider all the possible angles. In fact, there's no need to necessarily choose one and then stay with that entirely. As the previous speaker said, we can maybe have several alternatives that offer people many alternatives.

The Member for Calgary Fish Creek, however, did fall into the trap that the government has a tendency to do in this province, and that is to quote some statistics and some dollar numbers and say, "Because we do this and because we do that we are first in this, this, and this." I would just like to mention in that context that sometimes that ends up sounding a little foolish, like a former minister of hospitals in this government that bragged that in Alberta we have the lowest medicare premiums in the country. Well, we do if you count that only three provinces have medical premiums and ours happens to be the lowest, but we have seven with zero premiums. That is the absurdity to which sometimes we go to be always first and best when, in fact, maybe a lot of dollars doesn't necessarily always make for the best system. It depends on how they're spent and how much caring goes with those dollars.

One of the basic things that bothers me a little bit about getting into this area of employer and employee agreed-upon centres is the lack of universality. For example, we do not in our education system — I'm a teacher, and I understand and appreciate that we have a universal education system for all people from age six to 16. Is there any reason why we should stop and accept anything less for people from a few months old to five or six years old, when in fact, as my colleague from Edmonton Avonmore pointed out, that is the most crucial time in the growth and the development of a human being? While we may have a

variety of flexibilities within a system, it does seem to me very important that it be universal and that it encompass day care centres for everyone. Your day care proposal would not quite do that. Of course, I realize you're adding it on to what we've got. Even so, the hodgepodge of the two would not necessarily guarantee that.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, yes, we need to talk about what is best for children but, please, what is best for all children. Look at the whole society, not just some of those children.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to get into this debate, because I've heard so many half-statements, half-truths, and generalizations that I must confess I could not retain my temper to get up and speak coherently.

First of all, however, I'd like to point out that when I was an alderman in the city of Calgary and a member of Pleasant Heights United Church, it was indicated to me that there was a great lack of day care centres in the city of Calgary. So under our social service community development program, we encouraged certain agencies throughout the city to set up private day care centres. These were nonprofit centres, and the one I was involved in involved such churches as the Catholics, the Presbyterians, and the Baptists on the north hill of the city of Calgary.

I'd just like to read a statement from our director of that centre, who I point out has been the same director for 16 years. She has 48 places; she has a waiting list for fall enrollment. Her comment was that "Day care standards have been greatly improved over the past 16 years." She does point out that it would be advantageous to have better training for workers. In our particular centre we use people who have been through the two-year program at Mount Royal College. I would point out to the members that perhaps the reason we don't have universal day care is that our society is not ready to accept it.

If I listened to the comments the various members made, I would suggest that my wife, who raised four children, is not qualified in your eyes. The reason she's not qualified is that she only has a grade 12 education. Obviously she's not equipped to be a good mother, according to your standards.

I agree that statistics can be used to present whatever case you want to make. That's why I'd like to point out some statistics that I'm not going to use. I have several day care centres in my constituency, and I've represented it now for 11 years. Mr. Speaker, in my constituency I also have one beautiful centre erected by the city of Calgary, and it's run by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Of all the day care centres in my constituency, in 11 years I've never had one complaint from one mother or one father about the care in any centre, except the one the Canadian Union of Public Employees runs. The only complaint I've had from that one, though, is that the director is unhappy with the various forms and requirements that have to be fulfilled in order to make sure that the public's money is being spent wisely.

I would suggest that if the standards are as deplorable as some of the members opposite try to imply, surely in that period of time I would have heard from someone. But I have heard from no one, and I don't have an unlisted phone number. My name is in the phone book, and there are two numbers. I'm available, and I also have an answering service. So there's no excuse for anybody saying they could not contact me.

To deal with the motion, Mr. Speaker, I have some problems with the motion. In our last election campaign this party said that one of the objectives we had was less government, less involvement in people's affairs. I would suggest that this motion hardly suggests that. Then I'd like to ask the question: how do you encourage employers? Do you go to an employer and say, "It's a good idea, it might cost you money, it's going to make your work force happier, it will make them more productive, and it may even save you money"? I think we're going to have some difficulties with that.

As the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar suggested, maybe we should have tax incentives. I think one of the problems we have in this country is that we have too many tax incentives and not enough people paying their bills. We have a huge deficit.

AN HON. MEMBER: Developed by the Liberals.

MR. MUSGREAVE: It doesn't matter who it was developed by. The important thing is that Canadian citizens are prepared to live with it, and many of us seem to want to make it larger.

I have some difficulties with the suggestion of the member, though, for other reasons. Some members have already raised it: the problem of access to the workplace by outside contacts; for example, your health inspectors or your welfare or child care inspectors who have to come. Problems of getting to workplaces with young children have been raised, and parking or hanging on straps in a LRT system or buses. You have the baby in one hand and lunch in the other. I remember that I used to ride to work on the bus for 25 years. When I was down at city hall saying that everybody should use public transit, I was one of those people who believed in what I said. It was very distressing to me to go past the Pleasant Heights day care centre I previously mentioned to you at 7 o'clock on a winter's morning and see some poor mother taking her child out of the car and into the centre. I thought there was something wrong in our society when this situation prevailed.

We can go through all the good reasons why women have to work and all the rest of it, but I would like to come back to the motion and ask the hon. member: do we encourage employers by giving capital grants, or do we increase the subsidy if the child is placed in the work centre versus the neighbourhood centre? How do you get an outdoor play area in downtown Calgary or Edmonton when the price of land is like it is? I happen to live near the Bethany centre in Calgary, which is one of the day care centres mentioned earlier. I happen to see those young children go by, and I'm pleased to see them go by. Sometimes they're on a rope; sometimes they're not. But I think it's better to see them going by where I live than being tied together on a rope going down Jasper Avenue or 8th Avenue in Calgary.

I'd like to ask the hon. member who provided the motion why we should be taxing citizens to provide such a service when many people in our community are opposed to the whole idea of child care centres. I know there are some people, and they are throughout the country, who still think women should stay home. We know that 60 percent or more of women go out to work. Some have to and some want to, but the fact remains they're out working. As women take their place in our economy, it reflects in improved education and the improvement in advancement of opportunities. Obviously, the need for day care is going

to increase. I would like to ask everyone, since we all seem to talk about women being liberated: why is there such an emphasis on women and where they work? Why not the husband and where he works?

I discussed this with some day care experts in Calgary. They said, "Sure, it's a great idea; the parents could visit at noon." What happens as in the case of my daughter and son-in-law? He teaches high school in Bowness, and she works in downtown Calgary. My two grandchildren were in the Bethany centre, which is midway between the two of them. I don't know how you rationalize that.

Getting back to the reaction of day care experts, they agree that there are lots of advantages if it is in the centre where a parent is working. If a child were sick, there could be a quick response. I'd like to come back to the concerns of the small business community. We hear people talk in the House about how wonderful and important the small business community is and how many jobs it creates. I ask you: how many small businesses could afford to have a day care centre for one or two children in their workplace? In my opinion, the whole idea is fraught with too many difficulties. Mention was also made of shifts, store hours, and 24-hour work shifts. What about the problem of reduced transportation schedules on weekends, which is also a concern you'd have to worry about if you had the day care centre at the place of work?

I guess my main concern is that the government can encourage by legislation, by bribery, by using grants or subsidies, by offering tax incentives, but I notice that most of the organizations or institutes that are offering these services now in Canada — universities, hospitals; these kinds of institutions — are those that never have to worry about where the dollars come from. They've never worried about where the dollars come from. They leave it to the politicians to worry about that.

I think we should look at this more carefully. I really feel that it is lacking in an economic evaluation. It's the kind of thing that everybody says it's a good idea, but then when you ask them who's going to pay for it, "Well, obviously the government has to pay for it or the large corporations." I just leave this thought with you: in the city of Calgary earlier this year there was an 18 percent vacancy in the day care centres, and they decided the main reason was that so many people have lost their jobs. Parents are going back home and looking after the children. Now you want to add more to the burden to make this worse.

Frankly, I have great difficulty in supporting the motion. I appreciate what the hon. member was doing, and I appreciate her concerns, but I feel that at this time it's something we can't afford and, as such, I therefore couldn't support it.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, a few points to make about this issue. One has to do with the actual value of having the day care in the workplace. As was announced fairly recently, my wife and I had a second child. If we are going to use the private day care system, if and when my wife chooses to go back to work, we will be faced with the problem of taking children two different directions to two different day cares. One day care takes children age three months to two years and another one two years and so on.

Those kinds of difficulties might be solved if my workplace happened to have a day care. I would point out that I would not mind being the husband if in fact it was I who took the children to the day care at my workplace. It would

be nice to see the government investigating and showing leadership in this issue by opening up one at my place of work. There is a lovely outdoor play area with a most delightful fountain, flowers, and so on. I think the value of it is obvious. The benefits for both the employer who provides this service for his workers and the people that that employer hires are obvious.

In terms of standards, I think the point was made on this side that the standards are not good enough, that they could be improved. The Member for Calgary McKnight went on to conclude that we were saying every day care in the province is deplorable and quoted the fact that he had not had any complaints in 11 years as support that that's not the case. I think there is a big difference between day cares which are so deplorable that they excite a public outcry and day cares that have standards good enough that a parent may not see fit to complain but may move his or her children from one day care to another in trying to find a better one. We're accused of being extremists. I don't see where it has to be this extreme where they're either perfect or deplorable. In fact, I think there are a lot of very mediocre day cares where children are babysat safely, but they are not nurtured constructively and humanely. I think that is what we want to be looking for.

In terms of the issue of free-enterprise day cares versus publicly supported day cares, I think the members on the opposite side are the ones who most often try to tout the benefits of free enterprise and explain to us that in fact free enterprise is the system that allows people to get the most money by providing the least service and, therefore, maximizing profit to its fullest. In terms of production of widgets, that's a great principle. I can choose to buy the cheap widgets that last for a week or the really great ones that last for decades; that is my choice as a consumer. When it comes to dealing with children and raising them, when it comes to providing necessary day care for them, and when it comes to perhaps many, many single parents who, because of the substandard pay they will get, will have to choose the cheapest possible private-enterprise day care, even though it provides minimal service for them and their children, then we are looking at something that should not fall in the free-enterprise realm and in fact should be used very rightfully for many parents to try to break out from the poverty cycle by providing the best nurturing for their children regardless of the parents' ability to pay. So I think when we look at this issue ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Like the post office.

MR. YOUNIE: Which works faster than some private courier services I've used, Mr. Speaker, and cheaper on occasion. Anyway that has little to do with day care; I don't mail my child anywhere.

I think it's very important to consider in our encouragement of employers to provide day care services that we be very concerned about the standard of service they will be supplying and that part of the government's encouragement be in the form of an education program to employers to explain to them why they can benefit financially by providing the highest standard of day care service for the parents that they employ, because those benefits are there for them. Thank you.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to speak to this motion. My feeling regarding work-related day care space for children strongly favours this motion. The number

of women in the work force today is soaring, as my colleague from Calgary Foothills has already expressed. Almost three-quarters of all part-time workers are women; 13.5 percent of Canadians in the labour force work part-time; 57 percent of employed mothers with children under 11 years are in the work force; 82 percent part-time workers and 68 percent full-time workers are found in occupations such as clerical, services, sales, and health care givers.

Employment in Alberta for women specifically rose last year, while the national rate remained unchanged. The Alberta rate for unemployment remains fourth lowest in the country. Women account for the majority of the increase in employment. Women also account for the decrease in unemployment. Women are generally responsible for the care of their children. Parents, whether they're men or women, single or married, must take the initial responsibility in caring for their children. It is indeed with anxiety and guilt that parents leave their children in another person's care.

There should be avenues to ease this burden. Whether we as this Assembly agree or not, the working parent is on the increase; thus the provision of day care is on the increase and is becoming a fact of our modern life. There are many institutions throughout this province providing day care for the children, and they are funded by the province at the cost of \$57 million annually. This province helps achieve a very high standard of day care, as my colleagues have already alluded to. There has certainly been criticism as to the quality of care, of day cares, and the facilities provided throughout this province. At the risk of our children they could be profiting very heavily.

When I have researched this information in the city of Calgary, the criticism of day care and quality came from other day care operators, not from the parents. Again I say the assurance of quality of care must be ensued by the parents. During my interviews with various day care users and my investigation of studies, it appears that the highest quality of day care and the longest running facilities are those which allow a high degree of employer, union, employee, parent, and day care staff involvement. The most successful and highest quality operators in Calgary are communities, YWCA, cultural centres, the city day care services, and specifically work-related facilities such as the Bethany care hospital. Parents look for convenience and quality when they're placing their children in day cares.

Work-related day care or employer-supported care can be one very important component in a diversified system meeting the needs of working parents and their children. This program can be defined as a program established by having involvement with a sponsoring employer and employee groups working together. This day care can be owned and operated by the employer and employee having direct input into the hiring of qualified staff, offering quality programs, and continued input into the physical needs of this centre. The entire management responsibility would be put on the part of the employer and the employee, as would other extra activities maintained within this workplace. The support from the employer could include subsidy costs for utilities, rent, and maintenance and could also assist in fund-raising to help offset the day care costs. The government is already subsidizing programs. We don't need any more subsidy. The centres located on the worksite can be achieved on a co-operative basis. Users operate and control the centre.

Work day care is not a new idea. This idea existed in 1940, when women were needed to work in factories while the men went out to the war, and it should work again

today. A further example of a work care system: San Francisco has become the first city in North America to build child care requirements into their building code. Developers now must provide free space or pay \$1 a square foot towards a nearby day care centre.

Workplace day care is an excellent opportunity for everyone to enjoy. Work day care centres provide opportunities for parents to interact with their children throughout the day. It also removes anxiety for both the parent and the children. It also reduces job absenteeism. However, most important, it leaves the responsibility to the parent. Mr. Speaker, I'm a working mother, and I don't depend on day care to raise my children. I look after it as a responsible parent. I look after my children as a responsible parent. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to support this motion.

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to make a few comments on this motion. I thank the Member for Calgary Foothills for bringing the motion forward for discussion. Obviously, it has attracted a lot of attention. As has already been said by several others, my real concern in this motion is the topic of the child. One thing that bothers me deeply in our society is the possible threat of inadequate attention to the child, inadequate care, in fact, verging on child abuse.

The whole topic of this support system in our society reminds me of many others which we have seen coming along recently as new ideas or new approaches. Many of us here were raised in a society that didn't have day care centres. We had other support systems going for us. In recent years it seems that we've seen things come along like wheelchair ramps, which we didn't have before because we hadn't given that topic that kind of consideration, yet there we have a group of people in our society with a real need. All of a sudden our cities throughout all of North America, around the world in fact, now have wheelchair ramps at intersections. A lot of discussion took place in this Legislature recently on the use of special numbers in elevators for the blind and other features in our day-to-day life where we could be of assistance to the blind — people with a specific need. Yet for so many years we've been ignoring it.

