

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Thursday, September 4, 1986 2:30 p.m**

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

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

From our forests and parkland to our prairies and mountains comes the call of our land.

From our farmsteads, towns, and cities comes the call of our people that as legislators of this province we act with responsibility and sensitivity.

Lord, grant us the wisdom to meet such challenges.
Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 40****Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
Special Appropriation Act, 1986-87**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 40, the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Special Appropriation Act, 1986-87. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill transfers from the General Revenue Fund to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund 15 percent of the nonrenewable resource revenue on a normal appropriation basis.

[Leave granted; Bill 40 read a first time]

Bill 268**An Act to Amend the
Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I think it appropriate that I beg leave to introduce Bill 268, An Act to Amend the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act.

This Bill will amend the Act in that section which now requires legislative approval of a motion to invest moneys from the fund in a provincial Crown corporation. Instead of a motion for approval, an Appropriation Act would be required, including in its process appropriate consideration of the estimates of the desired investments in Committee of Supply.

[Leave granted; Bill 268 read a first time]

Bill 49**Take-Or-Pay Costs Sharing Act**

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 49, the Take-Or-Pay Costs Sharing Act. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

The intent of the Bill is to resolve the issue of who should bear the interest costs accruing to the pipelines' Topgas loans to producers once deregulation occurs. This Bill follows the recommendation of the National Energy Board that the issue be resolved by the imposition within Alberta of a charge on all Alberta producers who are new users of the TransCanada PipeLines system to defray part of the Topgas interest costs. The levy, Mr. Speaker, will not be payable on certain exempted gas, and that will be determined in the regulations.

[Leave granted; Bill 49 read a first time]

Bill 50**Gas Resources Preservation
Amendment Act, 1986**

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 50, the Gas Resources Preservation Amendment Act, 1986.

The principal amendment in this Bill is required to accommodate the gas agreement of October 1985 and removes the incrementality test to allow consistency with the principles of negotiated pricing for natural gas. However, Mr. Speaker, the amendment requires the Energy Resources Conservation Board not to grant a permit unless, in its opinion, it's in the public interest of Alberta to do so, having regard to a number of factors but including any other matters considered relevant by the board. As well, gas removal permits still require either ministerial or order in council approval.

[Leave granted; Bill 50 read a first time]

Bill 52**Planning Amendment Act, 1986**

DR. CASSIN: Mr. Speaker. I request leave to introduce Bill 52, amendments to the Planning Act.

This would change the provisions of the Planning Act in respect to the present right of municipalities to freeze privately owned lands by designating privately owned lands for future public purposes.

[Leave granted; Bill 52 read a first time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 52 be placed on the Order Paper under Government Bills and Orders.

[Motion carried]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table with the Legislative Assembly today a very important public information document entitled Monitoring the South Peak of Turtle Mountain 1980 to 1985.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to file with the Legislative Assembly the 10th annual report of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer and table with the Legislature the annual report for 1986 of the Alberta Foundation for Nursing Research and the 1985 annual report of Lakeland College.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly Miss Joanne Dechief of Falher and Mr. Ted Wood of Tofield, the winners of the essay and poster contest held during Municipal Involvement Week this past May. The essay and poster contest was the department's invitation to students — who knows, Mr. Speaker; future members of government — and I would like to introduce them and wish them so well on any career they may undertake that would lead them here someday. I would ask that Miss Dechief and her mother and Mr. Wood stand in the gallery and receive the welcome of the members.

MR. GOGO: I'm pleased to introduce to you, Mr. Speaker, and to members of the Assembly a special visitor to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta from the Parliament of New South Wales in Australia. It's the Clerk Assistant of that Assembly, the counterpart of our own Mr. Bubba. His name is Mr. Russell Grove. Mr. Speaker, he is seated in your gallery, and I would ask him to rise and receive the traditional welcome of this Assembly.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to introduce to you and to the members of this Assembly a group of delegates from across the province representing the Alberta Association of Independent Church Schools. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this House.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Department of Manpower**

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to announce that the government will allocate \$12 million to the 1986-87 priority employment program. During the winter months in Alberta the seasonal increase in unemployment requires priority consideration. We will meet this demand again this year through the operation of the priority employment program. Now in its 15th year, the priority employment program, or PEP, encourages the creation of job opportunities from November to April. This year more than 4,000 Albertans are expected to benefit from the program.

PEP has two elements, the provincial government departments and community elements. Under the first element provincial government departments are eligible to create jobs. Wages are paid at \$5.50 per hour. Eligible employers under the community employment element include nonprofit or publicly funded organizations, municipalities, Indian bands, and Metis settlements. Wages are subsidized at \$3.80 per hour for each project employee plus 10 percent for employee benefit costs. Priority is normally given to those employers who top up the hourly rate. In 1985, for example, the average wage received by employees under PEP was \$5.31 per hour. PEP positions must not eliminate, amend, nor affect the security or hours of existing employees. The application deadline for this element is September 30, 1986.

Mr. Speaker, since 1981 PEP has provided some 27,000 Albertans with jobs during the winter months. Positions have included dietary aides, office managers, computer programmers, sawmill operators, child care workers, and native student teachers. The provincially funded programs do more than create jobs. Many help those who are new to the world of work gain valuable experience. Good

examples are the job-creation initiatives implemented by the government of Alberta this summer. Through the summer temporary employment and wage subsidy programs 15,000 young Albertans had a positive learning experience while gaining new skills that will enhance their ability to obtain employment in the future.

Our programs also assist those who have been unemployed return to the work force. In this regard many women have strengthened and updated their job skills in order to re-enter the work force on a full-time basis. I would like to emphasize that many of the jobs created under Manpower job-creation initiatives lead to full-time positions after the wage subsidies have ended. Under the Alberta wage subsidy program, for example, a recent study showed that six months after the subsidies had ended, almost 40 percent of the employees surveyed had been retained in that position. Another 10 percent had gone to another job while 5 percent had returned to school. In my view, this underscores the positive results that can be attained when government, employers, and employees are working together towards the common goal of achieving maximum employment for Albertans.

Our experience this summer with the enhancement of Manpower's job-creation efforts showed that the demand for short-term employment was significant. We demonstrated flexibility by generating additional funds in response to a high demand for summer employment. I intend to take the same approach this winter. Our goal is to be flexible so that we can respond appropriately to the needs of unemployed Albertans. I encourage eligible employers to make full use of the 1986-87 priority employment program and to work together with us towards our goal of achieving the highest level of employment possible for Albertans this winter.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in replying to the ministerial announcement, certainly we on this side of the House always welcome any move by this Conservative government to increase employment. On any announcement of a program that will do that, we will certainly accept it and congratulate the government. But I have to say that there has been a lot of money spent on what I call make-work projects in the past, say, since 1981. They do cost a lot of taxpayers' money, and a lot of the people end up back on unemployment at the end of these programs. I know some move on, as the minister said, but there are statistics that prove a lot of them end up back there. So in some cases the programs have been a failure.

The other point I would like to stress is where the minister says on page 2, "PEP positions must not eliminate, amend, nor affect the security or hours of existing employees." Mr. Speaker, I hope that we're going to police this much more than we have in the past. We've raised in this House examples of where that has happened, so I would hope there is a monitoring system so this program is intended to do what it's supposed to do.

I would say that it shows that the diversification that this government has talked about — the reason we need programs like this is that there's been a total failure in dealing with our economy by this government. Again, it has to do with our two major industries, agriculture and energy, being basically in disarray.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, even with this \$12 million to the PEP program, and I welcome it, unfortunately it's going to be a long, cold winter in Alberta.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Energy Prices

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Energy. Yesterday IPAC projected that oil field activity next year would be only 30 percent of 1985 levels, the CPA predicted that the number of oil industry jobs which might be lost now could go up to some 70,000, and of course new layoffs were announced in Calgary: all of this despite the fact that the international price of oil is inching upwards. The Tory energy policy is sure a resounding success in this province. My question is: does the Energy minister have any information on what level international prices will have to reach before this sort of devastation of our oil industry is stopped?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see that the hon. member has had a look at the IPAC report on the energy industry and their proposals with respect to how they see the industry responding to certain steps that government might take over the upcoming months. We've been working very closely with that particular organization as well as other umbrella organizations to get their views on what steps should be taken by government. As the hon. leader should know, there is a wide range of views as to what should be done. The IPAC organization represents a broad spectrum of the oil industry, as do the Small Explorers and Producers for the smaller companies and the CPA for the larger companies.

Certainly the drop in prices has had a significant impact on the energy industry, not only in this province and country but throughout the world. We're working very closely with our colleagues in Saskatchewan and British Columbia and the federal government to take steps to see whether or not we can bring the activity up to a higher percentage than what the hon. member is referring to. Certainly 1985 was a very busy year in this province. If the steps that are proposed by IPAC can be accomplished, we would have approximately 50 percent or better of the activity of 1985.

The hon. leader talks about "resounding success." He's got a one-track mind in terms of what he's going to recommend, and that is a floor price. Floor prices mean the taxpayers pay more money to support the industry in this country and mean more regulation: precisely what that party wants this government to do.

MR. MARTIN: Well, it's better to have a one-track mind than to have all the views and sit there and be paralyzed like this government is.

Seeing that we're talking about a number of views, the minister is well aware then that the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors has recommended that a base price be in the range of new oil of around \$20 U.S. My question is: other than saying he's considering it, what is the specific government response to this stabilization idea?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, we've had a series of meetings with the federal government at the officials' level as well as meetings between myself and Mr. Masse, the federal minister of energy. We have discussed a number of alternatives, including the proposal we've put forth to the federal minister with respect to a credit stabilization program. Officials are assessing that, and I expect to have further discussions with the federal minister very soon with respect to that particular policy.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, talk about one-track mind: we've assessed, we've talked, we've assessed, and as we know, the unemployment figures keep going up.

But my question to the minister is simply this: is this the type of stabilization alternative for new production that this government is advancing? Tell us if that's the sort of thing that we can look forward to in the future, or are we just talking still?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition had some patience, he would find out in due course.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, it has nothing to do with my patience; it has to do with the patience of the people of Alberta. They're waiting for some direction from this government. When we notice that there's been a thousand new welfare cases occurring in Calgary in August. I imagine they're a little impatient, Mr. Minister: another record breaker.

My question is: has the Premier or the minister asked for any analysis of the degree to which these jumps in welfare cases are related to the crisis in the energy sector, or do you care?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member may have forgotten, but I'm no longer the Minister of Social Services and Community Health, so the acting minister may take it as notice for the minister to respond when she comes.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as the Acting Minister of Social Services, I will take the question on notice and raise it with the hon. member.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Energy. Sorry I missed the Minister of Education's supplementary: I know he needs all the help he can get.

One of the concerns that's bothering the Independent Petroleum Association, of course, is TransCanada PipeLines' application to increase its already high charges for transporting natural gas to the east. Are the government's efforts in transportation to get the gas costs reduced — how is the government going to intervene? Are they going to intervene at all, or are we just going to stand by and idly watch the rates go up?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking a supplementary with respect to, really, a number of issues that relate to deregulation of natural gas, including the one issue that he just raised. As I indicated a number of times in this House, we are looking at a number of issues related to gas deregulation, consulting with the industry, and are taking steps to deal with those issues. If we can accomplish what we want to accomplish prior to November 1, the date of total deregulation, then we would proceed. But that is just one of a number of issues related to gas deregulation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. The Prime Minister of the country made a visit to the maritime provinces and made some very concrete agreements with those provinces relative to the energy industry. Has the Premier any indication that the Prime Minister is coming to the west to make some solid agreements with western Canada, specifically Alberta, relative to energy?

MR. GETTY: Nothing new that I could report to the House, Mr. Speaker.

Oil and Gas Well Safety

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the second question to the Minister of Energy. In the 1984 report of the Lodgepole blowout inquiry it was recommended that a strict code of practice for drilling in Alberta should be enshrined in regulation, but voluntary, recommended drilling guidelines are being developed instead and even those are not in place yet. Given continuing blowouts, deaths, and injuries since Lodgepole, why has the minister not ensured that a mandatory code of practice is in place as the Lodgepole report recommended?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Lodgepole report I indicated yesterday there were some 39 recommendations that were made by the ERCB in their public inquiry, and we are following up on those recommendations in a number of ways. I outlined in the House yesterday some of the ways in which we are following up. I'd like to indicate that the numbers that were raised in the House yesterday by the hon. leader, and my reference to the blowout report and the improved situation with respect to wells being inspected and the smaller number of wells being shut down each year because of those inspections, in fact, primarily related to drilling activity.

I'd like to indicate in addition today that with respect to service rig inspection policy, 1984, the ERCB strengthened that policy by in a greater way selectively inspecting service rigs throughout the province. We have from 1984 to 1986 found an improvement whereby in 1984, 31 percent of the service rigs inspected were found to be unsatisfactory but not serious enough to shut all those down; that improved to 21 percent in '85, and so far this year that number is now down to 17 percent: a significant improvement. Of the rigs inspected this year only 15 were deemed serious enough to have been shut down, for a total of 5 percent of the total rigs inspected to date. A significant improvement, Mr. Speaker.

However, we are following up on all the recommendations. After every accident there's an investigation to determine the cause, and we'll look at those investigation results and decide where to go from there.

MR. MARTIN: Those percentages may well be, but the questions had to do with how many are being inspected: 31 percent of two, or 17 percent of one.

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the minister in his answer said that ERCB seems to take quite a scattergun approach to service rigs: they "follow up on inspections as best they can." Given that servicing can also be quite dangerous and that we saw last weekend that this can cause deadly blowouts, what steps is the minister now taking to make sure that a solid approval and inspection process is in place for service rigs?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the policy with respect to the inspection of rigs is well outlined in the Oil and Gas Well Blowout Report on events of 1985-1986. The policy is there if the hon. leader would care to read it. The ERCB keeps track of service work that's being done in the province by the criteria that's outlined in the report, particularly those wells that are sour gas type wells and companies that

have not as good a record as others. There's a special emphasis on inspecting those sites.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to also indicate that in addition to the large number of people we have inspecting rigs throughout this province, we in fact have tens of thousands of well servicing sites going on each year, and it would be totally impossible to visit every one of those sites. So on a selective basis, with the priorities as outlined, the record is very good. However, as I indicated yesterday, we can always improve, and we intend to improve. In that regard, we've established a joint industry and government enforcement committee solely dealing with service rigs that are operational. That has been in place since April of this year. They're looking at the inspection process as well as the ERCB's role in that process, and they will be making recommendations to me very soon.

MR. MARTIN: It certainly is in the realm of debate to say that it's good when you only do 28 percent and 13.5 percent were found negligent.

A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. The ERCB concentrates its inspections, as the minister says, on sour gas wells. On July 2 the minister said that other wells were inspected dependent on their safety records and the co-operation of rigs and contractors. That seems a little vague, Mr. Speaker. So my question is: will the minister be taking steps to ensure that the ERCB inspects all wells it deems necessary, no matter the opinion of contractors about that?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I certainly would have to check *Hansard* to the accuracy of that quote. However, the policy with respect to inspections is outlined in the report that I referred to a few minutes ago.

In terms of my responses to the other questions in terms of the steps we're taking to deal with inspecting service rigs as well as drilling rigs in this province, we are expecting the report from the joint committee. As well, as I indicated yesterday, at the training centre some 1,000 employees will be trained each year in working on drilling rigs and safety precautions that are necessary in servicing wells.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the minister will have to remember what he says from time to time.

My question, again, has to come back to the mandatory part of it rather than the voluntary. It seems to me that's important. That's what Lodgepole recommended. In view of the fact that energy companies right now face ever more severe cash problems, there will be a temptation to cut back on safety. My question simply is this: does this not make the need for a mandatory code of practice even more pressing now?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, as a result of the investigation of this particular well blowout and of examining the recommendations of our joint committee between industry and government enforcement, we will treat all recommendations seriously to see what we should be doing to improve the safety record in this province.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary to the Minister of Energy. Seventeen percent is just not good enough for service rigs, because every hole that a service rig touches is a danger whereas in a wildcat rig it's only three out of four — in my case maybe four out of four — that are going to go. The point is that every well that a service rig touches is a dangerous one.

What I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker, because so much of this is human error: is the government moving towards putting into action a ruling or regulations whereby no one can work on a service rig unless they have passed a recognized course in handling the service rig and also in safety? Right now anyone, as you know, can be hired.

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, we now know why the hon. leader went into politics, on the basis of the record he has just outlined.

Mr. Speaker, I've indicated the importance of training people to work on service rigs and wells with the program that we hope to have in place before the end of this year. We have had a program over the years — I think the last 15 years in this province — to assist in the training of workers on the rigs and in the service industry. With respect to the recommendation of the member, I certainly would take that into consideration and further check the policies of the ERCB with respect to that.

Farm Credit Stability Program

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, this question is to the Minister of Agriculture. We prepare to have another case of government mismanagement when, according to the information I have received from farming communities, the eastern-owned banks are encouraging all farmers, particularly the well-heeled ones, to get on the bandwagon and apply for loans under the farm credit stability fund program.

The first question, Mr. Speaker, is in light of the dramatic increase in the provincial deficit. Will the government now be placing controls on the administration of the loan program to ensure that this money is not used for land speculation or other expansion purposes to the detriment of those farmers that actually need the loan for refinancing?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we were very detailed in our terms of reference to the banking institutions as to what this money could be used for. It can only be used for legitimate farm purposes and not for land speculative purposes.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, legitimate farm purposes are being interpreted by the banking community as lending money to go out and buy more land.

Can the minister tell us then, for instance, how many of the loan applicants were in fact debt-free before they applied for any loans under this program?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we can't give the hon. member correct figures as it relates to that because we're still in the process of making sure that those who have applied for funding will have the funding made available to them in a very quick and prompt manner. I can share with him that we've received some 4,542 applications as of 6 o'clock yesterday, amounting to some \$628 million, and the average loan amount is \$138,000.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, as you can see, the money is disappearing at a great clip, so it's important that it be used where it will do the most good.

Will the minister be implementing a system of sliding scale interest rates in view of the fact that farmers in a profit position can deduct all their interest from income tax while less fortunate farmers must pay tax on the full amount of their interest? Are we going to have a sliding scale

interest system to help those farmers that are not in an income tax paying position?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are consistent in their requests for more regulation. No matter what one does, they wish to regulate a good program to death. We're not about to do that, because we feel that we've brought forward an excellent program that the agricultural sector is going to benefit substantially from. Unlike the comments by the hon. member, it's obvious that the program is very effective when one analyzes the uptake on this program. The figures I shared with him indicate that slightly in excess of one-quarter of the program has been taken up over a one-month period. Our projections are holding very true. I'm sure that this money is going to last for a considerable amount of time, because those who are wishing it are taking advantage of it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I don't know how he can justify a program by how many people line up for a free lunch.

Will the minister abandon the present system of fixed-payment loans and instead allow farmers to make repayment without penalty based on their cash flow: high some years, low in others?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, when we introduced this program, we indicated that the prime and key criterion was repayment ability, which we will maintain throughout the life of this program. The farmers that are hard pressed are the ones that are using this program. In the event that the hon. member figures there should be no help available to the agricultural sector, I wish he'd be honest and state so. We feel the agricultural sector is in need of help and support, and that is why this government brought forward this very worthwhile program.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister referred to the number of applications received under the program. I wonder if he could indicate to us just what percentage of those applications are being accepted and which ones are being rejected.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we don't have that information available to us, but I would assume that the vast majority of these would be accepted; otherwise, the banks would not apply for a verification number. I would assume that the banks themselves would go through the process of analyzing the loan portfolio to make sure that they would be eligible for it prior to seeking a verification number.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question to the minister. In terms of the uptake and also the eastern banks in a sense manipulating their credit, has the minister any indication at this point in time that there is a withdrawal of credit from Alberta — that is, into central Canada — that is replacing the amount of money that's being placed in the hands of the banks by the government of Alberta?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we have no indication of that whatsoever. I should point out to hon. members and to our agricultural sector that in the event they are having difficulty obtaining a loan from one of the banking institutions, they are always free to go to another one, and we would hope that they would follow that avenue. I can also

point out that the number one borrower under this program at the present time is the Treasury Branch.

Grain Handlers' Strike

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Yesterday the minister stated that he was sending a telex to the Hon. Mr. Mayer, minister responsible for the Wheat Board. Could the minister indicate whether that telex has been sent and whether a response has been received at this time?

