

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Friday, September 5, 1986 10:00 a.m.**

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

PRAYERS

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, grant us a daily awareness of the precious gift of life which You have given us.

As members of this Legislative Assembly, we dedicate our lives anew to the service of our province and our country.

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, and through you to the members of this Assembly, Dr. Morag Pansegrau, department chairperson from the Alberta Vocational Centre, and five students from the business careers program. The five students are Cathy Benoit, Heather Jurykovsky, Barb Lane, Elsie Heidebrecht, and Cindy Russell. Would they please stand and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 45****Alberta Corporate Income Tax
Amendment Act, 1986**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 45, Alberta Corporate Income Tax Amendment Act, 1986. This is a money Bill. Her Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of the Bill, recommends it to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Corporate Income Tax Amendment Act is a Bill which to a great extent follows the outline of the Bill introduced by my colleague earlier this year. In essence, it provides for the enrichment of the royalty tax credit announced as part of the provincial energy package in June of 1985. It also implements a further temporary enhancement of the royalty tax credit announced April 1, 1986. Certain other amendments in the legislation provide for consistency with the federal tax amendments and bring the collection of administrative processes and procedures into line with that recommended by the federal government.

[Leave granted; Bill 45 read a first time]

Bill 46**Alberta Income Tax Amendment Act, 1986**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I also request leave to introduce Bill 46, Alberta Income Tax Amendment Act, 1986. This also is a money Bill, and Her Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of

the contents of this Bill, recommends the Bill to the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, in a similar way this Bill does in fact provide for individual corrections for the Alberta royalty tax credit, and similarly it provides for certain alignments with our own provincial legislation with those federal amendments which have taken place. I recommend it to the Assembly for first reading.

[Leave granted; Bill 46 read a first time]

Bill 255**Provincial Pensions
Liability Reporting Act**

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce for first reading Bill 255, Provincial Pensions Liability Reporting Act.

The Bill would establish in statute the requirements that the province's financial statements carry an annual report of the valuation of its pension plans and their unfunded liability. As well, a complete actuarial evaluation of each pension fund would have to be done and reported once every three years.

[Leave granted; Bill 255 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report of the Public Service Employee Relations Board for the period ended March 31, 1985.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased this morning to table the 1985-86 annual report of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a group of very fine citizens from the town of Vauxhall in my constituency representing the Vauxhall senior citizens' organization. They are 32 in number and are accompanied by driver and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Corbiell, from Brooks. I'd like to ask them to stand and be recognized by this Legislature.

head: MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Department of
Economic Development and Trade**

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, today I'm pleased to announce to the Members of the Legislative Assembly that additional funding of \$11 million will be provided for the small business equity corporations program over and above the \$50 million allocated to date.

The SBEC program has been very successful in creating equity capital pools accessible to Alberta small businesses. The additional funding will be used for those applications accepted up to September 2, 1986. Further applications will not be considered until the government has fully assessed the program and its benefits.

Of the SBECs approved to date, approximately 53 percent or 207 have completed their investment requirements and have created approximately 1,800 new jobs in manufacturing, retail/wholesale services, construction, agriculture, and transportation.

Since the SBEC Act was proclaimed in July 1984, more than 450 corporations, consisting of shareholders from all areas of the province, have formed small business equity corporations which have created an equity pool in excess of \$200 million. The remaining SBECs to be funded, together with the additional funds now allocated to the program, will further stimulate investment in Alberta small businesses.

The small business equity corporations program is just one of the many positive steps taken by the government to strengthen and diversify the Alberta economy.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, in replying to the ministerial statement, we in the Official Opposition have supported the program in the past, at least in principle, because we think the idea of providing equity capital rather than always debt capital is a good principle, as I've said. But from time to time we've also asked for — and have been turned down — some very crucial information about who was getting it, the jobs created, the types of companies that were involving themselves, so we could understand if it was doing the job that it was meant to do. Unfortunately, the government hasn't provided this information.

Mr. Speaker, we'll still support the extra \$11 million provided in this program, because anything that creates jobs, as we well know in this province, is necessary at this particular time. But I also want to say that this ministerial statement along with the other one yesterday is the best example of tokenism that I can see. The province is in a deep financial crisis, and we get token programs like this as the government's answer to pretend that they're doing something about a very serious economic program.

So, Mr. Speaker, we look for something more significant in the next ministerial statement.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Employment Initiatives

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier. As we head into the fall and winter, we see that the official unemployment rate in Alberta has increased to a seasonally adjusted rate of 10.5 percent. Thirteen thousand more Albertans were unemployed this August than in August of last year. The Energy minister is still reviewing options; the economic development minister has announced no meaningful new projects; the Manpower minister extends low-wage, temporary programs; and the Premier says layoffs are a fact of life in the energy industry. My question to the Premier: when is he going to announce a comprehensive, multiyear plan for tackling unemployment and encouraging diversification which features annual targets for reductions in the unemployment rate?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member might recall that in the government's throne speech and in this budget we have presented to the people of Alberta — which they have strongly supported — a program that supplies the largest job-creation effort in the history of Alberta. Now, it is true that in two of Alberta's key industries we are facing international problems which are causing those indus-

tries some difficulty. Nevertheless, the government's programs are working in this province and providing help in every way possible. We will also continue to monitor those programs and other matters in this province, and when we have an opportunity, we will help.

MR. MARTIN: That's small consolation for the thousands of Albertans that are unemployed. As I said yesterday, lots of money has been thrown at temporary work projects; that wasn't the question, Mr. Speaker.

A supplementary question. We notice again that Manitoba has the second lowest seasonally adjusted unemployment rate at 7.3 percent. My question to the Premier: when is this government's policy on establishment of a special jobs fund in Alberta along the lines of the Manitoba fund, which has as its specific goal the creation of good, permanent jobs — and I stress permanent jobs — in co-operation with the private sector?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there are very few things that happen in the Manitoba government that we want to copy.

MR. MARTIN: Let the people listen to that answer, that they don't want 7.3 percent unemployment, they want over 10 percent. Let them answer to that, Mr. Speaker.

My question then. Before, the Premier said that he hadn't even read all of his predecessor's white paper on industrial and science strategy, and I believe we've seen only two follow-up papers on that process, one on tourism and another on finance markets. To the Premier: has the government completely abandoned this process for each of our economic sectors, or can we expect some further white paper response documents?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there was a great deal of good information obtained in the course of reviewing the white paper throughout this province. We will continue to review that information, and if there are opportunities to present additional statements and additional impetus into the province, we will do it.

MR. MARTIN: We're great reviewers in this province, Mr. Speaker, but people are looking for some action.

Mr. Speaker, double-digit unemployment rates seem to become a fact of life under this government, and my question to the Premier is this: is there any specific unemployment rate which this government is waiting for before it will initiate an overall plan, or are we just going to have to sit and drift and wait for someone somewhere else to help us out, maybe Sheik Yamani? Is that what we're waiting for?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition talks like he hasn't been in the Legislature at all this year. After all, there have been comprehensive programs introduced which have all impacted on unemployment in this province. We have, as members know, provided to the energy industry a series of programs, all of which have helped the industry and provided jobs. We have reduced royalties, starting last June in a massive way; that helped the industry and provided jobs. We removed the NEP which was brought into this province and supported by the parties opposite; that helped the industry and provided jobs. We have this spring introduced a \$300 million exploration assistance program to provide jobs. We've cut royalties to small producers by \$100 million to provide jobs. Our capital

works budget of \$2.8 billion this year has provided jobs in parks, in roads.

One of the problems of getting around in the city of Edmonton is the amount of money that this government is putting into jobs in roads and transportation. All of us have to drive, and we see the work that's going on; it's a tremendous amount of work going on in this city providing jobs. In the agriculture area, Mr. Speaker, we have had a program of low-interest loans and small business low-interest loans. We have done the things that are needed for the people of Alberta.

Nevertheless, we're never happy with unemployment levels as they are, but we are going to continue to review the programs within the capacity of this government and do everything possible to provide jobs. We've been doing it; we'll continue to do it.

MR. SPEAKER: Brief supplementary information, Minister of Manpower.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think that when looking at Statistics Canada numbers on labour stats day, it's very easy to be selective and not reflect a true picture as to what's happening in this economy. I'd like to just point out to the members opposite, particularly the Leader of the Opposition ...

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I didn't ask him questions; I was asking the Premier about diversification strategy. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Sorry; you poke one and the whole cage starts after you.

Further to the Premier's statement on jobs and further to — as the Premier well knows, the big job time for the oil industry is in the winter. Will the Premier insist that when the PGRT is removed, it be retroactive to the first of this year, thereby giving the oil industry maybe \$500 million so that they could create the jobs we so desperately need this winter?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the PGRT, we've been following a plan that will have it removed, and I believe that plan will work.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. minister of utilities. This has to do with employment. Is the minister in a position to verify that the Genesee project will go ahead?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I can only respond to the letter that was sent out by the ERCB dated August 29, which indicated that

the Board does not see a need to review its decision outlined in ERCB report D85-21 respecting the commissioning date for Genesee 2,

and I assume what that says is that there is no change at this point in the commissioning date of 1989.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Manpower. I wonder if he could complete his remarks on what his department is doing.

MR. SPEAKER: Nice try, but we need a better question.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I'll try to rephrase that. A supplementary question to the Minister of Manpower. Can he tell us what specifically his department is doing in the way of creating jobs for all Albertans?

MR. ORMAN: I'm glad somebody wants to know what's going on in this economy, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to point out a fact that the opposition may not like to hear. I think that that was quite evident a moment ago. We all recognize that the unemployment rate in this province is materially affected by agriculture and energy. They're not the only ones who know that. We know it too, and we're taking steps to alleviate that.

I should also point out that the statistics the member is referring to also indicate we have 23,000 more people working in the trade sector of the economy, this August to last August, and we have 8,000 more people working in the service sector, Mr. Speaker. I think that points out that the balance of the economy is carrying on its back tough times in energy and agriculture. I think it's important to point out that once those sectors get back on their feet and once prices get back to acceptable levels for activity in the industry, we will see a very strong and healthy Alberta economy.

Topgas Debt

MR. MARTIN: I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Premier. Why has the government of Alberta adopted a policy that independent Alberta gas producers who are not part of the Topgas consortium and who are in no way responsible for the billions in debt piled up by TransCanada PipeLines and the banks should now be asked to help pay off that Topgas debt, especially when British Columbia and Saskatchewan producers are not so required?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows that there was a Bill introduced in the House yesterday. That Bill will go through a series of processes in the Legislature: we've had first reading; there will be second reading, committee study, and third reading. All of those opportunities will provide to the hon. member a chance to ask his question to the Minister of Energy, who will be conducting that Bill through the House, and not duplicate that work now in the question period.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is just a follow-up to a similar line of questioning that I conducted on June 18, to which the minister's answer was ...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Calgary Forest Lawn, the difficulty is that, as you just mentioned, questions at that time were then in order because the Bill had not been introduced. Since the Bill has been introduced yesterday, this is anticipatory, and so the Chair listens with careful attention to what this supplementary question is.