I worked for an organization that had a very specific feel for people who became very sick and had a health problem on the job. This bothered me because when you see people on the payroll not pulling their weight, particularly in a public service sector, you begin to wonder at the real role of our society. I checked this out with some corporate citizens in the community and was quickly told that, yes, we have national and international banks with people with 25, 30, or 35 years' service, who for reasons beyond their control have become very sick, and they had to be looked after. These responsibilities are assumed by our society, and we do in fact look after them.

We have an interesting arrangement in Grande Prairie right now called our Crystal Park school, where we have the seriously disabled child from kindergarten through to grade 9 now in school with the able-bodied. We have these students studying together and playing together, the able-bodied students assisting the severely handicapped students. They are all learning together, rather than having these people segregated, one group of people going one way, one another. This is a relatively new approach. Or is it? Maybe back in one time or another before we had institutions for the disabled, maybe the disabled were at home, and we

had the home care right at home where the able and the disabled lived together, loved, grew up, and enjoyed each others' experiences. We have gone the the cycle of having disabled people in institutions. Now we have them back in the school in Grande Prairie working together.

Palliative care: we had the discussion on that a while ago, as though the whole system was just discovered in Alberta the last year or two or three. I remember asking a senior nurse in the Beaverlodge area, "What are we doing about palliative care?" She laughed and said, "That's a city term, Bob, because in places like Grande Prairie where we have small hospitals, palliative care has been a major function of this community and the hospital through parents, friends, and extended family ever since the community was developed."

Women's shelters: I never heard of a women's shelter until somebody showed me where Odyssey House was in Grande Prairie, and that's just in the last few years. Where were we with women's shelters prior to the time that we had them? Why do we have women's shelters? I know why people go to women's shelters. But why in our society do we have this need for people to have to turn to an organization or a facility like the women's shelter for that kind of help? I know I'm going backwards one step in trying to find solutions and answers to some of the things I find worrisome that come to my mind in reviewing the issues associated with this motion. By the way of interest, getting back to the motion, the women's shelter in Grande Prairie known as Odyssey House does have a built-in day care system in the backyard, with a fence high enough around it to keep the father from coming and snatching away the children.

Going back into the history of day care, our child care systems have changed considerably over the years. I'm sure most of us in this Assembly grew up with the care that was required without going to a day care system. This is no surprise for mothers of previous times, particularly farming mothers, some of whom we have right here in this Legislature, who did their work in the workplace, and the child was looked after too. I know a mother in this Legislature that had the playpen right out in the garden, where the child could be protected from hurting himself and at the same time the mother could keep an eye on him. The farm children were raised along with the stooks, and the farm collie was sometimes the best babysitter. But that opportunity isn't available to all. That's why we find all of a sudden that we have these other requirements. Reference was made to an early attempt at day care systems in the workplace with the munitions factories in Canada. But it only lasted until the end of the war, and then that was abdicated and went on and was transferred to the provinces and the municipalities.

Today we have a society where apparently there is need for more money. We have children in single-parent homes, and we have a need to develop and refine a system to accommodate this society where, for reasons that aren't always clear, it's been deemed necessary that both parents seek an income to supply the needs and the wants — and I underline the wants — that are important to all members of the family. This means a child care system in which the employee and the employer may well be called upon to have an input. We call that a work-related day care system.

Also in this area I think the role of government must be considered for the various reasons of tax concessions, subsidies, or a redistribution of those funds that are presently

designated for day care systems in our society could well be used to advantage with the workplace employer through matching dollars of one form or another.

I do get concerned about the reasons we need these day care systems. I look upon this opportunity for re-examination. I think we have a real role here for the parent to re-examine their position. What is their responsibility? And what do I mean by their responsibility? I'm fascinated by the statement made by the Member for Edmonton Centre last Friday when he was talking about the Mackenzie health services centre. He called it the Taj Mahal of the north, and he was critical of the kind of people who require the services in that centre. He made examples and he implied some irresponsibility. He didn't give many facts, and I didn't have time to review his statement to determine what the facts might be, but he did say that it was the most expensive and the least required form of medical services. I'm inclined to piggyback on that statement and apply that kind of a thing to a portion of those needs which are identified for day care centres. Is there a responsibility, or is it irresponsibility? He talked about the drink and the smoke and the stress and people should take more time for love.

My question is: why do we have this growing need for day care today? Where does the responsibility lie? Do we have people that are in there for the two incomes just so that they can meet their own greed, so they can have more of the things that they want, not what they necessarily need but they want? I'm not talking about any particular group of people in our society, Mr. Speaker, but I'm talking about young couples who seem to be just excessively anxious to get into the life and the world of the middle-aged and the seniors. They seem to want to make that trip to Hawaii annually; they seem to want to have that motor home, the skidoos, the trail bikes, the larger home, the swimming pool; and they've hardly reached the age of 25. It seems interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, that we have to have that kind of greed to get there so fast.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Then we have those people who, for reasons that might be important to them but are not clear to me, become single mothers. Again, where is the responsibility? Is it a divorce breakdown? Why? Are people showing good responsibility towards each other? More and more young mothers with babies out of wedlock. Where is the responsibility? I think we all as members of the society share that. Where are we with our home? Where's the kitchen table discussion that gets the message of responsibility through to students and through to people in the family to keep them from getting into the position where we have single-parent families, divorces, and kids that have to go to day care so some parent can go out and get a job?

The fact remains that these are the situations that we have in our system today. They're around us, and we have these people reflected on the unemployment roll. Now we have the employer. Maybe there's an opportunity here for the employer to be of major assistance in the development of workplace day care centres so that he can provide an opportunity — which was discussed and reviewed earlier — for these, again, primarily young mothers to get into the work system, establish a life for themselves, get on with their life, break out of that routine where they're stuck in an institution with their baby, and become an effective and important part of society.

Mr. Speaker, I think I will terminate my comments there, primarily with reference to the fact that because Alberta is so heavily committed to the day care approach to life at this time, it seems to me appropriate to suggest that our government seriously consider using some of that commitment to approach certain employers to determine if they could be of assistance in a co-operative way to get day care into more of our workplaces.

I would suggest, as has been suggested perhaps earlier today, that this be considered in our public buildings for starters. I believe that we would be solving two problems by promoting and supporting this motion. I see an opportunity to help a lot of people who need help. I see an opportunity to provide perhaps a little more secure future for children who today may not have much of a future. I see an opportunity for employers to obtain and recruit and save and keep their help by offering workplace day care. And I see an opportunity for young mothers who need that sort of guidance and help and support to get on with their lives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I'm enjoying these debates on these motions, not only for the content that they have in them but also for the growing cracks that we on this side see in the government members and in their caucus. Can they ever get it together, or are they always speaking in this kind of doublespeak and double-talk? How possibly can the one Conservative member — maybe she's a progressive and the rest are the conservatives; that oxymoron Progressive Conservative is something I've always had trouble with. But how can one hon. member who presents this motion talk so glowingly about the need for children's care and this particular way of funding that and then another hon. member, the one from Lethbridge West, I believe, say that any funding of day care leads to increased rates of divorce? Or how can one member say that, yes, we need to be child-centred in this regard and then talk about that, no, really funding of day care leads to better business.

Mr. Speaker, these apparent contradictions in the government's mind can only lead us on this side to be extremely optimistic about the future of such debates. My biggest problem with this, as members on this side have continued to allude to, is the fact that though this may be proceeding in a useful direction, that employer-operated day cares would meet the needs of many people, it does at the same time leave many, many people out: those in small businesses, those in small organizations, those mothers or fathers who happen to be self-employed. In our own situation my wife plays in the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, where there's been a veritable baby boom amongst members in the orchestra. They have tried repeatedly to set up their own day care centre while members are rehearsing or practising or having concerts for the enjoyment of Edmontonians. But the economy of scale just does not permit it, no matter how much government assistance they might receive.

As well, in terms of looking at support for this, I would then look, as the hon. member to my left here, in terms of the Legislative Assembly. If this motion were to go through, can't we please get some funding for us here at the Legislature so that we can bring our children to work and have them join in in question period and other debates, as they would be so delightful?

On the other hand, because we have not been able to find support for our two children at any of these employer-centred places, we have shopped around all over the city

and have found such glaring discrepancies in what is available for privately operated day care centres: everything from a glorified babysitting service that's dirt cheap to a stimulating, exciting, high-quality day care which has a two-and-a-half-year waiting list.

Mr. Speaker, it also galls me to think that we in this province stipulate that people need to have a four-year university education to be well educated and mature in their life before they can teach kindergarten but that we don't need any such requirement to teach and be supportive and be employed as a day care centre worker. At the same time, we lose millions of dollars because the Canada assistance plan won't offset the Alberta public dollars which go to private, for-profit day care centres, which 90 percent of Alberta's are. We could spend our dollars better by promoting nonprofit child care, get the Canada assistance plan dollars back to our coffers, improve the training standards of our day care people, and promote better employer-facilitated child care to the benefit of all parents and their kids with this political will.

Before I conclude, Mr. Speaker, I not only bring to the attention of all hon. members the situation they are decrying in terms of care for our children in this society but warn them that in the future this issue is going to be turned in another direction; that is, as we learn more and more about social day care programs for our elderly, that more and more of our senior citizens of Alberta are without their families, are lonely, are depressed, and need some social day care centres and facilities in which they can receive some sense of community and some sense of support. Their families aren't doing it. They're often single elderly people. What is the role of government in this issue, in this kind of situation?

I conclude by commending the progressive who brought this motion forward for our attention. I warn them of other areas of this debate which will not let us go. I hope this does not die on the Order Paper but rather that we can come together as responsible representatives of our people and bring forth better day care for our children and for our elderly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHUMIR: I rise to speak mercilessly briefly, Mr. Speaker, as a childless member in favour of day care in general and the potential benefits of day care at the workplace in particular. I had no intention of rising to speak on this matter until I heard the comments of the hon. Member for Calgary Fish Creek, as a result of which I was overcome by irresistible impulse. I thought I was hearing somebody from Texas. To hear the hon. member, one would think we had come as close to perfection as was humanly possible in our day care system. Of course, that's the sign of the true Conservative: total tolerance and satisfaction with the status quo rather than an attempt to look for ways to improve conditions in our society. Of course, our society is changing, and it's important for us to develop institutions to meet the needs which arise from such change.

It is quite clear that many of the day care centres operating in this province are indeed excellent. However, no less an authority than the head of the school of social work at the University of Calgary earlier this year issued a very well publicized report in which he was strongly critical of standards in many of our day cares in the absence of regulation and inspection of the quality of day care. Anybody who took the trouble to read the newspapers in the city of Calgary earlier this year could not avoid noticing that there

were a number of very, serious problems arising on a regular basis with our day care system.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to note that insofar as the comments of the hon. Member for Calgary Fish Creek are concerned, I share the views already expressed by the hon. Member for Edmonton Kingsway that there is an undue emphasis on numbers: square feet, numbers of spaces, and cold, hard cash expenditures. It reminds me of the recollections I have of that mininovel *Le Petit Prince*, in which there was discussion of how grown-ups like numbers.

Mr. Speaker, the children of this province deserve more than statistics. They deserve the very best standards we are able to provide, whether they be in government-operated or privately run day cares. We can do better, and I support this motion.

DR. CASSIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to speak in favour of Motion 203. I do not, however, support the concept that government should be in the child care centre business except where it pertains to its own employees. I do support the concept that it could play a very useful role in encouraging private business, employers, and other groups to provide this service. I also appreciate that this is a hard sell to business at this particular time in our history, as suggested by the Member for Calgary McKnight, but this is the time to develop the infrastructure, most of which is already in place.

I also feel that government needs to play a very important role in maintaining the regulations and standards for these facilities, to go beyond the minimum requirements of the physical plant, the health standards, the basic requirements, and supervision, but more important, to the quality of the programs and the individuals providing these services. This is no longer a babysitting service. Mr. Speaker, we should recognize the opportunity to create meaningful, service-oriented jobs for those qualified people who will make this a career choice rather than a stopgap until something better comes along.

One has only to reflect on our present situation. I was certainly made aware of this problem during the recent campaign, and I'm certain that many of my colleagues who sit in this House had a similar experience. It was brought to my attention that a large number of our preschool children are spending the majority of their early and very formative years in day care centres under the care of a surrogate parent who serves as a role model during the most active portion of the day, at a time of the day when most of the communication takes place, and spending the majority of their time with their parents during the sleeping hours. I appreciate the concept of quality time, but I still have to look critically at the seven- to eight-hour period each day spent with different people, many of whom may be at the lower end of the pay scale, many of whom may lack communication skills, many of whom may not be the ideal role model.

I do recognize, however, that there are some shining and excellent examples of some very good day care centres and dedicated and responsible people. But because this industry has grown so rapidly in response to the demand, I appreciate that the opposite is all too often true.

I would therefore suggest that if we are to encourage both industry and the public sector to provide these facilities, there is a need to look closely at our accreditation programs for both the facility and the staff, a screening and training program, and ideally on-site supervised training so that those individuals with the right attitude and aptitude for the

demands of this job are selected. There should be incentives for young people to consider this occupation for a career choice.

I would like to refer to the author Naisbitt, who said in *Megatrends* that we've gone through the industrial revolution and are presently in the communication and high-tech revolution but with that we have to look at high touch. There's going to be a lot more in the way of demand for people involved with dealing with other people and providing these services at both ends of the scale, both from the standpoint of the early development years and, as has been mentioned earlier, to our seniors.

This is not just a women's issue; it is not just an issue of the two-cheque household syndrome; this is not just an issue of the single parent. It is more often today an issue of choice between career and raising a family. I won't discuss the social implications of this change in our society and the impact it has on the family and will have on other social questions, as alluded to by the hon. Member for Lethbridge West. We are making choices, and for each of these choices there is a price to be paid. It should be noted that there is an increased incidence of men taking responsibility for child custody, so this is an issue that concerns all of us.

We have already heard from the opposition of the 36-cent wage gap between men and women. Part of this differential has to be attributed to experience and education, but for the most part it's because of families needing the mothers at home, which denies them the time and devotion to build a career. I believe that the availability of day care at the place of work can play a role in offsetting some of these differences.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that most initiatives today have been taken by hospitals and institutions in the public sector, and I believe that they should be commended for their actions. I personally cannot understand why we sacrifice so much in the way of professional training and expertise that has been invested in the women of this nation by not providing alternatives to let them carry on with their careers during the child-rearing years. Many who lose their accreditation after 10 or more years of absence from their chosen careers have elected to do something else; nursing is just one example.