MR. ELZINGA: Yes, Mr. Speaker. We sent a telex yesterday to the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board. As of this time we have not received a response.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate when a response is expected and at, say, tomorrow's date or this afternoon's date what the next action of the minister is to put pressure on the federal government to convene Parliament to act on this question before us?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we're going to assess the situation on an ongoing basis to hopefully see it resolved sometime in the very near future, because it is a very costly process for the agricultural sector. In the event that we don't have a response in a very short period of time, we will follow it up with a telephone conversation. I'm not just sure what the minister's schedule is myself. As the hon. member has indicated, Parliament is in recess. It could be that the hon. member is on vacation. But we are going to follow it up in the event that we do not receive a response to our telex in a very short period of time.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Certainly it is a costly venture. In 1981 farmers were losing about \$10 million a day during the strike. Potentially we could lose \$260 million in terms of the loss of sales. Could the minister indicate, in this strategy of putting pressure on the federal government, whether he or the Premier are willing to convene the Alberta MPs and gain their support to put pressure on the federal government to convene Parliament to act on this matter of the strike at the Lakehead?

MR. FOX: The MPs don't have any input.

MR. ELZINGA: Don't judge the MPs by your own status.

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member is aware, it is under federal jurisdiction. He is correct; in 1981 the strike did cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$10 million a day, and it did go on for 16 days. We would hope that the federal government would take some type of action, but I should share with him, too, the caveat in that neither side has asked for a mediator as of yet. We would be hopeful that both the union and the management would recognize the seriousness of this problem and involve themselves in meaningful negotiations so that this difficulty — which, again I'll just underscore, is very detrimental to our agricultural sector — can be overcome.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier, and it's with regards to contacting the Prime Minister of the country. I think this matter is very serious. Would the Premier be willing to make contact with the

Prime Minister and with other western Premiers to outline a strategy and some deadlines by which the mediation can be established or, if it's not established, by which the government of Canada with the co-operation of the western provinces is willing to move ahead with the necessary legislation?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in consultation with our Minister of Agriculture if it appeared necessary to do that, we certainly would.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, also to the Premier. This is a national emergency. There's no question that shutting down is even as bad as the 70,000 jobs lost in the oil industry. Can the Premier not use his influence to ask the Prime Minister of this country to convene Parliament as soon as possible to discuss this particular issue?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, these are always matters of judgment, and if in the judgment of the federal government it's necessary to do that, then I'm sure they will.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. minister. Could he indicate to us whether or not the deficiency payment that the agriculture ministers are jointly pressing the federal government for envisions of payout only for grain to be exported, or does it involve grain that's domestically consumed?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what the federal Minister of Agriculture is working on, to make by way of presentation to the first ministers, whether it would involve strictly export grain or a combination of both export and domestic grain. As the hon. member is aware, it falls under federal jurisdiction. We're looking forward to their proposal. We pushed them very hard, and they did decrease the time line in which they would come forward with a specific proposal, and we look forward to that specific proposal.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. I wonder if the minister himself or through the minister of economic development has made any approaches to have Alberta grain that's on the way to the Lakehead rerouted through either Vancouver or Prince Rupert so that it doesn't get caught in the problems down there.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, maybe the hon. minister for economic development would know the answer to that one. I was going through some briefing notes and discussions I had with a number of individuals within my department, and I don't know if that was possible or not. But I will further investigate it for the hon. member and report back.

Government Grants and Projects

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier also. It appears to be the practice of the government that when cheques for awards, grants, scholarships, and so on are to be distributed to persons resident in or carrying on business in a constituency represented by a member of the government party, that government MLA effects personal delivery, but when the cheque is to be delivered to a person in a constituency represented by an opposition MLA, the cheque is delivered by a representative of the government or its bureaucracy or virtually anyone other than the sitting

MLA. Can the Premier identify the policy by which this practice is justified?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I recognize a representation in that question. I'll review the matter and report back to the hon. member.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I take it then that the government does regard the money as the people's money and not the money of the Conservative Party?

MR. GETTY: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WRIGHT: If I can ask for another supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the reason for this practice simply that the government seeks political advantage from it?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WRIGHT: I'm very sorry that we harboured dark suspicions on this side then, Mr. Speaker.

As a final question, can the Premier explain the rationale behind the similar policy of announcements on projects in a particular constituency being made jointly by the minister and the member in the case of Conservative constituencies but just by the minister in other constituencies?

MR. GETTY: It's just those we can trust, Mr. Speaker.

Pay Equity

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the minister responsible for the Women's Secretariat. In responding to what I now consider to be the famous 64-cent question — that is, the gender wage gap in Alberta — I wonder if the government, particularly the minister's department, is studying pay equity progress in other provinces, particularly Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba, to see how well they've been able to do.

MR. ANDERSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we continue to monitor those experiments.

MS BARRETT: Thank you. A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister will state categorically one way or another whether this government is ruling out pay equity on principle.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, this government rules out no possibilities when it comes to the potential for approaching the full and equal participation of women in Alberta life. However, I would say that my initial analysis of pay equity experiments throughout the world, particularly some of those in the United States and Australia, indicates that the problems may be far greater than the solution they speak to.

MS BARRETT: A supplementary question then. Will the minister make it clear? Is his department not working in any respect towards establishing a program of pay equity to reduce the more than \$10,000 a year in wage discrepancies based on gender in the Alberta public service? Is that the case?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, to be absolutely clear, the government believes firmly in equal pay for equal work. The government believes firmly in moving to reduce wher-

ever possible the wage gap that does exist. It is not working at this current time towards the concept of equal pay for work of equal value, at least as I understand that concept in terms of the various options and alternatives that exist in the world with respect to those experiments.

MS BARRETT: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The minister may be interested to know that equal pay for equal work has existed since 1956 and even by his federal counterparts has been considered a failure. Will the minister indicate how long women in Alberta will have to wait while this government sits around and dreams up excuses not to establish programs for pay equity in this province?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, clearly the member's suggestion that the government has sat back and done nothing on this issue is not at all accurate in any respect. The progress towards this difficulty that the member points out in terms of the wage gap is clear year by year. There has not been any regression in this respect. It has not moved as fast as most of us would like to see it move, but it entails factors that are extremely complex with respect to our society. The government continues to establish and develop programs, a number of which I would be happy to articulate and have in the past: everything ranging from the line co-ordinators in the various departments of government through to the training courses and the new career development centre established in my colleague's department this year.

This year I expect several other announcements to be made at least by the First Ministers' Conference in November. Clearly, the government is committed to doing away with any inequities. Clearly, it is not willing to move into an area like the one the member suggests without knowing the full ramifications, which by many reports have been extremely negative in terms of opportunities for all people in a number of states in the United States and other parts of the world.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us if there is an office established through him, the very least that should be done, to deal specifically with this outrageous and unfair situation?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what the hon. member would mean by an office. There's certainly the Women's Secretariat, whose primary responsibility is to co-ordinate activities governmentwide. I would see one particular office to be an inadequate response to the problem.

MR. MUSGROVE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Talking of equal rights for equal pay, are there not quite a few ways in our society where this happens? For instance, the question is: do female MLAs get paid the same as male MLAs?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the concept of equal pay for equal work, the government is clear and emphatic. It amended the Acts with respect to this in the past and clearly stands on that basis in our society.

Hazardous Materials Transportation

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of the Environment. Snap to it. Now that the Swan Hills waste management plant is being built, there is increasing concern that the government does not have a compre-

hensive plan for routing hazardous wastes throughout this province to that plant. Edmontonians have to be concerned that the PCBs, literally the ones which made it past Kenora in that truck owned by Kinetic last summer, the ones that were invited into this province by this government's authorization, will be transported right through this city to the plant when it is completed. My first question: is it true that the hazardous wastes from around this province and across this country will go right through Edmonton's west end and other areas in Edmonton, up the Whitemud Freeway, up the 170th Street freeway, on their way to the Swan Hills waste management plant when it's completed?

MR. KOWALSKI: I don't know how I can answer the question "Is it true?" Mr. Speaker, the amount of material going from Nisku to Swan Hills when it's time for it to move will follow duly designated dangerous goods routes that have been assigned and determined by all the municipalities that exist between Nisku and Swan Hills. The hon. member will remember that earlier in this session I indicated that the city of Edmonton had recently passed bylaws by their council designating dangerous goods routes within the city. Numbers of roadways within the city of Edmonton had been designated, and there may very well have been one in the western part of Edmonton. But to suggest that a particular material would go from Nisku on that particular roadway en route to Swan Hills is something that I could not definitively say yes or no to today.

MR. MITCHELL: So you don't in fact know.

Can the minister then confirm that he is saying that there is nothing stopping these PCBs, the ones that made it past Kenora on that truck, from passing through Edmonton's west end, past schools, past a hospital, and right through densely populated areas?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the decision to designate a particular roadway that's funded by public dollars is one that was made by the municipality, in this case, the city of Edmonton. That is clearly public information. It's a bylaw applied for and resolved by the council of the city of Edmonton.

MR. MITCHELL: They had no choice.

MR. KOWALSKI: I'm sure that if the hon. member wished to consult with members of city council, he might ask them why a particular roadway within the city of Edmonton was designated a dangerous goods route and why one was and another one wasn't. That's a decision a local municipality can choose to make. They then provide those bylaws to me, as the minister of Alberta Public Safety Services and I, on record, have them assembled in the offices of Alberta Public Safety Services. They're there for the written record of the province of Alberta and would fall under all the provincial guidelines, rules, and regulations that we have with respect to the transportation of hazardous or dangerous goods.

MR. MITCHELL: They don't have the alternative of not designating a dangerous goods route; therefore, they have no way of saying PCBs can't go through the city.

Is the minister aware of the status of his government's plans to complete the Edmonton ring route, along which these kinds of hazardous wastes could be routed around this city?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, a dangerous goods route is something I think the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark might want to gather some information with respect to. [interjections] He might find out that a dangerous goods route would take such ...

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, please, hon. minister.

Hon. Member for Edmonton Meadowlark, please do not engage in dialogue while the answer is being supplied to you, because I see here that you still have opportunity for at least one more supplemental. That's more the accepted form of approach, please, hon. member.

Mr. Minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

A dangerous goods route will cover the distribution route for a variety of materials, including gasoline that goes in the member's car when the member drives from his home if it's on the west side of Edmonton to where he works today at this particular moment. He would, presumably, like to have a service station in his neighbourhood. Somehow that fuel that would have to come from a refiner to that particular service station to allow the hon. member to go and fuel up his car would have to go across some route. Such a route has been designated as a dangerous goods route. The hon. member might argue and say that the city had no choice to designate such routes. He's absolutely incorrect.

Furthermore, if the hon. member would kindly take a look at a map of the province of Alberta, find where Nisku is located, and take a look at the roadways that exist to the west of Nisku and then to the north from that point on, he would find that there are routes that would go to the west of Edmonton, and such routes could be followed in the transportation of such goods from Nisku towards Swan Hills.

It should also be pointed out again, Mr. Speaker, that the purpose of the Special Waste Management Corporation is to clean up and improve the environment of the province of Alberta. Swan Hills has been built to take materials that have been stored here, there, and hither throughout the province of Alberta in the past. We will all have to recognize that those goods will have to go from Nisku to Swan Hills. There will be a point of time when those goods will have to be transported if we want to arrive at the general objective of cleaning up the environment.

If the hon. member is saying that the people that he happens to represent in his constituency should somehow not have to see goods go by their homes, then that's a petition that I hope that he would very honestly come forward with and say, "It's okay for somebody else to have to be responsible as a citizen of Alberta, but as the MLA for Edmonton Meadowlark, don't ask my constituents to be responsible."

MR. MITCHELL: That kind of frivolous and smart answer is hardly becoming of a minister who is charged with this level of responsibility.

Does the government have a comprehensive ... [interjections]

MR. TAYLOR: Quiet the roosters down.

MR. SPEAKER: Quiet the roosters down. There are an awful lot of roosters in this henhouse, and a lot of them have been coming from over in that part of the Assembly.

MR. TAYLOR: But they're the ones laying the eggs.

MR. SPEAKER: That's discussable. The Member for Edmonton Meadowlark, a supplementary, please.

MR. MITCHELL: Does the government have a comprehensive hazardous waste transportation strategy designed to avoid urban concentrations and to go through unpopulated rural areas wherever possible?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the maximum number of movements suggested to me that will occur in the province of Alberta when the Special Waste Management Corporation plant at Swan Hills goes into effect will probably be in the neighbourhood of eight to 12 movements per day. Those movements may in fact be from one location to another. One would have to use a considerable degree of imagination, and I would be very happy to go through this in considerable detail, Mr. Speaker, pointing out what exactly the member is suggesting.

By suggesting what he has suggested, it may very well entail distances that could very well be twice the normal distance that would have to be followed by simply avoiding so-called heavily populated environments. By the same token, if the hon. member is suggesting that every public roadway in the province of Alberta be simply cancelled as a dangerous goods route, I simply have no way of fathoming how we're going to get such very important materials as automobile fuels, fertilizers, and insecticides that people use for gardening and agriculture and everything else to their destination points.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question to the minister. In an earlier question period the minister indicated that he would review the contract that would occur between Bow Valley and the waste management corporation. Has the minister completed that review? Has there been any change in date as to when the waste site will be effective and on stream?

MR. KOWALSKI: No, the review hasn't been completed, Mr. Speaker. I indicated earlier that I was hoping to have that review completed by the end of September. Secondly, the anticipated ...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, I'm sorry; the question is out of order because we have a motion with respect to that matter on the Order Paper. It's part of the difficulty at this stage of the sittings with the various things on various parts of the Order Paper.

The time for question period has expired. Might we finish this line of questioning? Do you agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Member for Edmonton Glen-garry, a supplementary.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned the Nisku storage facility as a midpoint in the transportation. I'm wondering if the minister has inspected the second warehouse that was built there in terms of ascertaining whether or not the floor is adequately solid, has adequate sidewalls for containment, and meets other safety factors as well.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, at no time did I indicate that Nisku would be a staging area. Nisku exists currently as a storage facility for what has happened in the past. The goods will be moved from Nisku to Swan Hills. There is absolutely no intent to have Nisku exist as a gathering centre at some time in the future. Once the materials that are currently stored in Nisku have been taken to Swan Hills, the purpose of Nisku will become redundant.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would move that motions for returns 158 and 165 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

163. Ms Laing moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing copies of the study, prepared during the current calendar year by the women's programs unit of the organization development division of the personnel administration office, which deals with the position of women in the Alberta public service and includes specific gender-based comparisons of wages and salaries, and occupations.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the government has to reject this motion. A thorough review of documents has not been able to disclose a study such as is mentioned in the motion, in either 1985 or 1986.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I take it from the minister's comment that studies don't exist or that they've not been found. I'm just a bit surprised that information of this nature has not even been gathered at any time by the organization development division of the personnel administration office. I find that very difficult to understand. Perhaps I misunderstood the minister's comments on that. But the fact that that information is not available I find difficult in view of the fact that we've had awareness of the position of women in the Alberta public service for so many years. That no one has undertaken such a study or data collection — I just don't understand that.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has obviously not picked up what I said. I said we had been unable to find a study as delineated in the motion for a return. There are many, many internal working documents of the department of the personnel administration office, and computer printouts galore. The matter is always under consideration, but we do not have a study such as that delineated in the motion.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, the information I request is the position of women in the public service, and I would ask that such information that is available to the minister be made available to us so that we can monitor the government's handling of this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, hon. member; we have great confusion as to what's happening here. It is really contrary to the practice of the House to have this argument back and forth. The Member for Edmonton Avonmore moved

the motion for a return, the response was given on behalf of the government, and the matter goes to the question. [interjections] It was open for debate. We've had the debate; therefore, she can finish the debate. Mover now concluding debate. Thank you.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, this information is essential if we are to monitor the government's actions in regard to the treatment of their female employees. Without it we have only their word that they are treating them well and equitably.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Chair apologizes to the House. The question has been put.

[Motion lost]

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

221. Moved by Mr. Musgreave:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to direct Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation to develop a plan whereby citizens who have rented AMHC-owned housing units for two years be given the opportunity to purchase same by adopting the following:

- (1) a subsidized interest rate to enable the renter to use his rent as a mortgage payment;
- (2) that special arrangements be made for single-parent families in determining their down payment.

MR. MUSGREAVE: Mr. Speaker, my object in bringing Motion 221 to the Assembly was to bring to the attention of the government in particular and to the Minister of Municipal Affairs a former decision made by the priorities committee which I now think needs review. To put this in perspective, I know of one landlord in Calgary who manages several hundred units with very, very few people. Granted, his management skills are important to his operation because he owns the properties, yet when nonowners manage property, costs go out of sight. The number of managers increases, the level of upkeep goes down, and the cost to the Treasury goes out of control. In my opinion, many bureaucracies grow like the weeds around some of the properties that are publicly owned. So today, Mr. Speaker, I hope we can question the role of Alberta Housing and Mortgage Corporation.

This motion has two functions in my view: first of all, to urge Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation to review their present policy of housing in Alberta and, secondly, in the interim to reduce the inventory of houses being held in spite of the naive hope that the value of the properties will increase to their original lending value in the near future. Finally, if this motion is passed by the Assembly, it will give the minister an opportunity to review a number of former decisions that concerned our housing policy.

First of all, though, I would like to give a particular example of what is happening to our policy as it is being carried out by our civil servants. On Bermondsey Rise in my constituency is a half duplex that was sold to Kathy Rampersad, a constituent of mine, with a \$60,000 mortgage on it. This was close to the original value of the property. Later in the year the other half of this duplex became available for sale through a foreclosure. However, because of the foreclosure and the unkempt nature of the property, the value of the property had dropped to a market-assessed

value of \$55,000. A legitimate offer of \$48,000 was made on the property and refused by Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation. AMHC had done an appraisal that indicated a two-storey, three-bedroom half duplex in this area was worth only \$55,000, and to quote what was said to the realtor by a member of Alberta Housing:

If [any] purchaser was prepared to pay \$64,000 for this place then he was a fool.

The question of the person living next door was: was this person a fool for paying the \$60,000 mortgage on their property? She doesn't think she is because it's her home and to her it is worth a lot more. She said:

However, if this is the attitude AMHC displays to the public it is obvious as to why there are so many quitclaims and foreclosures.

She goes on to state that in June of this year she had to mow the lawn twice and kill the weeds as the property was disintegrating and still no one moved in. She questioned what would happen to other properties that were vacant for three to nine months.

She goes on to say that when AMHC rented this particular unit, they were getting \$350, whereas if she had to rent it, she would need at least \$650 a month just to pay her mortgage. I would like to quote her again:

I strongly believe that had AMHC dealt with the original offer in March for \$48,000—\$50,000... they would be further ahead than trying to put themselves in the Real Estate Management business.

In conclusion she says:

I think [they] could learn a lot from CMHC by liquidating as many properties as possible at fair market value and stick to social lending, not leveraging real estate [prices].

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that other members of the Legislature will have examples of management of these units in their particular constituencies.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

As I mentioned earlier, my motion has two parts, and first I'd like to deal with part A. The intent here is to in effect convert a renter into a homeowner. Because of the oil crisis, prices for properties owned by Alberta Mortgage and Housing are declining even today. So to insist on getting a price that existed in boom times, which is optimistic at best but in reality is very low, is in my opinion being a very poor steward of our people's resources. The longer we hold these properties, the more they will cost to maintain, as government managers have no reason to be cost-effective. Of course, to suggest we be realistic and face the reality of the marketplace is difficult for politicians, and for bureaucrats it is even more disastrous to have to face the market world.

During the election campaign it was my good fortune to have a secretary of a high school in my constituency knocking on doors with me. It was interesting to visit people in their homes who are not satisfied with the seniors home improvement program. They wanted more help even though their homes looked neat and attractive. My campaign worker, a single parent who lives in a low rental project, would have given anything to own one of the many homes we visited. Many of them were not expensive, but they were obviously well cared for. This lady, my constituency worker, has lived in a low rental project owned by one of Alberta's major real estate development companies and has raised her family there as a single mother. She has lived there for

over five years, and in the period of time she has lived there, unfortunately the standard of maintenance of the property has gone down and the general environment has declined. If people cannot get enough money together for a down payment to move out, unfortunately they stay and their children grow up in an area that quite often is not conducive to the raising of healthy, productive citizens.

Opposition to this motion can be anticipated from the corporation because they are essentially going to protect the status quo. For example, they think a cash down payment is required in all cases, and in most cases I would agree. Yet for years the American government had a program in the United States of giving veterans 100 percent mortgages to buy homes. I'm sure these same bureaucrats would be concerned if we made sales of houses with little or no down payment at prices lower than the original cost. All of us who are homeowners who bought homes or built in the late '70s or early '80s know that our properties have declined according to today's market.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to deal with the matter of special arrangements for single-parent families. Unfortunately, a large number of people, both in and out of government, do not appreciate the difficulty of one parent raising a family in today's society. To support that the general public would not be happy with a move to house these people in their own homes rather than leave them as part of a large group of tenants that justifies keeping a bureaucracy and jobs that would be best eliminated or at least reduced in numbers and scope is unbelievable in my opinion.