MR. PASHAK: Well, my supplementary is a policy question, Mr. Speaker. It deals with policies of the government. Why has the Alberta government adopted policies that favour banks and TransCanada PipeLines rather than already hard-pressed small Alberta producers?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is still referring to a Bill that's before the Legislature. All he has to do is deal with the legislation as it proceeds through the House, and I'm sure the Minister of Energy will be glad to answer all the questions he has.

MS BARRETT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I know that you don't like points of order in the middle of question period, but this is, I think, pretty legitimate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will not entertain a point of order in the middle of question period.

MR. PASHAK: A supplementary. This is related to gas that's currently being marketed. I wonder what percentage of that gas would be considered netback gas under future pricing arrangements.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, those kinds of details I don't have at my fingertips, and surely the member would consider it appropriate to ask the Minister of Energy when he's in the House.

MR. PASHAK: Well, I'd like to put him on notice then with a further supplementary, and I think they should have taken this into account as they're developing their policies. Has the government done some studies — they must have — to show how much this netback pricing system will cost Alberta producers?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there's always an argument as to whether or not additional sales will provide incremental dollars to make up for lower prices. Most of the small producers that I know in this province are very pleased to be able to compete and sell their product anywhere in Canada and the United States. That's the real key that helps small producers, and we're going to support those small producers in this province.

MR. CHUMIR: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the charges by TransCanada Pipelines. The Independent Petroleum Association has made one of its key points the reduction in the very high transportation costs of gas to the east. I was wondering whether the Premier could advise the House whether or not the government does have a firm policy of attempting to see that these very high charges are reduced.

MR. GETTY: Yes, we do, Mr. Speaker.

Water Distribution

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, this question is to the Minister of the Environment. This Tuesday a state of emergency was declared in the town of Oyen because the town's water supply ran out. Is the minister aware that this is not the first but the second time in the last three years that this has occurred?

MR. KOWALSKI: Yes, he certainly is, Mr. Speaker. He's had ongoing discussions with the Member of the Legislative Assembly from that area, and we're reviewing a number of possible solutions.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, a supplemental. Over a year ago a study was tabled in this Legislature that recommended

the construction of a pipeline to run from the Red Deer River and provide water for Oyen and neighbouring communities. When will the construction of this pipeline begin?

MR. KOWALSKI: In the discussions I've had with the Member for Chinook, I had indicated to him that he should undertake some discussions with the community. At the conclusion of this session it would be my intent to go and visit with the community to see and understand firsthand what the specific concerns are, and it's a high item in my agenda.

Oyen is not the only community in that part of Alberta that's experienced that kind of water problem. Hanna has also experienced that. Steps have been taken in the past. We debated them earlier in this session with respect to the estimates of the Department of the Environment, and we've outlined the steps we've taken in Hanna. It may very well be that similar steps would have to be taken with respect to Oyen.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, discussions, discussions. This went on a few years ago. The thing was passed. You were supposed to build it, not go back and ask what's going on now.

To deal with the situation, the town of Oyen is trucking in water at the cost of \$50 an hour. Will the minister responsible for Disaster Services reimburse the town for this expenditure?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I've had no requests at all from the town of Oyen with respect to such a proposal. Should such a request come, I'd be very happy to take it under consideration.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I wish the minister would show a little more initiative. Can the minister tell this House how many other towns in the province have declared local emergencies in the last three years because of critical water shortages?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear to the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon that there has been considerable initiative with respect to this particular matter. The member may feel that he has an enlightened approach and that the Minister of the Environment has not taken initiative. I've already outlined several times now in question period today the discussions I have had with the duly elected MLA for the area, who has conveyed certain messages to the community of Oyen.

MR. TAYLOR: Just now, because he sits behind you.

MR. KOWALSKI: No, and I think the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon shouldn't point his finger and shouldn't be Gritty with respect to too many of his comments. The discussions I've had with the Member for Chinook have been ongoing and certainly did not just begin in the last few minutes. It's a matter of considerable concern.

I certainly hope that the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, as other members, has been listening to the very good advice and wisdom that my colleague the Member for Chinook has provided to this Assembly with respect to the whole mandate of the Water Resources Commission and the very crucial and important nature of water in east-central Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Supplementary question to the hon. minister. Could the minister indicate what options are available to the town so that adequate water supply will be available before winter sets in?

MR. KOWALSKI: [interjection] Yes, that's right. Liquid from the air would be the most important option that we would have. That part of Alberta, as all members know, is an area that suffers from a shortage of water, a shortage of water by a lack of moisture from the air primarily. [laughter in the press gallery] The scribes up above may laugh, but that's reality. There is no water in the ground unless there is water from the top, and it has to come down. There have to be dugouts, and ground-water levels have to be maintained in the lake.

It may very well be that the only long-term solution is the development of a pipeline that would come from a river to the south that would go north to Oyen. That example has been utilized with respect to Hanna, and it's an option we have before us. However, I want to have the opportunity to discuss with the duly elected local government in Oyen what their specific recommendations to me would be. We've had initial discussion via the elected Member of the Legislative Assembly from that area, and good advice has been provided to this point. It's a matter of considerable concern and importance to the government of Alberta.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary question to the Minister of Transportation and Utilities. I wonder if the minister could inform the Assembly how many small towns, villages, et cetera, have participated in water programs, either pipelines or dugout expansion or programs such as this, in the south part of the province in the last three years.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd be very, very pleased to provide that kind of information in written form to the member.

I think it's important to supplement this. To follow up, I should point out that one of the things being reviewed with respect to Oyen is that while the town of Oyen does have a concern with water — there's simply no doubt at all about that; that's been public information for some period of time — in the review of a pipeline that would come, I want to also tie in the importance of having an adequate water supply for irrigation purposes to the farmers between Oyen and the river to the south and look at other municipal responsibilities and concerns in the area as well. There's more than simply Oyen that could benefit from an initiative in this regard, and we want to make sure that what we do is best for the greatest number of people in the area, in the region.

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, in response to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have supplementary information, Mr. Minister?

MR. ADAIR: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to try to answer the question that was directed to me.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have the information at my fingertips, but I'd be glad to get it. [laughter]

MR. YOUNIE: Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the people of Oyen or the four other towns in the area are laughing as much as we are.

When the pipeline went through to the Genesee power plant and serviced Hanna, it did not do anything for Oyen, Acadia Valley, Cereal, Chinook, or Youngstown. I'm wondering if the minister is investigating the possibility of utilizing that existing pipeline to service those towns. If not, how much longer will this situation that he has admitted has been ongoing for years — how much longer will they have to wait for something to be done? [some applause]

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member and his colleagues can clap and pound all they want, but my understanding of the geography of Alberta is that Genesee is located about 35 miles to the west of the city of Edmonton, and there is simply no tie-in whatsoever.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sheerness.

MR. KOWALSKI: Finally the light has come; we're certainly talking about Sheerness. There has been and will be initiative with respect to Oyen.

MR. SPEAKER: All questions have been exhausted on this topic, including from the government. In what capacity, hon. member? As chairman of the Water Resources Commission?

MR. KROEGER: First of all, Mr. Speaker, personally I live with this every day, so the attention to the House and to the minister doesn't really need to come from somewhere else. Secondly, the distance from Sheerness to Oyen is about 70 miles; the distance from the Red Deer River north to Oyen is about 38 miles. You have to look at the economics of this thing.

Grain Handlers' Strike

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. For the last two days I've asked the minister and also the Premier to commit to actions forcing the federal government to get the grain handlers back to work, but at this point nothing has happened. Will the minister outline at this time the strategy and timetable of this government in pushing his federal counterparts to settle the strike/lockout at Thunder Bay?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we have indicated on a consistent basis in the House ever since this difficulty arose that we are going to continue to pressure our federal counterparts. As the hon. member should be aware if he is not, it is under federal jurisdiction, which we've stated on a consistent basis. We make representations, and we were encouraged by the response of the minister responsible for the Wheat Board plus the Prime Minister whereby they indicated they hoped to have a speedy resolution to this problem in very short order.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'm looking for dates and times in that strategy so we in this Legislature know exactly how the province is representing the farmers of Alberta. I've also found in research from the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Canadian Wheat Board, and the Canadian Grain Transportation Agency that all agree that the strike is jeopardizing a \$260 million sale to Russia. My question to the Premier is: if no settlement is reached by Monday, will the Premier commit that he and the Minister of Agriculture

will go to Ottawa to fight for Alberta and Alberta farmers to achieve an end to this strike?

DR. BUCK: On to Ottawa.

MR. GETTY: You're right.

Mr. Speaker, it's a very important issue to the farmers of Alberta and all of western Canada. It's unique, I guess, that during the summer we usually end up having the beer or alcohol shut off, during Christmas we usually end up having the mail stopped, and during the fall we end up stopping grain shipments. It's a very important issue for this country. We are monitoring the situation very closely. The hon. member has used the words "if by Monday," and therefore his question is obviously hypothetical, but we will make sure that the interests of the people and farmers of Alberta are protected in every way possible.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier. When the air traffic controllers in the United States went on strike, President Reagan took action and settled the strike. To Albertans and Canadians, agriculture is much more important and requires the same kind of leadership in this country. Will the Premier commit to phoning the Prime Minister today and getting a commitment in terms of a timetable for preventing and stopping the strike/lockout action that's going on in Thunder Bay? A commitment today; no assumptions.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raised an issue regarding the United States, which is a completely different matter. It was an illegal strike that the President was able to move on. There's nothing illegal about the strike currently facing Canadians and western Canadians. As I said earlier, we'll do everything possible to protect the interests of the people of Alberta.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture. It is my understanding that the longshoremen in Vancouver will be in a legal strike position as of September 22. Is it the intention of the minister and government to wait until we have both ends of the country paralyzed before something concrete is done and action is taken with regard to this dispute?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I must share with the Chamber that I'm surprised at the nonsense I'm hearing from the hon. Member for Little Bow. The member is very much aware of the positive action this government has taken as it relates to the agricultural sector. If he's got nothing better than to raise federal issues in this House, I'm surprised his concern isn't that much deeper. We have indicated ... [interjections]

DR. BUCK: Come on, Elzinga.

MR. ELZINGA: It's great to hear the hon. Member for Clover Bar finally speak occasionally.

I can share with the hon. members, as he is aware, that we have pressed and will continue to press to make sure that the agricultural sector in this province is protected. One only has to look at our record and they can see that that has been done on a consistent basis.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question was ...

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, hon. member, you're out of order. All questions from your ... Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplemental, Mr. Speaker, to our thin-skinned Minister of Agriculture. Given that the grain handlers have been working without a contract since December 1985, why didn't the minister prepare for the possibility of a strike by informing Alberta grain farmers of the alternative terminals?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, it's not quite as simple as what the hon. member attempts to indicate. One has to make sure that there is room available in the alternative terminals. One also has to make sure that the shipments from those areas will reach their final destinations, which is not always the case in the event that you ship from a different port.

MR. TAYLOR: It's complicated, but you have a system.