For the past 70 years and more specifically during times of crises and world wars, women have been encouraged to enter the workplace, and child care centres were set up to respond to that need. When the crisis was over, they returned to their home and in most cases to the traditional role of mother and homemaker. This would appear not to be the case at this time. Yes, some were forced into the workplace by double-digit inflation to help the family secure the home and to maintain their standard of living. This time, however, more are returning to universities, postsecondary education, and to pursue a career.

Historians may prove us wrong, Mr. Speaker, but I believe that industry must recognize this apparent social change. I will support the motion so that the government can take the initiatives to address this problem at this point in time and hopefully reduce the social implications and problems associated with the dramatic change in our society, particularly as it pertains to recognizing and giving status to the providers of this service and recognizing the benefits that these people could provide in dealing with support and care of seniors at the other end of a life cycle, where the problems are similar, but with perhaps more emphasis on

education in the earlier ages and on nursing at the other end of the scale.

I remember that one of my colleagues, a pediatrician, said he really wasn't worried too much about the drop in the birthrate because he could very easily become a gerontologist, because we're dealing with the same problems: additional care and the same formula problems. I think we should look at this and say, okay, we're developing careers that have far-reaching implications and these people aren't going to be concerned about losing their jobs by being replaced by a high-tech piece of equipment. Our Minister of Education should advise our training program directors to consider the broader scope of these workers, in both curricular content and name.

I thank you.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, just a couple of additional . . .

MR. NELSON: On a point of order. I believe the hon. member has already spoken to this motion, and I would suggest that we have another speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that correct? Thank you. The Table officer confirms that. Other speakers on the motion? The Member for Cypress-Redcliff

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, just a few words on Motion 203, the motion before us this afternoon about workplace day care and encouraging the government to take whatever action would be necessary to encourage such a thing to happen. Firstly, some thoughts I have on it: I wonder what effect that would have on the 20 percent rate of unfilled day care positions as illustrated to us by the Member for Calgary McKnight. I think workplaces could make deals with day cares near their workplaces and maybe fill some of these empty spots that we have now and still achieve the same thing.

I would also suggest that it isn't just the profit day cares or those owned by individuals that have these empty spots, because I've been in many of them, as I said the other day in this Assembly. In many cases it is also the nonprofit day cares run by boards that have empty positions that are unfilled by children.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little about that dastardly, dirty word "profit" that we hear so much about lately — that it's such a downright terrible thing that one should make a profit in whatever one does. As I said previously, there are day cares in this province owned by individuals and/or companies that provide very good service to the children in them and to the parents. They have loving staff, facilities second to none, and good programs for the children. Some of them have good programs for the staff. One member said previously that the best day cares in Calgary are those that are jointly sponsored, either in worksite locations or in locations that are near work. I would challenge that and say that they may be among the best but they may not necessarily be the best. I have been in other centres in the city that aren't in such locations, and they are of a very high quality as well. I think they meet the needs of those children in there to a great degree.

We also heard some comments, Mr. Speaker, that the subsidy moneys on day care should be geared mostly to the nonprofit day cares. We were in that situation some time ago — some four or five years ago; I'm not exactly sure — and upon receiving many, many letters from parents who would have to either put the child in a car if they

had one or, as the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight described, get on public transit and cart that child halfway across the city to find a nonprofit day care that they could put the child in, now with the subsidy following the child, the parents can look for a day care that is reasonably close to them and that's acceptable to them in all manners. They can pick that day care and use it and still receive the profit. Be it a profit day care or a nonprofit day care, they can still use it and have their child go to that day care and feel safe when they go to work.

Mr. Speaker, I also heard some members speak about children being tied together going down the street from a day care to a park or wherever. I don't know how many children that member has and how close they are in age, but I would suggest that as our sons are six years old and twins are three and a half, I can sure understand why, with even four, they would have them tied together. If you try to look after three little boys, especially twins that are on the go, and they're going in three different directions at the same time, I can understand why you would have them tied together: so you can keep track of them. At least they can only get as far away as the end of the rope goes. I always used to think that it wasn't a good thing when you'd see little children in the mall and parents had harnesses on them. Well, I can tell you that after taking the twins shopping a few times, by gosh, we bought harnesses for them and used them when they were smaller, because there's no way you can hold on to them.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand that there are certain industries where the motion would apply more than others, especially those industries — and I know that there is a problem — where they work on shifts, such as hospitals and other facilities that work on a 24-hour shift. Whereas most day cares are open from somewhere around six in the morning to six in the evening, when you get into facilities such as hospitals, I can well understand where the member's motion should and could be encouraged. It does create a problem with day care when you are on shift work like that, especially the evening shifts and especially if it's a single-parent family where there could be a need for day care in a facility on a 24-hour clock. The children could be brought into those day cares instead of some of the other arrangements that have to be made so that those parents can still go to work.

Mr. Speaker, some members said it would be a very nice thing to have a day care here or near here in the Legislature so that they could bring their children. That's nice for you Edmonton members. I would have to bring my children up. I suppose I would have to have three airplane tickets twice a week. It may be nice here, but I'm saying that where I am, we have to make our own arrangements because we live in a small town and we like to live in a small town.

We have three children, as I said. My wife works part-time, and we have to make arrangements with different people in the community to look after our children. As other members have said, that is part of the parental responsibility. The town is not big enough that either a nonprofit or a private day care has been set up. So if we set these facilities up, any kind of facility that we are talking about, remember that it is just a portion of the population of this province that it's going to affect. It isn't going to affect all the areas that many of us represent, especially the smaller towns and the rural areas where women work and they have to make their own arrangements for looking after children either with babysitters or grand-

parents or friends. I know some cases where mothers look after other kids for one or two days a week and then when they go to work the next two days, the other mother looks after her kids as well as theirs — these kinds of arrangements.

Mr. Speaker, now to get further into the motion and make some comments on the number of visits by groups into day cares. I don't know how many visits by professional day care workers to various day cares there are in this province, but I would suggest that it would be a great many day cares. I would also suggest that if you're looking at day cares in one area and saying they are not as good as day cares in others, or condemning all day cares because of what you see in certain day cares or areas — before one would do that, you should go into various parts of the province and look at various day cares rather than make the comment on just a few that you've gone into.

As I said last week speaking on another Bill, maybe with the exception of one person in this Assembly, I've been to more day cares in this province in the last three and a half years than anyone else. I've been in all parts and I've seen all kinds, believe me. I've seen exceptionally good ones and some that may not be so good.

The Social Care Facilities Review Committee has made some recommendations on certain day cares. Some of those recommendations have been followed and some action has been taken on those day cares. The Social Care Facilities Review Committee is a committee of 12 citizens at large appointed from various parts of the province. Two MLAs were formerly on it, myself and the Speaker. Before he took his new position as Speaker, he was the chairman of that committee. We used to go through the province in groups of two and go unannounced into day cares because the legislation says we can go into a day care at any time. We don't have to give notification. We can go in, we can look around, and according to the legislation we can't be stopped. In some cases that is better access than certain people in the Department of Social Services have. We can go in unannounced, we can look around, and we can make our recommendations.

As members of the Legislature would know, a report is tabled every year. I don't know how many read it, but it has been tabled every year in the same form. It outlines some of the things we've seen as concerns. I should say that last year, in 1985, the committee made 1,125 visits to facilities right from the adult care, child welfare homes, day cares, all sorts of groups homes, hostels, and emergency shelters — all kinds — and made recommendations. I should maybe paraphrase a couple of the recommendations that were made by the committee in 1985 if members haven't read their book. I would recommend that those who feel strongly about day care and the various other areas the committee goes into take time to look up the report and read it. One recommendation, for example, says:

In Order to achieve, consistent quality care, it is essential that clearly defined standards be developed for Day Care. The committee recommends that these be established and implemented.

[The committee feels] that with the vast amount of government dollars being directed toward Day Care that there should be greater financial accountability by the operators by asking them to submit an annual financial statement.

Mr. Speaker, those are just two comments out of one of the committee's annual reports, that of 1985. I believe the total number of visits since the committee was formed is now 3,627 as of the filing of this report, so that report is

probably somewhere between 300 and 400 visits shy of what has actually been done. To date I don't have any clear amounts on visits.

I should also say that one of the items that members of that committee discussed is accreditation programs. Most members look forward to the accreditation program that is being developed in group homes and such. They intend to have an accreditation program set up in a certain way, and the industry itself will rate it. Once that gets working, I think it would be the feeling of many of the members that we could get into such things as that kind of program for day care. But it was a desire, at least my personal desire, that the other program develop fully and properly before we try to go with another one, and I think we're very close on that.

Mr. Speaker, I think that about winds up the comments I wish to make on this motion. I guess it would be fair to say that I partially support the hon. member's motion, with the concerns I expressed.

Thank you.

MR. WRIGHT: I move the previous question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I beg your pardon?

MR. WRIGHT: May I not move the previous question?

MR. SPEAKER: My previous question here is that we're going to move on this motion unless I recognize any other speakers. We're both in the same direction.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: We have a call for the question. The Member for Drayton Valley.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make a few comments on the motion. I know that about two and a half years ago there was some consideration on the establishment of a day care centre in the Legislature. The secretaries in my office contacted me asking what I would think of the establishment of a day care centre here. Quite frankly, with the number of young women we have in the building, I wouldn't oppose it. I think it might be quite useful. But I also know that some of the secretaries who have worked for me and in our offices have also taken the other approach, in that they've chosen to stay home and look after their own children. I believe we have to make sure that both of those options are available.

It seems to me that at the present time the public focus, and certainly the government focus, is on making it very, very attractive for a person with small children to leave them in a day care as opposed to staying home and looking after them. I'm thinking now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of income tax. If one wants to put a child in day care or hire somebody to look after the child, it's tax deductible. When my children were of that age, there was certainly no tax deduction. On the other hand, if a lady and her husband decide that she will stay home with the children, the tax deduction for that child or those children is very, very minimal.

I believe it's imperative that as a government we think in terms of the best interests of the child. I've been talking to the Minister of Social Services, and she indicated that she had some studies — and studies can prove anything; any study can, of course — which clearly indicated that

some of the problems with some of our young people are a direct result of institutionalized care at a very young age. There is a great deal of advantage in staying home and raising those children, from both the parents' point of view and the child's point of view. I think we have to take a really careful look at that as an option.

Mr. Speaker, you hear a lot of discussion about the single parent. I've heard it mentioned a couple of times in this discussion, especially the single mother. Quite frankly, I think a single parent, whether a mother or a father, has exactly the same kinds of problems in raising their children. The problem may not be the same. For instance, a single mother has more support from government and government agencies than a single father would have. A single father might have trouble staying home and looking after his children, whereas it's certainly not difficult — it may be difficult, but it's certainly not publicly unacceptable for a single mother to stay home and look after those children if that's in the best interests of the children and the mother.

MR. SIGURDSON: And be on welfare?

MRS. CRIPPS: If that's the case. That may be. But putting that child in a day care centre may not be in the best interests of the child or the mother. I think we have to look at all of the alternatives that would be in the best interests of both of them. For a period of time, it might be in the best interests of the child to be looked after by the parent.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the time, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Member for Drayton Valley, all those in favour please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Those opposed, please say no. The motion is carried.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, this evening when the House reconvenes the throne speech debate will be continued.

[The House recessed at 5:28 p.m. 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 23: Mr. Cherry]

MR. CHERRY: Mr. Speaker, although I have already risen once to briefly address the House, I beg its indulgence to

make my maiden speech today as we consider the throne speech.

First, Mr. Speaker, let me congratulate you on your election as Speaker of this House. I'm sure you will elicit the respect of this House not only for your office but for the dignity and decorum with which you perform your duties. I look forward to participating in the activities of this House with you at its helm. Also, Mr. Speaker, I must thank Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for her gracious manner and presentation of the throne speech to this 21st Legislature.

I have also been impressed with the quality, clarity, eloquence, and elegance of the members who have preceded me in this debate. As one of 39 new members elected to this House, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure there are many who share my enthusiasm for the constituency I serve in this new role. The boundaries of the Lloydminster constituency are relatively new ones. My predecessor, the hon. Bud Miller, was first elected to the Lloydminster constituency in 1971. It was previously known as the Alexandra constituency.

My constituency of Lloydminster, Mr. Speaker, all prejudice aside, is one of the most beautiful areas of the province. The rolling hills yield nature's bounty in agriculture and in heavy oil, another of nature's treasures. Thus, our economy rests on the two pillars which are also the major industries of our province: agriculture and energy. Our strong agricultural sector, together with work opportunities in the oil and gas industry, have allowed both the smaller communities and the city of Lloydminster to survive and prosper. The city that gives its name to our constituency is a very unique part of the whole. As Canada's only border city — and I underline that, Mr. Speaker — it allows for a spirit of co-operation between governments and government representatives on both sides of the fourth meridian.

With an ever-increasing population of 17,000, the city offers advantages in both life-style and business, particularly on the Alberta side. Due to the socialist political climate existing in Saskatchewan over the years, newcomers to Lloydminster have found their opportunities on the Alberta side of the border rather than on the Saskatchewan side. Two-thirds of Lloydminster residents make their homes and businesses west of the border.

Transportation plays a significant role in the lives of my constituents, Mr. Speaker. Through the centre of the constituency runs the Yellowhead Highway, undeniably one of the busiest of our provincial roadways. Highway 45 links the northern part of the constituency from Beauvallon in the west through Myrnam, Derwent, Clandonald, Dewberry, and Marwayne to the Saskatchewan border on the east. Secondary roads have continuously been developed. One of the more important is the north-south link of 897 running from the north boundary of the North Saskatchewan River through Kitscoty and Paradise Valley to the Battle River in the south. Local roads are also of great concern as they must accommodate the heavy traffic flow from the agricultural and heavy oil sectors. It is essential, Mr. Speaker, that the lines of communication between local and provincial governments remain open for ongoing improvements to our road system.

My constituency is one with exceptional health care, educational, and recreational facilities. The new Lloydminster regional hospital, while yet another example of interprovincial co-operation, is also a medical facility that will encompass all the best of medical technology. Construction of the new facility began in February of this year, Mr.

Speaker, and the hospital is scheduled for completion in November 1987.

Lloydminster also boasts a campus of Lakeland College. The college is a regional one, serving northeastern Alberta, and also an interprovincial one, serving northwestern Saskatchewan. As some of my colleagues are aware, Mr. Speaker, we are looking forward to building a new and expanded college campus in Lloydminster. We also have top-notch facilities for our students in grades 1 through 12. For example, last year in Kitscoty a new junior/senior high school opened its doors to students. The school is a beautiful modern facility with a capacity for as many as 500 students, and the facility will be ready for changes in the area's population with the proposed heavy oil upgrader.