It is obvious that the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation will feel uncomfortable with my suggestion that we take a different view of our housing policy. If the corporation does not wish to make different housing approaches to face reality, it might be helpful to consider what Canada Mortgage has done in Alberta. Their policy right now is to be as liquid as possible. In northern Alberta, including Edmonton and district, they sold 704 units in 1985; they have sold 794 units in 1986. These are foreclosed or quitclaim homes that they have had to repossess. In the southern part of the province in the same period of time, in 1985, they sold 1,029 homes and 692 to date in 1986.

Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate the concern raised by people who wonder why we should make a more generous attempt to help those in the lower economic strata of our society. I remember in the 1982 election the opposition of some of my constituents who owned clear-title homes and were upset with our mortgage subsidy program. They had made it on their own, and why shouldn't everyone else? That was their attitude. They conveniently forgot, though, that their homes were built with 20- to 30-year fixed interest rate mortgages. Their salaries probably went up every year more than their cost of living, and the value of their homes increased considerably. The reverse has happened in the past few years. House prices have dropped severely. People have lost their jobs or have been put on part-time, and many have been faced with severe salary cuts.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to draw to the attention of the Legislature the remarks of the Member for Calgary Mountain View, who mentioned on August 25 that in setting up the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, the assets of the fund were not to be "tied up in deteriorating and vacant homes all over Alberta." This is a serious problem, and AMHC has to face up to it very, very quickly in my opinion. On every side we are being told how fortunate we are in Alberta to have the heritage fund. I

am concerned that perhaps some of the assets are not as healthy as they should be. Should we be pumping more money into this Crown corporation? We house more seniors than any other province. Perhaps we should stop building some of our housing programs and put far more money, for example, into home support programs for seniors so we can keep them in their own homes as long as possible.

Secondly, while this motion is mainly concerned with reducing our stock of foreclosed homes, perhaps the more important issue is the future role of the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation. We have advocated less government. In view of the severe decline in revenues, perhaps it is time to consider dismantling some Crown corporations whose asset values have fallen so drastically and whose original purpose at creation is now, in my opinion, in question.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the motion brought forward by the hon. member. While I agree with him that the status and operation of Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation could well be reviewed, it seems to me that all that is required is that the government should have made some policy changes relative to the corporation that would probably have improved and met the requirements of the motion before us today.

It is correct that the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation has an inventory of nearly 3,000 properties in the province of Alberta, which is costing the corporation somewhere in the vicinity of \$170 million. The corporation has been rather negligent in disposing of its property, whether through sales or through the rental process. For example, they've leased out only some 300 units or approximately 12 percent of that particular inventory. I think the corporation could take a much more prudent approach and should have implemented a scheme where rather than foreclosing as they have done and acquiring all this inventory and subsequently renting properties to someone else, they should've made some arrangement with the purchaser to deal with the problems the individual was having relative to his financial position. In many cases, I understand, the rentals have been substantially less than the mortgage payments that were being made on that property. Why wasn't some arrangement made with the original owner to accommodate their financial position and implement what is being suggested in this motion through a reduction or some type of subsidized interest rate to allow the original owner to be able to retain that property?

I agree that the corporation seems to think there is going to be a strengthening of the marketplace, and somehow they're going to be able to unload and eventually sell the property they hold. But in the meantime it's costing us a great deal of money. In fact, the projection is that it's going to cost in the vicinity of some \$360 million for the corporation to hold these properties. At the same time there are people out there who are looking for affordable housing.

While I support the motion, I do have some difficulty in sort of understanding how it's going to be worked out. It probably requires some refining. It seems to me also that the corporation leases out its property to people who are well above the criteria that the corporation normally requires before it can lease a space out. If an individual has lived in a residence owned by the corporation for more than two years, according to this motion, he can then apply for the subsidized interest rate or the other provision that is being suggested. That seems to me to be somewhat unfair. I think that while the intent here is good, there has to be some

further work done to ensure that those who are in fact in need and require affordable housing will come under this legislation. It has been suggested that only people who are — as the purpose of the corporation is to provide accommodation for low- and middle-income families. As I understand it, because of the glut and the excess amount of inventory the corporation has, they are now leasing to people at basically market value and in fact now don't deal with the criteria requirements of income.

In supporting this motion, I send out that provision, that there has to be a requirement that only those who qualified under the criteria stated previously. Until that happens, there are some difficulties to this particular motion. But because I think the intent is a good one, we will be able to support it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to support the motion, I'd like to congratulate the Member for Calgary McKnight for bringing it forward. I think it is a very good motion, although some members have pointed out that we might be able to polish it up a bit or refine it in some areas. Particularly in a motion such as this, hopefully the idea is to get across to the government that they have the support of the House so they can go ahead and start implementing the policy.

I am afraid that a great deal of the reason that the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation is not knocking down their vacant homes to low-income or low down payment buyers is maybe not as kind as some of the members have stated. I think the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation, largely because this is characteristic of this government's policy for some years, is trying to protect the banks and private lenders a lot and that they feel that if they were to unload or knock down much of their inventory, there would be a loud howl from the chartered banks and some of the more established financial institutions which would see the value of the market eroding.

I submit that although the government has shown a propensity to make sure our eastern bankers are looked after first, they may be mistaken in this case. Just because this inventory has not been disposed of is probably causing just as big a drop in property values as if they went ahead and disposed of it at a low price. Once it's disposed of and out of the way, the natural market can come back. I think it is misplaced protectionism by this government to think that if Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation desists and refrains from putting houses on the market at cheaper prices or giving them away with cheap down payments, they're in any way, shape, or form protecting the established lenders. The very fact that 3,000 homes are sitting there hanging over the market is enough to depress the price. They should take the bit in their teeth or take hold of the chestnut, whatever metaphor you want to use, and go ahead and start disposing of the properties on hand.

Secondly, bureaucracies being what they are, whether they're private or public, it may just be possible, if they don't dispose of the asset, that they can carry it on their books and say, "Look, we have all these assets," whereas once you dispose of an asset, you have to show a loss or your capital account goes down. One of the ways of showing your boss that you haven't lost any money is not to sell what you've got in your inventory. This second reason may be another reason why the AMHC will need prodding by this government. They will need a push by this government to go ahead and try to dispose of their properties for low

down payments and for prices much reduced from what they have on hand now.

Also, if I might add anything to the Member for Calgary McKnight's motion, because he has a better chance to look at the inner workings of the antediluvian minds that in turn run CMHC, I hope he might get across to them some form of lease purchase where the rent — or 10, 20, or 30 percent of the rent — in time could be converted into the down payment. This is another way of getting the down payments, getting the pride of ownership that's necessary.

Maybe one of the issues that we've overlooked — I know the Member for Calgary McKnight is very much interested in the very basic integrity and sanctity of the family, the family unit. A stable home is about one of the most important things that any society can provide for its coming generations. This is an easy way. This is a way that we can go about solving a twofold problem. You might say the government has not only an economic problem with it but a social problem because of the instability of home life: the moving about and the fact that many of our low-income people cannot achieve the pride of ownership or at least the pride of having a stable community, a community in which they are bringing up their children. Single parents or double parents or sometimes more than that is one of the social areas that we could be looking at.

In fact, it may well be — I don't know if our economists are able to do it, because chartered accountants are noted or notorious, it depends which way you want to look at it, for being able to weigh out profit and loss — that when it comes to the real accounting of what it costs society, the best bargain that any society can make today is possibly to take a dollar loss on the homes themselves. Indeed, because of the stability of the home, the social adjustment, and the lower cost down the road in crime and in mental health, it may well be the best investment this government could possibly make.

Thank you very much.

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak most adamantly in support of this motion presented by the hon. Member for Calgary McKnight. I might just start by indicating that, in the first instance, it is difficult to understand why anybody would suggest we or anybody should unload the amount of inventory that Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation has in the marketplace at a time when prices are depressed. It is inconceivable why anybody would want to dump — and I'll use the phrase "dump" because that's what it would be — housing onto a marketplace where home prices are somewhat depressed now in any event.

You're going to hurt the people you don't want to hurt. The banks are big enough; they look after themselves. If you don't believe me, go in and see how much they charge you for their services these days. I'm not one that feels very sorry for banks or lending institutions with all the charges they hit you with, their personal guarantees, and so on and so forth. They don't look for much sympathy from this guy here.

MR. TAYLOR: Come on over and join the Liberals, Stan.

MR. NELSON: I'm not a socialist.

Mr. Speaker, the integrity of our neighbourhoods is our primary concern today and should be in the future. The integrity of our neighbourhoods, our cities, and our communities must be given some sensitive consideration by Alberta Mortgage and Housing, this government, the munic-

ipal governments, the federal government, and whoever else is in the business of looking after these communities. I think what we have to do here today — and hopefully we may come to a vote on this motion in a positive fashion — is to send a message to Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation and possibly to the government about how they are dealing with housing issues in those neighbourhoods where there are considerable units that have been developed over the years, units that either have been purchased by the present homeowners or are being rented, or an effort should be made to turn them over to a social housing authority; for example, in Calgary, the Calgary Housing Authority.

It is my view at the present time that this whole issue of housing programs by Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation — and especially now, since the issue of what's happening in Calgary that I'll get to with regard to the motion here — should be examined by an independent committee or commission or whatever to ensure the effective management of this portfolio of inventory, that it's being done in an appropriate manner for the benefit of the community at large.

The present issue of the homes, as the Member for Calgary McKnight has described in his motion here, is such that much of our housing from Alberta Mortgage is being unloaded on the social authority of the Calgary Housing Authority without any discussion or consideration by the city of Calgary. It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that no discussion has taken place other than that the Alberta Mortgage Corporation has over the past few months advised the city of Calgary of its intention to transfer a number of units — foreclosed units, I should add — to the Calgary Housing Authority. It has not consulted with the city of Calgary on their location, the type of housing, or their prices.

First of all, in dealing with the motion, before transferring any property to any authority, rental group or otherwise, we should be offering these homes for sale to people who have lived in them, have put their heart and soul into them, and may wish to purchase them. At the present time that is not possible under the present manner in which they're doing business, unless you live in Airdrie, where there's a rental purchase option agreement available to those residents. It is quite an extensive piece of material but does offer people living in those homes the option to purchase the units they are renting, utilizing a part of their rent as a down payment on that home they are presently in.

It's interesting to note that when Alberta Mortgage was doing their policy and what have you, they had previously rejected a city application for 21 single-family homes in the Huntingdon Hills area for social housing and are now transferring a large number of single-family units to community housing. In rejection of the city's application, it cited destabilization of the balance between ownership and tenant accommodations as the basic reason. By concentrating the single-family properties for social housing in one area, Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation is now precisely aiding the very destabilization of balance between ownership and tenant accommodation which they intended to avoid because of the high vacancy rate in the Calgary Housing Authority units, and the addition of these units would result in vacancies elsewhere.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is that these social housing units have a large number of vacancies at the present time and the mortgage corporation appears to be dumping more units on the city's housing authority, without cost to the city at this point in time, but at a cost of \$560

per unit paid for by the provincial and federal governments for a four-year period, at which time the city will have no option. They will have to pay a portion of that money as their risk or their portion of the social housing at something in the order of over \$50 per unit. This move has been defended by Alberta Mortgage, because no charge would be made to the city of Calgary to participate for that four years. As I've indicated, the bottom line is that the feds and the provincial government will provide a subsidy of \$560 per unit.

The lead-up to that, to the motion at hand, is that there's some discussion and some concern that in selling these units, it may be at a cost to the taxpayer. In all likelihood it wouldn't, but would provide a stabilization factor to the communities that have much of this housing. It would also provide a stabilization in the prices of homes in the community that are privately owned and mortgaged outside of Alberta Mortgage. It would provide a stabilization of the community itself by what home ownership and market-rent units would offer to the community. In other words, by utilizing a rental-sale agreement for many of these people who wish to participate, we may have a saving to the province and the federal government of some \$560 per unit. Over a one-year period that is maybe not that much for one unit, but when you're talking about hundreds or thousands of units, it creates a tremendous burden. We're always looking for ways of saving moneys.

Mr. Speaker, I have been in discussion with Alderman Pears of the city of Calgary on this issue, as he has become very concerned because much of this housing is in his ward. Also, there is much housing in wards 9 and 10. I can't think of the ward on the west side of town, but it seems there are three wards on the east side of the city in two or three provincial constituencies that have a considerable amount of this housing. I think there is a solution to it. However, it's not going to be fixed or a solution found by the approach that has been taken by Alberta Mortgage and Housing, which is to bring out a big hammer and sickle and say, "Boys, this is how we're going to do it." There is some opportunity for discussion both by Alberta Mortgage, through the administration of the municipalities, be it the city of Calgary or others, utilizing the MLAs who are responsible for looking after the needs of certain areas they are elected to represent, and by the elected people, the aldermen, councilmen, et cetera, within the community itself and in the municipality.

There are present and future financial and political consequences regarding this type of action by a corporation. Let's face it; we in the House hear from the socialists how large companies do this, that, and the other thing and they don't care about the community. With Alberta Mortgage and Housing, maybe we've got one here that is not overly concerned about the overall well-being and welfare of the community at large. I think, Mr. Speaker . . . [interjection] It's okay; the peanut gallery is continuing here.

Mr. Speaker, I know some recommendations are going to come forward from the city of Calgary that will include such a thing as objecting to the unilateral transfer of units to that city, because it is unaware of the alternatives that may have been considered. Alberta Mortgage is further concentrating low-income housing into certain communities of the city that, in the first place, have more than their share at the present time. Until such time as an independent committee or somebody examines this whole issue. I think that transfer of properties to the Calgary Housing Authority should be stopped and given further consideration.

Secondly, it will also likely increase the subsidy paid to the city for existing social-housing units. If you can't rent the units because you're being dumped on by the mortgage corporation with additional units, then you're stuck with the costs of the capital investment plus the utilities and other costs that relate to those particular units you already have in inventory. The most important thing, Mr. Speaker, is that this action has been taken without consultation with the city, aldermen, local MLAs, or anybody concerned with this type of action, and we are being hammered on by our communities. Quite frankly, I object to it personally. I have certainly written the minister concerned with this action personally, and hopefully a reply will be coming that will be favourable. The city hopefully will request consultation on this matter. They will probably initiate it so that there is some discussion between the city and the province or the mortgage corporation to review the various alternatives available and the pros and cons of each of those alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, in discussing this matter further with Alderman Pears and other members of council, it comes to mind that Alberta Mortgage, in doing what they have done with a hammer and sickle — that's what the socialists like to do, in any event, because that's their insignia. In dealing with the Member for Calgary McKnight's motion here, a little consultation could solve this issue very, very quickly by allowing those people who are interested in purchasing a home to do so. It's interesting, Mr. Speaker — and I have a letter here which I won't read because of its length; I hope other members will remember that in reading their long letters to the Legislature. The person who wrote this letter indicates here: "I am concerned with the implication of the concentration of these units next door to me."

People have purchased homes, duplexes, or otherwise and because of a situation or a circumstance which was not controllable by the individual next door, the house they lived in went into foreclosure. Now what are the options? To sell, rent, or dump on the housing authority. Mr. Speaker, the first thing we should do is offer to ensure that the marketplace and the community members are looked after, because all we're really going to do is encourage somebody else to put their house into foreclosure or into a quitclaim situation and walk away. The next thing you've got is a whole community full of housing that we can't afford to support. The options are: first of all, as identified in this motion, let the person purchase that home if he so desires; secondly, if there's a foreclosure or vacant home next door, let's keep it on the market.

It should be remembered here, Mr. Speaker, that last year there was a motion passed by the Heritage Savings Trust Fund committee that indicated that these properties should be looked after in the appropriate fashion in conjunction with the community and for the upkeep of that community to ensure that the values of some properties and the community itself would not deteriorate by empty housing units, especially those of Alberta Mortgage and other lenders. In many cases that hasn't been done, so again, Alberta Mortgage really has to put the hammer on. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that it's not often I stand up here and really hammer an agency of this nature, but I'm afraid today is the day. I'm not overly impressed right now because of the lack of communication and the lack of availability for input to decisions that affect my constituency and my community.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that Alberta Home Mortgage is on notice at the present time that what has to happen

is that they've got to consult with the city of Calgary, the MLA responsible for the area — not necessarily myself but other people as well — and that serious consideration has to be given to expanding the type of agreement they have in Airdrie for rental purchase options into Calgary and other areas of this province, not only for the betterment of the community at large, which is the primary goal, but also for the benefit of those who have an emotional involvement, an emotional participation in owning that home they've worked so hard on and put their guts into. Let's give them the benefit of the doubt and try to help them also, and then let's discuss the options that are available to keep the community viable, in its proper context as it was developed to be, rather than dumping in some of this housing that will be not looked after.

The Calgary Housing Authority does not have a good record. In fact, it has a lousy record. Quite frankly, I don't want to see Alberta Mortgage get that same type of — I guess you could say headline or whatever. Because if they do, I'll be up here saying that they've got a lousy record too. I'm not about to say that at this point in time. However, I'll go the next step down from saying that. Until such time as the people of that organization are prepared to sit down and discuss these things, I think we should stop this nonsense of transferring all these houses into an authority that will not look after them properly. The taxpayer gets dumped on and the community gets hurt because of this issue.

Alderman Pears is right, and I'm supporting him a hundred percent, because I'm going to support myself on this issue. It's not a nice one totally to discuss here like this. I support this motion and I hope the rest of the members of this Legislature will support this and give Alberta Mortgage a message.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, prior to 1979 I was the vice-president of the southern region of the Alberta Housing Corporation. I joined the corporation in 1975. I then participated in the breakup of the corporation into the Alberta Housing Corporation and the Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation in 1976. I had the privilege of becoming an MLA and was here in 1982 when the Department of Housing was formed and in 1984 when AHC and AHMC were put back together again and, finally, this year when we've seen the department merged with the Department of Municipal Affairs. So it's not been easy for the corporation.

I'm pleased, Mr. Speaker, to be able to follow the Member for Calgary McCall on today's speaking list because I think it should be said that the corporation and its staff, during these very hectic growth times and now very strenuous restraint times, have had to consider downsizing, reorganization, relocation, and upheaval. These are all very trying and stressful problems for staff. But I want to say that this government and thousands of Albertans — whether they're homeowners, renters, seniors, builders, or suppliers, whether staff of trust companies, banks, realty companies, credit unions, or co-operatives or appraisers, surveyors, engineers, lawyers, trade employees, and so on — have benefitted from the work of the department and the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation in its earlier configurations.

I listened carefully to the Member for Edmonton Beverly and a few days ago the Member for Calgary Mountain View, who supported Motion 221 before it was brought forward. Whether we live in Edmonton, Airdrie, Cochrane, Fort McMurray, a Metis settlement, or on an Indian reserve,

AMHC has programs; they've been rifled in to solve housing problems. But times have changed and the corporation's programs are now mainly in two areas: construction of rental housing for seniors and low- to middle-income families, and mortgage financing in the private sector for our low- and middle-income Albertans.

The corporation has a number of pilot programs to facilitate rentals and sales. As the Member for Calgary McCall mentioned, the rent-to-purchase option in Airdrie is one example. But there's a mortgage trade program throughout Alberta, where people can trade their mortgages if they are moving, if it's under the home purchase prep plan. There's also the community housing program, where units are being transferred. I agree with the Member for Calgary McCall that perhaps consultation should be given a much more careful look by the corporation.

I would hope that the officials of the corporation and the board will look very carefully at today's *Hansard* and the remarks of the Member for Calgary McKnight and the other members who have spoken. It seems to me that we should look very carefully at the challenge that the Member for Calgary McKnight has thrown out to the corporation. I agree with his challenge. So does the federal government with its programs, and so do Saskatchewan, Ontario, Nova Scotia, the Territories, and Yukon with their specific programs. There are hidden costs associated with the carrying of this large portfolio in terms of not only administration but tax loss, maintenance, and repairs. And these are all paid for by the taxpayers at large. Surely the corporation and its board should be able to provide a plan to provide opportunities to renters to purchase subsidized homes without increasing their home expenses. I agree that they should be able to do this and reduce our massive portfolio of properties and improve our province's income flow.

There are problems to overcome. There are challenges to be met. But there is one inescapable conclusion: ownership means a special pride and responsibility. No one includes in the studies that I've seen the costs of renting, not just in terms of hard AMHC costs but in terms of the costs of property devaluation through rental policies that don't work or the cost to single parents in families forced to continue to rent without hope of ownership.