MR. ELZINGA: We have, and we are going to hopefully see that the Canadian Wheat Board does take advantage of that. As the hon. member is aware, this falls under the Canadian Wheat Board's jurisdiction, just as the matter of the strike falls under federal jurisdiction. But I want to leave the House with the assurance, as we have done over the last two days, that we have been in communication by telephone. We've also telexed the minister of the Canadian Wheat Board indicating the urgency of the problem, because it is going to have a severe and detrimental impact on our agricultural sector, as the hon. Member for Little Bow has indicated. We share that deep concern, and we have taken action whereby we have indicated that concern to our federal counterparts, where I'm sure hon. members opposite have not.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Recognizing of course that this unfortunate situation involves an employee-initiated strike at one plant and an employer-initiated lockout at several plants, is the minister making representations to both sides in the dispute?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member should be aware if he has a feeling for this, prior to intervention a mediator must be asked for. This, I understand, has not been the case as of yet. But I can share with him as I shared with him, I believe, two days ago in the House: I don't think it helps our agricultural sector when a so-called leader who is very closely associated with the New Democratic Party, the president of the NFU, comes out in support of a strike that is very detrimental to the agricultural sector.

MR. HYLAND: A supplementary question to the minister of economic development. I wonder if the minister can inform the Assembly if he or his department is exploring the possibilities of the orders that are to be filled — we heard about possibilities of orders to Russia being filled and the grain movement down the Mississippi-Missouri system and filled in the U.S.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture and I have had discussions with the chairman of the GTA, the Grain Transportation Agency, with respect to the movement of western Canadian grain. There are a number of important matters that have been raised with the agency

and with recommendations that the government of Alberta has made with respect to possible amendments to the Western Grain Transportation Act. One of the areas that Albertans have always been interested in is an alternative method of moving our products to market. We have not pursued the possibility of building a rail line from Coutts to northern Alberta as yet, but it's something that may have to be considered if disruptions in the movement of Alberta goods and services continue.

Liquor Control Board Strike

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Solicitor General. I wonder if the hon. gentleman would indicate if it was the official departmental view last week, in fact on Friday of last week, that the strike between the ALCB and its employees would be settled this week, and if yes, on what basis that assessment was made, please.

MR. ROSTAD: I'm not sure where that's coming from, Mr. Speaker. At no time last week did I indicate in a personal capacity or as Solicitor General that in fact the ALCB strike would terminate. I did in fact have a meeting with the president of the Alberta union of public employees and the chief negotiator for local 50. We did clear away a lot of the chaff and came to the kernels of dispute. I have had communications with the chairman of the Alberta liquor commission since that time. I believe that negotiations are about ready to recommence.

I might indicate to the Assembly that it's in the ballpark of the union at the moment. They asked for the mediator to be involved, and there is certain protocol that before negotiations commence, they contact the mediator and ask for the negotiations to recommence.

MS BARRETT: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Solicitor General then would indicate when he next expects the negotiations to resume and if it's his government's policy that they will do so as quickly as possible.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I believe I just indicated that it's up to the Alberta union of public employees to recommence the negotiations, although I might indicate that as early as 8 o'clock this morning I was in conference with the chairman of the liquor commission and that the board is ready to start renegotiation. We're now waiting for the mediator to set up such on the initiative of the union.

MS BARRETT: A final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Solicitor General indicate if it's official ALCB policy that under the circumstances of increases in part-time employment and decreases in full-time employment, no benefits should ever accrue to those casual employees, regardless of the number of hours per week they might work?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'm impressed with the information that the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands has from the union. That is certainly one of the items under negotiation at present. I might indicate to the member that I am not on the negotiating team and wouldn't give her any indication as to how that is progressing. She probably already knows.

MR. CHUMIR: As alluded to in the earlier question, Mr. Speaker, one of the main problems in this strike and our

economy relates to part-time workers and their long-term benefits. Does the government have or is it developing a comprehensive policy to deal with this increasingly serious social problem in our community?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can answer that on behalf of my colleague. If the hon. member reads Bill 15, he will see there some provisions for the equal treatment of part-time workers, providing their earnings reach a certain level. I'm quite sure that the committee on the review of the labour legislation will be looking at that type of thing.

Automobiles for Premier's Staff

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Leadership and cost control has to start at the top. Senior management must send the correct messages to Albertans and to public servants. Can the Premier please confirm that a Treasury Board minute dated August 19, 1986, now authorizes the purchase of cars at government expense, at the expense of Albertans, for the Premier's two executive assistants and his press secretary and that this expense is in the order of \$60,000? Prior to August 19 they had to buy their own cars like the rest of Albertans.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, from time to time various members of the government receive cars when it's necessary to have them to do their jobs. I don't go into every detail of Treasury Board minutes, but I'll review it and report back to the hon. member.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you.

Can the Premier please explain — surely he works closely with these people — whether the duties of these three staff members have changed since the days prior to August 19, 1986, in some way that would necessitate their having a new car? Or are we just being nice guys to these people?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, their duties haven't changed. They've always required the cars, if the cars are now being provided.

MR. MITCHELL: So they weren't doing their jobs very well prior to August 19. That's obvious, I guess, in the case of the press secretary. Sorry.

Can the Premier please comment on how these kinds of additional perks to lower echelon political staff are consistent with today's need for restraint and, more importantly, for demonstrated leadership in this important policy area?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, these are always matters of judgment of what is required from a variety of people, whether it be the Leader of the Opposition or the Speaker or members of cabinet or any other members of the government, whether they require cars in the fulfilling of their responsibilities. They're matters of judgment. We have to make those judgments, and we do.

MR. MITCHELL: Could the Premier please reassess this particular judgment and assure the House that he will have these ill-timed and questionable car allowances reversed as soon as possible?

MR. GETTY: They aren't car allowances at all, Mr. Speaker. They are the provision of automobiles in fulfilling responsibilities that they are asked to do by the government.

Consultations with Municipalities

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Thousands of Calgarians are faced with the prospect of losing long-held dreams they've had for parks in their city: Nose Hill park, Nose Creek park, Bowmont park, parks in the inner city. And indeed Albertans in every city and town are assessing how their long-term plans may be threatened by this government. Will the minister outline why no real consultation takes place with Alberta's municipalities before any legislation affecting their long-range planning authority is introduced in this Legislature?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, the question as it pertains to the introduction is out of order, but the second half of the question with respect to consultation is indeed in order.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, consultation does take place on a very consistent basis and most of the legislation affecting municipalities which does come to the Assembly is there because of the requests made by the associations or by the municipalities on an individual basis. It's all assessed, and as to planning legislation, very often beyond the municipalities themselves and the associations other comments are also sought.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, as an example, the mayor of Calgary laid out a compromise position to the provincial government over 18 months ago to try and find a solution to the land acquisition impasse on Nose Hill. Why is it, despite repeated requests from Mayor Klein to meet with the government, that his compromise proposal has not even yet received an answer?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, if this relates to a specific in the sense of Nose Hill, I would review that proposal perhaps, as the hon. member has pointed out, made to my predecessor, and I would be glad to look at that. The situation, of course, always is that when legislation is introduced, we do look to the municipal governments for comment after first reading.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, as a Calgary MLA I was copied with a letter from the mayor to the minister on August 14, 1986. In that letter the mayor asked for consultation on proposed changes to the Planning Act and on his proposal on Nose Hill. Will the minister give an undertaking that he will meet with Mayor Klein to discuss the contents of those letters?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I believe the situation is that Mayor Klein was informed that once the legislation which would affect the situation was through caucus and presented to the Assembly, we would welcome his comments on the actual proposals being made.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, finally, in terms of that particular legislation now that it has been introduced, what consultation will the minister and this government have with municipalities and community groups which are strongly affected by the legislation which has received first reading in this Assembly?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. . Speaker, Calgary isn't the only municipality that has asked for consultation on this issue. For each one who has asked for consultation, we have assured them that would take place.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. Unfortunately, as he points out, the situation is not restricted to the city of Calgary. May I ask the minister about consultation from the city of Edmonton regarding their request for municipal taxation adjustments in the Municipal Government Act that allows landholders to plant vacant lots in downtown Edmonton to secure agricultural assessment? No consultation, no action. Also, the joint venture job creation programs. Any consultation, any action on either of those, Mr. Minister?

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, of course that question is not supplementary, but . . .

DR. CASSIN: Supplementary information, Mr. Speaker, pertaining to the previous question. The Bill was tabled yesterday. I did meet with a representative of the 14 communities involved and provided them with a copy of the Bill . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Sorry, hon. member, we're not into the Bill. You do not have the opportunity to be able to provide supplementary information.

Secondary Education

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, this is directed to the Minister of Education. School opened this week and questions as to curriculum and costs of education arise. On June 24 the minister stated in the House that in terms of implementation of the secondary education curriculum only two changes would be taking place this fall. In view of the minister's comments last Friday, has she changed her position on this matter, and is this new curriculum now being implemented?

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Will the Assembly agree to the completion of this series of questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: I hear noes. We need unanimous consent.

Before Orders of the Day, there was a point of order raised during question period.

MS BARRETT: Fine.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS (Second Reading)

Bill 7 Department of Social Services Act

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 7, the Department of Social Services Act. I have really no additional comments to add to my opening comments, but just to refresh members about the principles of

the Bill, I believe there was one important new principle inherent in the Bill . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, the Chair hesitates to interrupt, but perhaps the noise level in the Assembly might go down a touch so that we could hear the minister, please.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a little bit like speaking at home.

Just to refresh everyone's memory, I wanted to speak to the one principle that I would say is new, and that is that where moneys flow from the department for services and involve the payment for capital facilities by way of recognition of either rent or mortgage payments, we believe that the taxpayers' dollars should be protected and that in contractual arrangements the opportunity should be there for us to claim that investment should continue into the future. Mr. Speaker, that basically represents the particular principle in the Bill.

The other aspects of the Bill: I believe there may have been some misunderstanding on various points, and I expect them to be raised. We are modernizing the Bill to have it in line with other departmental Acts. I look forward to any comments that members may make on second reading and any clarifications that I might do.

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a few comments on Bill 7 and raise a couple of concerns I have with this particular Bill.

I think the Bill was drawn up essentially to first of all accommodate the splitting of the department currently known as Social Services and Community Health. I do think it is probably in the public's best interests to split up the two departments inasmuch as it may simplify to a certain degree and hopefully reduce the red tape and bureaucracy that many experienced when the two departments were one.

I'm hoping, however, that the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Community and Occupational Health have developed some kind of mechanism so that communication continues between the two departments to guarantee services to those people who may perhaps fall between the two departments. I think this is really important. Also, with that communication we'll reduce any of the services that may be duplicated. So I think we have to be very sensitive to this because there are people who may perhaps fall between the two departments. I do see a need for both departments to continue to work very closely with each other.

In observing Bill 7, it's quite obvious that the Bill contains no statement of philosophy for the department. There are no goals, no objectives outlined in that particular Bill. I think, considering the nature of the department, that it would've been very helpful at least to have a written overall philosophy, perhaps outlining certain programs, certain services offered by that particular department, because it's very important to clearly express exactly what the goals and objectives and philosophy are of this department. If it is stated in the Bill, then we have a chance to evaluate the overall success and performance of that department, and it's a lot easier to evaluate the programs and their effectiveness. I think it also provides some type of direction for a department if these things are outlined very clearly; it gives a department some type of focus. Those would be my comments in terms of a need for a philosophy and objectives.