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of joining with the hon. Member for Whitecourt on June 19 for the official opening of a very special facility in Lloydminster. The Bud Miller All Seasons Park is named in tribute of the member before me who served so well in this House. The All Seasons Park is one the people of the city of Lloydminster and area will be able to enjoy for many, many years. Mr. Speaker, I felt very honoured to participate in the opening of this \$8.7 million park, honoured for whom the park was named and also because I could already see how well the ball diamonds, tennis courts, picnic areas, horseshoe pits, and amphitheatre were being used.

Mr. Speaker, I could devote hours to describing my constituency, but I'll stop at that brief description. No doubt the House will become better acquainted with the Lloydminster constituency as I bring my constituents' concerns before the House.

As a farmer myself, Mr. Speaker, I join with my constituents in embracing the number one priority agriculture was accorded in this throne speech. There is no doubt in my mind that some of the very best farmers in the world grow their crops in the Lloydminster constituency. However, not even the best farmer can successfully battle elements that are out of his hands. Successive years of drought, climbing interest rates, and forces outside the Canadian borders have combined to provide one of the most turbulent times in Alberta agriculture since the Great Depression. I am sure the farm credit stability program will be of great assistance to some of my constituents and farmers throughout Alberta. I am also certain that both the hon. Minister of Agriculture and the hon. Associate Minister of Agriculture are deeply committed to agriculture and the farmers of this province. I congratulate them on their appointments; both are excellent choices. I am also confident they will work in consultation with the farmers of this province to provide a more stable and stronger-than-ever agricultural sector.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents were also pleased to see the commitment to small business in the throne speech. They realize the important role which small business plays in Alberta's economy.

Before I talk about the energy sector in the Lloydminster constituency, I'd like to mention a very special part of Alberta's population: our seniors. I am happy that in Alberta senior citizens are not a forgotten part of our population. In Alberta we still recognize seniors as an important part of our society. It is important that commitments have been made for affordable senior housing and quality home care. I believe programs that permit seniors and other Albertans to retain their sense of self-worth and independence in the comfortable surroundings of their own homes are of immeasurable value.

Mr. Speaker, the heavy oil deposits in the Lloydminster area have been recognized for decades. As early as the 1930s serious attempts were made to exploit available resources. However, the technology of the times limited the amount of heavy oil that was recoverable. In the mid-1970s revolutionary changes occurred in the oil industry. Once heavy oil recovery became more economically viable, the Lloydminster oil area boomed. I have no need to detail what the federal national energy program did to the Lloydminster oil patch. The last five years have brought as many as 1,700 new wells on stream in the northwestern border of my constituency. Unfortunately, the energy sector had only just begun its recovery when falling oil prices negated that recovery. The throne speech reiteration of programs announced for short-term stimulation of drilling, well servicing, and geophysical sectors were welcome in my constituency.

However, the more important commitment in the throne speech for my constituency, and indeed all of Alberta and Canada, is the Husky upgrader. The upgrader means jobs and economic prosperity not only in the Lloydminster constituency but throughout northeastern Alberta. Its operation will have a rippling effect in the oil-industry sector. The economic benefits will be felt here where the oil is refined instead of outside Canadian borders. The upgrader will assist in economic diversification, with activities stimulated in light and heavy manufacturing and an extensive variety of service industries. A strong base of advanced petroleum technology would be developed and maintained. Substantial new and continued employment would be generated. Substantial government revenues would also be derived from royalties, direct taxes, and indirect and induced tax revenues. As you may note, Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of enthusiasm for the Husky upgrader project. I'm confident that with the right mix of federal, provincial, and industry funding, the project will go ahead and play a critical role in our economic future.

I look forward to the future, Mr. Speaker, with optimism, an optimism typical of Albertans. Despite the circumstances, we in Alberta shall overcome and be strong in ourselves and our land. I look forward to joining with all members of this Assembly to meet that challenge.

Thank you.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, in rising in this Assembly for the first time, I wish to congratulate you upon your election as Speaker. Having seen you in action over the past two weeks, I know you will uphold the dignity and decorum of this Assembly much as your predecessor so capably did.

Speaking of predecessors, I'd like to pay tribute to John Thompson, who so ably represented the constituency of Cardston since 1975. Upon my arrival in Edmonton I quickly discovered the great amount of respect that his peers and staff had for him as a man, as an MLA, and as a friend. John served the constituency well, and I hope to measure up to the very high standard that he has set.

I would like to compliment Her Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor for the gracious manner in which she presented the Speech from the Throne, as well as the hon. Member for Calgary Foothills and the hon. Member for Ponoka-Rimbey for moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne. I also wish to thank the constituents of Cardston, who have accorded me the honour and privilege to represent their interests and concerns here in the Legislature. I will endeavour to live up to the trust and faith they have placed in me. I've been told that I am the eighth MLA to represent

this constituency, and I pledge to carry on this task with the same vigour and enthusiasm as my predecessors.

I'd like to direct my remarks, Mr. Speaker, to the Speech from the Throne. I will also comment on the tangible benefits that the constituency of Cardston has received under this government and what things lie ahead for the Cardston constituency. The people in my constituency have always been a people of great faith, vision, and industry. This reflects well on both their culture and their ability to understand a situation. In times of adversity they seek opportunity. In times of disparity they seek harmony. It is in this light that my constituents view the challenges outlined in both the Speech from the Throne and the budget speech. Please keep in mind throughout my remarks that my constituency is largely made up of pioneer stock whose roots go back to the early settlers of that area, and they carry a pride in their communities and in Alberta that is second to none.

They send me to this Legislature with a political philosophy steeped in the free-enterprise system, one that tells us to take care of ourselves and that our government is the last resort in times of difficulty. Their pay-as-you-go philosophy is borne out by the financial positions of the municipalities in that several of them are in a surplus position and the balance are well in control of their financial condition. With such a philosophy, it is natural for them to have concerns with a deficit budget, and I'm glad this government sees this as a temporary measure for a difficult economic time.

The cornerstone of the economy in the Cardston constituency since 1886, when Ora Card founded Cardston, has been and continues to be agriculture. Nowhere is the pioneer tradition more evident in Alberta than in places like Cardston, Raymond, Magrath, Hill Spring, Glenwood, and Stirling. My grandfather arrived in Cardston before the turn of the century and, along with thousands of other homesteaders and pioneers, transformed what was once a land easily described as unproductive to a bountiful and prosperous land.

Agriculture is the lifeblood of the constituency I represent. It is for this reason that I am encouraged by the priority continually placed on it by this government. With respect to the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the review of the Alberta hail and crop insurance plan and the Agricultural Development Corporation. I wish the Associate Minister of Agriculture the best of luck in her deliberation and consideration of these areas. I am encouraged that the farming community will have a great deal of input and consultation in these reviews. If I may be so bold as to make a few suggestions in this regard, I hope both reviews will take a look at streamlining the operations of ADC and the hail and crop insurance plan while being sensitive to the needs of the people they are serving.

Irrigation is important in my constituency and to Alberta as a whole. There is a statistic which has been cited innumerable times but which I think is worth repeating again. Only 4 percent of Alberta's arable land is irrigated; however, this same 4 percent produces over 20 percent of the province's agricultural input. The irrigation rehabilitation and expansion program which is cost-shared by the province, 86 percent, and the local irrigation district, 14 percent, has made it possible for five of the irrigation districts in my area to undertake significant upgrading of their facilities. I would encourage this government to continue its commitment to irrigation and this program in particular. Irrigation in southern Alberta has been the only saving grace for some farmers over the past three years.

I want to avoid painting a rosy picture of the farmers' plight in southern Alberta and indeed across the province. Farmers are facing a crisis of debt, a crisis of accelerating input costs and declining revenues, and a crisis in confidence. In 1985 and again in 1986 the Alberta government has responded in an outstanding way for the short term. The \$2 billion farm credit stability program is welcome news to many farmers in my area and provides for substantial long-term support for the agricultural sector.

I cannot stress enough the relative importance of the agricultural sector for my constituency, Mr. Speaker. Just as the closing of a coal mine or a pulp mill will create a ghost town in B.C., the abandonment of the agricultural industry would mean a similar fate to some of the smaller communities in my area like Leavitt, Welling, and Spring Coulee — small communities, yes, but so important to the economic well-being of larger communities like Raymond, Magrath, and Cardston. For these reasons I'm encouraged by the government's current commitment to Alberta's agriculture sector and urge my colleagues on both sides of this Assembly to continue to search for imaginative and constructive ways to aid this primary industry.

I will now turn to small business in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. As agriculture goes, so goes small business in the Cardston constituency. While small business is a big contributor to the local economy, their support lies in an agricultural base. They have suffered alongside their most important customer, the farmer. The closing of a few businesses in a larger city may not even be noticed. I can assure you that when the local hardware store closes down in any small town, it is very much noticed in the surrounding areas. The Alberta small business term assistance program will greatly assist small businesses in the Cardston constituency. Hopefully, it will provide the small businessman with some much-needed capital to bid a project, expand his enterprise, or otherwise keep his business afloat.

We have a serious unemployment problem, but hopefully the initiatives contained in the Speech from the Throne will help alleviate this.

Mr. Speaker, tourism plays an important role in my constituency. We have three ports of entry from the United States, as we are one of the three Alberta provincial constituencies which border the United States. Waterton National Park is a tourist facility that we take a great deal of pride in. We hope to see it preserved and protected, consistent with the needs of all who may see fit to use and enjoy it.

In Cardston there is a great tourist attraction known as the Remington Carriage collection. This is a collection of vintage carriages of upward of a million dollars in value donated to the province of Alberta by Mr. Remington on the condition that an appropriate facility be acquired or built to house the collection. I could talk about it at length, but suffice it to say that I hope to seek out the ministers of Culture and Tourism to secure funding for this project. This facility would serve well as an initial introduction to our American visitors of the type of attractions that Alberta will provide for them as they proceed north through our province, leaving with us the tourist dollars they will surely spend.

Mr. Speaker, I will turn to municipal matters and commend the government for its ongoing support for Alberta's communities, towns, and villages. To cite but one example, the community recreation and cultural program has allowed many communities to develop expanded recreational services. This is a great asset in rural communities, because in some cases

the closest recreational services may be up to 25 or 30 miles away. Local communities can now enjoy the facility of their choice on a local basis, ranging from skating rinks to community halls to enlarged gymnasiums.

Mr. Speaker, I feel the municipal partnership in local employment program, announced this past April and reaffirmed in the Speech from the Throne, will have a positive influence upon municipalities. For the Cardston area, I'm sure local municipalities will see fit to target some of these moneys to upgrading roads. I'm optimistic that this program will be beneficial to the local road network in all Alberta municipalities. I must also add that the advent of these programs does not mean that all the municipal issues in the Cardston constituency have been dealt with. Specifically, we still suffer from rail line abandonment and from lack of all-weather market roads in some areas.

Mr. Speaker, medical care is an important issue in many constituencies in Alberta. Over the past several years Cardston, Raymond, and Magrath have each been the location for a new hospital. I can assure the Assembly that all are highly utilized and appreciated. One of them has an extended care unit attached. The one in Raymond has been approved for this year; Magrath waits anxiously. These extended care units mean a great deal to seniors in the surrounding areas as they allow them to stay in close proximity to friends, family, and community. Home care programs were also addressed in the Speech from the Throne, and again I cannot overemphasize their value and the constituents' appreciation of them.

Mr. Speaker, on the matter of programs for Alberta senior citizens, you may not be aware that the Cardston constituency enjoys a larger-than-average percent of the population being over 65 years of age. I've been told that Alberta's programs, services, and facilities for senior citizens are among the best in the world. Evidence to that fact are beautiful senior citizens' villas located in Cardston and Raymond. For seniors staying at home, the extension of the seniors' home improvement program is welcome news. Many of my senior constituents have taken full use of this program, and it is a program which creates jobs at the local level.

Turning briefly to communications, Mr. Speaker, in a rural constituency the party telephone line has become a veritable institution. It was a source of amusement when urban friends came to visit and tried to use it, a source of frustration when the neighbours were not home to answer it, but it has never been a source of privacy. The former minister of utilities is well aware of my personal aggravation with this system. I'm very pleased that the government has chosen to extend private lines to over 100,000 party-line users. Some have put forth the view that \$4.50 per month for 20 years was an excessive amount to pay for this service. They have obviously never been a rural resident or they would gladly pay that amount for privacy and convenience.

I want to turn my focus to the native constituents I represent. The Blood Indian reservation is located just north of Cardston and is the largest reservation in Canada in terms of area. The Blood Indian Reserve is clearly an important ingredient in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. I will always encourage the government to assist them and treat them fairly. They have taken some positive steps toward self-government, education, and administration at the band level. I'm encouraged by this trend.

The government has chosen to disband the former department of native affairs and divide the responsibility among two or three departments. I caution the government to avoid losing sight of the goals of natives in this province and to

ensure that their needs and aspirations are not lost as a result of poor co-ordinating mechanisms between departments.

My final remarks relate to education. In the Cardston constituency we have some fine educational facilities. This is indicative of the priority which government has placed on education over the past 15 years. A large number of these facilities were constructed during that time. This year alone three communities are receiving new schools or upgrading in our constituencies. Others are in the planning stage.

One general remark, if I may, Mr. Speaker. Just over 10 years ago my predecessor delivered his maiden speech in this Assembly. Like myself, he was responding to the Speech from the Throne. At that time he noted that the government of the day was being roundly criticized because of the restraint it was recommending in the Speech from the Throne. It seems that very little has changed. Today we hear critics saying that the government is not doing enough. On the contrary; I suggest to you that the government is being responsive to the needs of Albertans and responsible in its fiscal stewardship.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence and guidance over the coming years on those occasions when I have opportunity to stand and speak before this Assembly. To the other members, I wish to thank you for making a man from the southern part of the province feel welcome here in Edmonton. I look forward to continued discussion and debate with you.

Thank you.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I rise to add my two cents worth in the debate on the Speech from the Throne. Before I do that I would like to add to the congratulations you've received on the job you've taken on as Speaker for this Assembly. I would like to point out that those members of this Assembly that knew you as a member seem to expect no less than the excellent job you're doing in reflection of abilities you've shown before.

I would like to also extend more than just congratulations but a note of very deep personal thanks based on something I quote from *Hansard* on Friday the 13th, that being this statement by you:

Members of the Assembly, it's a very unique occasion for some of our members to get so involved in the life of the province that they then rush out and give birth to a baby. On this day I'm sure members of the Assembly would join me, on your behalf, in wishing well to the Member for Edmonton Glengarry and his wife on the birth of their son [Ian] David, who was born on this day.

I quote that for two reasons. One, as a proud father it's hard to resist mentioning it to a captive audience. But the other ...

AN HON. MEMBER: Did you bring pictures?