I don't want to be accused, Mr. Speaker, of saying that tenants are somehow less worthy citizens than owners; they are indeed worthy citizens. Many tenants are taken in by owner landlords or neglected by them. What I see instead is the need for pride, pride to be rediscovered, to be encouraged, and to be initiated by a plan that provides an opportunity for ownership, equity, and commitment to one's neighbourhood. Indeed, if these units are sold in consultation with the municipality and there is still a demand for more from needy Albertans, AMHC could assist the municipality or the housing corporation and have a new wave of development and redevelopment in our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I support this motion, and I urge that the corporation develop new strategies.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Speaker, I'll be brief, and I'd like to thank the previous speaker for also being quite brief.

I rise to support the motion, Mr. Speaker, but I want to make a couple of points that aren't addressed in the actual motion. One is why we have such a very high inventory in the AMHC program. It's due to a number of properties being foreclosed upon.

In my constituency I've had a number of constituents address that particular concern. They've gone to the cor-

poration and asked that because of the financial circumstances they find themselves in, they be given special consideration for a lower rate. The response, of course, is that yes, they will have a lower rate for a period of six months, but after that six-month period, they have to make all of the back payment in one lump sum. The problem then is: how do they come up with the money for that one lump sum, period? Why do we not look at extending that rate for another six-month period or have a review period so that we can keep those people in the homes they have purchased and not force them out?

Right now people in my constituency are paying, in some condominium associations, \$670 a month plus their condominium fees of \$60 a month. After they're foreclosed upon, those very same properties are being rented out by AMHC at \$425. That's an incredible drop. If we were to take into account the economic circumstances of some of the initial purchasers and the commitment they're making in ownership, in pride in the condominium and in their community, perhaps then they would be able to stay in their homes and we wouldn't have the kind of inventory we have.

At this hour, do I now have to ... Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair will interpret rule 8 in about 30 seconds, so the hon. member has 30 seconds.

MR. SIGURDSON: I have 30 seconds to attempt to conclude my remarks. I do believe I'm finished. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think that 30 seconds has expired, and I would move to adjourn the debate.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It's not necessary to move that question. The record would show that the hon. Member for Edmonton Belmont has in fact concluded the debate.

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

Bill 212 Ambulance Service Act

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker. I rise to request consent of the Legislative Assembly on private member's day for support to move Bill 211, the Seat Belt Act, back to the top of the Order Paper for debate on second reading.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under *Standing Orders* I would assume that the hon. member has the right to seek unanimous support of the House at any time. The Chair has no option. I guess, but to put the question moved by the hon. Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

The item called for business is Bill 212, which has to be disposed of first in one way or another.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Then this is an unacceptable motion at this time until the other Bill is dealt with?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill 212 has been called as the order of business. It has a sponsor. Whether that sponsor is in the House or someone else wishes to speak to it, that

Bill must be dealt with first before another item could be considered.

MR. WRIGHT: On a point of order. By the same token if there is unanimous consent of the House, consideration of the later Bill can also go ahead of 212, even if it has been called, with respect, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It would be the Chair's interpretation that once an order of business is called, the House would then be anticipating the sponsor of that order of business to rise in his or her place. I don't think a motion for any other item can be considered until that member has either risen in his or her place or spoke to the Bill.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I certainly will carry on and move on behalf of my colleague, Dr. Buck, private member's Bill 212. I want to indicate that my colleague from Clover Bar is away this afternoon at a funeral of one of his close friends in Fort Saskatchewan and has asked me to follow through with moving second reading of Bill 212.

Bill 212 has two basic principles that it places before this Legislature. First of all, the intent is to establish a uniform and high standard of ambulance services in the province of Alberta relative to standards of the ambulance itself, standards for the attendants and, as well, it has as its subobjective, in that first principle, to establish a level of service that may vary from one community to another but have some kind of consistency in communities of comparative sizes.

Mr. Speaker, the second principle in this Bill to consider in second reading is that the provincial government should commit funds to the ambulance services across the province of Alberta. Suggested in the Bill is an 80/20 formula that follows the precedent established by various other programs of this Legislature and of the government, the earlier preventive social services program, and certainly the cost sharing between the municipalities and the provincial government in terms of public assistance.

When I reviewed this Bill, I reviewed *Hansard* since 1974 and found a number of very interesting things in terms of the record and the attitude of the government over that period of time. I also noted, with fear to some extent, that the vast majority of the people that participated in debate on this question of standardization of ambulance service across the province are no longer in the Legislature. So I only offer to new members of the Legislature that when you stand, you stand with a little fear, because possibly the next time around at the polls it may have some bad omen. Hopefully not.

As I look back in the record of the government in *Hansard*, we can go back to March 26, 1974, when my colleague moved a resolution in the Legislature requesting that the Conservative government establish a legislative committee

to study and make recommendations upon the aspects of ambulance service in rural Alberta.

That resolution was accepted by the Legislature, but as of today's date there's been no action on the resolution. It was a direction to government.

Secondly, I note on March 27, 1973, the beginning of a number of promises by the ministers in the department to do studies and review and report, Mr. Crawford: "I certainly don't hesitate in any way to undertake a review." December 4, 1973, the hon. Miss Hunley:

Ambulance service is one of the health services which we have under continuing review.

On March 27, 1974, and October 25, 1974, the hon. Mr. Crawford: the department review is taking place.

June 9, 1975, hon. Mr. Miniely:

We're in the process of examining that ... [referring to ambulance services] ... my intention is to spend several months examining the entire area.

May 17, 1976, hon. Mr. Miniely:

I view 1976 as a year of broad policy development of future directions.

Our ambulance policy.

October 12, 1978, the hon. Mr. Miniely:

I should not leave the impression that we haven't moved in very important ways in ambulance service.

In short, it's a local responsibility.

May 5, 1981, the Hon. Dave Russell:

It's my hope that we will be able to announce some elements of an ambulance program in the not too distant future.

He goes on to say:

I can only reiterate that it has always been a municipal responsibility. If some municipal governments in Alberta feel they're not getting an adequate ambulance service, it's their responsibility to improve the service for their citizens.

We go on to today, September 1986, and what has happened? I secured from the library after a terrific amount of work and research two reports that came from the emergency services branch, Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. One is September 23, 1980, and the other April 1980. The first is entitled Ground Ambulance Study: Discussion Paper. The second one is Ground Ambulance Services: Advanced Life Support Levels. I understand there is a third report which I could not secure. I found one copy in the Legislature Library after much research and another one in the department's library, but in contact with the minister's office it was not available.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that's the attention that the question of ambulance services in the province of Alberta is getting from the government. The studies are there. The need is there, as it is well documented in each one of these reports. The report on advanced life-support level makes a number of recommendations that have not been followed out by government. The ground ambulance study with regard to the standards for ambulances: it's recommended. They have not been followed through. Recommended legislation has not been followed through. Training levels, qualifications for ambulance attendants: that recommendation has not been followed by the government. Funding recommendations: not followed by the government. Reporting systems: not followed by the government. Radio communications: not followed by the government. Interhospital transfer of patients: possibly a little bit of work done in that area. User costs: no policy of the government that's clear and definable that we can find.

So what we see is a series of inactions by the government on this very subject in these two reports. I read the supporting evidence I've found in the *Edmonton Journal* as of September 22, 1985. The group representing paramedics and emergency medical technicians says this about ambulance care in the province:

Albertans are dying [unnecessarily] because the provincial government refuses to set standards for ambulance care.

They go on to say:

There is woefully inadequate legislation on ambulance care [in Alberta] and no provincial funding for municipalities, [said] paramedics' president, Richard White . . .

"Rural Alberta gets left out in the cold," he said.

And in areas where neither the province nor the municipality take responsibility, his impression was that Albertans were dying or having ill effects unnecessarily.

Mr. Speaker, that's where we are today. My colleague has said very clearly in this House that the government hasn't even a plan in attacking this question of ambulance standardization and better care across the province of Alberta. That's our recommendation. We've put it in the form of a Bill, which places before this Assembly for discussion two basic principles: one, standardization and improving services and, second, a suggestion relative to funding. The government may say, and the arguments at this time are, "We haven't got the money to fund it, and we must leave ambulance services to the municipalities and the volunteers." But that whole question of training and abilities of attendants is one that concerns me very much.

I made contact with my local hospital today, the hospital at Vulcan. I said: "What's happening relative to ambulance services?" They have a good ambulance service; they have excellent volunteers. On October 7 it is my intent to go and present pins and recognize volunteers that have gone out in the last month and a half and raised a significant amount of funds privately to keep the ambulance operating in the Vulcan area and district. Excellent; I want to recognize them. I raised with the hospital administrator the question: "What standards are required for ambulance attendants?" He said: "If we belong to the association, there are some basic standards, but they're very basic, very minimum standards. If you don't belong to the association, whoever gets in the ambulance takes the risk." That's the situation we're in at the present time. I certainly think that is a very inadequate position.

I would recommend that if this Bill is unacceptable in its form, the government should come back to this Legislature and the minister should take the responsibility. We can also look at changes in Committee of the Whole. If it's unacceptable, the government should at least have one department at the present time speaking on behalf of ambulance standards and the funding of ambulance services in the province of Alberta. It's indicated very clearly in various reports that there are four or five departments all trying to deal with this question. The policy is piecemeal, not co-ordinated, and not effective. That's the first recommendation.

Secondly, the government should set in place a sequence of actions they can fulfill relative to the revenue they can expend on a program such as this. Why not first of all establish standards for the attendants and, in turn, provide some funding for the training of those individuals? If we want well-trained people — if they are just there to provide service in terms of basic life support, that's one thing; if it's advanced life support, that's another thing. But we should provide the opportunity for individuals to get that basic training. Secondly, we could look at some kind of program support for the purchase of ambulances and the capital cost. Overall cost sharing could become a third priority, and down the road, at a point in time when the priorities of government can change and moneys are available, a policy could be implemented. The ambulance associations and the various locals would then have an idea

where this provincial government is going relative to ambulance services. At the present time there is no indication.

The question of local autonomy is often raised in this policy determination: we're going to erode local autonomy by setting up some type of provincial, standard program or co-ordinated program from the provincial level. I believe that with good policy and some good understanding you can maintain that local involvement of people, that local involvement of volunteers that are presently in place. I do not support a program whereby we as a province would take over all ambulance care and run it with provincial civil servants. That is not the intent of the Bill, as I look at it. Eighty-twenty may mean funding, but it shouldn't mean that the provincial government take over all of those services. We could leave it with the municipalities and, as a province, co-ordinate the services in a better way.

Mr. Speaker, in my summary remarks and in requesting the Legislature to support my colleague's Bill in principle, first of all, the government should have one department co-ordinating the policies with regard to ambulance care and, secondly, the government should set out a plan that is clear not only to the government but to the Legislature and the ambulance associations across this province, so we know that we're trying to deal with the problem in the best way we can.

DR. CASSIN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to Bill 212, sponsored by the hon. Member for Clover Bar and addressed by his colleague from Little Bow.

I have to support the objectives and goals of this Bill to establish uniform and high standard ambulance services in this province. I also agree in principle with the point that the government has a responsibility through its various departments to establish standards and regulations for this industry as it has established standards, regulations, and certification for hospitals. I also appreciate that this is an ideal, an objective that we should all strive for. It may not be completely obtainable at this point in our history because of the sheer size of the province, our population density, and the cost of implementing such a system. I also agree with the principle of cofunding the service. I'm sure we could debate at length whether government should contribute 80 percent or some figure above or below the figure that has been suggested.

Mr. Speaker, I make these comments for a number of reasons. I don't believe that government should be involved in any way with the operation of the system, as suggested by the sponsor. The operation should be in the control of the local municipality or ambulance district who take some fiscal responsibility for the good management of the services and are directly responsible to those individuals they are serving. It would also be left to the district to impose a user fee to control the use of the services. I've worked long enough in the system to know that citizens do abuse the system, and at \$130 a trip or more in the city, it's a pretty expensive alternative to a taxi. Not only are we dealing with the monetary problem; we also have to deal with the abuses, taking a very essential piece of equipment and personnel out of the system when someone else may be in real need.

The major problem, however, is the cost and implementation of the system. Mr. Speaker, what this Bill is addressing or recommending is putting in place the vital arms or tentacles of an emergency health system in this province. In the cities of Calgary and Edmonton we already have in place world-class, tertiary hospital facilities capable

of handling a full range of emergency problems. Those hospitals are complemented by the best ambulance services that you will find anywhere in the world. They'll meet all the criteria and guidelines set out by the prehospital emergency care service published by the Minister of National Health and Welfare in 1985 from standpoints of personnel, equipment, and services. In the city of Calgary through the paramedic program at SAIT, developed from the efforts of people like Dr. Bill Donald and a good number of other volunteers back in the early '60s, we've turned out top-notch paramedic support people, not just for the city of Calgary but for the cities of Medicine Hat and Lethbridge and Red Deer. We should be proud of the accomplishments of this organization.

Our problem is not in the large urban cities, as suggested by the former speaker, but in rural Alberta. The everyday reality of the situation, however, is that even if we had unlimited funding at our disposal, the accidents and the major traumas that we've experienced in the last two to three years — it may be a derailment in the middle of nowhere, a gas well that has blown out in the rolling hills of the Rocky Mountains, an accident on a remote farm, or a heart attack in a remote area. We have to remember that once one stops breathing, we have only four minutes to act. Because of the vastness of this province and the kind of cost involved in putting in the ideal that is being projected here, there has been some difficulty, as I can appreciate, in the government coming to grips with this in the past.

The bottom line to any community or provincial emergency service, before we consider the sophisticated equipment and personnel, has to be an educational program. CPR and first aid in all isolated and rural communities should be a must and the first priority of this government, and this should be instituted through our educational facilities, certainly complemented by the voluntary organizations presently carrying out this work.

The second is a transportation system and communication to a medical resource centre or a tertiary hospital which can retrieve and care for the patient with the appropriate medical care and the best conditions possible under the circumstances. I'd like to stress that care is important. I can remember working in jurisdictions where we worked on the pick and run situation. It's not very comforting for an individual who has maybe had a heart attack or is bleeding when he's riding in the back of a hearse, which was the traditional way of dealing with this problem, and he knows the driver has a vested interest in his welfare, that he's worth a lot more to him dead than alive. It wasn't that long ago that that was the rule in the country, and it's still the rule in some parts of North America.

I think we need to stress care. The individuals manning ambulances should have the necessary qualifications and standards to deal at least with what we call the five Bs: if the individual has a breathing problem, they can deal with that; if they have a bleeding problem or a heart problem, they're able to recognize and deal with that as well; if they have a brain or spinal chord problem, they are able to deal with the transportation aspects of the injury; if they have a bladder, bowel, or internal problem, that can be recognized; and lastly, if they have broken bones, those problems can be recognized. This information can then be relayed to a physician or a tertiary health care centre where appropriate advice and support can be rendered to the individual in the field. Having met those requirements, ideally one would like to move to what we call the advanced cardiac life-support unit that most of us in the large cities have come

to take for granted and assume is the level of care that is provided to all Albertans. Let me assure you that it is not.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to compliment the Member for Clover Bar for moving this Bill. I recognize his dedication and patience and perseverance since this Bill was first tabled in 1974. I share his vision and I believe many of my associates do as well. I think it's interesting to note that of all the provinces in this country, British Columbia comes closest to meeting the ideal. I would suggest that perhaps that province being a maritime province has a bearing. If this system is to really work, one could review the model of operations used by the Coast Guard in providing emergency rescue service for a large area, not encumbered by municipalities or districts as we seem to be in a land situation. One could envision a command post, perhaps in Red Deer. This would include the most densely populated part of our province: Edmonton, Calgary, from British Columbia to Saskatchewan. One would be able to monitor, control, and direct the necessary ambulance services that this province should have. This would have to be in constant communication with the large hospitals and the other hospitals that could be identified for various levels of expertise to help and support such a program.

I believe that some of the ideals that have been brought forth by the Bill may not be that far. I think the problem that has been alluded to by the previous speaker is that the jurisdiction falls into various departments. One could perhaps look at some of these departments and look at the inventory of supplies we already have and whether we're utilizing those supplies most effectively.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to support and encourage the previous speaker. I admire his ideals, and I think it's time we as a province looked at some of these objectives and tried to fulfill the needs where we can.

Thank you.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I too would like to add my voice to what seems to be all-party support of this private member's Bill that is before us. Although some of my comments have already been stolen by the two previous very competent speakers, I'd like to add some others that haven't yet been added to the discussion.

I think it is a very urgent need that we come to grips with this legislation and with this need in our province, that it's not something we can continue to study and to wait around. As hon. members have already said, it has been under constant discussion and assessment and study. There is ample evidence from other provinces and jurisdictions on how we can proceed. It seems to me that the life of one Albertan that is still put at risk or in danger the moment they have had an accident and are unable to have access to first-quality ambulance care in this province is one Albertan too many.

I might add that we are, as I understand it, the only province in Canada that does not have such standards, such provision for ambulance service in an Act of the Legislature. That seems to me to be a great embarrassment. Why does Alberta have to be the last one to ban extra billing or to have seat belt legislation or, in this case, to bring into one comprehensive Act competent, standardized ambulance care? I'd like to be proud of the province, particularly in the area of its social record, and it's embarrassing to me that we stand alone among the provinces of Canada without such an Act.

It's of concern to many Albertans. When I introduced Bill 224, I was flooded with calls from the media and with

letters and calls from private individuals, all very concerned about these gaping holes and omissions in public policy in this area. I've learned from that that many Albertans are very concerned, but particularly concerned, as members have already said, are people in the health care field itself. That is no accident, because ambulance care and the care of any person in Alberta who has had an accident or mishap is a person who in that sense has entered the health care system. As soon as the person has been touched by anybody who is coming to their assistance, they are in a sense in a state of prehospital care.

Though we have devoted enormous energies and resources to coming in the door of the hospital and how you're treated once you're in that door and we're beginning to see that there are some cost benefits and advantages to posthospital care or home care after hospital visits, it seems to me at the same time there is a basic concept in this discussion which we all have to get straight, which is that this is prehospital care. This is fundamental in terms of the linkages, which hon. members have already alluded to, that in a sense the paramedical training of that person who begins to touch the person who's had an accident can have great consequences for how the orthopedic surgeon later has to deal with them if they're not properly transported from a spinal cord injury and so on.

The linkages are throughout the health care system, so to me this really is a health care issue. Furthermore, as others in the health care field have said, if we do not pay better attention to this prehospital phase of care, the costs will be much greater once they're in hospital. So it is in effect very cost-effective and a great cost benefit to the whole health care system to have adequate and high standards of ambulance and prehospital services. For that matter, it seems to me it should be brought together under one department, the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care.

Furthermore, if this is a foreign concept that people just don't buy, I think the discussion ends there. Sure, it can be a matter of private or volunteer help. Sure, it can be a matter of municipalities if you think that prehospital care is not part of the health care system. But I am convinced, as many in the health care system and many throughout the province are convinced, that it is part of the entire embracive network of the linkages in the important health care delivery that we want to provide in this province.

As has been said, it is, I think, primarily an issue for people in rural and remote Alberta. The problem of standards and adequate funding in the cities is really not a problem, although there still are some who are concerned about response times of ambulances within the cities. Certainly the current negotiations with the ambulance workers in the Edmonton Ambulance Authority, feeling that their efforts are not being adequately remunerated, are concerns in the cities. But it is alarming to me, as I have come to learn just this morning, that we have unaccredited hospitals in rural Alberta, hospitals that are not accredited by the Canadian Council of Hospital Accreditation. So we have unaccredited ambulance services throughout rural Alberta. That to me is alarming and as responsible legislators we need to put it to an end.

It's all right if people realize they're going to a hospital but that it has its limitations, that they cannot have particular treatments or therapies and diagnoses made in this particular hospital. When you look at that big H on the road, you might be going to a hospital, but it is severely limited perhaps in its ability in what it can do. Maybe people in rural Alberta should be made more aware — maybe this

is the education that we're talking about — of what the limitations are of that particular unaccredited hospital.

Similarly, if we're going to be picked up by an ambulance service, let's be very careful about how unaccredited the ambulance service is, and maybe we should find a better term for it. Maybe we should call it a taxi. It seems to me that's often what we have out there, taxis that can do very little more than transport a person from point A to point B. Certainly there are standards that the association of ambulance operators has put forward. They are minimal, and there is no policing or enforcing of those standards. So if it's a hearse, as has already been suggested or has been the history, a hearse that picks up somebody and — talk about a conflict of interest — takes them either to the morgue or the hospital, if that's what an ambulance is, maybe we could also look at it as a taxi. If it is, then let's not call it an ambulance. Let's not mislead our people into thinking that it is an ambulance that can be better equipped and better accredited according to provincial standards.