When looking at the Bill in its totality, I am in agreement with the Bill in that it is separating itself from the current department of community health. But there is one clause in the Bill — and I will keep my comments quite general because I think this particular clause affects the overall philosophy of the department and has certain implications for the delivery of services for the department. The clause I am referring to gives the minister the power to charge fees for any services to any person.

I would like to explain why I am concerned about this particular clause in relation to the overall department. I don't quite understand if this is just a philosophical statement within the Bill or in fact the department does plan on charging fees for services delivered by the department. I think it's very important to remember that the Department of Social Services for the most part offers programs to those in this province who are very much in need of certain programs. It covers a wide variety of Albertans. Whoever these people are who are in need of these services, we must guarantee that they have equal access to them, because a lot of times the people using and accessing these services are in the lower economic part of our society.

If we're entertaining a clause that would charge user fees for these services and perhaps limit the accessibility of services to these people, I think this is a very serious clause in the Bill and it has serious implications for the overall department. If we begin to charge fees for services, I think this automatically will limit people to have access to those services. We also run into the danger of creating a two-tier system where those who can afford services will get the best quality services and those who cannot afford them will get lesser quality or perhaps no service at all.

There has been a lot of talk about how prevention is so important and so cost-effective. I think the whole idea of prevention is seriously limited if we talk about implementing some type of fees for services provided by the Department of Social Services. I think we're in a time when we should be seriously looking at increasing the prevention type of programs. I really feel that this is not the time — nor should it ever be — to introduce any type of user fees for services.

The clause in this particular Bill also states that the department may charge a fee for any research done or materials provided by the department. We are in a time when the department is handing over a lot of its responsibilities to community agencies, and I know a lot of those agencies are having a hard time getting the money together to run those operations. So I think that if we start charging fees for research done by the department or materials provided by the department, many of these agencies will simply go without this particular material and it will not be utilized as it should be.

I'm looking forward to some comments by the minister to clarify some of the concerns I have raised. I think the implication of user fees is serious. I know that this particular clause could probably be interpreted in many ways, but I'm reading it as it is in the Bill. It's in black and white there, so I would like to express my concerns about that particular clause.

Thank you.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I also wish to address this Bill. I have two very strong concerns about this Bill. One is the splitting of Social Services from community health. Certainly I worked in the field when the two departments were together, and the biggest problem was that there was very

little liaison between the two departments and often many people didn't even realize they were connected. I think there must be a strong connection because social workers, particularly in the area of social assistance, whether that be to welfare recipients or special needs recipients, are on the front line to pick up mental health problems as they develop. When we're looking at social assistance recipients, this would be in terms of the potential for child abuse, depression, and that kind of thing and also for the unemployed and the disabled. I think it's absolutely crucial that these two areas are strongly connected.

In terms of clause 9(2), in view of the minister's opening comments, I'm wondering why it is worded in this way. If it is only looking at capital costs, then putting in services, research, and materials would seem to be unnecessary. I'm very concerned that this is opening up the ability of the department to charge for services. To my mind, this principle destroys the whole concept of the safety net to people in need. I would also ask when and how it would be determined who would be charged. Would it be at a time of crisis, when a mother is in the police station with her husband and child and he has just been charged with incest? How would it be assessed, who would pay, and what would happen if people refused to pay for the services they need, possibly for the benefit of their children or their own well-being? So this aspect really troubles me.

In addition, charging for these services can add immeasurably to the guilt and shame and powerlessness that these people feel at the time of crisis. In fact, in terms of even needing social services, in my experience people usually feel terribly guilty and ashamed that they're even in such an agency, and then to be questioned about their financial position and face the possibility of having to scrape up money or not be able to bring their children to treatment because of user fees is very troubling.

The other concern I have in this area is: will charitable, nonprofit organizations then be pressured to charge their clients? On the many boards and agencies I worked with, we always consistently made a decision not to charge fees, for the reason I have mentioned prior to this. It's a fundamental commitment.

There is often an argument or belief offered that people who receive free service do not value it. This flies in the face of my experience of eight years of offering free service to people. They were often deeply grateful that there were no costs involved. I think, as the hon. member mentioned, distribution of materials in this area works to inform, to prevent, to aid those in distress, and that if in fact they are not free to agencies, they may not be available in all the places that people may find them. So again, I'm very concerned about that.

In terms of the distribution of information, the assessment for adoption, for instance, I'm concerned about a conflict of interest in assessments for people who want to adopt children. Who in fact is the client in this case? The person that pays or the department who then reads the assessment? What about confidentiality and issues around access to information? If the person doing the assessment is being paid by a prospective parent, what kind of position will that person, the psychologist, be in if in fact they feel the person is unfit? Who is their client then? So I think it's a very important issue. For this reason, I believe that with clause 9(2) in this Bill, I cannot support the Bill.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I have some questions I would like to ask the minister in regard to the Bill and the intent

of the Bill for activities in the department. I've expressed before my difficulty in understanding how it's now going to work with the division of responsibility for mental health into community services and Social Services, where in many cases we have the same clientele, people who require support in both categories. The difficulty was there previously between Social Services and Community Health, the original department, and Hospitals and Medical Care. There was enough of a division there to cause difficulties for users who were unable to find out exactly where to get support. Now we have split it three ways, and that simply exacerbates the problem between Social Services, Community and Occupational Health, and Hospitals and Medical Care, so I find that we need assurance in the community about it.

The unfortunate part of it all, Mr. Speaker, is that in many cases we're dealing with people where illness has left them, either temporarily or over longer periods, inarticulate and helpless. Perhaps it's difficult for us in the House to comprehend the tragedy of many of the people who suffer in this way and the problems that accrue to them when they must shop around and seek support from a number of different sources. I believe those people and all of our community associations and organizations need assurance that not only the Act as it's written and the regulations that hopefully we'll see in place but the support mechanisms and the staff who are responsible for applying these Acts are there and they can guarantee that the user is not further jeopardized by lack of integration of these three departments. The minister has assured us on a number of occasions that there are interdepartmental committees. I don't believe that kind of assurance really helps the user on the other end of the scale to feel comfortable that his or her needs will be met.

Mr. Speaker, another problem that is often expressed to me by consumers and the constituency that I serve and relate to is regarding standards and regulations. I understand that we have some documents being prepared that are generic in this regard and that these are going to be available for consultation — hopefully, shortly. Perhaps the minister can tell us about that so the public will have an opportunity for input before they're written into proper regulations.

Mr. Speaker, into that comes the matter of child welfare regulations, and I continually hear that these are not intact and understood by workers, users, and foster parents. I'd like some confirmation from the minister in regard to child welfare regulations.

Fees have been mentioned before, Mr. Speaker; item 9(2). I'm very puzzled and concerned by this inclusion. It appears to me to represent a considerable departure from the department's operation and in what people may expect from the department. I have not observed that fees have been charged for services before, and before this is written into law, I think the community has a right to understand exactly how those fees would apply, to whom and under what circumstances, so that we don't see any discrepancy between what we understand here and what in fact is going to take place.

Mr. Speaker, my final comment relates to the continuing privatization and commercialization of human services through the department, still without the standards and regulations I've previously mentioned that I think are absolutely essential before any moves of this kind take place: that we all know what standards are expected to be met by private and commercial organizations supplying residential care or any other human services; that we have in place clear and well-understood methods of evaluation of objectives and evaluation that can test those objectives and how well they are being

met, of monitoring and, most definitely, of accountability. When there are public tax subsidies going into commercial operations and there is no written program for accountability, I think we have reason to be very concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister will comment on some of these questions before I have to determine whether or not I can support second reading of this Act.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on only one aspect: the issue of fees; that is, with respect to the charging of fees for publications and literature put out by the Department of Social Services. This is a matter which has been of great concern to me for a long period of time. It relates to the free flow of information in the community. I've noticed a disturbing trend — it's a long-standing trend, but it seems to be reviving recently — of charging very significant fees for government publications, the effect of which is to inhibit the free flow of information. By way of example I would note that the federal government in the last three or four years has implemented policies of initiating fees for Statistics Canada publications and other matters. I have written to the government and expressed my concern, but they prevail.

We see fees in the hospital situation, which I have raised in this House: a \$35 flat fee plus \$2 a page to obtain a copy of one's hospital records. The city of Calgary four or five years ago was charging a dollar a page for copying bylaws, which is a matter I raised. I'm most concerned about this because what we're dealing with is our capacity for policy making. The most important thing this country needs is good policy, and good policy is dependent on the proper flow of information. That is not a secondary matter, Mr. Speaker; that is of the very highest priority to this country. The difficulty is that the costs inhibit the flow of information, and once the flow of information is inhibited, we can never really be sure what the effects of that are upon the community. It's not just major items, or what are on its face major items of information that are of concern, but very many smaller items which enable individuals in the community who are following Social Services and other matters to be able to understand the detailed implications of policies and thereby put meat on the skeleton of policy.

I would urge the minister to pay particular attention to this issue of the free flow of information, Mr. Speaker, particularly because I've noted over the years that there is a great tendency of bureaucrats to focus very narrowly on the issues before them. One of those is cost control, in the very narrowest sense, but we shouldn't be penny-wise and pound-foolish, and in this matter sensible policy direction from the very top is required. In light of this provision being in the legislation and the signal that that legislation may give to bureaucrats, I would urge the minister to very carefully review that issue and set a tone so that this very free flow of information that is so important to critical policy-making decisions is not inhibited.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I add to the objections in principle delineated by my hon. friends from Edmonton, Calgary and Edmonton. The objection that I have made before and will continue to make in all Bills, that for a department to do something that should not be countenanced in the way of delegation of authority — that is, the department or the Lieutenant Governor in Council, so it's the government, not only may make grants for certain purposes, which is fair enough, but also by regulation may

write their own ticket for the purposes for which those grants are made. Those powers should always be set out in the Act itself. It is no answer, as has been ventured by the government ministers responsible in other cases, that the votes will appear in the estimates annually. That's putting the cart before the horse, Mr. Speaker. The powers should be there before votes are attempted for the purposes. It is subversive of the principles that we should work on in this Legislature to put the powers to prescribe by regulation at the disposal of the government. That is a matter of principle and should be added to the reasons why this Bill should not be supported.

MR. SPEAKER: May the minister sum up?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I want to add a couple of comments.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps all hon. members could keep an eye on the Chair in the process. The Member for Edmonton Kingsway, please.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, the first two comments are sort of general. It seems to me that in most of the Bills brought in by this government, there's a lack of any statement of philosophy or basic principles or basic objectives outlined, and this Bill is common to most of the others in that regard. It would seem to me that that's a very important lack in a Bill; it should have some sense of direction, some sense of focus.

Instead, what we get is a sort of omnibus handing out of power to a minister with incredible powers, and supposedly the only limit is the total amount of money that we've voted in the budget somewhere earlier, with no direction or reason why the minister should or shouldn't spend money for particular things. The Bills are much too broad and much too vague in that regard.