MR. YOUNIE: I'll bring them later.

AN HON. MEMBER: Cigars?

MR. YOUNIE: I brought chocolate ones; I'm a nonsmoker.

My other reason, though, Mr. Speaker, is to point out that I do not hold lightly the historical significance of this document. To have the birth of my son mentioned in it is

indeed a very deep honour, and I appreciate it very much. Thank you.

After 14 years of teaching, Mr. Speaker, I've now spent a little over one week at my new career here in the Assembly. I must confess to a certain amount of culture shock. I've spent 14 years confiscating notes as they were passed around my classrooms. Now I have delightful young men and women in formal attire to carry my notes on silver trays. I've always discouraged students from interrupting my class by leaving to go to the washroom and here we leave at will, and I must confess that never ever has a student bowed to me or my chair as he left the room to do so. There certainly are differences, but I've been told I'm a fast learner, and I think I'll get the hang of it as time passes.

Just this afternoon I had it reinforced on my mind that indeed one only gets to speak once to a motion before the House. Perhaps that is why so many members tend to speak for so long. They want to make sure they don't miss anything in their one chance. Instead, I left some good points for later and didn't get them in.

Before I comment on the constituency I represent, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to comment on a speech made yesterday by my colleague from Avonmore. She spoke most eloquently on, among other things, women's issues. As she spoke, there was a constant excited buzz from the hon. members to my left, and that's left geographically speaking only. Although I have no doubt that their more than audible whispers were motivated by the profound nature of my colleague's speech, it did make it hard for me to hear her at times. Because of this I was faced with a quandary as I wrote my speech for tonight. Should I address profound issues and elicit their excited commentary, or should I bore them to sleep with effusive praises of famous New Democrats and a detailed account of every institution in the riding of Edmonton Glengarry? I'll leave it to the members to decide which of those two courses I chose.

I would like to make two comments on the subject of women's issues. First, I would like to note that in 14 years as a teacher dealing with excellent administrators, the best I have known was a woman. This was not because she was a woman or in spite of the fact that she was a woman. She was just a superlative administrator. In other areas of business I've also known several women in the past decade who were passed up for deserved promotions and then asked to train the man who was given the job instead of them. I've never known a man to suffer the same fate. So I think it is obvious that that kind of discrimination does exist, and it would be foolish for any of us in here to try to believe otherwise.

At this point there are a number of things I would like to say about Edmonton Glengarry. In many ways it typifies much of Alberta. It is ethnically diverse. It has large numbers of reluctantly unemployed people. It has areas of great economic disparity, such disparity that the cost of a vacant lot in one area is equal to the cost of two houses in another. Like most of northeast Edmonton it suffers a number of transportation problems and the intrusion of many noxious odours and potentially dangerous pollutants from Refinery Row. We have one neighbourhood which lacks a junior high school and several other neighbourhoods which fear it will get the needed school because their schools may be classed as nonviable without bused-in students. One of the most difficult aspects of this problem is the danger of pitting one neighbourhood against another.

Edmonton Glengarry differs from any other riding in one important respect. The voters there decided to ignore the

Premier's dire warnings and elect an opposition M.L.A. During the election and the previous year of campaigning, which is the amount of time I spent knocking on doors, they reflected an attitude which I found most disquieting. Most believed that it did not matter who they elected; the government would continue to do things badly and would continue to ignore their needs. They did not believe their voice would make any difference. In a dictatorship this is true. In a democracy this is a dangerously incorrect perception. This feeling was illustrated when nearly half the voters didn't even go out to vote. Over the next four years I plan to prove that those who voted for change were correct. I can only do this by being the most effective M.L.A. they have ever had. That is what I plan to do, because Edmonton Glengarry deserves no less than that.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would like to do what only two or three other speakers before me have done. I would like to speak a bit about myself and the background that I bring to this Assembly. I wish more of the previous speakers had done so, because I know so little about the 83 people with whom I will work for the next four years. Outside of my own party I know only that the majority are members of the dreaded Tory party that we have criticized and castigated for so long. Some, much to everyone's surprise, are Liberals, whom we have always said are identical to Tories except that they have less shame about using our platform during an election and Tory policies when in power. Others belong to a new party with, unfortunately, fairly old policies.

I do not make these statements to offend anyone but to illustrate my hope that we can get to know each other and go beyond these stereotypes and deal in open honesty for the good of those we represent. In fact, I contend that if we do not do that, we have no excuse for being here at all.

A bit about myself I was born in Olds, Alberta, just over 36 years ago. I'm one of seven children in a military family and the only one born in Alberta. I have lived at 32 addresses in five provinces in the last 36 years. Twenty-three of those homes were in Alberta, and eight of them were rural. I received my education in eight schools in five provinces and at one college and one university in Alberta. I have previously worked as a housepainter, cook, dishwasher, ward attendant, waiter, and teacher. I have taught in five schools in 14 years. To say I've been around is somewhat of an understatement.

I believe each one of us brings a unique background to this Assembly. I believe mine helps me to understand the frustrations of people who want to work but can't find jobs. Right across Canada I think people want their governments to do a good job without intruding on their daily lives. Government, however, can intrude by inaction. One of the crudest intrusions into the lives of citizens in Alberta has been this government's lack of action on job creation.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, I bring to my new job a wide range of experience with Canadians and their institutions. Perhaps it was this experience that caused me to react strongly to words uttered the other evening by the Member for Sherwood Park. He said we have the best people in Canada in this province. I'm sorry, but I have to disagree with the hon. member. I have run in five ridings in the province and have lived in many other areas across the country. My experience has taught me that Albertans are like people everywhere. The majority are very fine and decent people, a few are hard to like, and an even smaller few, thankfully, are harder not to hate. Is a murderer in

Alberta better than a family man in Ontario? Of course not, and I am sure the hon. member does not think so. But his words are the kind that can inflame xenophobic passions and regional hatreds that cloud the fact that a man is the result of his life experience, not the province or country of his birth.

I believe this is true in every country, not just Canada. The people of the United States, South Africa, England, Russia, and Ethiopia are all much the same. They want to live, provide for loved ones, build a secure future, and have time to smile, even laugh, and love those around them. The government that is right is the government that allows them to do this best. I believe that in Canada we have done better than many countries. But have we done the best that could be done? We have not intentionally bred racial hatred, but have we ignored racial indifference? I fear that we have. We have not ignored mass starvation, but have we fed every hungry child? I know we haven't. We have not destroyed our democratic traditions, but have we let Canadians come to feel that democracy no longer works for them? Voters have told me that we have. We will never attain perfection, but as long as one Albertan goes to bed hungry, suffers because of his race, or rightly feels that the system no longer cares for his fate, then I think we must work harder and do better.

In reference to the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch on an area where this government has been particularly weak: environmental protection. In the April throne speech there was only one reference in one line about environmental protection. In the June throne speech that environmental job program was omitted. For two decades environmental scientists have been telling us that the risk of destroying humanity with pollution is as great as the possibility of nuclear annihilation, perhaps even greater. Industry and even governments have been hiring scientists to say they are wrong. Our major industry in Alberta, the petrochemical industry, works with and dumps into the environment a wide array of the most dangerous chemical pollutants. Dangerous waste disposal methods, negligent government, greedy industry, and job-hungry workers have overlooked many dangerous situations. I would like to discuss a few of them.

The first, Mr. Speaker, is the disposal of solid waste. It is an issue of some importance to the Edmonton area at present. My concern is the reason that it has become an important issue. There has been a lack of provincial leadership in this area. Edmonton's waste disposal problems affect their neighbours, and their neighbours' problems affect them. There are a number of reasons why the provincial government should show leadership in this area. The main reason is that waste disposal is a provincial problem, and provincial action would save much duplication of effort and expense. A provincewide strategy of regional waste management would ensure that waste is disposed of in the safest and the most economical manner.

Another reason is that landfill seems to be the only method open to municipalities. A provincial strategy could look at the possibility of incineration and recycling. Oppositions to this method claim that there is no demand for the recycled materials. In this case I think the supply has to come before the demand. That is so true of the materials of recycling. Once we have the supply here, people will create a demand and use it. The important point here is that landfill is no longer an environmentally responsible method of dealing with waste. New methods must be found, and that requires leadership from the provincial government.

Let's take a look at how such leadership would affect the Edmonton area. Edmonton is looking at a cost of about \$25 million for a new landfill site. All available options have serious drawbacks. Five major population centres and many smaller municipalities in this region face similar problems when landfill is discussed. Obviously, nobody wants it to be in their backyard, and if you're going to bury garbage, you have to bury it in somebody's backyard. Unfortunately, landfills have a limited life span, and the problem keeps coming back to haunt each municipality. Then there is the possibility of a regional incineration recycling facility designed to serve the entire region. It would cost about the same as the total that all the region would spend on landfill. It would not allow dangerous chemicals to leach into the water table as would a landfill site in a river valley, and it would provide offsetting income from the sale of recycled materials. Why then does the provincial government keep dumping this problem on the municipalities? It's time for the provincial government to show leadership and take action.

In another area of waste management the provincial government has shown leadership, but I have grave reservations concerning where that leadership is taking us. I am talking about the whole subject of special waste management, "special waste" not being my term. Even the name is a form of duplicity and deception. "Special waste" doesn't have a fearful ring to it. When I think of special wastes, I might think of surplus caviar that Mila couldn't finish in Europe, old limousines that the Prime Minister has ridden in three times and is now tired of, or perhaps the Premier's old football shoes. But what will really be trucked through Edmonton to Swan Hills? It will be hazardous wastes, dangerous wastes, carcinogenic wastes, toxic wastes, and deadly poisons. It will be the full range of the most dangerous substances produced by modern industry. When we use these names, we suddenly illustrate why political games, sweetheart deals for friends, and the government's mania for privatization must take second place to safety and the public interest.

With these ideas in mind, let's look at how Chem-Security Ltd. was chosen to develop the Swan Hills toxic waste disposal facility. As I understand the situation, 19 companies submitted initial proposals. Four proposals were studied in the final competition. Three of those four proposed joint ventures with shared risk with the government. A fourth, Chem-Security, proposed a totally private development with the private company taking all the risks and making all the profit. This fourth proposal was accepted. In view of the government's philosophy, one could expect little else. Chem-Security was owned by an American firm which had a deplorable record environmentally and economically. This problem was rectified, or so it was believed, when Chem-Security was purchased by Bow Valley Resource Services, which is owned by Bow Valley Industries.

There were a few problems with BVRS. They were reluctant to proceed as a totally private venture, so a joint venture was struck. Although they expected to make the very high level of return that accompanies a high-risk venture, they were reluctant to accept virtually any risk. During this time Bow Valley Industries, the parent company, did some corporate restructuring which saw most of the assets of Bow Valley Resource Services channelled into the parent company while the liabilities of the parent company were transferred to BVRS. Now the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation was dealing with a company with many liabilities and few assets. In fact, under the terms of

the present joint-venture agreement BVRS is not putting one cent of their own money into the project. Their contribution to the project is \$27 million borrowed, which the taxpayers will eventually repay for them. For all of this BVRS is guaranteed a very high rate of return while accepting none of the down-side risks.

This deal was so bad for the taxpayers that the board of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation wouldn't recommend it to the minister. Their decision was based on the recommendations of a study done by Woods Gordon, an economic consulting firm. They recommended that one of three courses of action be taken: one, that the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation oversee the construction and management of the facility; two, that the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation oversee construction of the facility, with BVRS hired merely as a management firm and paid only a management fee; three, that the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation continue with construction of the facility while looking for a joint-venture partner which would accept more risk than BVRS was willing to.

Shortly after these recommendations were brought to the Minister of the Environment, the chairman of the board of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation was released and two other board members subsequently resigned. Three new members were appointed to the board, but as yet the board has never recommended that it believes the present joint-venture agreement is best for the taxpayers of Alberta. They have good reason for this. It's obviously a lousy deal for the taxpayers of Alberta. The public should have a number of reservations about this deal. First is the perception that there are many friends between the owners of BVRS and the Conservative Party. Second is the fact that BVRS is guaranteed a high rate of return while they accept no down-side risk in the venture. Third is the dubious financial condition of BVRS. How safe is it to have a financial cripple running a toxic waste disposal facility? Will economic demands compromise safety? How much money will the government pour into this company to avoid the embarrassment of having it go broke? Fourth is the fact that it will be decades before Alberta produces enough hazardous wastes to make such a facility economically viable in the private sector. This demands one of three courses: either the facility should be run by the Crown corporation as a public service; the private company must be allowed to import toxic wastes from outside Alberta, which I think is unacceptable; or the government will have to subsidize the private company's profits.

New Democrats can see the sense of using the existing Crown corporation to operate the facility. Only Conservative ideological blinders make the government willing to throw away \$20 million of taxpayers' money for the dubious pleasure of having a private company manage the facility.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might address a question to the Member for Edmonton Glengarry? Would he be prepared to accept a question?

MR. YOUNIE: At the end of the speech, yes.

MR. SPEAKER: At the end of the speech, if so willing. Would the Member for Edmonton Glengarry continue his remarks, please.

AN HON. MEMBER: Don't be so defensive.

MR. YOUNIE: I like striking in air. Those facts, by the way, are from the Legislature Library.

Another issue I would like to discuss, Mr. Speaker, is the sour gas study. I call it by that name with some sense of irony, because there was no effort to determine the levels of sour gas or sulphur emissions during the period of the study. My reservations about the study are not related to the unquestioned validity of the test's scientific methods or the impressive qualifications of Dr. Spitzer.

My first reservation is with the fact that the study was done by Community Health rather than the Environment department. What exists in the area studied is a problem of environmental pollution. The study should have been done by the Environment department and should have concentrated on the pollutant of most concern, that being the sulphur emitted by gas well flare-offs.

Another reservation I have is the fact that the test did not address the source of the complaints over the last three decades. As the complaints mounted, the gas plant itself cleaned up its operation considerably. More recently, complaints have originated from about 65 families who live in the immediate area of the gas wells which supply the plant. Their complaints centre around a wide variety of symptoms of ill health which occur only when the nearby gas well is being flared. By and large, the symptoms fade when the flare-off ends. The symptoms were also worse when weather conditions prevented the sulphur emissions from dissipating.

For some reason the study dealt with all 3,600 residents of the study area rather than the 65 families living near the wells. It also concentrated on fatal and life-threatening diseases rather than the general symptoms of ill health that the residents complained of. This inappropriate focus of the study was complicated by the lack of ambient testing of sulphur levels during the period of the test.

Others assert that the gas plant considerably reduced production at this time. There was a coincidental weather phenomenon, a lack of inversions to keep sulphur pollution in the area. This would indicate that the pollutant that residents believed caused their problems was almost non-existent during the test period. Because there was no ambient testing done to establish actual levels of sulphur, I am compelled to accept the statements of the residents, and no one can scientifically prove otherwise.