It's not just a matter of people in rural Alberta: it's a matter of people who are travelling Albertans. As we may all be travelling around this province on business or on vacation, we have come to expect certain standards of care and transport in our ambulance services in the cities. Would we tolerate that there would not be the level in the cities that we would tolerate in the rural districts if we are travelling in those remote districts? And if we happen to have a mishap or an accident, are we aware of how the ambulance service would not be assured to be of top-quality care for us as travelling Albertans?

Fourthly, it seems that there's a matter which I still need some clarification on, but we've heard over and over that it is a municipal matter, as hospitals once used to be a municipal matter, a matter of churches or the volunteer sector. Why is it that since 1969 the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association itself has been saying, "We don't want it; we don't want to have to regulate; we don't want to have to operate; we don't want to have to do the funding all ourselves" and it has been asking for better standards and a better way of funding this with the provincial government? In its report earlier this year, it says the Municipal Government Act

does not delegate responsibility: rather, it is permissive legislation to regulate. Having this potential authority and consequential responsibilities is quite distinct from the responsibility to ensure a service exists as may be inferred by the comment

of the then Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. That sense of assurance that the standards will be kept, that we are committed to them, and that we will fund them no matter what they would cost throughout this province is what we're being asked in this Bill and what we as the Official Opposition caucus entirely support.

We certainly support Bill 212 in principle insofar as it raises, as has been said, the vision and some of the methodology of how to achieve that vision of adequate ambulance service throughout the province. It is good, but it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that it can be made much better in an Act than it is currently presented here. One thing that it does not require is that it does seem to me that ambulances may still in a sense opt out of this Act. There is nothing that requires the registering or licensing of ambulances under this Act. It's nice to call them ambulances. It's nice to try to set up some regulations under the Lieutenant Governor in Council. It's nice to sort of try to

give them some public dollars. But it seems to me that accountability and universality would say that if they're going to be receiving these benefits and these definitions, they should all either be in or out. They should be registered under the Act, and they shouldn't be allowed to be an ambulance in this province if they are not so licensed and so registered. But this Act does not make that clear. So it would seem to me that they may just be able to carry on business as usual and not abide by greater strictures, as we have certainly in other Acts throughout our statutes.

Furthermore, I agree with the hon. Member for Calgary North West that the funding formula is variable. What I've heard from municipalities is that it needs to be made more specific. What is the amount set aside for ambulance service per se? That needs to be arrived at in very cogent and very studied terms in terms of what dollar amount is set aside, whether it's 80/20 or maybe 100 in some municipal cases, maybe less in others, but whatever is arrived at, that is the amount that's earmarked for that municipality. As it is currently, it appears that it comes into some global budget. They have to try to divide it up between firemen, police, ambulance, and a whole host of other priorities, and some get short shrift and they'd better not.

Furthermore, in this Bill there is nothing that says that if there is an ambulance that operates by high standards in the province, if they for some reason were to have violated some aspect of the Act or were found to be not up to standards, their licence would then be revoked or their licence would be refused if they couldn't meet it. It seems to me it would be incumbent, if we were to have such a piece of legislation, that if it were not measured up to, then the punishment would be enacted. A person's driver's licence would be revoked if they didn't meet the regulations and the laws of the land; so an ambulance licence could also and should also be revoked in cases where there is gross injustice in meeting the standards.

Furthermore, there's nothing in the regulations that talks about the fact that ambulances should be keeping records and should be keeping a sense of response times and a whole host of paperwork that would be necessary to track what's going on with a particular ambulance service in a particular region of the province. That should be one of the regulations, as well as the level of training. It would seem to me that St. John Ambulance and CPR and others, as we have such high training for paramedics in the province — that some of these higher standards should be also spelt out more clearly in the regulations as to what those standards need to be provincewide.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is unbelievable to me, as a first-time MLA — and I appreciate the Member for Clover Bar, who introduced it, and the leader of the party, who spoke to it in terms of the history and the debate of this in the House. But it's unbelievable to me that we have still left this in limbo in this province. There are groups throughout the province, not only within this Chamber, that have made representations: the Alberta Hospital Association; the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta; the ambulance operators themselves; the Paramedic Association; the Alberta Urban Municipalities, as I mentioned; various other municipal governments and private citizens. A whole host of Albertans have been crying for this for a long time, and here we somehow sit unresponsive.

In the prayer that opened the session today, we were called to be responsive and wise in our legislation. This to me is a matter of first responsiveness, and I cannot understand how and why it's been left to sit in limbo for so

long and that we now stand alone among provinces for not having such legislation.

The hon. Member for Calgary North West mentioned British Columbia. The statistics I have are that British Columbia does set aside \$24 million in annual provincial government expenditure for provincially assisted ambulance service. The New Democratic Party and our caucus has costed it out, and we would think that to bring it up to standard we would like to see in this province would cost about \$18 million annually. That to me does not seem like a lot of money when we can build golf courses for much more than that.

People are at risk, Mr. Speaker, people are in danger, and we have recently, this year alone, seen how Albertans have fallen victim to accidents where they have been put at a danger or risk where they weren't aware of it at the time. It seems to me that we need more preventive care, we need more assurance that there are standards out there which our citizens would have in terms of their care throughout this province.

We have got a glimmer of hope from that pragmatist, the new Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. Last week he said that, yes, we are looking at this, which is not new, but that he will report on some new statements on the matter sometime next spring. And so, Mr. Speaker, as it is not a matter for further assessment or study but rather for leadership, for decisive action, for responsible legislation, we are counting on that new, pragmatic Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care to set aside whatever the reasons have been for delay in this matter and by next spring at the latest to have brought out a new policy that would incorporate much of what has been said this afternoon and bring it into an Act that we can be proud of in this province. If he does not, Mr. Speaker, then we should retract the prayer we uttered today, and I would offer that all hell would break loose.

Thank you.

MR. ADY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to add a few brief remarks to this debate on Bill 212, the Ambulance Service Act, sponsored by the Member for Clover Bar and brought forward by the Member for Little Bow. As I rise to speak to this following the glowing speeches in favour of this Bill, I feel a little bit like the parents that went to the army base to see their son in training and looked down and said: "Look at that. All of those soldiers are out of step but my Johnny." Because here I come in opposition, to some extent at any rate.

I have some reservations not with the principles of the Bill but rather with the implications of it. My concerns are twofold: first of all, relating to municipal autonomy and, second, to the fiscal obligations and implications that this Bill proposes. Mr. Speaker, up to now the responsibility for ambulance service in Alberta has been in the hands of Alberta's municipalities. This is where the service originated and has evolved from. Each municipality in the province has had an opportunity to develop and tailor their ambulance services according to their specific local needs. I think that this has worked well, not that it perhaps shouldn't be improved. What concerns me about this Bill is that it is an intrusion on municipal autonomy. It would have us tell the municipalities what they can and cannot do with respect to ambulance service. Now, we may say that that's not true, but in my experience in business I've always found that cash is king. So if the provincial government is funding it, the provincial government is going to decide how it's

going to be run. The standards and requirements that the Bill might have us impose may not be appropriate to the local city's or town's situation.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

There is also the matter of the implications that this may have down the road on municipal budgets. The municipalities may welcome the provincial government and their 80 percent funding with open arms in 1986, but what about in five years? Suppose the cost of ambulance service sky-rockets as a result of this Bill, and I have reason to believe that it likely would. This effectively obligates the municipality to a 20 percent share of whatever those costs might be. For a small town in my constituency that burden might well prove unbearable. Sure, we might have a Cadillac service, but at what cost and at what price to the municipalities and to the province?

The provincial government already makes a significant contribution towards support of ambulance service in Alberta. We spend over \$17 million each year on interhospital and air-ambulance service and the training of emergency medical technicians. If additional funding is required, I support a more flexible approach than is proposed in this Bill, a flexibility which allows the municipality to retain its autonomy and match the service to meet their specific, individual needs.

Mr. Speaker, my second concern relates to what I refer to as competing priorities. Since 1982 policy- and decision-makers at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels have had to come to grips with a shrinking revenue base. Across North America and around the globe governments have been faced with difficult choices in terms of the level of service they are fiscally able to provide to their citizenry. Big-budget items like education, social services, and health are all competing against each other for priority and funds. As legislators we are put into an unenviable position of having to make choices, aware of the fact that what we give to one area we may be taking away from another. Here today we are faced with this exact situation. I doubt there's a member in this Assembly who would not want to improve ambulance service in the province. However, the fact remains that what we give in ambulance funding, we might be taking away from geriatric care, pediatric care, or home care. Unfortunately, there are no formulas, no objective measures to make this choice easier.

Health care in this province already takes up a quarter of our provincial budget, and per capita we spend annually over \$1,100 on each Albertan in health services. What is proposed in Bill 212 would have significant financial and expenditure implications for the provincial budget and for health care's portion of that budget. Sure, we could provide provincial funding to the municipalities in Alberta at the level of 80 percent, but I ask you, Mr. Speaker, at what cost? Ten million dollars? Twenty-five million dollars? One hundred million dollars?

I think that as members of the Legislature it would be irresponsible to support Bill 212 until there is some idea of what the real bill and cost would be. As I listened to the previous speakers, I heard regulations and rules that could come into play that I'm sure were worth \$100 million, and we already spend \$17 million, so we're at \$117 million and we haven't even got it past the Legislature. I'm sure that there would be more things coming on, the thing would grow, and we would have created a monster. I believe that this Bill would need to be revamped and some controls put

in place that would allow it to evolve through the local municipalities, with perhaps some help in funding to help them assimilate it according to their particular needs.

The sponsor of Bill 212 is asking the government to hand the municipalities a blank cheque. We're telling them that we'll fund 80 percent of whatever they come up with. I wonder if that would mean that they would come up with a helicopter at each hospital, prepared to move at a minute's notice with three or four attendants in place, well trained at government expense? Can we really afford that in today's economy? I really can't subscribe to that type of thinking.

Mr. Speaker, as a novice member of this Assembly. I want to leave future generations of Alberta a legacy, not of debt but rather of sound judgment and responsible fiscal leadership. On that basis and having noted my concern as it relates to municipal autonomy, I would urge all members to not support this Bill in its present form.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Cypress-Redcliff [interjection] I gather Edmonton Gold Bar was recognized by my predecessor.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be very brief and give him time. I rise to speak in support of this Bill, and I thank the Member for Little Bow for presenting it to us on behalf of his colleague from Clover Bar.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Bill provides for us a sensible, practical, achievable approach. Other speakers before have talked about the very vastness of the province, and that is the reason we have to address this problem immediately. To be sure, there have been a number of studies and representations from professional and community groups on the matter over a number of years, and they've provided a great deal of background information as to how and why it should operate.

I've spoken before on the matter in the House, Mr. Speaker, made a number of statements, and I've always spoken about the need for a rational health care system. Others have talked about the complexity and the amazing new and complicated techniques we have available in our province that we are so proud of and the wonderful professionals with specialized skills that are available to us. To be sure, they're available in single spots and single centres and mainly in urban centres, which is a practical way. But to me a provincial ambulance system is an indigenous component of any rational health care service and would be the absolute essential to make it cost-effective. Without it I don't believe it can be that. Neither can it offer the kind of service Albertans want and need, nor can it be cost-effective within itself in the economic sense.

Mr. Speaker, we must go as far as we can to ensure that all citizens have reasonable access to these services that we've developed and that we have a well-organized system with uniform standards in place to move people, whether on an elective basis or an emergency basis, so that they can move in comfort and safety and with speed from any location to the optimum care centre, wherever it is in the province. I submit that there are economies in such a plan for a rational service. There are economies in dollars: there are certainly economies in human — we've all seen evidence of failures and of major successes where ambulance service has been available to move people.

I like, too, the notion of municipal involvement. While we have a provincial health care system — and this is a provincial responsibility — I think the municipalities have

every reason to be involved in decision-making and financing.

Albertans, regardless of where they live, should expect our health care system to be comprehensive, Mr. Speaker. I believe, too, that this could be a blend of the present existing public and private services, that they need not be removed or phased out but simply made to come up to the proper standards through training, improvement in vehicles, and new techniques.

Mr. Speaker, I will support this Bill. I'm sure members of my caucus will. I believe it's important now for all of us to support this in order to put a phased program in place to produce this essential component of health care.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, as I rise to participate in the debate of Bill 212, the Ambulance Service Act, I would like to say initially in the short time that's available that Cypress-Redcliff is served by at least three volunteer fire departments — I underline volunteer — who drive the ambulances as part of their duty to the community. It's a large area. It's served partly by the paramedics operating out of the Medicine Hat hospital. The fire departments in Bow Island, Foremost, and Taber also operate ambulances.

It may not be the same ambulance as rolls down the streets of the city of Edmonton or the city of Calgary or any city, but it's something that the people are proud of. For anybody to say that that kind of service that those people go out and do is just a bare taxi service is downgrading the people of my constituency, and I take exception to it.

Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, this evening it is proposed to deal with government Bills and orders on second reading, continuing the debate on Bill 19, the Women's Secretariat Act, which is a debate that has already commenced, and thereafter proceeding, if there is time, with Bills 16, 32, 37, 2, and 7.

[The House recessed at 5:28 p.m. and resumed at 8 p.m.]

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

Bill 19 **Alberta Advisory Council** **on Women's Issues Act**

[Debate adjourned September 3: Ms Barrett speaking]

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to continue comments I began yesterday on second reading of Bill 19, the council on women's issues, as it is called. At the conclusion

yesterday I pondered aloud just what is understood by the meaning of the words "women's issues" and questioned whether or not things like child rearing were women's issues. I noted at that time that some backbenchers snickered and laughed and made some interesting little jokes, amongst them the members for Grande Prairie and Bow Valley. I wonder if any of them have the courage to stand up and say which one it was who in response to my question that men also take part in creating children said, "How would I know?" I wonder if the members, the backbenchers, the Tories in this instance have the courage to do that.

DR. ELLIOTT: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. Reference was made to the Member for Grande Prairie, and I take objection to that, because I was not involved in what the speaker is referring to.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, the point of order is not particularly well taken, in that I was looking directly at the three members over in that corner who were laughing at those comments. [interjections] That's right. The real point is this: maybe the members who come here and think they're going to support a little charade that they call Bill 19, which is little more than a facade, ought to have the courage to admit it when they laugh at jokes that belong in the gutter. Maybe those very members ought to take some lessons in what it is to be a woman in this society and live ...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, perhaps the comment is a touch extreme. The Chair heard no reference to anything that really was of the gutter joke kind of thing. Perhaps the hon. member could return to the Bill. There is about 20 minutes' speaking time left.

MS BARRETT: I understand, Mr. Speaker. My point, by the way, was that when we considered the matter of "women's issues," an issue which I don't recognize to be legitimate in that phrase, there were comments made. They are noted in the Blues as interjections. All I'm saying is this: if government backbenchers feel so strongly about what they consider to be humour, I ask them to at a certain point stand up and identify themselves.

On that note, I will return to the essence of the Bill which, by the way, I would like to point out I believe has very little in the way of principles to be defended. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to illustrate that point briefly by just quoting from what has become a poem. It will take about a minute. It certainly underlines the extent to which it is a man's world, the extent to which it is important that we recognize the validity of a council on the status of women comprised exclusively of women.

Dear Sirs • man to man • manpower • craftsman
working men • the thinking man • the man in the street
fellow countrymen • the history of mankind
one-man show • man in his wisdom • statesman
forefathers • masterful • masterpiece • old masters
... sons of free men • faith of our fathers • god the
father

... yours fraternally • amen • words fail me

Mr. Speaker, the point is that in a government that is so dominated by men at the level of management, at the level of deputy ministers, and so weakly represented by women at those levels, surely this government in sponsoring this Bill, when there was ample time to rewrite it, could have had the courage to at least specify that this particular

council could be comprised of women exclusively. No such courage is indicated; hence I said "chickens" yesterday.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out, there are about 1.15 million women of various ages in the province. Virtually any and all of them could be nominated or could have themselves nominated to this council. I had recommended a few weeks ago in this Assembly that what we do is take a systematic approach and let organizations which are formed for the express purpose of promoting equality for women nominate members for this council. It would give the women's associations a real chance, a fighting chance, at having really good representation and at having people nominated for the express purpose of promoting equality for women in Alberta. But Mr. Minister chickened out on this one too. No, it's easier, I suppose, to appoint Tory hacks and friends if you bypass the legitimate, valid associations which exist in this province for the express purpose of educating and proselytizing for equality for women and all that that means.

Mr. Speaker, there's another problem with this Bill, and it again reflects on the very essence of the Bill. It's required that the council report through the minister. I note in Bill 20, the one which establishes the Women's Secretariat, the successor body to the Women's Bureau, that that organization will be allowed to deal directly with government ministers and government departments. If that's the case, why can't the women and the committee — presumably it will be comprised of women, unless you chicken out on that too — communicate directly with the government? In this set of circumstances they actually would never come to feel a conflict of interest in so doing. Their jobs would never be on the line. Their integrity would not be jeopardized. Why not do something like that?

If we're going to all the trouble of asking the Queen's Printer to write up two pages of ink on white paper and asking for time for this Assembly to consider such an Act, then why not give it some guts? Why not give it some strength? Why not give it a mandate? It's really disappointing, Mr. Speaker. There has been ample opportunity in this House under consideration of Bill 208, a Council on the Status of Women Act, which I sponsored, to take the best from that. I noted during that debate that the only criticism was, "Gee, it would allow some bureaucrats sitting in as ex officio members." So I talked privately to the minister afterward, because I know what it's like. You've got to do these things. You talk privately, and you see where your weaknesses might or might not exist. At least you do if you're an opposition member and you want to serve your constituency in the best way you can. I figured, okay, if that's his concern, maybe that's pretty valid. I've heard it from other quarters. Some provinces don't agree, but that's all right, this is Alberta after all.

Why couldn't all the other recommendations as principles — which is why they were in that Bill, Mr. Speaker, and not left to the device of regulation to be established behind closed doors — have been included in this Bill? We've had a couple of months and it didn't happen. I'd like to point out that I'm shocked to recognize that this Bill in front of us is actually worse than the one that the minister who previously held the portfolio responsible for the Women's Secretariat introduced just a few days before the 1986 election. It then was known as Bill 7. I would say that one of the worst weaknesses that has appeared is that Bill 7 at least specified that the council was able to "increase the awareness of the public relating to women's issues" — faulty language, I'm sure — "needs, and concerns." This

Act only allows the council to provide information. We're not even talking about a body which is formally sanctioned to go out and promote awareness, to promote understanding or, to use the catch phrase invented by a certain Tory, tolerance and understanding. Why not, Mr. Speaker? Why introduce a Bill like this if it isn't going to mean anything? I don't get it. I think a lot of women in Alberta don't understand.

Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned yesterday in reference to both Bills 19 and 20 his new buzzword, and it was "opportunities." It was opportunities for full and equal participation as opposed to promoting the status of women, promoting equality for women. There is a big difference in terms of opportunities. How does the government understand opportunities? I just found out today from the minister that he thinks there are so many problems with pay-equity legislation around the world that, jeez, he's not interested at all. I know; I'm going to get back to the Bill, believe me. I know how to relate these things to it.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm concerned about the word that was used.

MS BARRETT: Which one?

MR. SPEAKER: [Inaudible] examine the Blues.

MS BARRETT: I would like to know whether access to poverty is considered an opportunity, whether the government believes that it's just a women's issue that the majority of those who live or subsist on social allowance with dependants have had opportunities that we ourselves as legislators could create to get out of those syndromes. I'd like to know if the government is of the view that there is no solution to the wage gap and if there is no positive measure that this government can take to solve those problems. Is it all a matter of opportunity? How about the fact that the growth occupations for women are in the lowest paid sectors — the service sectors — and particularly jobs like bookkeeping, waiting tables, clerical, and telling. Is the minister or the government going to tell me that opportunities exist there? You see, Mr. Speaker, the point is this: if we don't actually take a courageous path, an avenue directed toward action in which women, the voice of authority, speaking from experience, help determine that course of action, then what's left in that famous buzzword "opportunities?"

This Bill doesn't even allow the council to publish as it sees fit. It is virtually stripped of all potential strength and good it could have had with the political will of a government prepared to live with the difficulties that go with women finally working toward attaining some equity, some say in the direction of society which directly affects their lives. But it is abundantly clear to me that the Tories at least have no such political will. I'm afraid I've heard other nonofficial opposition members even using the phrase "women's issues." As I've pointed out, I don't think there is such a thing. These are social issues; these are public issues. To call a council, after years of being promised one, which followed years of being told we didn't need one, a council on women's issues betrays in the final instance the shallow commitment this government has to promoting equality for women, Mr. Speaker.