Of course, having said that as a general criticism of the Bill, clause 9(2) allowing user fees . . . No matter what the intention of the government and no matter how well the minister might explain it — it's only for this, or it's only a fee to use your computer to get some information for somebody that needs it, only for some documents that need to be released, or whatever explanation she might come up with — the fact is that it doesn't say that in the Bill. The fact is that in the Bill it's a licence to bring in user fees, and I don't know how user fees can be consistent with the need for helping somebody that needs help. You can hardly give somebody social assistance and then charge them a user fee for doing it; it doesn't make any sense.

So I guess I'll just have to vote against Bill 7, Mr. Speaker, mainly on that principle.

MR. SPEAKER: May the minister please stand up and reply?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. minister?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to conclude debate on Bill 7. A number of points have been raised. Some of them, in my view, are very appropriate; others.

I believe, are points that have come forward as a result of some possible misunderstanding.

I would first say that the Member for Edmonton Avonmore is now in her seat, and I wanted to note that when I was speaking to caveats or the registering of the government's or the people's interests in projects in capital costs, this relates to another section altogether. Mr. Speaker, I realize with some trepidation that I shouldn't be speaking to particular sections of the Bill, that I should be speaking to the principle of the Bill, but I thought it was important to make that clear. I hadn't wanted her to misunderstand that.

A number of important points have been raised. I think we should begin by speaking to the matter of philosophy and point out for hon. members that whether they agree with the philosophy or not, I believe it's important that they see it enunciated as in the Social Development Act, which has a major impact. In other words, departmental acts set out in a structural way how we might deal with things; the Social Development Act sets out fairly clearly the areas that must be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission I would like to read section 2 of the Social Development Act because I think it's important to the debate here:

The Minister, out of funds voted by the Legislature, for the purpose of ensuring that no person within Alberta will lack the goods and services essential to health and well-being, may provide financial assistance and may make all provisions and pay all amounts which he considers necessary or expedient to carry out the intent and purpose of this Act.

While I think we all recognize that that's a very broad statement and a very broad provision, as we evolve in our province and country, we see that needs are identified and change very quickly. I believe that very broad statement speaks to needs and also allows on a timely basis the Legislature to address those needs and the government to address those needs in a programmed way.

The Member for Edmonton Calder first raised the concern about liaising in terms of the two parts formerly in the department, one now housed in another department. The Member for Edmonton Gold Bar also raised this. A very important point. I don't think there's anything that governments or departments that deal with very complex human issues wrestle with more than seeing that services are co-ordinated and delivered on a timely basis, that we don't have duplication of effort which then takes away from our ability to deliver a better service, all of which is important and all of which I continue to wrestle with. I would say for hon. members that the battle only seems to be half won at any one time, because every time we identify a new service that needs to be delivered, we take a look at all the people who might be a part of delivering that service.

I think the hon. Member for Gold Bar will be even more concerned when she realizes that probably she's identified three departments and there are actually five which should be identified. We can add the Department of Education in terms of a number of services that schools will identify that really are in the social area, as well as the Solicitor General's area as it speaks to the young offenders that possibly also have some services delivered by our department.

It's very complex, and an area in which I would be pleased to continually receive advice, information from members as they see the service being delivered, and suggestions they might have in terms of better co-ordination. I know that that's difficult from the outside, so to speak,

but they do have concerns raised with them by the public. I hope to continually receive those and try to do a better job of that co-ordination, because whether we're talking about two deputy ministers within the same department, we're still talking about separate lines of authority and separate programming needing to be co-ordinated. So the problems exist inside and outside, regardless of whether we're speaking of two departments or not.

The area of so-called fees. I've realized as a result of ...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, I hesitate to interrupt, but there's a conversation taking place in the Assembly which should not be. Please.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the area of fees was raised, and I would like to clarify that. Certainly if I had believed it was a matter of a new principle, I would have raised it. I do not believe it's a matter of a new principle; maybe some hon. members will not agree with me. The fee area is already covered in the departmental Act. It's again in the section that speaks to the powers of the minister. Where many, many years ago when this Act was written, many services were delivered within institutions, it speaks to fees being able to be charged relating to institutions, and of course we deliver services now in a far different way. Fewer and fewer of those services are being delivered to people in institutional care. It was felt that to follow up on things that were already occurring to make it clear that the mandate was there — I can give hon. members an example. For instance, parents by agreement can contribute to a child's care in the child welfare area and the handicapped children's services area. We're delivering services. Parents also contribute to those services, and for want of a better word, "fee" is an appropriate term. So there are many areas, Mr. Speaker.

In an evolutionary sense, I believe we should anticipate services that we will be delivering to people in need as we identify needs, but we should not limit those services to only those in need and where it's appropriate. Others may want to access them, and agencies have the ability to react to that request. They ought to be able, within their own scope, to deliver those services to others and charge a fee for them. To be able to anticipate what all those services may be, if we're looking ahead into the future, is very difficult.

I think one must speak to the policy area. The hon. Member for Calgary Buffalo mentioned that, and I agree with him. Policy is very critical, but what I believe to be even more critical is that we have very good people with common sense implementing that policy. The best policy in the world can be written and it can go awry because the implementation process is not there, having good people with common sense in place in order to make it work and make it work on a timely basis.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona — I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. I should relate back to the hon. Member for Gold Bar first because she raised the child welfare area and also standards development. Both are very important, and they've been raised in the Legislature before. The Child Welfare Act, being a little over a year old, I believe, is in a five-year phase of implementation. As we go from having certain types of priorities before and certain ways of delivering services before and shifting that, obviously it can't happen overnight, so there is a five-year implementation. Again, if hon. members have suggestions as we walk through that implementation, I'd be pleased to receive

them and answer questions at any time on where we're at in terms of implementation.

The matter of mental health services in the child welfare area is of course key, and questions have been raised in question period with respect to that. Again, it relates to co-ordination and is something that all of us must keep our eye on and, obviously, particularly the minister charged with that responsibility, even though those services may be purchased from another department that has more expertise in that particular area. We must obviously be very guarded in making sure that they're appropriately delivered and that our young people are served.

The standards development area was raised before. I say again: that project is ongoing. My commitment is to share information with all hon. members. If we are not sitting in this Assembly, I will share that information on a timely basis so that you may discuss with your constituents and interested parties as to whether they believe the standards that are evolving and will be implemented are appropriate. Of course, many of the groups that are out there working in the area, those who provide very excellent service, are in a position where they exert some amount of peer pressure in terms of how services are implemented as well.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether I have covered all the comments that were made. I'm saddened that not all hon. members believe they can support the intent of this Bill. I hope I have addressed the comments that were made which I believe were germane to the Bill, not outside the area but only speaking to the Bill, because other things have been raised that I believe were completely outside. I would ask all hon. members to please consider supporting the Bill.

[Motion carried; Bill 7 read a second time]

Bill 29

Department of Manpower Statutes Amendment Act, 1986

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 29, the Department of Manpower Statutes Amendment Act, 1986.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that a Bill such as this that makes some significant changes to the former Department of Manpower, now the new department of career development and employment, would have come with a few more comments from the minister.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of concerns about this Bill that I hope the minister will be able to respond to in closing. One is just the fact of the change of name. Along with the name, everything else must be changed: the letterhead, the brochures, the pamphlets, and the business cards for everybody employed in the department. I wonder why the name change was necessary. I don't think that a name change alone is going to change the structure of the department. I think the name change may only be cosmetic and that if we're really going to address the concerns that Albertans have, we're going to have to do something that's just a little more than cosmetic.

There are a number of sections, Mr. Speaker, that cause a great deal of concern. I worry about the principle of having the one change in section 9, a two-word change. We used to have that the minister would "establish [or] operate [any] programs"; now we have that the minister "may establish, provide for or operate [any] programs." I

worry about "provide for," because I think that in those two simple words we can suddenly see a change from the department establishing and operating to providing for. Is that provision going to be in the private sector? Does it remove the responsibility for services that should be established and operated by the department to the private sector, so that the government, when serious problems arise, can turn and say: "Well, that's not our problem. We only provided for it. It's not our responsibility. It's out there in the private sector. They're the ones that operate the program, not us." That is a major concern, a major change, and it must be addressed.

Under section 1, again we have major changes to the department. The entire section 1(e) is being repealed. What is that going to do? It describes the services that were previously provided by the department. Are we no longer going to provide employment placement services? Are we no longer going to provide and identify locations that may have employment possibilities for people who are unemployed in other locations in our province? Are we no longer going to have training programs? Are we going to have consultative services through the department anymore? With that section gone, the entire principle is changed. That must be addressed.

Under programs and services, the old department used to say that the minister would "provide a comprehensive range of manpower programs and services." Mr. Speaker, that entire section has been repealed; it's gone. What is the minister going to provide now? Is there going to be provision for programs and services through the minister's department?

The advisory council is being changed as well, Mr. Speaker. From my understanding of the Bill, we will no longer have the advisory council. The council was there to advise the minister on what kinds of programs we needed in our province, but with no board, who is going to advise the minister? How will the information come to the minister? Is he just going to look out the window and see the unemployment rates? Is he going to look at the lineups at the food banks and say, "Oh well, that's not working; we've got to change a few things"? Where is the information going to come from? Where are the duties outlined? I don't see that in this Bill. I don't see the duties outlined, I don't see where the responsibilities are, and I wonder why they're not there.

Mr. Speaker, this is more than a cosmetic change, but there's no response. We're going to have to look very seriously at the responses the minister provides to us when he sums up. At the moment too many questions are outstanding, too many changes are being considered with this piece of legislation. I anxiously await a response prior to making any recommendation to my colleagues to support or not support this piece of legislation.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, just a short comment. I'm concerned that part 4, where the minister formerly had an advisory council, is being repealed. I know I've probably been one of the foremost critics in giving the government the dickens for having advisory councils and various patronage jobs and feeling that they had given a job or an appointment to everyone with blue and orange underwear in Alberta. But in this particular case there are so many ideas and thoughts that need to be brought into the thought process from manpower development, probably one of the more important portfolios as we move through a modern industrial revolution, if you want to call it that: moving

from the goods-producing sector to the service-producing sector with the idea of creating small business. We need a terrific multitude of ideas to help a minister, no matter what political faith, run the department properly. I'm a little concerned that he has cut himself off from what could be a great source of information and ideas, in particular involvement by the community if it were handled properly.

I'm having a little trouble, Mr. Speaker, understanding why the minister would put himself in such a disadvantaged position so quickly when what seems to me to be a minimal cost — it might be a little nagging to be told now and again that you don't know what you're talking about, but the main thing about an advisory committee is that it gives that broad spectrum of ideas. In particular it helps that two-way communication that's so necessary to devise the multiple choices and ideas we have operating in the community to create more jobs.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I have just a few brief comments as well. I'm sure we'll get back into this Bill in more detail at the committee stage. I, too, believe that the essence of the department has been changed somewhat by the contents of the Bill. This frequently happens under what are known as housekeeping Bills. I understand the convenience of changing departmental names and titles and certain references and then actually making substantive changes at the same time. I'm not being critical when I say that. I understand the efficiency of doing that. However, I would like as well the minister's assurance prior to determining the direction of the vote on this Act, not by virtue of its being a housekeeping Bill — that's not a problem — but by virtue of what appears to be the government absolving itself of any responsibility with respect to employment programs.