For these reasons the study, as it was conducted, can only provide one safe conclusion: the residents of the test area had a very good year as far as pollution goes. I would not accuse the gas company of reducing production and ceasing flare-offs to sway test results; their motives are immaterial. The government's motives are more important. Why is there this adamant refusal to conduct meaningful tests into sulphur emissions of sour gas well flare-offs? Will this study be used to justify future sour gas developments, especially those that involve higher concentrations of sulphur and those that are in delicate wilderness areas or near major population centres? This is a situation which demands meaningful study by the Environment department. It is a situation which will receive continued scrutiny by the opposition.

I would like to leave environmental issues at this point, as I'm sure the minister would appreciate, and conclude as I began on a personal and philosophical note. I mentioned earlier the honour I felt when the birth of my son was announced in this Assembly. I also have the pleasure of a most delightful daughter of two and a half years. She is a source of joy, and I am a father who knows his place: around her little finger. I have a nice house and a table that never lacks for food, as my waistline shows. I have

a wife who until recently maintained a career while she kept my house in order. After five election campaigns in eight years, I was accorded the honour of sitting in this Assembly to debate the affairs of the province. A friend commented that after so much work, I deserved the victory. It would be nice if I deserved all that I have, but I confess that I don't.

I live a life of totally undeserved abundance, abundance of friends, material comfort, and security. Yet my deservings are no greater than the black South African who risks his life fighting to win equality, no greater than the Ethiopian who watches his child starve in a world of plenty, and no greater than the Edmontonian who sets fire to his unheated tenement trying to stay warm beside a fire made in a garbage can lid. It is my hope that my service in this Assembly will help those who deserve more than they have. If so, I will still not deserve all that I have, but at least my enjoyment of it will be less tinged with guilt.

My colleague for Edmonton Centre once said that God expects that those who have more should give more. Hopefully, our efforts in this Assembly over the next four years will be found satisfactory. If the contents of the throne speech could be turned to these humanitarian ends, I could support it wholeheartedly. Mr. Speaker, because those humanitarian goals are omitted, so is my support.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: It is my understanding that in terms of the debate, any member may ask another member a question at any time, but it's certainly up to the member receiving the request to decline as well as to accept.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I understand that the hon. Member for Edmonton, Glengarry has accepted an invitation from myself to respond to a question. My question is a very, very simple and straightforward one. In his speech the hon. member made mention of sweetheart deals between BVRS and its friends in the government. As I am the Minister of the Environment, would the hon. member kindly identify for the benefit of the members of the Assembly those individuals in BVRS who are friends of mine and who received sweetheart deals?

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't referring to this hon. minister, because most of the negotiations that involved that deal were made by the previous government before the election, when the hon. member was not the Minister of the Environment. It is the ongoing negotiations over a period of years to which I referred, which I am sure did not involve that hon. member.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry. One question; you've had it. I'm sorry; you have a point of order or a point of privilege? What's happening here?

MR. ELZINGA: You might like to answer another question. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: If you'd like to sit down please. I've had a note with respect to the point of order on this, quoting *Beauchesne*, citation 366, and I'm awaiting a certain amount of advice on this. The Member for Calgary Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, citation 366 in *Beauchesne* reads:

Questions may be asked of private Members only under strict limitations. Virtually the only question possible would refer to a committee of which the Member is the Chairman. A question asking, for example, if a Member intended to introduce certain legislation, is out of order.

Notwithstanding *Beauchesne*, I don't know what the practice has been in this Assembly, but I'm wondering to what extent members of the opposition back bench are to be subjected to the same questions generally accorded to the ministers in Oral Question Period.

MR. ELZINGA: If I might, Mr. Speaker, I would assume it's much the same in this House as it is in the federal House, that the House itself adopts its own rules. In the event that there is unanimous consent, it is acceptable. I gathered that unanimous consent was given, because everybody seemed to concur that the hon. minister should have a chance to put the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Obviously, we were having some discussion in all quarters of the Assembly. For the last seven years that I have been privileged to be a member of the Assembly, in debate such as this it is indeed the practice to raise the question of any member of the Assembly, and *Beauchesne* — in this instance this citation does not apply. I am quite prepared to take it under advisement and will report back to the Assembly, but I am sure it won't be until tomorrow, which is not much use as of this moment.

I trust that all hon. members were listening to me attentively when I said that the member does not have to accept the question. In this case the member chose to accept the question. We then go on to another matter, multiplicity of questions. Therefore, I'm ruling that the time has expired for the allotted 30 minutes for the Member for Edmonton Glengarry.

We will proceed momentarily with the next member of the Assembly that I intend to recognize, but I would also like to comment with respect to another practice that has been going on with respect to the throne speech debate. I've been the recipient, the mail depository, so it is, of a number of messages from around the Assembly that I've been allowing great latitude with the reading of speeches. My comment is this: it has occurred in all corners of the Assembly, and with respect to one's maiden speech, so-called, in the Assembly, I'm quite prepared to continue with such a great degree of latitude. But again I advise all hon. members, whether this is their first time in the Assembly or they have been here a number of times, that it is not the practice of the Chair to allow such reading of speeches to continue after the maiden speeches, so I encourage you to develop your oratorical skills.

MR. MARTIN: On a point of order, if I may?

MR. SPEAKER: This is a fresh point of order?

MR. MARTIN: Yes. I think the point can be well made. Within degrees I see nothing wrong with asking questions, but it could get carried away if we don't follow *Beauchesne* at all, because I'll stand up and ask every backbencher a question every time. So it can be taken to extremes, Mr. Speaker, and I would just caution on that side of it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is appreciative of the fact that it's receiving notes in all directions. It's a practice which

adds to what I would describe as the laser light show of being the Speaker of the Assembly; there are so many things that go flashing by.

The first one is with respect to citation 366 in *Beauchesne*, that that citation is irrelevant to the current discussion because it relates to question period. Also, with respect to Standing Orders, if you would turn to Standing Order 13(4)(b) — the Chair is encouraged by the alacrity with which all members are opening the drawers of their desks to find Standing Orders.

(4) When a member is speaking, no person shall ...

(b) interrupt that member, except to raise a point of order.

So here we are. It's 9:02, and if all members would be gracious, I will continue to keep the matter under advisement. The Chair will now recognize the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

This is going to be a fresh point of order?

MR. ELZINGA: Yes, sir. I very much regret, Mr. Speaker, to interrupt this very valuable debate, but since I've just been sitting here reviewing *Hansard* of Friday, I wonder if I might have your consent to make a correction. I inadvertently indicated a percentage which was not correct. Or could you indicate to me the correct time at which I might do that?

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if the Member for Sherwood Park would be good enough to communicate to me in written form. My understanding is, though, that the appropriate time to do it would be when we call for Orders of the Day. That would take place some time tomorrow, I trust, if we ever conclude this debate this evening.

Thank you. May we now have agreement? No, I won't pose the question. The Chair recognizes the Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: I feel myself very privileged to sit in this House, Mr. Speaker, and to respond to the Speech from the Throne.

I hold Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor in deep respect and love, and I feel that for her office as well. All Alberta women earned unearned prestige with her appointment, Mr. Speaker. May I add my congratulations to those of many to you on your appointment. You have shown extraordinary equanimity, wit, and evenhandedness in your manner so far, and I thank you for your patience toward me. I'm most grateful for that. I will undertake to try to keep my gentleman colleagues of caucus, two of whom have deserted me tonight, on a very short leash and will hope that they will behave in an exemplary fashion as well.

I want to thank the residents and electors of Gold Bar for their confidence in electing me to represent them. I follow in very large footsteps, Mr. Speaker. Some of my predecessors were most eminent members of this House. From 1940 until 1967 the riding was served by Senator Ernest Manning, then Premier Manning. It was at one time also served by Mr. J. Percy Page, who subsequently became Lieutenant Governor, and it was also served by Mr. Elmer Roper, who became the mayor of Edmonton and served there with great distinction. So I follow in some very honourable paths.

Gold Bar is a very stable community, Mr. Speaker, 25 to 30 years old. It doesn't have many visible problems, but there are the same invisible ones there that plague many ridings, certainly all urban ridings, and they're the obvious

ones of unemployment and that new, quite different phenomenon, called underemployment. We don't talk much about that, but we're seeing increasing numbers of people in our province who are trained, skilled, and educated to take a certain kind of task, who've made it their life's work and are no longer able to find work at it. They are the underemployed of our province.

Family stress is another invisible problem: family breakup; young people who are desperately worried about finding work and where they will go in their lives; anxiety and loneliness among many people, including the elderly. But throughout my campaign people who spoke with me in the riding expressed puzzlement. They said over and over: "What's happened? Where did the prosperity go? Where did all the promises go that were made to us in the great years? Where did the promises of diversification and of building a stable economy go, so that we wouldn't be subject to the needs and demands of central Canada and the political whims of offshore decisions?"

People in Gold Bar, Mr. Speaker — and I expect they're not substantially different from those in other parts of the province — feel cheated. They're anxious and they're frightened. They're frightened for themselves and their families, for their future, for their pensions, for their retirement. Perhaps we were living too high. Perhaps our expectations were unrealistic in those years, but they were being reinforced constantly by our leaders. The steps to ensure a balanced, stable industrial economy simply were not taken or did not work.

I know Gold Bar well. I have lived there for 27 years. My husband and I have raised our family of four there. He works in the riding. I've been a part of the riding's development through the tough years when we all moved in with new families, new schools, and new institutions. I went through the teenage and youth problems of the '60s, the development of services for seniors as the community aged, the building and rebuilding of parks — I must express gratitude to the government for the development of Capital City Park in Edmonton; it has been a great boon to the people of Gold Bar, which borders on the park — the need to protect our residential neighbourhoods from increasing transportation intrusions as communities and industries sprang up all around us. During the '70s, Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to serve that community as a representative on our municipal council.

More importantly, however, I believe the riding knows me. The riding knows my strengths and my weaknesses, and they are considerable. I won't ever promise them something I can't deliver. I am always accessible. I do consult and listen to the various publics: business, seniors, youth. My style is consultative and collaborative, and open. Through many years of experience I learned to trust people. Their requests and demands are usually reasonable and are based on intimate knowledge of a situation. And I'm thrifty. I believe in careful stewardship of the public's tax dollars. I believe in a private and public mix in our services.

The major concern I have is unemployment and the inability of the government to recognize the severity of the problem and to come to grips with it. That is reflected over and over in the riding of Gold Bar. There has been a gradual erosion of confidence. Over and over I heard said: We don't know them; they don't know us; they don't represent my thinking — that inevitable "we/they"

Mr. Speaker, if I have a role model in my life, a heroine, it would have to be Emily Murphy. She is a very famous Alberta woman, and she has served me well as a role

model. We know her as the woman who was able to have women in Canada declared persons. What we don't know about her, or often don't think about her, is that she was a happy wife and mother. She was a clergyman's wife. She was fond of her home life and her children. She followed her clergyman husband to England in the early years of their marriage, and in England she became deeply concerned about children's rights and about child labour laws. She wrote about them under the name of Janey Canuck and had a great influence on changing labour laws relative to children in the U.K.

Back in Alberta she became interested in the plight and circumstances of what were then called "fallen women", ladies of the evening. She made it her business to make sure that their rights were protected and that they had support services, unheard of in those days. She treated her work with them with fairness and compassion. When she became a family court judge, her right to hold office was challenged. The Canadian Supreme Court upheld the challenge. She and her four companions went to Whitehall to have it overturned, and consequently Canadian women are persons.

I wonder about her and what she would think about us, if she would like me, and what she would think about whether we have made any progress since that time. Or would she say, like Peggy Lee: "Is this all there is? Is this all you've been able to do in those intervening years?" Have women's rights not come as far as they should have? Would she be pleased or disappointed?

Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed with respect to the throne speech. It didn't come to grips in any profound way with some of the major issues and circumstances that are facing us. I'd like to mention a few of them and make some comments, I hope in a positive light.

First, relating to women, I don't think Alberta's record is one that we can be proud of. Sixty-one percent of Alberta women work — almost 10 percent more than the national average — but they make, as we've heard, only 64 cents for every dollar earned by men. In 1982, the last statistic I could find on it, the income of women as a percentage of men's in Alberta was very close to the national average, 52 percent. Only Saskatchewan at 50 percent and B.C. at 52.1 were lower than Alberta. We do not have an enviable or admirable record. We don't have a good history in pay equity.

Judge Abella in her brief on equity says the following: those who suggest that equal pay and other economic issues for women be left to the awakening sensibilities of the marketplace either don't appreciate the values of the marketplace, may themselves be discriminatory, or they do not care that they are; equality in employment will not happen unless we make it happen. I couldn't agree more with Judge Abella in her statement. Equal pay for equal work does not exist in our province and will not until we in this government take some leadership and monitor the situations. Equal pay for work of equal value will come sooner than we know, as we watch what's happening in the rest of the country.

In the throne speech there were many brave statements about our commitment to women, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not sure what that means. I expect this government to show leadership in this regard. A Bill was introduced for the new women's secretariat and within it a women's advisory council, long awaited by me and many women and women's organizations throughout the province. I must express disappointment. I believe the Bill for the women's advisory

council should be a separate Bill, should be freed from the Bill for a women's secretariat, and should stand alone. I believe the women's advisory council should be advisory to the citizens of Alberta, not just to the minister responsible, and that it should be free to make its reports and its recommendations and its findings on all of its studies to the men and women of Alberta and to the government simultaneously, so that recommendations can be made to private groups and organizations as well as just to our government. I think citizens have a right to that. Women have a right to that, that the Bill will stand alone.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about poverty in Alberta, because it is an increasing experience. We are, I believe, in a downward spiral of unemployment, poverty. All of the manifestations are there: family break-up, spouse and child abuse, alcoholism, substance abuse, poor nutrition. What happens? We have lost motivation. Violent, anti-social, and criminal behaviour; mental and physical illness: the human costs are enormous. They are not always visible. But people in our province are caught in a trap of poverty. A common myth is that the working poor don't work, that the poor don't work. In fact, they are poor in spite of working. In '82 there were 154,000 working poor in Alberta. We have no updated statistics right now, but it's safe to say that the number has increased as the economy has worsened.

How is it that working people are still poor? Our minimum wage, which I've already spoken to, is \$3.80 an hour. That would put a single person on that wage \$2,000 per annum below the poverty line. A working mother supporting one child on minimum wage would be \$5,500 below the poverty line. A family of four would be \$12,000 below. How on earth do they cope?