Second reading of a Bill is meant to talk about the principles of a Bill. Aside from the fact that we have a charade created by this Bill, there are no principles in this Bill. It doesn't deserve second reading.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak to this Bill. I, too, am concerned about the title of the Bill, Advisory Council on Women's Issues. I am reminded of Golda Meir's remark when her generals suggested to her a curfew for women because they went out at night and got themselves raped. She responded to her generals, "It is not my women who are doing the raping." Likewise, to focus on women's issues is to ignore and to deny society's part in the denial of women's full participation in society, in all spheres of activity in that society, and to deny the impact of that denial on all people in that society, because when women are denied full rights within society, all people suffer. Children suffer when their mothers are beaten. Families suffer when women's wages are below the poverty line.

It is to be remembered that children have both fathers and mothers, and we need to recognize that accessibility to quality day care should be of concern to parents of both sexes. Violence against women and children should be of concern to men as well as women, for men are the fathers, brothers, lovers, husbands, and sons of women, and we have to remember that they, too, are affected when women are hurt.

I think we have to recognize that in the past, as in the present, women have been the backbone of general social issues such as civil rights movements and peace issues. Therefore, I suggest that the mandate of this council be to promote the full and equal participation in the economic, political, and social life of this province, because such participation will benefit every member of this society.

We need a strong advisory council empowered to increase awareness and to educate the public and the government as to how women are denied access to full participation. We need a strong council that will advise the government as to how to facilitate changes required to make women able to fully participate in society. We need a council composed of women who can articulate women's experiences from the reality of women's lives. This cannot be achieved by looking at women's lives from the outside. Advances in women's positions in society have come through women's efforts to articulate women's needs and experiences. Women struggled for women's right to vote, for women's right to be recognized as persons, for shelters and treatment programs for assaulted women. Imposed interpretations, as Freud's notion of incest, and treatment programs based on such notions do not work and in fact may further victimize the victims.

Therefore, this council must be composed of women, knowledgeable women that represent and can speak to women's experiences in the labour force, as native women, as immigrant women, as rural and urban professional or economically disadvantaged women, as lesbian women. Only women can fully articulate women's fears and experiences of violence; that is, what it means to be too frightened to go out alone at night or to be at home alone at night, what it means to be too frightened to walk in the park in the evening, what it means to know that it is unsafe to sit on a riverbank to watch the river, to paint, or to write poetry. This kind of fear changes the fabric of women's lives, and women know that fear in a way men cannot. Only women know how it is and why it is that women are trapped in violent, life-threatening, and soul-destroying relationships with men they love.

Women know what it is to live in poverty as a single parent responsible for raising children on wages that are systematically lower than the wages paid to men or to raise children on welfare. These women know why adequate

funding for shelters, treatment programs, and social assistance allowance are necessary for family support systems. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that for too long — and I think about it every time we hear about the impossibility of pay equity — women have been sacrificed for the greater good of society. What does that mean when we realize that 51 percent of society are women?

The council must be empowered to investigate, research, question, recommend, advise, and draft legislation that will bring about change that will empower women in this province so they can be full and equal partners in this society. I suggest that the mandate of this Act should not expire until such equal and full participation has been achieved for all women.

Thank you.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Bill 19 I have many concerns. Some of them have already been articulated by my colleagues from Edmonton Highlands and Edmonton Avonmore, but I think some of the provisions of an effective women's council concerned with the status of women would do some of the things that are mentioned in Bill 19.

One of the questions was elements of research that could be done on issues that impact on the status of women, and certainly there are many in our society, Mr. Speaker. If we take a look at the women in my constituency and around our province, in terms of their employment situation many of them are only able to get jobs that pay the lowest of wages. The whole question of the minimum wage and wages that are related and tied to that: as we've already mentioned in this Assembly many times, this government has really disgraced the people of Alberta by refusing to raise the minimum wage, and this is impacting on the questions of the status of women in our province. I think this would be an area where such a council could look at encouraging some kind of research into the impact of these kinds of job ghettos on women in Alberta and in particular immigrant women in this province.

Another issue that really needs some research and that I think such a council could undertake, hopefully in a restructured manner, is the whole question of part-time workers. There's a whole trend in our society now to get away from full-time jobs to part-time jobs, especially part-time jobs for women. What this means is that part-time workers, especially as the majority of them constitute women, end up with no pensions, no benefits of any kind. If you look at the statistics even now, the people who constitute the majority of the poor in our society are elderly women who had husbands who have died or left them and who have had no pension benefits and are very nearly in a destitute situation.

Another question, of course, constitutes the role of homemakers, Mr. Speaker. That's a very important group of women in this society. Such a women's council should be looking at research into the role of homemakers in our society and how they can properly be integrated in a full and equal manner with other people in our society. As I mentioned, there is the question of homemakers who for one reason or another are in a very desperate economic situation when they get older. The other question in terms of homemakers, besides the question of pensions, is how the whole tax system could perhaps be restructured to provide some kind of recognition for the important work that homemakers do in terms of supporting family members, including their spouse and the children. Right now the tax system

gives, as I suspect all men in this Assembly are certainly aware, a \$3,600 a year tax deduction, and there's no provision whatsoever that the benefit of that should go to the women. That's a benefit that goes to the man for having a spouse. It seems to me that that really is a whole area that needs to be looked at, the whole system of tax benefits that are direct benefits to men and not to women.

Mr. Speaker, I think there are a couple of other things in terms of Bill 19 that we need to say; that is, that this kind of council, hopefully in a restructured manner along the lines that my colleagues have mentioned, is important not only for the women of this province, which it most certainly is, but for the men of this province. Until women enjoy true social, political, and economic equality with the rest of us in society, we will all be degraded and dehumanized to a certain extent. It is in the interest of all of us, men and women, to ensure that all of us have an opportunity to enjoy equality within our society and get proper compensation for our legitimate contributions, whether they be in the home, the labour market, or whatever capacity they might be.

In terms of Bill 19 more specifically, I noticed that in section 6 there is a reference to the idea of an annual report, which of course is always a good idea. I'm wondering if the minister might give some consideration to having in there a report card to say how much progress has been made, how many fewer women at age 60 in retirement are in a less than poverty-line existence, how many more women with single-parent families are in a situation that is less than a poverty situation, how many part-time workers without benefits there are compared to what has been the case in the past; in other words, Mr. Speaker, some concrete assessment of whether or not we're making any progress in terms of adjusting the status of women in Alberta. I think that should be compared not only to the situation in Alberta for the past number of years but to other jurisdictions in Canada and perhaps to other countries in the world.

The second thing I would suggest is in terms of section 7, which provides for an expiry of this council on December 31, 1996, unless it is continued by order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. My only question there is: is it the view of the minister that we will reach nirvana in 10 years?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I and other members of the Assembly, I'm sure, are looking forward to the Minister of Culture's closing remarks on Bill 19, but I felt that I should take the opportunity to give some of the views on this very important subject that I have developed as a representative since 1979. As I heard the remarks tonight, I found that the Member for Edmonton Avonmore spoke very eloquently about concerns that all members and all citizens have. I was most disappointed in the remarks and the approach and the comments given tonight and last night — I have the Blues from last night — by the Member for Edmonton Highlands. The only ones who can really make that judgment, or the judgment of any of us in this House, are the people we represent. Obviously, it will be their decision and not mine as to whether or not she's fulfilling the role that they expect of her or my constituents expect of me. But I was most disappointed.

There is a very strong relationship between the two Bills, Bill 19 tonight and Bill 20. The title may very well be important to the Member for Edmonton Highlands, if titles are important. To some people seating arrangements in debates are very important. To some people skills, levels

of education, backgrounds are very important. To me and to the people I represent — and I include all men and all women and all of the children — it is the quality they bring, the judgments they present, and the decisions they make, and not the titles.

Mr. Speaker, I particularly wish to compliment the Premier of this province, who assigned the Member for Calgary Currie this very special responsibility in his role as Minister of Culture and minister responsible for the status of women, following the excellent work done by the Member for Lethbridge East in his former capacity. Prior to that we received many submissions from individual women, women's organizations, and other Albertans that the government's position of having a minister responsible for these concerns, these issues, appointed every year was not the best way to manage, even though each minister and his or her officials, all of cabinet, all of caucus, and all of the Assembly did their very best. The organizations and individuals felt that one minister should be named. In the short time since May 26 I believe that the Member for Calgary Currie has taken on this role very, very effectively. He has made himself available to organizations and individuals throughout this province, and it's his responsibility under this Bill and under Bill 20 to direct, to provide advice, and to receive recommendations, and to take those issues to the cabinet and to this Assembly.

The advisory council has a very special role, and I think it's being given very short shrift by the one or two members in the New Democratic Party who've spoken because they have a different kind of advisory council or council in mind. But I have the greatest confidence that whoever is selected to represent the people of Alberta on this council will do their very best to follow the directions provided in the legislation and from the minister and in listening to and responding to the concerns that are brought to their attention by the people of Alberta.

There is no doubt whatsoever that there are serious problems affecting every one of us. There are problems that are particular to the biological, physiological, and emotional differences between men and women. Let's say that. There are differences. There are societal pressures that are enormous, and it can be argued that they are much more difficult for women. I think that is debatable. As more and more women enter the work force — and in Alberta the highest proportion of women who are able to work enter that work force — stresses are showing. There are possibly problems of heart attacks now occurring at earlier ages. That may change what we have known for some time as a difference in our life expectancies. There are terrible societal pressures on women. There are family pressures on women, and always will be. Notwithstanding the support of the male spouse and the children in the family, there are very special attachments to the demands placed on the mother of a family, and I hope that everyone understands that it takes all of us to work together in a family.

There is a waste of a human resource in this province and elsewhere in our country and in society when we don't have the opportunity available to everybody to grow, to develop, to fulfill their greatest expectations. There is a terrible waste of human resource and brain power. There is violence, as the Member for Edmonton Avonmore gave us clearly to understand tonight, violence toward women, violence toward children, problems because of alcoholism, problems because of abuse, problems because of neglect, problems because of economic deprivation, pornography. I

tried recently, Mr. Speaker, to attend a meeting on pornography, and I was turned away because I was a man. Perhaps the group that organized that meeting felt it was important for the women in the room to see the films or to understand and discuss with each other how to react without my presence. But I was quite shaken that I wasn't appreciated at that meeting, because I did want to understand more about why pornography is actually violence against all of us and not just women.

There is loneliness. Women are left alone by their husbands leaving or by becoming widows or by choosing to be alone all their lives. There are economic problems because of the impact of our society and the market approach that we have taken — and which I support — and the job opportunities that have for years been denied or limited to women.

For many years this government has taken a leading role in ensuring that women in the public service have opportunities, Mr. Speaker. This government has taken a leading role in establishing programs of affirmative action for female employees, which were opposed by the then Official Opposition. In terms of family support, social service programs are the highest in Canada per dollar, per family, per service. In terms of medical programs for all Albertans, but particularly under aids to daily living, for example, for women with breast cancer and the loss of a breast or two breasts, the protection, the availability of services in this province is now greater than in any other in Canada. In terms of widows' and widowers' programs, again this province has led even the federal government until recently. In terms of employment opportunities and maternity benefits ...

Much can be done, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think it can be done by force. It can't be done by legislating that it shall be this way. It can't be done by determining that these are the people who will represent all the women of Alberta because there are some groups that speak for some women in Alberta. Great strides have been taken by providing opportunities in jobs, in senior management, and in the levels that are about to be recruited for managers. In Alberta something like 40 percent of the next level in the public service is occupied by women candidates.

I don't know what women want, and I'm not pretending to speak for women. But the women whom I represent always say these things to me: "I don't want to be placed on a pedestal by you. I don't want to be given a unique opportunity by you. I don't want to ask a man permission, whether that man is my father, my husband, or my brother. I just want a fair chance. I just want understanding. I just want the right to do what I choose to do with my abilities, skills, and goals. If that means staying at home for a while because I as a woman choose to do so or because I and my husband choose to do so, that is my right to decide to do that."

Speaking of principles, Mr. Speaker, tonight I heard the Member for Edmonton Highlands saying that this council didn't have the right to produce reports, couldn't make public recommendations. She must be reading a different Bill. Clearly, the council's role is to help government decide what the key issues are and to help prioritize those. There are only so many dollars and so many people available to do these things. Here is an opportunity for a council meeting together, having input, travelling throughout the province, receiving advice, to say to government, through the minister: these are the items of importance, these are the issues that need to be addressed, these are the areas where we think

government can take action now, these are items that need more study, these are items that will need some time, and these are items that may involve a whole societal change and education. That's what I see as the role of the council: prioritizing.

I see the council making recommendations to the minister on a meeting basis or on an annual report basis, perhaps meeting with the cabinet or a caucus committee from time to time, meeting with members of the Assembly. It's not denied to them at all in this legislation. I see the council carrying out activities of providing information. Most of us, whether we are at home or in business, are not sure what's going on except for what we read or hear in the media. Here's an opportunity for a council of effective people working together — perhaps they should all be women; I'm not going to say whether that's right or wrong — providing a basic background paper on an issue of importance to all Albertans, giving the people of Alberta the opportunity to say: "Isn't that interesting? Here's what I thought, but here are the facts. Here's what's happening in Alberta, Quebec, the United States, or New Zealand." We can hone in and present our concerns to this council.

The council can also do other things considered appropriate by the minister. Surely to goodness this minister, who is not only responsible for Culture but has responsibility for Bill 19 and Bill 20, needs to be able to direct the council from time to time: "I'd like you to hone in on this area. I need your advice on this particular matter which has now come to the fore because of societal change X or pressures from this situation. I need to direct you to do this now, travel there, listen to this group, and give me advice today or next week."

I have the greatest respect for this council. The number of people that have brought their names forward, the number of organizations that have presented names — I don't think there is one person who has been nominated who doesn't want to make this successful. So I give my support, Mr. Speaker, and I speak for the constituents of Banff-Cochrane. The ones I've spoken to about the approach being followed by this government support this approach, and those are women from rural, urban, and Indian backgrounds. I've spoken to hundreds of people about this issue, and they are happy to see us take this step. They look forward to seeing the recommendations that will flow from the council to the minister.

I support the Bill before the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to express a feeling of dilemma that I have about this Bill. It's a dilemma because on the one hand I see some tremendous problems with this Bill and with the principles or lack of principles that this Bill embodies. Put simply, it does not go far enough to confront the level of problem that this society is experiencing, unbeknownst to many of the members of this society, about women and their relationship to this society and their activity within this society. It doesn't go far enough to confront those problems. In not going far enough and, in fact, in being established in a way that would suggest that it is being stifled to not go far enough, it might actually be worse than useless. I underline that it might be worse than useless because it might make some people think this government is actually providing leadership and taking some concrete and constructive steps to do something about women's issues and women's roles in this society when that's not really their intention. They're not motivated to solve the social problem of women in our

society, but in fact they are motivated to stifle a political problem that has become an irritant and a difficult pressure.

So I feel on the one hand a tremendous reluctance to support the Bill in principle, and yet on the other hand I say, "Maybe something is better than nothing." There is a profound lack of fairness in our society. There is an insidious prejudice in our society toward women. It's all that much more insidious, demeaning, debasing, and difficult to deal with because every single institution and all the relationships we structure seem to support it — in fact, do support it. Our socialization process is so completely successful in supporting the lack of status of women in this society.

Fathers perpetrate it on their sons. They perpetrate it on their daughters. They feel more comfortable if their daughters play a certain kind of role, and without even realizing it, they fashion and influence daughters who will play that kind of traditional role. Mothers perpetrate it on daughters because they too feel more comfortable in those relationships, and mothers perpetrate it on sons.

Believe me, this socialization process is extremely effective. It works. We see its effect and its results in every single walk of life. Although you can talk about statistics — and they mean something — people have to consider what it means in human terms and what it means to women who cannot confront it and who cannot rise above that kind of socialization because they do not see how to do it. We do not allow them to see how to do it; in fact, we work against their doing it. So the results are that women bear a disproportionate burden of violence in our society, a very insidious and personal kind of violence, violence in the home, and a physical violence that men can't experience, in the form of rape. Single mothers bear a disproportionate burden and cost for child care, day care inefficiencies, and a lack of adequate day care facilities. Certainly they should be men's problems, but our society doesn't make them men's problems. They make them women's problems time and time again.

Women bear — and this is another result — a disproportionate portion of the burden of poverty in our society. It's hidden, much of it, but they bear it. It's very real in human terms. It's very debasing, and it's very demeaning. Even those women who do compete and who get into our business world have a much more difficult time. They don't compete on the level playing field, it seems, that we hear so much about when it comes to free trade and those kinds of issues. The more aggressive they get, somehow the more our society says that that's an unbecoming feature. Again we seem to stifle that.

What I'm saying is that there is an insidious prejudice. It's a prejudice that is very difficult for us to feel as men, for us to detect as men. In fact, as men we have such a tremendous interest in the status quo because we have so much to lose by a real equality for women in our society. It raises very difficult kinds of decisions for this Legislature, which is largely men, for the caucus committee and the cabinet committees, which are largely men, those groups and those people who have really fashioned this Bill which is before us now. It makes it very, very difficult for us to be objective in any way and to make the correct and sensible decision. In fact, it may be one of those decisions where each and every one of us has to go against our instincts and against everything that seems at our instinctual level to be right. I know that most of the people who get to this Legislature ultimately have to resort to their instincts and to their gut feelings; otherwise, they wouldn't be able

to withstand all the pressures they're confronted with from all the different groups and all the different people who are telling them how to do things.

So we have to go against that grain. We have to be able to see that we need a council on the status of women that shakes us up, that confronts us and those traditional views we have, and that makes us feel extremely uncomfortable. I believe we will have failed categorically if we create in this council a council that makes us feel comfortable, a council that we in this government feel we can control. If we can control it and if we feel comfortable with what it's doing, then it will not accomplish what it has to accomplish. It will not advance us toward the objective of equal and full participation for women in this society. It will not shake the status quo, and it has to shake the status quo if we are to overcome the prejudice and the lack of fairness that this Bill should at least in part be designed to confront.

In the Liberal caucus we feel a tremendous dilemma, but I think we will support this Bill in principle, in the hope that we can amend it in third reading, that we can debate it further in front of the public of Alberta so that we can at least contribute to a thought process. Even if we don't get amendments, we can broaden the debate and broaden the process of thought. We will support it in second reading, but only for those reasons. We ask the minister and this government to consider the amendments that we will be proposing in third reading, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in support of second reading of this Bill on the council on women's issues. In my view, and as a woman in this Legislature, I do not believe that the issue we are dealing with is merely an issue of the name of the Bill. What we are dealing with are issues that do affect women and men and children and families in this province.

I also believe that the Bill strikes a balance in the legislation, and I believe that's a very important role for legislators in this province. We in our caucus have spoken and debated long and hard with respect to issues affecting all people in this province, but in particular the issues that affect women. We come from all walks of life and from all corners of the province in our caucus, and in my view what we now have before us strikes a balance in this province with respect to the issues affecting women. I respect completely the very strongly held views and the expression of those views by the Member for Edmonton Norwood, and although this legislation may not strictly satisfy the views of that member, they may not strictly satisfy the views of me as the Member for Edmonton Glenora. However, I don't believe that we can be selfish in this regard. I think we have to strike the balance, and I believe the balance is struck in the present legislation. The legislation provides a vantage point. It also acknowledges fully that we can do more in this province to recognize a special plight of women. Therefore, we have a council.

I would like to take up the challenge which was given to us by the Minister of Culture and Member for Calgary Currie when he introduced second reading of his Bill, to say that there were many issues which the council could and should deal with, and he gave a partial list. But if I may, I would like to speak to some of the issues which I feel should be part of the mandate of what that council will be reviewing as a representation of all women in this province.

Violence in the family is clearly not only a women's issue. It is an issue which affects us all. However, I do believe that it has a very particular effect on women in this province. Children in abused situations: we have a hot line. Pets, dogs, cats: there's a hot line for that to the SPCA. What about women? It doesn't exist. I think it's important that the council address that. I also think that the issue of women and poverty is a very, very important one for the council to address. Part-time jobs and job sharing are other issues. It's not the men that are demanding part-time work and job sharing in this province, Mr. Speaker; it is the women. It is the women who have to balance, in many instances, family, work, and children. This is a very important issue, in my view, for the council to address.

Day care. Mr. Speaker, given that 13 percent of families in this province meet the "nuclear model" for families — i.e., the father is the breadwinner, the mother is at home, and the children are being cared for by the mother during the day — and we have 82 percent of the lone-parent families in this province headed by women, I think a very, very critical issue for this council to review is the changing demographics in Alberta with respect to how the role of women is changing. Clearly, it's changing in an economic and a demographic sense.