I don't think anyone from any political party would ever say that it is entirely the responsibility of any government to make sure that employment exists or anything like that. Honestly, we all understand that we live in a mixed economy; any denial of it is just silly. However, Mr. Speaker, when we have cycles that are commonly called boom-and-bust cycles — I know the minister knows what that means — we have had a government that we've all been critical of that formally recognized in legislation the responsibility of government to do its level best to level out the worst parts of those troughs; that is, the down cycles. By the change in this Bill, I see what I believe is the government absolving itself of any sort of responsibility in that regard. Of course, amendments are possible at committee stage, and maybe the minister will look at that, but for now I'd like his assurance that this government is not, by virtue of the essence of this Bill, saying that it is no longer responsible for any aspect of unemployment, whether or not that means direct job-creation programs or proper programs to ensure the long-term diversification of the economy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I'll be brief. Colleagues on this side of the House have raised the main objections to the changes in the legislation, but I want to look at that in its totality. It seems to me that, yes, the essence has changed, and basically it's changed in the direction of some of our main complaints about many of the Bills. The fact is that it gives more power to the minister and less sense of direction or purpose or measurable things so that we can say, "This is what this is for," and can check afterward to see whether or not the Manpower department met its

commitments and so on. It seems to me that what you've done is bring in another vague Bill giving omnibus powers to the minister with less input from, for instance, the advisory council that was there before and is not now.

I think that's an alarming trend and that the minister should seriously stop and look at what kinds of Bills they're bringing into this House and try to build into them — the government has been very good at forcing other people to be accountable. As an example I can think of all the talk of evaluation of teachers; being a teacher, I heard a lot about it. I can think of my wife, who is an occupational therapist, being told that to be accountable, she had to keep track of what she does in five-minute units, which is totally ridiculous; you can't keep track of every five minutes all day. Yet the government is not accountable in its own Bills. It brings in an omnibus Bill saying that the minister can do what he likes and then maybe we can look at it later. I know they stick in some clause that says there will be some accountability on money Bills, but there isn't even that on these Bills. A general statement of accountability isn't what we're looking for. We're looking for a more specific direction in the Bills as they come in, a more specific statement of principles and policy and direction to the minister so that he doesn't have a sort of blank cheque. I keep finding this. Bill after Bill comes in in that manner.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to Bill 29, I have some concerns as well. In this particular Act, for example, it seems to me there is really no indication of how the minister is going to be responsible for the administration of his department. There is no indication here of any performance targets that should be presented to this Assembly. I think we as legislators need to know if the resources that are being allocated for manpower development are being effectively used. It seems to me that the minister should have some obligation to present to this Assembly each year his targets for reducing the unemployment problem in this province and that that should be subject to a review. At the end of the fiscal year we can see whether or not the minister and his department have reached those targets. This Bill doesn't provide for any kind of performance review like that.

In this province we do have one mechanism of performance review, and it's called an election. I think the government should have realized on May 8 that their performance was not adequate. But beyond that, we need to have on a more ongoing basis, on an annual basis, some mechanism in an Act that empowers the minister for career development and employment — what targets for unemployment is he looking at for the coming year? What concrete measures is he taking that can be presented to our constituents and effectively reviewed and monitored over the course of the coming months and years? Mr. Speaker, I think it's just not adequate to leave a Bill like this, creating the department of career development and employment, without any appropriate measure of responsibility and accountability.

We're now looking as well, as some of my colleagues mentioned, at some major sections that will be repealed. I'm rather surprised that we're repealing the whole section that says, "The Minister shall provide a comprehensive range of manpower programs and services." What then is the purpose of the department, if not to provide a comprehensive range of manpower programs and services?

We're looking as well at the question of a Manpower Advisory Council, which the minister is suggesting to us is no longer required. He may be a talented individual.

Mr. Speaker, but surely he could benefit from the advice of many people in this province. I might suggest that an advisory council is something that should be maintained and perhaps beefed up. Perhaps we should look at some representatives on that council from the food banks so that the minister would understand the hardship caused by the unemployment occurring in this province, perhaps representatives from the thousands of unemployed people in this province and a representative from some of the major labour organizations in this province which this government has already indicated to us it holds in contempt.

For many of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, there is no way I can support Bill 29.

MR. SPEAKER: May the minister sum up?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I guess in some ways I do owe an apology to the members opposite, in the sense that two fundamental changes in this Bill did deserve some preamble. In fact, nothing is disappearing. What we have done is moved to repeal the establishment by statute of the Manpower Advisory Council. That council will be moved from appointment by statute into a ministerial appointment. It had to do with the nature of the splitting of the departments of Advanced Education and Manpower. So I'd like to give some comfort to the Member for Edmonton Belmont and the hon. leader of the Liberal Party that in fact we will be maintaining the Manpower Advisory Council. As a matter of fact, I am also moving to establish another advisory council on immigration and settlement services. I just wanted to point that out.

The other point, Mr. Speaker, is that we are repealing under the Manpower Development Act the programs and services provided by the department, and that gives us the opportunity to move them to the department Act in itself. Again, that was some housecleaning that had to be done and should have been done when this government split Advanced Education and the Department of Manpower. For convenience's sake we are just moving those two items into the department Act rather than the existing manner in which they were in the Act.

I would also like to point out to the Member for Edmonton Belmont that we are changing the name of this department for a couple of reasons. One is because in my view manpower is a sexist name. I don't think it appropriately reflects what the department does. It's consistent with our sensitivities to the women's movement. We were the last department in the country to use manpower, and I'm very pleased to move away from that name and move to the name of career development and employment. I would certainly hope that the members opposite would support that move for that point only, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to also say that the member opposite asked about targets. He can go back to his constituents and tell them that this government is doing everything it can to move to zero unemployment. That is our target; I've stated that in this House. We will do everything within our abilities to move to that unemployment rate.

I think that may answer all of the questions, Mr. Speaker. I should conclude by saying that I think career development and employment very appropriately defines what this department does; manpower did not. It gives the public the opportunity to identify this department with career development and to identify with the employment nature of some

of our programs. I do take exception, and I think it in fact is a very appropriate name change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 29 read a second time]

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Bill 34

Health Disciplines Amendment Act, 1986

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, in moving second reading of Bill 34, the Health Disciplines Amendment Act, 1986, I'd just like to make some brief remarks indicating what this amendment to the Health Disciplines Act does.

As members know, the Health Disciplines Act is amended relatively frequently as new health disciplines go through the process. On this occasion, in addition to adding the discipline of psychiatric nursing to the schedule and changing the name from "respiratory technologist" to the currently more accepted title of "respiratory therapist," we are changing some of the concepts of the statute. First of all, we are going to allow the appointment of expert committees prior to designation being recommended. This is based on the fact that the Health Disciplines Board has found on occasion that the sequence of investigation by the board without expert advice prior to recommending designation has caused some difficulties, and they feel they would like to have expert advice prior to recommending designation. These expert committees will also be useful in developing draft regulations so that that development of regulations can to some extent be concurrent with the original investigation to see whether or not designation is justified.

A minor change is to allow health disciplines under the Health Disciplines Act to have honorary registers for non-practising members. Of course, that's similar to what happens in most other professional and occupational legislation.

The other significant change is to, I suppose the word is, "refine" the appeal process in two ways. The Health Disciplines Board and the health disciplines committees will henceforth be restricted to subpoenaing members of the designated discipline or the person who has been complained about rather than being able to subpoena other people. Of course, this is in almost exact accord with most other professional legislation.

In the event of registration appeals, Mr. Speaker, rather than an appeal from a decision by the appropriate health disciplines committee to the Health Disciplines Board and the subsequent decision of the board being nonappealable by the health disciplines committee, we are going to change that system so that the Health Disciplines Board will still be an appeal body in the event of registration appeals. But rather than making a decision which is irrevocable, they will refer the matter back to the appropriate health disciplines committee for further review and consideration, with their reasons for doing so. Of course, any subsequent decision of the health disciplines committee will be appealable to the Court of Queen's Bench.

Mr. Speaker, with those comments I would appreciate any remarks that may be made by various members of the Assembly.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I stand to support this Bill in principle. Though we have many questions that may more appropriately be raised at the committee stage, I would just like to say in response now in terms of the principle

that indeed we're moving into an area with the health disciplines generally where there is a lot of confusion and a lot of concern amongst the general public and in various professions today. It has to do with an increasing incidence and numbers of people involved in what we would call the ancillary services in the health field or, as one person referred to them, the acolytes for the high priesthood of the medicine man. Indeed, there are a great number of not just doctors and nurses who we turn to and look to but a whole host of other disciplines and other people who deliver health care services. There is a great deal of confusion in terms of how they are accredited, what disciplines they abide by, and what the public policy surrounding their work needs to be. So it's an important Act to have and to have frequent amendments to, as the minister has already indicated.

However, it also brings up the difficulty that we might have in very established or conservative circles about assessing the quality and need and the accreditation for entirely unorthodox or alternative forms of healing and those who have an orientation completely other than is the commonly held orthodox view of medicine. It's important that we look with great care to what they are offering and not just to dismiss out of hand some of the aspects of healing that are exercised in other parts of the globe but that are not part of the orthodoxy of how we practise medicine, so far at least, here in Alberta.

Furthermore, there is great confusion — I don't know about the hon. minister in his office but certainly in ours — a great number of letters and representations from all kinds of people in other health disciplines who are wondering about their status under Alberta health care. But that's perhaps a matter that the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care will clarify later in September, as he said he would.

As for the Bill itself, Mr. Speaker, the aspect of adding honorary members or having them be honoured members although they're not practising — I don't know if it's necessary or essential, but there it is. The introduction of this advisory committee certainly is crucial to what this Bill is about. It would seem important to have a committee of so-called experts go out and do the proper assessment and investigation of some of the new health disciplines. However, it still does not lay it out more clearly. If we're going to go into this in terms of putting good legislation, why isn't it more clearly spelt out how these experts are decided to be experts, what sort of expertise they have, and who exactly they may be? Also, the funding for this advisory committee is not regulated at all. It seems it could be anybody, at any point in time, at any price. We're wondering if there could be more restrictions on who they are.

As well, that might open up the area of just how political some of these people on the advisory committees might be, as opposed to how neutral, and what a more wide-ranging perspective they might have in terms of some of the health disciplines. Certainly it would be difficult to have an expert orthopedic surgeon try to assess the worth of a chiropractor, for instance, or an expert pharmacologist try to assess the efficaciousness of a naturopath. There are certainly biases. Let's not pretend there aren't biases by people throughout the health care system. How are these biases or these political aspects going to be overcome so that a fair and neutral assessment can be made as far as is possible about the quality and efficaciousness of new people on this expanding horizon?

Furthermore, I haven't been amongst large bureaucracies like this for long, but there does seem to me to be all

kinds of new bureaucratic difficulties when a board is at work doing the work that it thinks it's doing but there's an advisory committee also at work. It seems, as the minister has indicated, that the board has in a sense been asking for this advisory committee, but I can imagine the adjustments that will need to be made in terms of where the authority really rests, who makes the decisions, who does the investigation, and who is really the final arbiter. I'm not at all clear at this point if the board really is the final arbiter or whether it's going to be continually sent back to the advisory committee and whether they as the so-called experts are just going to be mandating and dictating to the board as to what they should be doing or whether the board will really have the teeth and the authority to make the final decisions in this area.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, we basically support the Bill in principle. It's an important area for public policy to be carefully defined. On that basis we support it as well as the including of the honorary members, the advisory council. But it is one we would certainly be watching quite carefully, and we would have more specific questions at committee stage.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the minister . . . The Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. TAYLOR: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, for being slow on my feet.