Being poor is more than just a rotten inconvenience. Family poverty in Alberta doubled between '81 and '84 to 107,000 families. One in six families in Alberta is poor. What is it like? Do we sitting here in this House know? What is it really like? It's frustrating. It's being isolated and lonely. It's losing your friends and colleagues and co-workers and your family. It's using up all your markers that are out there. You live from paycheque to paycheque. You never quite make it. It's feeling trapped, helpless, hopeless. It's loss of self-respect, self-esteem, and self-determination. You cannot support yourself or your family. Your children have poor clothing, poor nutrition, poor teeth, poor expectations, more likelihood to have illness, no recreation, no holidays. For many poor people in our province, there is little expectation of ever getting out of their circumstances in this generation or the next. There is a loss of motivation.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the unemployed to us in many ways are just ciphers. They're just numbers. We sometimes don't see them as real, living, suffering human beings. Poverty is not temporary, it's not an inconvenience, it's not just a scaled-down version of life; it's a permanent condition of soul-destroying insecurity. Poverty in Alberta is still relatively invisible and so is more a manifestation of the economy. But I suggest that this government must act now to intervene before poverty becomes systemic.

What help do the poor get? They get UIC if they're unemployed, they get minimum wage legislation, and they get welfare to ensure that the basic needs are met. But the safety net is inadequate. "Safety net" is an interesting term. That analogy has some extensions, Mr. Speaker. A safety net entangles you. If you fall in that net, you can become entrapped in it, as a fish or a bird or a butterfly. You can become entrapped in the safety net that we speak about

with such comfort. That net is inadequate. The social allowance underspending in 1984-85 was \$45 million, under-spent by 10.5 percent. The largest underexpenditure, 14 percent, was support to single-parent families. In '83-84 it was underspent by \$105 million. Caseloads are at 225 per worker, rather than the policy of 125.

What are the entitlement issues? What are you entitled to? A recent survey gave us some interesting information. It was not a large sample but, I think, large enough to be illustrative. Seventy-six percent of the people surveyed had deductions from their monthly cheques. These are euphemistically called recoveries. This is where someone has a bill with the utility. They are entitled to so much in food, clothing, and shelter, but if the bill is paid, it comes off their entitlement. That's a penalty. If the worker decides that in order to support your family you need X number of dollars for food, clothing, and shelter, that's your line. That's what you get, and then they deduct. For every adult \$21 comes off to pay your former bill. How are you supposed to live?

Fifty-three percent paid more for shelter than the maximum allowance they were given; they had to. Of those looking for a job, 27 percent received money for a telephone; they couldn't get that. Fifty-three percent did have money for transportation. Of those surveyed, 27 percent had been extra billed by doctors. Of those who had children, 70 percent didn't receive any money for child care. Sixteen percent with children received recreation allowances. That's what you're entitled to, and that's the percentage that gets it.

Recently an organization developed something called The Other Welfare Manual to help people on welfare begin to understand what we say they are entitled to, and what you and I sitting here like to think they have a right to and can receive.

Let me talk for a minute about child welfare. The results of unemployment and social assistance are that many children are removed from their homes because their parents simply cannot fulfill their needs. The new Child Welfare Act was proclaimed on July 1, 1985. I understand that the regulations for it are not yet in place. There have been some temporary regulations in use, but there are many uncertainties about the system with these temporary regulations and it cannot help but create confusion and room for error on the part of both workers and clients. These regulations, Mr. Speaker, I suggest must be finalized immediately. We've heard a lot in the House in the last two or three days about day care, about the standards — that are not sufficient in my view — about the accountability, about the lack of monitoring.

The family and community support services is an outstanding program and is underfunded. This is a program designed by the former Social Credit government, a remarkable and unique program to help municipalities develop preventative programs. It has served well. There was no increase whatsoever since 1983 until this year, in spite of increasing demands in all our municipalities and increasing needs that are a result of the employment situation. After school care for some reason falls into this category and is not treated as is child care and day care.

Privatization of human services has been talked about in many instances recently, particularly related to child welfare and to the welfare of the disabled in our communities. This is where we subsidize organizations or individuals who may or may not be in the business to make a profit — in itself not a bad idea, Mr. Speaker, but privatization without regulations and monitoring could be a very dangerous and

unsafe situation for the users. The clientele could be helpless, silent, and muzzled.

What does it tell us? It tells us that our social services and community health services are not dealing with the realities of today in Alberta. They may be expensive. There may be a lot of money being put into them, but it's not a system that truly meets the needs for change. Good workers, good people are in the system, but the system is clumsy and awkward and should be changed.

Some of the same maintains in health care, where we find a city hospital with excellent staff, wonderful equipment, and not enough room to operate, where we find home care being left on its own for far too long. Eventually we are putting some money into it so that our hospitals will not be jammed with people who no longer need active treatment but could in fact go back home or could go into nursing homes if beds were available or if the home care system had kept pace with the needs as they developed.

The government did undertake a study some years ago, Mr. Speaker, on day hospitals. The study proved how excellent these could be and how well they might serve that part of our community. It was not really acted on. We only have one in the city of Edmonton that I know of I would hope that we could develop more.

Adult day care has been mentioned. The Victorian order is experimenting with this in Edmonton. I think the government will see great strides in this area too.

In ambulance services I believe we should have a provincial program combining the existing public and private services and offering minimum standards to people throughout our province.

Mr. Speaker, a word about mental health. I have become disturbed by the separation of services to children, particularly in the field of mental health. With the new separation of departments, I am unsure at this point in time whether children with mental health problems are served through Community Health or through Social Services. It seems they are now divided, and I think that may work some real handicaps to the children and their families who so desperately need assistance.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to name some regional hospitals that will be receiving hospitals for involuntary mental patients. This is a good move in my view, because people will be able to be treated near home where they can have their families and friends around them. The separation will not be so great and, hopefully, the treatment will therefore be shorter.

Following the Drewry recommendations of December '83, which I don't believe have been acted on as yet. I would hope that we will begin to develop some legal and some nonlegal advocacy services for the involuntary patient as well and that the government will see fit to extend the Ombudsman's mandate to all institutions where voluntary patients are held.

Our recent problems with labour have been spoken to at length. We need to create that new Act immediately, and I would hope that the government will announce a commission to study the Act and to bring recommendations to us so that we may have it before us at the fall sitting — which I hope we will undertake — and that that will restore much-needed confidence in the collective bargaining process. With our Labour department, we need a collaborative, not a confrontational, approach.

Municipal affairs are something that I have been deeply immersed in for 10 or 12 years. The urban problems in our province are legion. I would hope that we can think

clearly about the need for an urban secretariat within Municipal Affairs. Regional planning and the transportation and solid waste disposal problems have already been attested to. Unconditional grants will help our municipalities — no question — but provincial/municipal financing needs to be carefully studied and restructured. We now know what income should properly go to services that are property services and those that are people services. Municipalities in Alberta need to be able to plan ahead and not simply move from year to year.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the municipal partnership employment program, which I see as another grant to municipalities. It will help them of course, but there is no requirement that jobs be created. I would hope that the government can see its way to changing the financing schedule of that program so that the municipalities can have sufficient funds to start up next year — this year is too late — when they so desperately need jobs in our Alberta communities and not over eight years, as is presently planned. I'm not talking just about public works; I'm talking about private companies, service companies, material companies. In the longer term, Mr. Speaker, we need in our municipalities more diversification and collaboration with our government for new markets, and we need to deal with those problems that are so prevalent in our major cities: family violence, homeless youth, and unemployment.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the throne speech was a disappointment. I think citizens expect and deserve more of us. Hopefully if we are all open and can set aside foolish pride and ideological constraints, we can create positive programs that will get this province going again. I think we should be proactive in the situation that is at present so urgent, not reactive.

Mr. Speaker, I'm committed to working with all my colleagues in this House, with any member or any group where proposals will, in my view, benefit the citizens of Alberta. I think they have a right to expect nothing less of all of us.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair would like to comment briefly with respect to the points of order that were raised earlier with respect to interruptions in debate.

The first is with regard to Standing Order 13(4)(b):

(4) When a member is speaking, no person shall . . .

(b) interrupt that member, except to raise a point of order.

This perusal of the documents in the last while shows us that we have at least raised a situation for us to examine further with regard to our Standing Orders.

The next area that was raised is with regard to *Beauchesne*, citation 366, and as mentioned previously, that citation deals with question period. I would ask all interested members to look at that in that light.

The appropriate citation from *Beauchesne* is actually number 317, which is entitled Interruptions in Debate. I would briefly read through this for the edification of all members, including the Chair.

If a Member desires to ask a question during debate, he must first obtain the consent of the Member who is speaking. If the latter ignores the request, the former cannot insist, even if he thinks he is being misrepresented. He cannot make a denial during the speech, but he must wait until the Member has resumed his seat and then he may ask leave to make a statement, or he must wait until his turn comes to address the House.

Failing that, of course, he can raise a question of privilege, if he feels that his honour has been dealt with in an inappropriate manner.

As I mentioned earlier, even though I was unable to quote the appropriate citation at the time, the general practice of this House has been, with regard to what I have just quoted, citation 317 in *Beauchesne*.

The Chair recognizes the Member for Red Deer North.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your challenge to the members to not be reading their speeches. I will try to go through my speech without reading it. However, if you notice my head nodding from time to time, it's merely to check with my colleague here to make sure everything is still going all right.

Sir, as I arise to address this House, I am acutely aware that tradition dictates that I commend the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for their show of good judgment in the selection of you as Speaker. However, sir, I'd like you to know that as I've had the opportunity of watching you discharge your duties, it is not tradition that is compelling me to congratulate you on your appointment; rather, my sentiments are based on my observations of your obvious capabilities and suitabilities for the job.

Sir, a thought has crossed my mind as I've watched one member after another rise and praise you. I have wondered, "Will all this praise go to Mr. Speaker's head?" I wondered if the real purpose of the interesting looking hat you wear is to keep the cerebellum from swelling to unrealistic proportions. But you allayed those thoughts in my mind in our first days of business when you arose in this House on more than one occasion to publicly correct yourself on some small points of order, which I'm sure most of us would not even have noticed. Mr. Speaker, by doing that you demonstrated to this House true humility and, therefore, the basis for genuine authority, and you also brought great relief to those of us who are new members. As we sat in fear and trembling of making a procedural error ourselves, we were assured by your own actions that it wouldn't be the end of the world to make such an error and that a kind but firm correction from yourself will only serve to better us as parliamentarians and to preserve the order and decorum of this House.

Sir, I'm sure I speak on behalf of all the members present when I say to you that when you make a ruling, no matter which side of the House it goes to, we will support you.

I would also like to congratulate Her Honour Lieutenant Governor Helen Hunley for the excellent manner in which she represents the Crown and for her fine presentation of the Speech from the Throne. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that I do not believe she got that appointment because she was a woman but because her obvious capabilities earned her that position. I sat with some wonder at the pronouncements of the member who just finished speaking, talking about women being taken from the place of women and lowered to person. Sir, I would like to go on record tonight as saying that my wife is one hundred percent red-blooded through and through ever-loving woman, and I am thankful for it.

Before I have the pleasure of boasting about the uniqueness and strengths of Red Deer North, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some comments in a broader vein, comments toward the throne speech, and comments on what I feel are important points of philosophy. Then I would like to demonstrate those points by looking historically at the people and events that make up Red Deer North.

Mr. Speaker, I'm able to proudly claim Canadian roots that go back over 200 years to the days of the United Empire Loyalists, when my mother's side of the family would have no part of the brewing revolution in the colonies and, wanting to remain loyal to the Crown, she left that area south of the border with her family to migrate northwards to the area then virtually uninhabited and now known as the Eastern Townships. There like all Canadian pioneers they endured the elements, cleared farmland by hand, and carved out an existence for their young families, and I might add that they did it all without equalization grants, transfer payments, or fertilizer assistance programs. Mr. Speaker, with my roots going back that far, over a century before Confederation, I consider myself a true native of this country.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

The paternal side of my family roots interestingly enough also goes back to the people who settled south of the border in the 1600s, and later, becoming incensed at the increasingly oppressive king's taxes, they chose to stay and fight and eventually won their independence and their freedom. It was not until after the turn of this century that the female monarchist side of my family met the male revolutionary side of the family, resulting in a true north-south dialogue, part of which result is this present monologue.

Mr. Speaker, I've taken this historical side trip on my speech to partly explain some of my present political outlooks. The loyal monarchist side of my roots causes me to be fiercely loyal to my country and to my province. The revolutionary side of my past has caused me to become painfully sensitive to the oppressive taxation and trade policies of our eastern federal governments, regardless it seems of their political stripe. Since the days of Sir John A. we have been continually viewed by the eastern power block through colonial eyes. We are too often unfairly drained of our vast resources when demand for them is high and uncompensated for them when demand is low. Sir, we were drained of some \$50 billion in energy royalties by a Liberal government during the good times, and now when times aren't quite so good, we'd like to see a little return on that forced investment.

Mr. Speaker, I pledge myself to defend this province from eastern inequities by promoting and supporting initiatives which support and enhance our position in Confederation, both politically and economically. I believe we need to consistently remind Ottawa that our allegiance does not come without a price.

In another vein, Mr. Speaker, as I've listened to the opposition debate the Speech from the Throne and as I've observed their actions, I have some comments and concerns. After the election and before entering this House, many people asked me if I felt that the opposition would be a positive and constructive force in this House. My reply, somewhat idealistic and naive, was that I felt the potential for good was there. I am still enough of an idealist, still not so politically jaded, that I actually believe opposing political forces can work together to bring about good legislation. But that can only happen if we collectively recognize the wisdom in the adage that says that there is nothing we cannot accomplish as long as we are not concerned with who gets the credit.

Mr. Speaker, some of the responses to the throne speech from the opposition have severely taxed my fledgling idealistic hopes of any rational or constructive input coming

from them. They have variously responded that this government is doing little or nothing in areas such as education, energy, agriculture, or day care, just by way of example. Most of my constituents know firsthand that this government is moving very aggressively in these areas, as is plainly indicated in the Speech from the Throne. The farmers in Red Deer North recognize that in spite of international factors the government's initiative in agricultural programs allows them to enjoy among the lowest input costs in North America, yet the opposition says we are doing nothing for agriculture.

Red Deer North, whose business sector is arguably the energy servicing capital of Alberta, is directly affected by world prices in oil. The businesspeople there know the difficulties this puts on the government, yet many representatives of that industry have clearly indicated to me that they welcome the hundreds of millions of dollars the government is delivering in aid, and they welcome the fact that they have raised the royalty tax credit. Mr. Speaker, I hope nobody is naive enough to say that the government has all the answers. Yet the opposition insinuates we are doing nothing at all for energy.

In spite of leading the country in spending on student financial support and promising to raise spending yet another 4 percent, the opposition insinuates we are doing nothing for education. Hon. members constantly and with shrill voices decry an apparent lack of attention to day care in this province. Mr. Speaker, the facts are openly obvious to any who can read or count. This province's per capita day care expenditures are second to none anywhere in Canada.