I would argue that this legislation is a course of action. There was action by our Premier when he appointed four women to his cabinet — a very remarkable step, Mr. Speaker, when we compare other cabinets across this nation. One member I would like to speak to particularly is the Associate Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Drayton Valley. I'm proud of that appointment, because for the first time in Canada's history we have a recognition of the role women have played in the agricultural community. That was recognized in our appointment of our associate minister. I am proud of that, and I am proud to be part of a government that appointed that woman to that particular position.

There's been action in addressing what I believe is a balance in this province. There is action in striking a balance of the opportunity for women to be equal participants — not become but be. In my view, Mr. Speaker, actions clearly speak louder than words, and I commend and applaud the women and the men who have brought us to this point in our province's history. This is not a council for comfort; this is a council to deal with the issues which affect women. I support the Member for Calgary Currie on second reading of this very important Bill.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few moments and address Bill 19. I was quite taken with some of the comments I heard from members opposite. I didn't really hear any great enthusiasm for an intention of a government that has long believed in attempting to treat and encourage others to treat individuals on an equal basis.

It's no secret that I have not been known as a champion of a women's Bill any more than of a men's Bill. I have been critical in the past of any government that does not deal with people's issues as people as opposed to sexes. If we feel that strongly about people around here, why don't we get involved with kids' rights? Why don't we get involved with those who seem to have no say on whether they don't have fluoridation to protect their teeth? But no, we choose other routes, and one of those routes is with us today. The hon. Member for Edmonton Avonmore says that the title of the Bill is not right. What's in a title? How important

is the title? Can we take a moment and look into it and see the intent and the desire?

I've listened to the Member for Edmonton Glengarry. I don't blame her for being critical. She had a Bill in the House that the House wouldn't support. She doesn't want the people of Alberta, through its elected representatives, to represent the people; she wants 30 women's groups to represent all the women in Alberta. Why don't we have 30 women's groups elect the government in Alberta? I'm sure that would make the hon. member happy. We have a commitment from government to review the Labour Act in this province, which affects all people. But members opposite say, "Oh no, don't you dare let the public judge that; only the unions, only those who represent 30 percent of the work force." So the Member for Edmonton Glengarry is consistent, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Edmonton Highlands.

MR. GOGO: I apologize to the hon. member.

There seems to be a general attitude, Mr. Speaker. Something happens to people when they arrive under this dome: they seem to know everything. They know what's best for everybody. The 1982 election. I remember so well a forum at the University of Lethbridge: the Member for Lethbridge East, myself, plus six others under the firing line. The question was: will you support tuition-free education? Naturally the other six supported it, because it seemed like the easy thing to do. Fort Macleod is 30 miles from Lethbridge by road. It's 135 miles by river, because it's a meandering river that takes the path of least resistance. Those people said, "Free tuition." We might have 72-year-old widows who can't get in the hospital for a gall bladder because it's elective surgery, but they want tuition-free education. I said: "Well, we're in an election, and I'm knocking on doors. You come with me tonight. We'll knock on about 400 doors. We'll ask the people at the doors, because they're the taxpayers. If they agree it should be tuition-free, I'll agree with you. Now, will you come along?" This student was in the seventh year of a four-year program, and he said to me, "Oh no, they're probably just as stupid as you are."

I get very concerned when I see people sit in judgment of others and not recognize the intention of a government that's attempting to do something meaningful. I don't claim to be an expert. I have four daughters. I think I have a little bit of knowledge. Three of them are married. Each of them has two children. The fourth one doesn't have any children. I think I have some understanding of and empathy for some of the hardships they face in our society. But we're talking about society. How can we set ourselves on a throne in here and legislate people's lives? How can we think we're capable of changing society's views? We have a society in this province . . . You may smirk, hon. member. You may smirk, but hear me out as I heard you.

We have a society here that spends a billion dollars on booze, 68 cases of beer per person. We have a society that spends \$300 million on gaming every year. We have a society that goes to Safeway; the third largest product they sell is pet food. We have a society that has that attitude, yet we have a government here that says, "We'll put our money where our mouth is; we will demand equal pay for equal work." And we do it. The evidence is there.

We have a government that commits itself to \$5 million a month for day care. We have a government that is committed to put into law a framework called the Advisory

Council on Women's Issues. Under section 2 — the minister said this ad nauseam — is their role. How can you quarrel with that? How can you quarrel with a concept that will select 15 Albertans out of 240 applicants, I think the minister mentioned, to sit in judgment of their peers, not people who for a variety of reasons have joined certain political organizations or women's groups but who represent all Albertans? How can you be critical of that as opposed to selecting select women's groups? I don't understand your rationale.

You seem to say, like the labour review business, that only the 30 percent involved in the labour movement are qualified to judge labour issues, when 100 percent of Albertans have to pick up the tab. Don't you understand that when Safeway settles with a cashier, it's on the basis that the customer has got to pay in the groceries for the price of that? There's an economic cost to everything. So surely everybody involved in that should have a say.

When I look at and hear the comments under our British parliamentary system, the British common law — would you want only women jurors to hear women's cases? Is that what you want? Then say so. Then I'll set the lawyers on you. Have you no respect for 800 or 900 years of history? To have the audacity to say only those people are qualified to determine what is inequitable — you're wrong. You're totally wrong when you're telling me that the system we have in this province to elect its members — i.e., the voter — is stupid. You're very wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to close on this note. I have stood in this House and I have raised matters with the Attorney General in his estimates year after year, because we have a system that says if you're a woman and you're being beaten up by your husband and you need a restraining order, you've got to go to a judge to get it. But if you can't find \$400, you can't get it. That is wrong. I've spoken on that and so have other members. So don't make the judgment that government members, regardless of where they sit in this House, are uncaring. The government is attempting to do what they think is best for all people.

With that in mind, if the hon. members will read that Bill, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand, really, how they can do anything except support it. Thank you.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I rise as one of the smirkers to reply to the attack on those who are said to claim to know everything simply because they disagree on some points with the hon. member that has just spoken. All that we are asking on this side of the House — in this group at any rate, Mr. Speaker — is that there be established an advisory council on the status of women which is not another quango, which has its membership drawn exclusively from women who are the persons appointed or elected by women's groups in this province, who are at the forefront of women's movements. Let this body be a pressure group. Let it be radical. Let it shake up public opinion. Let it not be just another Conservative piece of window dressing, Mr. Speaker. That's all we ask.

MR. SPEAKER: May the minister sum up?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, it has been an interesting and far-ranging debate this evening on Bill 19, with a number of excellent points made by members on both sides of the House. I'd like to say that with comments like those

made by the Member for Edmonton Avonmore, the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark, the Minister of Education, the Member for Banff-Cochrane, and others about the specific kinds of issues that the council would deal with, I indeed hope that in the long run the council, once established by legislation, will deal with quite a variety of those issues.

There's no question about the need for a body that will assist us in trying to deal with the inequities, the difficult kinds of family violence situations, and others that have been spoken to here this evening. Members are quite correct in saying that while progress has been made to a great degree — and members, at least on this side of the House, have helped to outline what that progress has been, helped to identify the commitment of this government to that progress — there is much to be done. There are inequities, there are problems, and there are situations in which women do not have the same advantages, the same opportunities, as do men in our society.

This Advisory Council on Women's Issues Act, as I mentioned in the introductory remarks, is one of four Bills in the country that establish in legislation, before a Legislature, the fact that we are committed to this council, and so committed that we did it in that way.

Members opposite, particularly the Member for Edmonton Highlands, dealt with this Bill, in my opinion, in a rather cavalier way, indicating that it wasn't sincere or serious. I don't feel good about that, Mr. Speaker. I happen by nature to want to respect the views of all those on all sides of the House, want to work co-operatively in trying to achieve what we can for the people of Alberta, and don't question the motives of the members in other parts of the House. I'm a little sad that those motives are questioned. I have no problem with the question of specifics or concepts or ideas; that's what we're here for, and that's what we should be debating.

Mr. Speaker, to deal with a few of the specific questions — and some of the members on this side of the House have helped me in doing that — the title of the Bill has been talked about often this evening. While I did have a personal conversation with the Member for Edmonton Highlands on that and went back to think about what the title should be, whether or not women's issues are in fact exclusively women's or for all Albertans. I have to say I concluded that they are indeed for all Albertans. They are men's concerns as well. But children's issues are men's and women's concerns. Agricultural issues are the concerns of the consumer and of all others. In my opinion, we could not find a title which would not say you shouldn't be looking at another aspect.

I think a rose by any other name is perhaps a good cliché to use when talking about the title of this particular Bill. The Ontario council, incidentally, is of the same name and, in any of the reading I've done on that council, has not been any less effective, any less broad in its mandate, or any more restrictive than have councils by other names in the country. A name is a name, but I think the true eating of the pudding, as they say, is in the content of the Bill itself, and that has been dealt with to a fair extent.

Mr. Speaker, I had hoped this evening that all members of the Assembly would unite in voting for the Bill. That's my hope as an individual committed to progressing the opportunity for women in the province. But from a political perspective, I'm happy to have a standing vote and have members in one political party vote against what is stated in this particular Bill. I am pleased as a Progressive Conservative, from a purely partisan perspective, to be able to

go to the citizens of Alberta and say that we voted for a council which would

advise and report to the Alberta Government through the Minister on matters relating to the opportunity for full and equal participation of Alberta women in the life of the Province

and that others would not vote for that. I'm happy to vote for a council which would identify specific matters and all of the items identified here and have others on the opposite side of the House vote against those tenets in this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, if we want to get partisan on this, I can do it easily with Bill 208. Again, I don't at all question the sincerity of the member who presented it or the party that supported it. But I believe that if Bill 208 is fully looked at by any women's organization in the province, there would not be support for it for two main reasons.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, please, Bill 19.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was responding to the debate previously on this particular addition with respect to the suggestion that there should be contained in this Bill the concept that only 30 organizations in this province be allowed to even make recommendations. In that way I affiliate myself with the remarks of the Member for Lethbridge West. I would like identified on the other side of the House the 130 names of organizations they would suggest not be considered and that that be enshrined in the Bill. In fact, I'd be willing to pay for an advertisement in the paper outlining who the NDP would reject from consideration in this province.

Mr. Speaker, if we were to further look at suggestions made, I could deal similarly with the issues. If we wanted to be purely partisan in dealing with the Bill that's before us, I would be happy to debate those items. But I do feel it's in the best interest of all Albertans that we proceed with an advisory council; that we do so in legislation; that we identify in that legislation, as we have done, the functions of the council; and that we then appoint 15 individuals to that council who will represent points of view, parts of the province, and knowledge of issues that will assist us in this Assembly and in this government in progressing the cause of full and equal opportunity for women in the province of Alberta.

I'm sure we'll have a chance to discuss further in Committee of the Whole the many specifics of the Bill which were identified by members. I might just indicate at this stage that there have been some 270 nominations, many that I think are excellent and do provide us that base from across the province and that kind of information base we require. I look forward to the passage of this particular Bill and to working with those individuals. "Working with" should be the phrase which identifies the manner in which we'd like to operate: a co-operative move together to try to progress this cause. I don't preclude the research. In fact, in identifying specific issues and investigating, a degree of research is absolutely essential. I don't preclude the possibility; in fact, I have no question that the council will choose to publicly talk to groups and organizations and to make their views and opinions known in that respect. I look forward to working with them directly, as I know other ministers of this government do.

I should mention to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that after this Bill was introduced, I received from women's organizations a fair amount of input with respect to it. We did that before, of course, and I mentioned that at intro-

duction in terms of meetings and requests. As soon as this Bill was presented, I sent it out immediately to all the organizations I knew of and asked for input. By and large, the response has been positive across the province. With very few exceptions the women who indeed helped to put together the concepts included in this Bill — the wording, in fact, included in this Bill — are pleased that this will establish the council which will really represent those issues that have to be dealt with across the province.

In saying that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the vote for second reading. I thank the members who have participated and commented this evening. I will enjoy working with them and they with the council in the years to come.

[Mr. Speaker declared the motion carried. Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Adair	Fox	Payne
Ady	Getty	Roberts
Alger	Gibeault	Russell
Anderson	Gogo	Schumacher
Barrett	Hawkesworth	Shaben
Betkowski	Hewes	Shrake
Bradley	Hyland	Sigurdson
Campbell	Jonson	Speaker, R.
Cassin	Kowalski	Stevens
Cherry	Kroeger	Stewart
Chumir	Laing	Strong
Crawford	McCoy	Taylor
Day	McEachern	Trynchy
Downey	Mirosh	Weiss
Drobot	Mitchell	West
Elliott	Moore, R.	Wright
Elzinga	Musgrove	Younie
Ewasiuk	Oldring	Zarusky
Fjordbotten		
Totals:	Ayes — 55	Noes — 0

[Bill 19 read a second time]

Bill 16

Special Waste Management

Corporation Amendment Act, 1986

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure tonight to move second reading of Bill 16.

Bill 16, for the benefit of all members, is perhaps the shortest Bill in terms of number of words that's currently before this session of this Legislative Assembly. Essentially, at the moment under the current legislation there is a chairman of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation who also serves as the chief executive officer of the corporation. Members will recall that a number of months ago my predecessor indicated that in reviewing the operation of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, there would be a need at a future point in time to differentiate between the positions and responsibilities of the chairman of the board and a chief executive officer of the corporation. Bill 16 simply indicates that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint a chief executive officer of the corporation and, secondly, that the chief executive officer is an employee of the corporation.

Just by way of further explanation, Mr. Speaker, there is a current board of directors of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation composed of seven individuals throughout the province of Alberta, and the total staff of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation consists of six individuals. With this amendment in place, the total staff of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation will consist of seven individuals, including the president and chief executive officer.

I might point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that in recent months, since the world has become more knowledgeable about the initiatives here in the province of Alberta with respect to our attention to this whole question of special wastes, we have been inundated with requests from around the world for consultation to provide advice and to participate with other individuals throughout the world. I really strongly believe that it will be a strong responsibility of the new chief executive officer of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation to maintain those contacts with other agencies and groupings in North America and all parts of the world. We believe very sincerely and very strongly that the whole question of special wastes, hazardous wastes, is an international concern and that we have to take initiatives here in the province of Alberta to ensure that there is, in fact, and will be international co-operation to find the most cost-efficient and safest methods that we can use in terms of dealing with such wastes.

Perhaps members would be interested to note that in recent weeks, and through the month of September and in the next several months, contacts have been made with our Special Waste Management Corporation in Alberta from such agencies as the American Public Works Association of New Orleans; the Air Pollution Control Association of San Francisco; the Alaska department of the environment; the Ontario Waste Management Corporation; the Minnesota Waste Management Board; the North Carolina waste management board; the Entech consultant group, which is a consultant to the Montana state government; the region of Niagara in Ontario; the Hazardous Waste Facility Site Safety Council of Boston; the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; the Department of the Environment of Nova Scotia; and the division of public health in Wellington, New Zealand.

This week two officials from the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation are lead speakers at a national conference which is being held in Nova Scotia on this whole question of special waste. The only Canadian to have been asked to become one of the founding members on an international steering committee that will be known as the East-West Conference on Hazardous Waste Research — a grouping that will basically look at the Pacific Rim countries of the world and will include representatives from Korea, Japan, Australia, Mexico, Taiwan, and the United States — is a vice-president with the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. He will be the only Canadian on that particular board.

Members will also note that recently I indicated to members of the House that several weeks from now several members of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation will also be attending an international conference in Denmark and will be leading and providing basic overview lectures and seminars to an international community of scientists and officials from around the world on this whole question of special waste management.

I think that the initiatives we as a government have taken on this very important subject matter are becoming known in our province, in Canada, in the United States,

and in the world. While we may compliment ourselves for the initiatives that we have taken with respect to this very important matter, I think what is most important is that we are now being asked to provide advice on an international basis to other jurisdictions throughout the world who are attempting to do what we have already started.

Mr. Speaker, I think that perhaps is enough background with respect to Bill 16. I will certainly look forward to input and contributions from Members of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Speaker, when I looked over this Bill, I was indeed struck by the brevity of it. I started researching and trying to find out if there were indeed things I should be concerned about in terms of the principles embodied in the Bill, and to my surprise, in fact, I was told that actually it's most common that especially major corporations and important corporations have those two functions split. Another person, who knows more than I about business, economics, and corporate structures, said that you should wonder, when they have both jobs in one person, if there isn't some kind of finagling going on, because it's a lot of power to have in one hand. So I would certainly support the principle involved in the splitting of the two jobs.

My concern there is then the original principle of not having it split in the first place. It seems to me that the aim was to have a person there who would have the power to do what was expected of him in terms of recommending the joint venture agreement to the department. Much to the surprise of the department, I'm sure, that individual political appointee turned out to be a man of great principle himself and refused to make that recommendation. It is thus now that we see the two jobs being split amongst two people, as it should have been right from the start. With that reservation about the original principles involved, I would certainly be able to support the principle here of following what is normal corporate procedure.

I would hope that with these two jobs now in the hands of two responsible people the Environment department would see fit to give those people and the Crown corporation they run sole responsibility to continue doing the wonderful job that is attracting international attention so that they — very responsibly and with the best interests of Albertans in mind, rather than just how they can treat the most waste most economically, rather than safely, and make profit — will run it through the corporation itself rather than through the joint venture or a private firm.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Bill 16 — support with some reservations. I would like to congratulate the Minister of the Environment for proposing to split the role of chairman between the role of chairman and chief executive officer. It may in fact be an enlightened structural step for the corporation. It is consistent with much of the literature on Crown corporations and the technical literature, which basically argues that to ensure an independent board review, the roles of chairman of the board and CEO of Crown corporations should be occupied by two different individuals. That's to the minister's and the government's credit. I congratulate them on their initiative.

However — I did say it is with reservations — the same literature makes the point that the effectiveness of Crown corporations has also been undermined by the politicization of appointments to boards of directors. So this structural change may in fact beg the real question which is at the heart of the operation of the Special Waste Management

Corporation in Alberta. If this change is being made with the clear intention to have a better, more objective structure, consistent with the theory in the literature that splitting those roles is advantageous to genuine independent board review, then great. My congratulations are wholehearted. If, however, it means instead that we have further politicization of that board and a disregard for that board's activities when those activities seem to fly in the face of political expedience for this government, then I argue very strongly that this move will only be window dressing and will not accomplish what it can accomplish by way of making this board more independent, more enlightened, and better at its task of representing the interests of Albertans.

The reasons that I raise this reservation are really based upon our experience in the last year or so with the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, the experience of its relationship to the government. We've seen that that experience has been questionable with respect to the agreement between Bow Valley Resource Services and the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, because that agreement will entail payments to Bow Valley Resource Services which are excessive and go beyond proper responsible fiscal management. We've talked about the details of that arrangement many, many times in this House.

It is a fact that we will be covering the interest on the money that Bow Valley Resource Services will borrow to build that plant. We will be guaranteeing that interest, we will be guaranteeing them 13 percent return, and we will be guaranteeing them 12 percent in addition to that to pay the taxes on their return, despite the fact that it appears that Bow Valley Resource Services will pay no taxes. That means that over the next 10 years Albertans will pay, in today's terms, \$23 million more than they would have to pay were we to do this through a management contract with the private sector and not such a highly advantageous financing arrangement with Bow Valley Resource Services.

What's very interesting about the decision to go with that agreement is that the board of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation, which was structured to defend the interests of Albertans both with respect to the danger and the cost-effectiveness of handling these hazardous goods, did not recommend it. In fact, the chairman of that board was let go because he failed to recommend that agreement. The new board has never recommended that agreement, but it appears that the government will go ahead with it despite the fact that it is not getting the support that it should get from a board that was set up to provide an independent review to ensure that Albertans' interests were protected properly.

Similarly, there are questions about the manner in which the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation handled the Kinetic case. There appears to have been pressure by this government to create a deal which will cost Albertans \$10 million to clean up a site, a site which contains hazardous wastes which were . . . Back to the Bill. My point is that that arrangement did not receive endorsement by the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation and its board, and it will cost Albertans money that it need not have cost. So it raises a real question about why the government is attempting to split the role of chairman and executive officer of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation.

I would like to think that it will be an enlightened step in the right direction to ensure that this board will be balanced and objective in its review of special waste management arrangements in this province. I hope that is the case. If it is the case, then we will support this Bill with

enthusiasm. If it is not the case, we will simply support it with the hope that one day it will be the case, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, rising to speak on the Bill, it's more on a point of information. I support my colleague from Edmonton Meadowlark in saying that we certainly favour this as a step in the right direction.