I want to talk in a very general line on the general principles that have bothered me through the years. I know that the minister, like many other members in the House and myself, are members of professions that are supposedly self-governing. What has concerned me through the years is how our professions, particularly in the western world, under the guise of governing and making laws and regulations in order to protect the public have become increasingly self-serving rather than public-oriented. I think one of the things that has happened over the last two generations is that the cost of a professional acquiring their education, be it in medicine or engineering or law or anything else, is to a large percentage paid by the public. In many cases today about all the individual supplies is the drive or the initiative to want to stay in school. Through loans and various other areas there are methods by which education is acquired.

We go on from that. After the person has graduated and gone out into the business world, their professions seem to continually work at trying to make sure that nothing elbows in on them, whether you're a lawyer worrying about the real estate agents or the mortgage brokers getting a commission, a doctor worrying about the chiropractors, a CA worrying about the certified public accountants, an engineer worrying that some architect won't let you have the right to build a garage, or the architect won't let the engineers go.

What's bothering me, Mr. Minister, is that we're getting so that the professions are governing themselves to a degree that I don't think is necessarily for the public good. We should be looking very closely at the idea that nearly every profession that wants to organize itself should have as at least a third of their governing board or their standards board laymen or people not from their profession. Government could take the leadership in this area, because you can hardly expect we engineers or lawyers or doctors to do it. Maybe this would be a chance to bring this in. I'm just

talking general principles which would start the move toward making the professions much more responsible to the public rather than worrying about their interface between each other. I think medicine is one of the worst for that — maybe engineering comes a close second; I don't know. Each one is trying to elbow somebody else out of a field they think is theirs, under the guise, of course, that they're protecting the public but really down deep more for self-advancement.

I feel that one of the things addressed in this Bill that could be gone into more deeply, much more than we hear today, is the professions' duty to the public to provide not only a service but public input to their governing bodies. I think a good start would be roughly a third of the governing body being laymen.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

DR. REID: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, in response to the remarks made by the Member for Edmonton Centre, I think he referred to the high priesthood of health care being the physicians. He's somewhat out of date — I would think by about 20 years. Being a practising physician for some 30 years in the province, it's about 20 years ago that we switched from the concept of hierarchy to the concept of a team approach to health care. I can assure him that for the last 20 years of my practice there was no doubt about it that the nurses, physiotherapists, laboratory technicians, occupational therapists, and everybody else have been involved in a team approach to health care.

As far as his comments about unorthodox methods of treatment, perhaps the Member for Edmonton Centre isn't aware that the health discipline of acupuncture was designated some time ago and that we had a committee including acupuncturists working on regulations prior to the proclamation of that appropriate section of the Act. I think that was passed some two and half years ago. In other words, the provision for what he referred to as unorthodox treatment and therapies is already in place and indeed is under way.

His remarks about the advisory committees. It's quite specific, Mr. Speaker. Although we are currently on the general provisions of the Bill, perhaps I should refer to section 4. "The Minister may establish an advisory committee to provide advice to the Board." That's to the Health Disciplines Board. There is no doubt about it; the Health Disciplines Board are the people with the responsibility, and they are the people who will ultimately make a recommendation for or against designation or any other matter to the appropriate minister, currently myself.

Section 4 also includes provision for the payment of the members of these committees. I can assure the hon. member that so far all the current health disciplines committees and the Health Disciplines Board costs are really quite moderate in relation to the responsibility they accept on behalf of all Albertans.

The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon made some remarks that could be taken up in an unfortunate way, and I'm sure that's not the way he meant it. Having had for over 18 months the responsibility of the health disciplines as well as the responsibility for professions and occupations in general and having met with, I think, every major executive group of the professions during that period of time, I've

been remarkably impressed by the way in which the boards of directors, the executives — whatever you may call them from one profession to another — handle the responsibilities and designated authority they have and also by their approach to the welfare of Albertans in general.

So far I have not found any professional group where I had a concern that they didn't understand the whole nature of professional legislation, which is that it is for the good of the general public and not for the benefit of the profession. We delegate authority and responsibility to the boards or governors of the various professions. Perhaps the member was unaware that it is now the case in almost all those boards and governors — there are lay members of the public on the college of physicians board, on the benchers of the Law Society, and on the others. Those people take a very great interest in the ongoing affairs of the professions and look after the public interest very well. So that has already been started and has worked very well so far. The professional boards and governors themselves have appreciated the input they have had from the lay members.

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I would commend the legislation to the Assembly.

[Motion carried; Bill 34 read a second time]

Bill 39
Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund)
Act, 1986

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 39, the Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund) Act, 1986.

All hon. members will recall that this Bill is to put in place by way of an appropriation Act the estimates which this House has considered over the past couple of weeks, subsequent to messages being received from the Lieutenant Governor. The money, of course, is for hospitals and universities, and I think all members are well aware of the intent of the legislation. I've had an opportunity to discuss with the hon. ministers who are responsible for the legislation the requests for the funding, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 39.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, in speaking in support of Bill 39, I would like to simply recognize the importance of the considerations of the estimates themselves and hope that the government does see fit under the authority of this Act to take into account the considerations, the concerns expressed by the Official Opposition, and the recommendations moved therein.

I concur in second reading.

[Motion carried; Bill 39 read a second time]

Bill 40
Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund
Special Appropriation Act, 1986-87

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, this legislation, which has been introduced recently, is a piece of legislation of which I am sure all members are well aware. In this legislation it is subsequent to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act itself, section 5 therein, where it is provided for the transfer of funds from the General Revenue Fund collected from nonrenewable resource revenue into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to allow us to carry out the important programs which we are under way with and which have been debated,

in least in part, I admit, in this Assembly. Therefore, I think it is of a nature that all members are aware. It is the established amount of transfers between the revenue fund to the heritage fund.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 40, Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Special Appropriation Act, 1986-87.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, recognizing the importance of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund as a pool of money collected on behalf of all Albertans in lieu of future resource revenue that will decline as a result of depleting natural resources, naturally the Official Opposition supports this Bill, as we do the continued building of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund and the use of that fund as a tool to diversify the economy. We support those goals and hope that the government does the same. We regret, however, the lack of a fall session, which led to this Bill's being in some respects already retroactive.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on this Bill. It's with some extreme reservation that we would have to support it. This Bill is not an innocuous Bill. It is not what it seems to be, with two small clauses. It is not something that should be treated as a matter of administrative course. It is a Bill that reflects a profound and frightening encroachment upon the income and integrity of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

Let me explain that. Prior to 1983-84, 30 percent of resource revenues received by this province went to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Since that time and in this Bill we're now being asked to authorize that only 15 percent of that resource revenue will go to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Prior to 1983-84 all income earned on the assets of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund went back into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund to promote the growth of that fund and to in turn benefit from the strength and power of compounding on those earnings. Now 100 percent of those earnings goes to the General Revenue Fund.

Secondly, this amounts to the Treasurer's application of smoke and mirrors in the accounting of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. This year, 1986-87, it is budgeted in the budget speech that fully \$440 million will go from resource revenue into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund; that is, from the General Revenue Fund into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. What hasn't been pointed out by the Treasurer is that in fact the General Revenue Fund will in turn supplement, subsidize, losses on five Crown corporations of about \$350 million.

These same Crown corporations provide income into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. In fact, net earnings would amount to about \$90 million. This 15 percent is an encroachment to the heritage trust fund, an affront to the heritage trust fund in the sense that it underlines the lack of growth that we can now expect in that fund, underlines what I perceive to be the moves of a desperate government going after easy money rather than confronting the problems and contingencies of the 1980s and coming up with restraint programs and with aggressive, forward-looking programs that are not easy to implement, discover, and make work well but instead are taking an easy course of action to find easy money to solve difficult problems.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I note that this Bill refers to an amendment, the term "non-renewable resource revenue" as defined in the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust

Fund Act. So you look in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act and find that nonrenewable resource revenue is money that is partially defined by the Mines and Minerals Act. Following this labyrinth through to its conclusion, I find that we are again brought to bear on Bill 18. Notwithstanding comments from this side in support of this particular piece of legislation, the Bill we're presently considering — which we will support — I just want to echo that this caucus and this Official Opposition is still very concerned about the material amendments in Bill 18 to the Mines and Minerals Amendment Act, and we recognize the interrelatedness of this legislation.

But, Mr. Speaker, I guess on a bit of a philosophical note, in view of the debate that's occurring on the sharing of these resource revenues between the general fund and the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, I see nothing wrong with the government from time to time altering the percentage that goes into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund from general resource revenues. That will depend on the economic circumstances with which a government has to cope in any given fiscal year, and the concept of changing that percentage from time to time doesn't — well, it concerns me, but I don't see any over-riding need to criticize that if it's done with a stewardly concept of the long-term future financial economic health of the province.

The Heritage Savings Trust Fund ought to be earmarked for the long-term development of this province, Mr. Speaker, and with that in mind these resources that are being directed in that line have got to be well used and well applied so that we don't any longer have to depend exclusively on the whims of an international commodity market for the financial and economic health of this province. But at the same time, we're not advocating major disruptions in the public service of this province in order to also accommodate to this kind of vagaries in the international commodity market. With that in mind, we're not advocating that we pump money into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund in order to maintain some ceiling or some traditional percentage of those resource revenues going into that fund. If in these particular economic circumstances we are in the government, in order to maintain the high quality of public service and programs provided to the people of this province, has to dip a bit into that resource revenue in order to support those programs and if that means cutting somewhat the amounts of funds going into the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, we feel that is a better approach than the disruption and dislocation of a massive and indiscriminate cutting of services and the laying off of people.

Certainly the most important problem this province faces in this particular time is job creation. It doesn't seem to me that this government or any government should be adopting a job-creation policy or program that means the laying off of massive numbers of people. That is an important point that I want to stress. For the long-term management of this resource, for the benefit of the people of the province, this government has to keep its eye on the future and the long term and use the resource revenues of the province in that direction. But we also recognize the short-term problems that this province faces and the need to, perhaps on a temporary basis, dip a little deeper into that resource revenue well in order to maintain the services of this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Bill, but I can't resist a few comments about it. First, I

was beginning to wonder if the government was ever going to get around to doing this. I mentioned it in the House two or three weeks ago, and finally, of course, the Bill appears. It seems to me we're something like 10 months late; it should have been brought in early in the session because the legislation definitely says that it should have been brought in November of the year before the fiscal year to which it applies.