I'm not saying I agree with how every dollar is spent by this government. [some applause] Thank you. I do appreciate the remarks made by the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark when he commented that it would be nice to say not just that this province spends more money than any other province but that it spends money more effectively than any other province. I concur with the member of the opposition on that point. [some applause] There's someone awake over there. Nobody in their right mind can say that this government is neglecting the areas I have mentioned, yet daily we face the false accusations of the socialists saying that we are doing nothing in these areas. Their empty challenges fall like casual dandruff onto the fabric of their presentations.

Mr. Speaker, I was somewhat disturbed to see various members of the opposition jockeying for camera positions on the picket lines recently, unconcerned with the potential inflammatory effect they could have on an already volatile situation. They will mumble something about not condoning violence, but not once did they go on record asking that the violence stop. Not once did they condemn the willful destruction of farmers' vehicles, the desecration of public property, or the outrageous threats of physical violence which were directed toward the men in the dispute. Not one word of condemnation, yet they have the nerve to pompously paste their pious peace stickers on their lapels, their briefcases, and their car bumpers. There is only one word for such hypocrisy: shame.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted with the settlement which was achieved in the Fletcher's situation in my constituency of Red Deer North. All sides of that dispute are to be congratulated for not letting violence rule the day. I wonder if there's any connection between the lack of violence there and the lack of grandstanding politicians on the Red Deer picket lines. In an effort to discredit initiative and freedom

of enterprise, the socialists toss around a phrase which even they cannot quite define. The phrase is "social justice." It has a nice ring to it. What it really means is redistribution of the wealth. [some applause] With all the applause I'm getting from the members opposite, I'm sure my own colleagues are going to reject me as a red Tory if I'm not careful.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition rejects the possibility that somebody can actually become wealthy by honest initiative and hard work. Profit and business become dirty words in their vocabulary, and democratic capitalism is rejected as being cruel and uncaring. Even the Lib-left history books that train our children painfully record that the countries which most freely practise democratic capitalism are the same countries that most freely feed the hungry of this world. It is only in an atmosphere of freedom of exchange and enterprise that one person's good fortune is dependent on another's good fortune, so that person A can freely exchange goods with person B without force or coercion. Fifty years ago Walter Lippmann said: our system is based on an ideal that for the first time in human history gives us a way of producing wealth in which the good fortune of others multiplies our own; at long last the golden rule has become economically sound.

Yet the Lib-left social planners of our day choose the stifling policies of socialist thinking. They would try to plan the economy by attempting to control the material arrangements of society. But in doing so they destroy the real resource, which is not material and not physical. It is the metaphysical capital of human freedom and creativity. They extoll the virtues of the progressive tax system, which only causes the hardworking innovators, investors, and risk takers to pull their money out of the productive avenues and put their money into less productive shelters or luxuries. This causes investors and producers to be perceived all the more as the rich, which leads to more taxation, which eventually leads to capital flight, loss of investment, loss of jobs, loss of taxes, and therefore loss of social services.

Mr. Speaker, it is the small businessman, the small businesswoman, the investors, the innovators, the risk takers who are the true job makers in our economy. Not everyone is cut out to be entrepreneurial and innovative, but if the entrepreneurs and innovators are permitted to enjoy the rewards of their labours, that means economic growth, jobs, relative stability, and social security for others.

The single most important factor for stability and strength in our society is the family. An interesting survey was done in 1965 in what was viewed to be an inner-city ghetto in San Francisco. It was a study of the Chinese community there. It was readily obvious that this group had at that time the highest unemployment, the worst, most crowded living conditions, the poorest housing, the highest susceptibility to disease, and the severe disadvantage of not understanding the language. Our modern day Lib-left planners would glibly predict astronomical crime rates for such a group. They would even excuse the crime rates for such a group, on the basis of it being environment and society that causes a person to commit crime. But in 1965 in the entire prison system of the state of California, there were less than 5 Chinese people in jail. What was the factor? It was the strength of the family, Mr. Speaker. Respect for authority of civil law was learned at home through respect for parents and grandparents.

Mr. Speaker, I have voiced some concerns, the same concerns that were shared some days ago by your very capable Deputy Speaker, the Member for Lethbridge West.

Are we paying lip service to the importance of the family, and then at times in a genuine desire to be a compassionate state, do we offer programs that make it easy for teens to leave home, for husbands to leave wives, and for parents to leave their children? We need to be careful and take a look at our programs and ask if we are really helping people by removing all their responsibilities and guaranteeing their rights.

One Liberal member has bemoaned our province's minimum wage. Does she not realize that the minimum wage is only a beginning, not the end; that diligence and willingness to work hard is what guarantees your wage, not a government edict? Upward mobility is not gained overnight or by government decree, Mr. Speaker, but by a long-range determination to improve oneself. For example, at the turn of this century 3.5 million Jews began arriving on the eastern shores of this continent. They carried in their pockets an average of \$9 per person, less than any other immigrant group. Six decades later their mean family income was double that of the national average. In World War II a large contingent of the North American Japanese population was placed in internment camps and their properties confiscated, but 30 years later the Japanese had the highest per capita earnings next to the Jews. After World War II the once supreme Wasps, of which I am one, had been surpassed in income by those of Irish, Italian, German, and Polish descent and more recently by the latest generation of black West Indians, and all through diligence, hard work, innovation, and a desire for improvement. None of this was achieved by socialist redistributive schemes.

Sir, the history and people of Red Deer North past and present attest to similar results from initiative and a desire for a better life for one's children. In 1893 the first frame house between Calgary and Edmonton was built on a site which is now at the south end of the Gaetz Avenue bridge. It was built by Reverend Leonard Gaetz, a Methodist minister, farmer, and businessman, who proved what hard work and family commitment could do. After he had established his home and his business, he engaged in a keenly strategic move. Dr. Gaetz offered land to the railway if they would locate their tracks close to his farm. The move was critical for the establishment of a railway access close to his and future businesses in Red Deer. Now, three-quarters of a century later, Red Deer stands on the brink of another railway relocation and major traffic corridor project, which will literally alter the face of the city, will open up residential property and expand industrial space dramatically. All this is being done by people committed to a strong future for Red Deer.

In 1906 Harold Snell arrived in Red Deer. He went to work for a local jeweller at, I would suggest, a very minimum wage, yet he was able to save his money and attended a postgraduate course at the Canadian college of optometry — without a government assisted loan, I might add. He returned to Red Deer and opened the first optometric practice in Red Deer. Mr. Speaker, his successful business was the result of determination, personal sacrifice, and hard work. Harold Snell was a hardworking man dedicated to a better future.

In 1894 Thomas Ellis resigned from the North West Mounted Police, and he and his wife operated a stopping-house at Fort Normandeau at the Red Deer River crossing. He later went on to manage the Arlington Hotel, and in 1907 he built one of the finest homes in the city, which still stands today on 55th Street as a superb example of architecture from that period. The Ellises were a family

dedicated to the present and prepared to take some pioneering risks to enhance their future.

In 1892 William Piper and his son Frank settled in the Red Deer area. He had a dream, Mr. Speaker, a dream to establish the best brick-making facility in the west. In the process, before the business really got off the ground and because no SBECs were available, he and his son had to find extra work. They homesteaded, and for a while they actually had to work as undertakers — a dying business, to be sure — but they held on to their dream. By 1901 their brick factory was employing 60 men and had turned out 200,000 bricks. To this day there are houses and businesses still in use in Red Deer and area containing bricks from the Piper brickyard. These are the types of people that make a city and a province strong.

Commitment to social improvements will always naturally accompany economic growth. Last week I had the honour of being at the 75th anniversary celebration of the establishment of the village of North Red Deer. There we sat in a restored schoolhouse that had been opened in Red Deer some 75 years earlier. Mr. G.H. Dawe, one of Alberta's foremost educators, expounded on the history of that place. As I sat there, it struck me that this had been a true community school in every sense of the word. Today Red Deer North boasts three community schools: the G.H. Dawe, St. Pat's, and the Pines. These schools are shining examples of community involvement and participation. I share with the families of Red Deer North the desire to see this province continue to fund such areas of vital concern to our community.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Economic growth makes for improvement not only in the quality of social services but also in the area of recreation. Our new and now famous Waskasoo Park is a testimony of co-operation between provincial and city governments and the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission. Under the capable management skills of project manager Ted Johnson and others in various city departments, the Waskasoo Park has become a beautiful system of miles of biking and hiking trails linking historic and nature sites with parks and recreation areas. All this began as a dream by people willing to work hard for a better future.

Today in Red Deer North that type of innovative and pioneering thinking goes on. For example, Mr. Speaker, in the energy sector Rod MacDonald of Mactronics Systems has developed a flare stack ignitor which is used in oil field work around the world. Jim Quinn and his company have developed a bottom-hole pump which doesn't have to take second place to any in the international marketplace. Kope Systems Incorporated, with partners Bill Hull and John Bourne, has developed a world-class hydraulic pumping unit. The list goes on and on. In the hearts of many people in Red Deer involved in the Westerner association rests the dream of seeing a multi-use agri/trade complex become a reality. Men and women like Jack Donald, Marg McPhee, Mayor Bob McGee, and many others have hung tenaciously to the dream of seeing a centre established in Red Deer, establishing that community as a world-class agricultural showcase.

I will be working hard with the people and with the hon. Member for Red Deer South, the two of us forming the Red Deer caucus, to see the hopes and dreams of our latter and former pioneers become a reality in all walks of Red Deer life, economically, socially, and recreationally. My

predecessor, Mr. Jim McPherson, former MLA for all of Red Deer, has set an incredibly high standard of service and dedication for me to follow. Being the first MLA for the new and excitingly dynamic constituency of Red Deer North, I trust I will be found worthy to walk in Jim's footsteps and in the footsteps of countless others who set their goals based on hard work, innovation, and determination to make Red Deer and this province and this country a better place.

Mr. Speaker, I am firmly committed to three essentials for a truly great society. These are faith, family, and freedom. I will support and promote all ideas and initiatives from either side of this House which embody any or all of those principles. It is my prayer that the members of this Legislature would be gripped with a desire to do what is right, not necessarily what is expedient; that we would show ourselves to be not civil masters but truly civil servants, for only out of a genuine willingness to serve do we earn the right to govern. May it be said of us in this House, "They came here to serve."

Thank you, sir.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, it is with all due respect and a great feeling of honour and privilege that I rise to speak in this Assembly for the first time. I would like to begin, sir, by congratulating you on your election as Speaker. I only hope that I can learn to carry out my duties as the Member for Stettler as quickly and as thoroughly as you have in assuming the Chair.

I would also like to recognize Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor for her grace and dignity in presenting the Speech from the Throne.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to recognize the former Member for Stettler for his 14 years of dedicated service in this House, during which time he served as Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Solicitor General.

I recognize and congratulate the other 19 new government members and the 19 new members opposite. Perhaps it will improve my perspective and theirs, sir, by noting that we sit side by side on the same side of the House in pursuit of a common goal, that being the good government of Alberta.

Stettler is a rural constituency, roughly 60 miles square, centered 80 miles east of Red Deer. The local trading base is predominantly agricultural, the new portion of the constituency after redistribution includes approximately a township of number 1 soil, and while soil quality and annual precipitation vary, the area as a whole is a productive one. There is also substantial oil and gas production throughout the constituency. Gulf Canada Resources is likely the largest single employer, with up to 500 people working out of their Stettler office. The Fenn-Big Valley oil field produces large volumes of light, sweet crude at a cost, I am told, that could conceivably compete with production in Saudi Arabia. Another large employer is the Alberta Power Battle River plant, the largest coal-fired electrical generating station operating in the province.

There are 16 urban municipalities and all or portions of four counties within the boundaries. You can understand, Mr. Speaker, why it will be necessary for me to take an active interest in municipal affairs. The largest urban centre and namesake of the constituency is the town of Stettler, with a population of 5,000 ambitious residents. It was incorporated in 1906 and named after its first postmaster and entrepreneur, a Swiss immigrant named Carl Stettler.

He built the first hotel there, but it burned down in the great fire of 1908. A new Stettler Hotel was built and still stands on the same site. In 1909 he moved east to my hometown of Castor and built the National Hotel and the Cosmopolitan. The latter still stands on the original site.

I bring these matters to the attention of the Assembly to remind it and particularly the hon. members opposite that there was a time when men were loved and respected for their enterprise. Mr. Stettler represented the essence of the qualities of the people who built this province. He suffered business losses during World War I which almost bankrupted him but did not break his entrepreneurial spirit. He died in 1919 on a business trip to Tennessee to interest investors in central Alberta. His body was returned to Stettler and his gravestone marked: founder of the town of Stettler.

Mr. Speaker, there are 41 rural constituencies in the province. We face many similar problems, which are not shared by our urban counterparts. Lower population density means that medical services, education, and transportation are more expensive and less accessible. Much of the burden for education and transportation falls on the rural property ratepayer, who is finding it increasingly difficult to pay.

On many occasions over the past year and a half people expressed concern to me about the steadily declining share of education costs being borne by this government. A larger portion of the funding of education is being borne by a static or declining property tax base and in many cases a declining population as well. I have some problem with the basic morality of charging education costs to property, Mr. Speaker, when it is the people of Alberta who will benefit from a well-educated population. If we accept that it is the people and not just property owners who benefit, then the largest share of funding should derive from assessments on people through income tax and from income generated on assets managed by the Crown on behalf of its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I do not advocate a wholesale immediate shift of education funding back to the province. I do, however, advocate a gradual increase in provincial funding

to levels enjoyed in the early '70s. With all due respect, I bring these concerns to this Assembly at the bidding of a large group of my constituents, who do not ask for more service but for lower property tax. I urge this government to recognize and alleviate this burden where it can reasonably do so.

Another area of concern expressed during the campaign period was rural telephone service. I commend the government on its initiative to provide private line service to all rural subscribers within the next five years. But another problem was brought to my attention and was touched on by the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon a few days ago. Five separate exchanges have extended flat rate calling to Stettler, yet they cannot talk without charge to other smaller trading centres, thereby giving the larger centre an unfair advantage. Mr. Speaker, I believe we should look at making all calls within an extended flat rate calling area free of charge so that smaller isolated communities are not separated further and weakened because of costly communication.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the late hour, I beg leave to adjourn debate this evening.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion by the hon. Member for Stettler, do the members of the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? The motion is carried.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, before moving that the Assembly adjourn for the evening, I should indicate to hon. members that the business for tomorrow will be Government Motion 8, following that, if there is time, third reading of Bill 6 and then a continuation of the throne speech debate with the possibility of Royal Assent following that.

[At 10:10 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]