One of the concerns I have — and possibly the minister could answer in a short summation to close out the Bill — would be that if he's working on splitting the chairmanship and the chief executive officer, I can see down the road that special waste management in the province could well break down into waste being managed or disposed of or refined or broken down, whatever you want to call it, differently in different areas. In other words, it might be wise to get rid of hazardous wastes in a void deep down in mother earth that we've already drained of oil or gas, or it may be wise to incinerate them where they are because the transportation from that point where the hazardous waste has been created to this plant that has been built may take it through areas that increases the risk far beyond what we want. This may be in effect setting up a method to institutionalize hazardous wastes to where we have a bureaucracy running the Swan Hills plant that insists everything from, let's say, a crankcase being drained in Coutts, Alberta, to a bit of PCBs being created in Lloydminster has to go to the plant.

Consequently, I hope that this split is a glimmer of sunlight or wisdom to indicate that the minister is building a policy down the road whereby we don't become victims rather than the boss of the plant at Swan Hills. The plant at Swan Hills is just one method of disposing of or refining special wastes. The chairman may be an indication that in the long run there may be a number of executive officers in different types of plants throughout the province, each in its own way doing away with special management.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the minister sum up?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, there were a number of statements made by my colleagues with respect to this, and I'll be very brief in summing up.

The Member for Edmonton Glengarry raised a question and used the phraseology "Department of the Environment" with respect to the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. I think it's important to make it very clear to all members of the Assembly right at the outset that the Department of the Environment is not associated with the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. The Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation is a Crown corporation that reports directly to me and through me, of course, to the Members of the Legislative Assembly. I happen to have the other half that says I'm also the Minister of the Environment, and I have to keep the two separate. Alberta Environment will be involved in terms of the whole system of waste management in the province of Alberta from a regulatory point of view, but the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation has very unique responsibilities with respect to it.

To the Member for Edmonton Glengarry and the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, I want to make it very clear that safety will be the priority issue in terms of all of the mandates of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. It will not be a profit motive, although there are some individuals associated with the board of directors in the little organization who believe it should be. It's the

intention of the government to ensure that safety is the first and foremost parameter in terms of the operation of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation.

I would like the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon to rest very, very relaxed, knowing that we are open to ideas. He and other members have heard me say on previous occasions that one of the difficulties we have in determining how much waste will be destined for Swan Hills is the reality that we've also built into the system the opportunity for a creator of waste to neutralize that waste on-site at their plant if they can find a safe, efficient, and cost-effective method. On the one hand, some of the hon. members from time to time have lambasted and slapped the Minister of the Environment over the head and said, "Well, how come you don't know exactly how much is going to go to Swan Hills?" It's because of this unique approach in accommodating the request of the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon to make sure that we allow our minds to find alternatives.

The Member for Edmonton Meadowlark raised concerns about the relationships of the various individuals. It's our view that there has to be a clear differentiation between the role of the chairman of the corporation and the chief operating officer, executive officer, or the president of the corporation. They have unique responsibilities each unto themselves and will have to fulfill them.

I want to make it very clear that the previous chairman of the board was not the board. When the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark says that the previous chairman had certain things, he was not the board; he was simply one individual on the board. There is a difference between the previous board and the positions they took and the position of the previous chairman.

This agreement will be recommended to me by the current board of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. It's under review now, and all members should be very relaxed in knowing that it would never be our intent to politicize anything. I've indicated before on numerous occasions that we want the best individuals that we can attract to these positions, who recognize with an empathy the objectives of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation and the objectives of the province of Alberta with respect to the mandate we have before us.

I wish to thank my colleagues who provided input here tonight, and I would really seek the approval of the Assembly in second reading of this Bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 16 read a second time]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Bill 32
Water Resources Commission
Amendment Act, 1986

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, in moving the second reading of Bill 32, I can only restate that if there is a major change in this Bill, it simply moves the public members as members of the commission from three to four to give us a better geographic spread.

MR. YOUNIE: Just a question or two, more than comments, and certainly, again, not disagreements with something quite so brief. There is a reference to the futures compendium of the Department of Economic Development and Trade. My question would be: by bringing a member of that particular compendium onto the Water Resources Commis-

sion, is that in any way connected with using our water resources as a method of economic development and international trade, which is an issue I have brought up? I'm concerned that, in fact, that is a method of legitimizing within the structure of the Water Resources Commission the diversion of water and eventual sale of large amounts of water from the province to the United States. If that is not going to be the role of that person, I would appreciate having that concern explained.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the hon. member conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Speaker, that was not the change in membership that I was referring to. The comment the Member for Edmonton Glengarry made relates to the change of name of a department. We've had a representative and assistant deputy minister from that department since the inception of the commission. This is a member at large. We have one from the north from High Prairie, one from Edmonton, and one from Calgary, but we had no one from the south. This makes it possible for us to get that complete geographic spread.

I move the second reading, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 32 read a second time]

Bill 37
Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification
Amendment Act, 1986

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to move second reading of Bill 37, the Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Amendment Act, 1986.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill comes about as a result of a request from the municipality of Crowsnest Pass with regard to the composition of their council. Currently there are nine members on the council. It is a unique structure in terms of municipal organization in the province of Alberta. They wish to reduce the size of their council to six from the current nine members. What the council found in attempting to move this was that they thought they could move under a section in the Municipal Government Act which allowed the minister to pass regulations to change the time frame in which they may make these decisions. Apparently, because of the unique Act we have, that provision in the Municipal Government Act did not apply to the Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Amendment Act, and the reason we have the Bill here today is to make it the same as and consistent with the Municipal Government Act and allow the minister to make that regulation and change for them.

I urge hon. members to endorse this Bill.

MR. CHUMIR: I have some concerns with respect to this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I heard the hon. member explaining the rationale. However, if that is the rationale for this Bill, this is a spectacular case of overkill. If the Bill is read closely, what it does is vest in the minister the authority to extend any time frame with respect to the actions of the council or any person or body pursuant to the Crowsnest Pass Municipal Unification Act, and presumably that would cover all the provisions under the Municipal Government Act, which are incorporated by reference in section 2(2).

Accordingly, we have a situation in which the time limits and guidelines under that legislation would have absolutely no meaning whatsoever. The council could with impunity go beyond any of that time frame on the understanding that the minister could rectify that. If that is a proper provision for the government of a municipality, if the time frames and guidelines are to be subject to extension by the minister, then why only for this particular municipality? Why doesn't each and every piece of legislation have an enactment like this? I hope I don't hear that there is such a piece.

So I would suggest that if that is the problem in this particular instance, the solution is to present a Bill to this House stating that the council of the particular municipality is for the purpose at issue and shall be six, not to pass a piece of legislation that seems so out of step with the means of governance of our municipalities.

So unless there is a satisfactory explanation presented, I would speak in opposition to this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the hon. member close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, this is not a particularly controversial piece of legislation. It comes as a result of the request of the council of the municipality of Crowsnest Pass. There's provision in the current legislation which says they could have made this decision by bylaw themselves had they done it before March 1. They had not made this particular decision until after March 1. If this Bill were not in existence, they could have made a request to the minister under the Municipal Government Act to in fact have their request to enact this change in their bylaw to change the administrative nature of their council. So it's not in my judgment controversial. It will allow the municipality of Crowsnest Pass to operate under the same laws as other municipalities in the province.

[Motion carried; Bill 37 read a second time]

Bill 2 Department of Tourism Act

MR. FJORDBOTTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move Bill 2, the Department of Tourism Act.

This Act establishes the Department of Tourism for the first time as a stand-alone department.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, in speaking on the Bill, I suppose that unless I heard more about it, I would accept the idea that there should be an Act. Certainly I like to see the highlight or emphasis given to tourism in the province. But when I read through the Bill, it seems to me that not only are we giving the minister the right to move tourism around, we're giving him the right to spend what little we have left in the heritage trust fund without checking back through the House.

When you jump to clauses 6 and 7, you see statements like the minister may not only set up boards and their payment but "prescribe the term of office of any member." I know as a defeated Tory I might like to be appointed

for 25 years. Also, the minister has the right to "authorize, fix and provide for the payment of remuneration and expenses to its members." That makes even the Minister of Labour's trip around the world look small by comparison, because they can apparently do that and do it each year. It goes on in clause 7 to say that there is authority available in a supply vote to make grants — gifts, if you want to call them. This would make Santa Claus look like a piker. "There is authority available in a supply vote for the purpose for which the grant is to be made." You go on and on.

I think it's fantastic; I haven't seen anything like this since I read about Charles II, and he lost his head. Here we have the Minister of Tourism having the right, apparently without any reference back to the Legislature or to a preset budget, to make grants and prescribe organizations and persons eligible for grants. It would make any other, even the Provincial Treasurer, green with envy. I think he has authority here that is entirely out of line.

In section 8

The Lieutenant Governor in Council ...

In other words, the minister.

... may make regulations providing for guarantees and indemnities by the Government in respect of the repayment of loans.

How big a loan? How long? In other words, I would think the minister will be one of the most sought after and desired dinner partners in the history of this province once this thing has gone through. I don't think we have thought this through carefully enough and put on enough handcuffs, although I am a great admirer of the minister and I think he is a very competent individual. You never know; that capricious Premier might replace him tomorrow, and the next minister might not be as adept and as smooth as this one is. To turn him loose with clauses 6, 7, and 8 is, I think, a *carte blanche*.

I could go on. If you read the whole area, it takes two pages. It makes it sound as if it's gift time in Alberta, with no particular check back or no particular rein on his spending, granting, and guaranteeing powers. All three are given to the minister. I don't think it has been a very carefully thought out Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the sponsor of Bill 2 close the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. FJORDBOTTON: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing unusual with the aspects of this Bill. It basically follows the same principle as all other Bills establishing departments in this government.

With respect to the making of guarantees, it would not be the intention of the Minister of Tourism to grant or make guarantees. Those recommendations, of course, would be made by the Provincial Treasurer, who would then make those guarantees.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move second reading of Bill 2.

[Motion carried; Bill 2 read a second time]

Bill 33 Naturopathy Repeal Act

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to move second reading of Bill 33.

The current legislation does not adhere to the current standards for professional legislation in the province of

Alberta. I would like to mention three areas that are of particular concern. First of all, the steps outlined in the current legislation with respect to entry to the profession do not conform to current legislation. Secondly, there is a very broad definition of the scope of practice for naturopaths, one which has proven to be almost unmanageable in terms of the enforcement and investigation of various concerns in that area. Thirdly, there are two possibly conflicting discipline procedures in the current legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there is an alternative with respect to the naturopathy occupation, and that is for registration under the Health Disciplines Act. Therefore, it is the view of the government that this Act should be repealed.

[Motion carried; Bill 33 read a second time]

Bill 35
Business Corporations
Amendment Act, 1986

MISS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 35, Business Corporations Amendment Act, 1986.

The principle of this Bill is very simple. It is merely to extend the time within which a company, as described in the amendment, can continue under the new Business Corporations Act.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, in saying that the Bill is very simple, the minister didn't explain why this was necessary. As I understand it by the old statute on the other side, these companies had "3 years after the last day of the anniversary month of the company first occurring after the commencement of this Act," not to read the whole section. But if they had three years to reapply, why do they need the extra time to December 31, 1987? Could you explain in a little more detail, please?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the hon. minister close the debate?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. TAYLOR: Wait a minute. On a point of order . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. TAYLOR: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, on closing the debate. I want to hear her answer, because I think I have something more to say.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair respects that, but if the House concedes to the hon. member closing the debate, that will terminate the debate on Bill 35. If members wish to speak on the Bill, members should rise in their places and be recognized.

MR. CHUMIR: To continue with the point of order, would it be possible to request that the House consent that the minister answer that question and that that answer not be considered to be the closing of debate?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I'm sorry. The rules of the House — we're dealing with the Bill in principle at second reading stage. Members have every opportunity if they wish to speak once to the principle of that Bill. The sponsoring

member will then conclude the debate. Members have every opportunity at the committee stage of the Bill to make all the comments they want.

MR. CHUMIR: Would another member on the opposite side of the House please explain to the House why this . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. If the hon. member wishes to enter the debate, he is free to do so.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I must confess that maybe our newness to the House makes us unable to understand, but in plain English it seemed to me that one of the members in the opposition asked a question of the minister and she either is being either cute and cagey or does not want to answer. We're just kind of curious as to the answer, because it's very key and very germane to the point that she wants.

Just why now, after all the hell that's been raised by this government to try to get people to file for continuance, is there an extension made until the end of the PIP, which is a federal Act? PIPs were put in federally. It says the *Alberta Petroleum Incentives Program Act* (Canada) and the regulations under that Act . . . not later than December 31, 1987,

when the last PIP in Alberta, as far as I'm aware, was paid here quite a few months ago. So why the tie-in to the federal deadline of the PIPs when we're talking about Alberta PIPs? This is what I'd like to ask the minister to answer without closing the debate.

MR. WRIGHT: The principle of the Act does seem curious. It seems to be a special exception to a general Act, and central to the consideration of the members of the House of the Act must be the purpose for this special exception.

MR. CHUMIR: I rise to speak in opposition to the Act, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the general proposition that the purpose of the Act is not explained in any accompanying literature which, I would submit, should be the means by which legislation is introduced into this House — we have a very fine example in the new processes being followed in the federal House of Commons with respect to tax legislation — compounded by the fact that the House is unable to get an explanation as to the true rationale and reason for this amendment, which may be very innocent. So on that basis alone, I certainly oppose this legislation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair does not make the rules of the House. The Chair would draw members attention to section 16 of *Standing Orders*.

May the hon. minister close the debate?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MISS McCOY: In answer to the queries let me explain that under the petroleum incentives program it was a requirement that there be a substantial Canadian ownership of any corporation in order to qualify for that, and that has to be maintained throughout the entire petroleum incentives program as long as it is in place. That program does not expire until January 1, 1987. One of the ways that the Canadian ownership share requirement was maintained was by giving the directors or management of a corporation the right to cancel shares owned by someone other than a Canadian. Under the Business Corporations Act of Alberta that sort of restriction or power of directors is not allowed.

Consequently, one cannot continue a company that now qualifies in that respect under the Petroleum Incentives Program Act under the Business Corporations Act. In order to allow that anomaly to work itself out in due course, this amendment is proposed.

[Motion carried; Bill 35 read a second time]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Bill 44

Department of Municipal Affairs Act

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 44, the Department of Municipal Affairs Act.

The Bill would establish the Department of Municipal Affairs in spite of the fact that it has existed for some 75 years. The important part of the legislation is that by repeal of the existing Act, the departmental Act, and repeal of the Housing Act, the Bill establishes the Department of Municipal Affairs as the one responsible for the traditional municipal functions of the province and for the housing function as well.

I have had occasion before to mention the inclusion of some of the native affairs programs in this department along with housing. The important aspect of that combination is that housing and native affairs programs would not lose their importance and their identity. That is the purpose in merging the various functions. The department Act does provide for the customary provisions in respect to the department's financial provisions, organizational provisions and, in particular, the right to make grants, including grants to Metis settlements.

Mr. Speaker, in many senses this is a routine type of Act, important as it is. I would urge members to support it.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, the substantive parts of the Act seem pretty good; for instance, the grants to Metis settlements and the methods of dealing with irregularities in management of municipalities and so on. But the procedural parts are completely unacceptable in a properly run parliamentary democracy, in my respectful submission. They're just replete with what I believe constitutional experts call King Henry VIII clauses, this type of provision:

- (2) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations
 - (a) authorizing the minister to make grants;
 - (b) respecting the purposes for which grants may be made;
 - (c) governing applications for grants ...

The purposes for which grants are to be made should be in the control of the Legislature, not merely in the control of the cabinet. It should be set out in the Act.

The next section:

- 8(1) The Minister, when authorized by regulations under subsection (2), may
 - (a) make loans for, or authorize the provision of guarantees ...

And so on. Admittedly this is a bit more specific. But the same very wide powers given to the minister by regulation to do practically anything and to appoint practically anyone to committees and so on — well, perhaps that is permissible too. It is simply that the power to make grants, to set down the conditions of eligibility for those grants, to in effect be entirely his or her own master in the department

in doling out public money without any control whatsoever laid down in this Legislature but simply such control as the cabinet may put in regulations is, in my respectful submission, unacceptable in principle.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, also on this subject, I can't emphasize any more than I have already the Minister of Tourism's *carte blanche* to go out with the taxpayers' money and create boards, make guarantees, and so on. We have the same thing repeated now with the Minister of Municipal Affairs. But even worse, there's a part — and this was already emphasized by my hon. colleague from Edmonton Strathcona — that goes on a little further too and says:

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

- (d) respecting the persons or organizations or classes of persons or organizations eligible for grants.

In other words, we get into the thought process. It's bad enough for the minister to have the right to give out grants or loans, but he can decide to make regulations for anybody that's eligible for grants. In other words, if you don't have the right type of people, the right numbers, or the right membership, he can ... Also,

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations

- (e) respecting the conditions required to be met by any applicant for a grant to render that person eligible for the grant.

Well, Joe, you can't get a grant, but you can if you do this and this.

I think this is an intrusion into the private lives and the organizations in this province that's entirely uncalled for. I don't see why any minister of any government has the right to tell organizations and persons how they should be organized, otherwise they're not even going to be eligible for his largesse or — let's put it this way — the largesse that the taxpayers are going to put up in the long run anyhow.. Henry VIII or Charles II, whatever way you want to call it, I think this is an autocratic government that's gone wild. These things should be cut back and looked at again.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, just a few comments on Bill 44 relating to the powers for making regulations for grants and for the minister giving grants to whatever organization, whatever municipality, whatever size of municipality, and under what conditions. I would hate to have to come back and sit in the Legislature to make a decision on regulations on a grant when one of the municipalities I represent would be entitled to that grant and would have to wait till the Legislature could be called. They would have to up-front their money. They would have to bankroll the thing. They couldn't get their grants in time. We heard a discussion on this on this Bill; we heard it on other Bills.

Mr. Speaker, if groups meet certain regulations, we've got different regulations existing for different sizes of municipalities; for example, those who are smaller have a greater per capita cost for water or sewer. We recognize that. We assist with that in different ways, and I'd hate to see us lose that in listening to the comments of previous members.

MR. McEACHERN: Just a couple of comments, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the last topic discussed, it would seem to me that if subsection (2) in section 7 were tied to section 7(1)(b) so that we knew the minister would stay within "the authority available in a supply vote for the purpose

for which the grant is to be made," which I assume the minister will — but it would be nice if it were tied in in words so that we could see that. In other words, he can make grants within the limits set by the supply vote. The way it's worded — to me anyway — it doesn't seem to quite say that.

I raise another point that I think is important. Part of the authority of the Minister of the Department of Municipal Affairs will be to deal with some programs for natives and Metis. I would just like to say that I think the government has made a mistake in splitting the affairs of natives into three different departments and putting one part in here and other part somewhere else. There should be a native affairs department, and that's what bothers me about this Bill. In fact, that points out again that they've been fragmented under three different ministers and will not know where to turn in most cases.

MR. SPEAKER: May the Minister of Municipal Affairs sum up?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for Cypress-Redcliff and the Member for Edmonton Kingsway for making the essential points. Of course, the section dealing with grants is conditional upon there being an appropriation to make the grant from. Anyone who carefully reads section 7(1) will see that. Section 7(2) declares that conditions and various ways of being eligible for grants are part and parcel of the responsibility of government.

The appropriation which is discussed and details of grants proposed to be made are available to members during consideration of the estimates. That detail is there. But the Member for Cypress-Redcliff made a good point when he pointed out that many grants made to municipalities are unconditional. There are other grants that can be conditional. There are also improvement districts, special areas, summer villages, and different types of municipal organizations. It is also part of this department now that guarantees, for example, should be able to be given for, say, a housing

project. Sometimes the guarantee is much better than the grant approach for that.

We have issues of various native associations which receive grants. We have various initiatives in the area of housing where grants or guarantees could be necessary and all of the municipal situations and conditional and unconditional grants.

Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, the details of those are provided at the time of the estimates.

[Motion carried; Bill 44 read a second time]

Bill 47
Chiropractic Profession
Amendment Act, 1986

DR. ELLIOTT: Mr. Speaker, I wish to move Bill 47 for second reading.

This Bill is the Chiropractic Profession Amendment Act, 1986. It is an amendment that has been put forth by the chiropractic profession to provide the profession with a little more opportunity to do some of its own administering and disciplining of members. The other major portion in the amendment provides that people registered as chiropractors and practising that profession cannot be registered in another profession and practise in a second profession. This provides for an opportunity to discipline members with respect to the one single profession. As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, the amendment was prepared in consultation and at the request of the members of the chiropractic profession.

[Motion carried; Bill 47 read a second time]

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as to business tomorrow, it is proposed that Bills 11 and 15 be read on Monday and Bill 27 be read next Wednesday. Other Bills available for second reading: we would consider all of those to be available tomorrow. If there's time after reading government Bills a second time tomorrow, some of the private Bills could be read a second time.

[At 10:28 p.m., on motion, the House adjourned to Friday at 10 a.m.]