Some of the questions raised by other speakers in this Assembly it seems to me raise the problem of taking large amounts of money, of our revenues, setting them aside and trying to treat them differently. Over the years, having had an incredible number of reasons to take some money out of that for various programs — I'm thinking of Bill 39 and Bill 41 — and then for other reasons you might have put some money in, and sometimes you leave the interest in, and sometimes you don't — it's become a very complicated process. I'm wondering if the government wouldn't consider sort of streamlining that a little bit. The heritage trust fund is not under the scrutiny of this Assembly in the same way that the estimates are, so it would seem to me that in thinking in terms of putting money into or taking money out of the heritage trust fund, as this Bill puts money in, I could just raise that as a question. The government I think should rethink the myriad of types and kinds of transfers of money back and forth. The motion the other day could certainly have been in the estimates, or it could have been in the Capital Fund section that we looked at another time in Bill 41.

With those thoughts, I would just say to the minister that having reminded him that this Bill was due some time ago, I also remind him that the 1987-88 Bill, our appropriations Bill — if there is to be one — is also due sometime in November. I hope we don't also find ourselves 10 months late next year approving one, as we have this time.

MR. TAYLOR: Speaking on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to pose it from the point of view that it is perpetuating a myth, and that myth is basically that we have a large, fat heritage fund, a large pool of savings which Albertans can draw on. I think the biggest single drawback — and I know my colleague has already mentioned the flimflammy or the fancy type of accounting that's going on here transferring money back and forth. But the biggest point I'd get at when we're speaking on the principle of this Bill is the perpetuation of the idea that we have a large amount of money. We have a heritage trust fund. Recent surveys, too, I think back up the statement I'm going to make. The rest of Canada sees no real need why our agriculture should be helped out, why our oil should be helped out, why we need the transfer payments to continue because every time they turn around they say, "this huge heritage trust fund," which in fact doesn't exist.

This just perpetuates the other type of accounting that already has been questioned a number of times in this House. The Treasurer has tried to defend what his own profession has said time and time again is not correct listing of his assets, what the Auditor General has said time and time again is not correct. It's a voodoo type of accounting that our Treasurer conducts that isn't bad in itself if all he is fooling is his own front bench and his own backbenchers. It's all right to take them into task and do that type of accounting, but the point is that the rest of Canada is being fooled too, Mr. Speaker, into thinking: "What do they need any help in the oil industry for? Why do they need anything in agriculture? Our Treasurer says they've got these billions

floating around, that they wade barefoot through gold coins every Saturday morning, busy counting them." It doesn't exist.

The Treasury and this whole idea of the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund and a transfer to it is nothing more than trying to cover up the fact that we are not doing well. We are going in the hole. But for some reason or another, like the impoverished person that still wants to impress the neighbours, gets out the old car, polishes it up, covers the patches on his trousers, and drives in Saturday night to show off to the rest of the people in town, our Treasurer is practising a bit of subterfuge here.

I cannot see how we support this, particularly when it's not that we're kidding ourselves as much as that we're doing a disservice to the people looking for jobs in the oil industry; we're doing a disservice to the farmers of this province that are trying to get things under way and get turned around in a time of bad international pricing. Here we have a Treasurer dangling an empty purse with a big sign on the outside saying that it's full of billions. This type is holding us up with our communications with the rest of Canada and our communications for any decent, long-term policies that can be worked out with the rest of Canada, not only the federal government but the consuming provinces.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May the Provincial Treasurer conclude the debate?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[The Member for Edmonton Meadowlark rose]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken once. [interjections] The committee stage of the Bill is yet to come. The hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, not only does the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark not understand the legislation, he doesn't even understand the process.

Let me say that in dealing with this piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, I do acknowledge the comments and suggestions made by the Official Opposition in that I think they understand that it was difficult for us to bring this legislation forward in the fall of '85. Moreover, I think the way in which they approached the discussion on the principle of this legislation in second reading is to be commended in that they understand that in government we have to make some choices, we have to develop a fiscal plan, and we have to use the resources of the province to the extent that we can to get through these variations that affect our various sectors driven by world forces. The reasonable questions and suggestions given can be seen as supportive of the policy and of the process, and I recognize the reservations that they did make in terms of the legislation itself.

However, it is both distressing and unfortunate that the official Liberal Party is opposed to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. For so long this province has been proud and strengthened by the resources provided to us by oil and gas revenues. We have had the foresight to put some of these dollars aside to allow us to achieve a variety of objectives — never succeeded, never touched, never achieved by any other government in the world. It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker — and the record must show that they're opposed to it, both today and in the long litany of misinformation and criticisms and harangues that have taken

place with respect to this in question period and elsewhere — that that has to be shown here today.

I think all Albertans have a sense of pride when it comes to the Heritage Savings Trust Fund. Who is it, which of us when we knocked on the doors this past May 8 heard it said: "Spend that money; get rid of it." Which one of our constituents said that to us? Mr. Speaker, I know the constituents in Lethbridge East for sure strongly reinforced and strongly endorsed the position this government has taken with respect to the way in which this fund has been set up, its management and, clearly, its successes. I know that I would be glad to go north, south, east, and west in this province to defend, discuss, and explain the successes which have taken place as a result of our vision, this government's vision in putting in place this Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

I've had an opportunity over the past few weeks to discuss with the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark what it is that's been achieved through this fund. We can all talk about the major successes. I notice that just recently we saw the medical research foundation [report] tabled here in the Legislative Assembly. Take it up; it's here right now. If you just thumb through this, you'll find an amazing number of significant achievements which we in Alberta can point to as being unique to us as a result of the heritage fund and which in fact will have long-term future benefits, not just to us here in Alberta but to the world itself. Around this initiative, this now \$500 million fund which was set up in the capital projects division of the Heritage Savings Trust Fund, we have brought to this province some of the most imaginative, creative, brightest people in the world in the area of medical research. That in itself is a significant diversification of our economy, Mr. Speaker, because from that will come not just the humanitarian and medical achievements I've referred to but there will be a variety of spin-offs in terms of diversification flowing from this unique medical research fund. That itself puts us in the forefront in terms of humanitarianism, diversification, and management of the resources.

It's a difficult day when that Liberal opposition, the profligate spenders from Toronto and Ottawa, under the Liberal Party who have ruined this economy, who know nothing about saving, who want to waste and tax, come to this House and want to bring the same policies here, Mr. Speaker. It think that's absolutely a shame. Those policies — through the election of May 8 there was no threat of any reasonable policy from the Liberal Party. Tell me of one fiscal plan that they talked about through the election. Nothing was there at all.

What can we do? Our only option is to drop back and look at the federal Liberal policy under Mr. Trudeau and others. How was that characterized, Mr. Speaker? It was characterized by wastefulness, the highest debt in the history of any democratic system, high taxation, intrusion into provincial rights, the rape of an industry. [interjections] And you're suffering from the National Energy Program yourself, as anyone else is. That's the fiscal plan that the Liberal Party is bringing to this Assembly. I know all hon. members would see it to be a dark day if we allowed that party to get control of the heritage fund, a dark day indeed. As far as I'm concerned, it will never happen in this province.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that not only has the smoke and mirrors approach been used across the way, the use of reference to voodooism in terms of the approach to providing this information to the Assembly — carefully I would say ... I would never suggest that it is the smoke that some hon. members may be using that has caused this distortion, not, in fact, the position of this government.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Let me say as well, Mr. Speaker, that with respect to the assets there has never been a question that these items in the capital projects division have not been assets. No accounting principle in the world would challenge that. What might be challenged is whether or not they could be assets in government approach to accounting or should be some other approach. Frankly, I often have been wrong, but I would say in this case that there are no general agreements with respect to accounting principles as it applies to government reporting. Why is that? Because no other government has taken the time, the initiative, and the foresight to put some money aside and to hold it in these kinds of assets, which have a clear, long-term use and benefit to the province of Alberta.

So I know that the people of Alberta, and certainly the members of this Assembly, who in their wisdom concur with this Bill, will obviously support it in second reading, will understand the uniqueness and the initiatives which are taken by this government, and will moreover discard out of hand this casual spurious criticism which we hear from across the way.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill number whatever it is — Bill 40, the appropriation Act, 1986/87.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair reflects upon the fact that having grown up in Medicine Hat, I've always wondered where the chinook winds came from.

[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	Gibeault	Osterman
Alger	Gogo	Pashak
Anderson	Hawkesworth	Piquette
Barrett	Heron	Reid
Bogle	Horsman	Rostad
Bradley	Hyland	Russell
Brassard	Isley	Shaben
Cassin	Johnston	Shrake
Cherry	Jonson	Sigurdson
Crawford	Koper	Stevens
Cripps	Kowalski	Stewart
Day	Laing	Strong
Downey	Martin	Trynchy
Drobot	McEachern	Weiss
Elliott	Mirosh	West
Elzinga	Mjolsness	Wright
Ewasiuk	Moore, R.	Young
Fox	Musgrove	Zarusky
Getty	Oldring	

Against the motion:

Chumir	Mitchell	Taylor
Hewes		

Totals:	Ayes — 56	Noes — 4
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[Bill 40 read a second time]

Bill 42

Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1986

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the hon. Minister of Energy, I move second reading of Bill 42, the Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1986.

This Bill brings the Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act in line with the new Business Corporations Act. Many

of the sections of this legislation are to strike out the "Companies Act," where the words appear, and substitute the "Business Corporations Act." It basically provides for a process whereby the Alberta Energy Company will be able to continue in existence pursuant to the legislation now in force, the Business Corporations Act. Of course, section 17 of the Bill is most important, stating that it

comes into force on the date on which a certificate of continuance is issued in respect of the Company under the Business Corporations Act.

There are no other matters of substantial principle involved in this legislation.

MR. PASHAK: I recognize that essentially all this Bill does is bring the Bill in line with the new [Business Corporations Act], but it seems to me that there is a greater principle involved with the operation of the company itself. As I understand it, at one time this company was largely a Crown-controlled corporation that was given certain real advantages in the sense that it was given land, such as the Suffield gas reserve to put under its jurisdiction. Since that time and over the years, this company has been largely privatized, and as I understand it, only some 25 to 30 percent of this company is now owned by the Alberta government.

If the government had retained control of this company at this particular time, I think it could have been a very powerful vehicle for helping the oil industry in this province. For example, as a company it could have bought up a lot of the gas that is being sold so cheaply today. It could have been held in reserve and put on the market at a much higher price in the future. I'm saying that it could have been used this way, and this is the way I think it should be used. I've already had a complaint from one drilling company that now that the company has been privatized,

or moved in that direction, the Alberta Energy Company has even been buying up drilling contracting companies and expanding in a direction that they previously promised the drilling industry they wouldn't go in.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that it's three minutes to one. If I may, I would move that we adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary Forest Lawn has moved adjournment. All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, by way of advising the Assembly as to government business for Monday next, it is proposed that on Monday afternoon the Committee of the Whole will take under consideration Bills 20 and 19, relating to the Women's Secretariat and so on; if there is time, will deal in Committee of the Whole with other Bills that are now on the Order Paper; and in the evening will deal with second readings, first Bill 11, the Alberta Stock Savings Plan Act, and if there is time thereafter, will move to the Employment Pension Plans Act. I understand we will perhaps deal with the Alberta Health Care Insurance Amendment Act on Wednesday of next week.

Having given that information, Mr. Speaker, I move that we call it 1 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Assembly agree with the motion?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

[At 12:58 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 4, the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

