

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, March 18, 1987 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 87/03/18

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

We give thanks to God for the rich heritage of this province as found in our people.

We pray that native-born Albertans and those who have come from other places may continue to work together to preserve and enlarge the precious heritage called Alberta.

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**Bill 21****Consumer and Corporate Affairs Statutes
Amendment Act, 1987**

MISS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being the Consumer and Corporate Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 1987.

This Bill would in fact amend four statutes, one being the Mortgage Brokers Regulation Act, one being the Partnership Act, one being the Public Contributions Act, and the fourth one being the Professional and Occupational Associations Registration Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 21 read a first time]

Bill 239**Ministerial and Out of Province
Travel Expenses Act**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 239, Ministerial and Out of Province Travel Expenses Act.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, would require ministers to table a detailed report of their travel expenses in the Legislative Assembly. The Bill would also require ministers to provide estimates of their traveling expenses prior to departure on publicly funded travel.

[Leave granted; Bill 239 read a first time]

Bill 250**Women in the Public Service of Alberta Act**

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 250, Women in the Public Service of Alberta Act.

This Bill will direct the Minister of Labour to ensure the production of an annual report listing the number of women employed in the public service, their employment status, the number in management levels, and the average salary levels of all female employees. The Bill will provide not only significant

information on the provincial government's female work force, but also it will help to ensure that the inadequacies of the government's approach to the promotion of women is well documented. It will be a worthwhile companion to pay equity legislation.

[Leave granted; Bill 250 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased, pursuant to legislation, to table the annual report of 1985-86 of the Alberta Cultural Heritage Foundation and, as well, the annual report for the same year of the Alberta Art Foundation.

MISS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased also to table the annual report of the supervisor of consumer credit for the year ended December 31, 1986, and to file the superintendent of insurance 1985 annual report covering the calendar year 1984.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I rise to table, for the information of all the hon. members, a copy of the wording of a petition I have today delivered from the supporters of Victoria community school in Calgary to the Minister of Education calling for retention of 100 percent funding for their community school.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table, for the information of all hon. members, the common text of approximately 150 letters received in my constituency office over the past two weeks. These letters were signed by 157 Calgary citizens opposed to cuts in services to handicapped children.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure, sir, to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, a group of Girl Guides with two parents from the Sherwood Park constituency. It's my pleasure to introduce the 10 students and the two parents: Mrs. Barbara Anderson, a very dear friend, and Mrs. Sandra Gutsch. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask if they would rise so that they could receive the warm applause of this Chamber.

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, three people in, I believe, the members' gallery. One is my wife, Ethne McEachern, who worked very hard over the years to help me get elected to this Chamber. The other is an aunt and uncle from Summerland, B.C., Henry and Margret Karr. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the House.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, six leaders of ethnocultural organizations in the city of Edmonton: first, Mr. Kim Hung, president of the Edmonton Chinatown Multicultural Centre Foundation; George Ares, president of Association Canadienne-Français de l'Alberta -- and I'm taking French lessons soon -- Mr. Lawrence Giacobbo, the president of the Italian Cultural Society; George Philippides, the president of the St. George Greek Orthodox Church Society; Al Dudaravicius, president of the Canadian Lithuanian Society of Edmonton; and Mr. Bob Allen, the president of the Edmonton Scottish Society.

They're in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, may I also introduce some very special people to me in the gallery today: Jane, my wife of some 12 years, who is carrying our third child; and, as well, her mother, who is the wife of the former Member for Calgary Currie, Mrs. Ursula Peacock. They're seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to rise and have the House welcome them in a special way.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Beverly.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure for me to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly, 47 grade 6 students from the Rundle school, which is situated in the Edmonton Beverly constituency. The students are accompanied by three teachers: Miss Kimberly Webber, Miss Steffany Kyselytzia, and the assistant principal, Mr. Ken Dropko. They're seated in the public gallery, and would the Assembly give them the traditional welcome, if they please would stand up.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May I through you ask the Assembly to welcome 24 pupils from the 6th grade of Stralhearn school in the constituency of Edmonton Strathcona, accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Henry Unrau, and a parent, Ms Darcy Aston. They're seated in the members' gallery and if they will stand and receive the welcome of the House.

Mr. Speaker, if I may ask the Assembly through you to welcome Mr. Richard Taves, formerly executive assistant to the late Mr. Notley, from the years '71-74. He is seated in the public gallery, and if he will rise and receive the welcome of the House.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Optometrists' Fee Negotiations

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the first question to the minister of hospitals and medicare. It has to do with the government's agenda . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Carry on, hon. member.

MR. MARTIN: Oh, I thought it was a point of order already.

Mr. Speaker, it has to do with the government's agenda for cutting back medicare services, that cute little word called "deinsurance." My question directly to the minister is: why did the minister break off negotiations with Alberta's optometrists last Friday?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, that's complete news to me. No such thing ever happened last Friday or on any other occasion.

MR. MARTIN: Well, I might suggest to the minister then that he find out what his department is doing, because it in fact did happen. Flowing from that . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Order.

MR. SPEAKER: No point of order, but perhaps the minister could respond when the question mark comes at the end of this, please, hon. minister.

MR. MARTIN: Don't be touchy; don't be touchy; you'll get your chance. My question is to the minister: would he confirm that the decision to break off fee negotiations with optometrists was based on the fact that basic eye examinations are on the government's hit list for medicare cuts?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is right out to lunch. No negotiations between myself and the optometrists in this province have been broken off. As I said in the Legislature in answer to a question from the hon. leader of the Representative Parly last week, it's my full intention to meet with all of the professional groups before we make any final decision. That will include the optometrists and a number of others. I've got, I think, about three meetings arranged for the next week with various groups on the subject of the amount that is charged to the health care insurance plan for the services they provide. Where the information came to the hon. Leader of the Opposition I have no idea, but it's totally inaccurate, as is most of the information he's been providing to this House in question period.

MR. MARTIN: This hon. minister is misleading the House. His assistant deputy minister last Friday said to the optometrists that they were disbanding these negotiations because the optometrists' monthly checkups would be not part of it, that they were looking at deinsuring these. Does the minister not deny this?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is totally inaccurate with respect to his opening comments that I had broken off negotiations with the optometrists. I haven't had any negotiations with them recently. I've met with representatives of the Association of Optometrists in this province a number of times during the last several months. I intend to meet with them again. They may have been having meetings with staff of my department -- I have no idea -- but they did not involve negotiations on a fee schedule. We meet from time to time with department staff with all professional groups. The hon. Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, again is totally inaccurate in the accusations that he's making.

MR. MARTIN: Well, don't be so touchy, because your department's saying these things. Maybe you should check with them. Mr. Speaker, my question is a simple one: would the minister confirm that basic eye examinations done by optometrists are on the government's hit list for medicare cuts?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I told the hon. Leader of the Opposition in the House yesterday that when we have completed our negotiations with the professional groups in this province, when the government caucus has had an opportunity to review what the proposals are, the hon. Leader of the Opposition will hear about it in this Legislature if it's still silting at that time.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I probably would get more truthful answers from their back bench, but I will ask the minister of health a supplementary question. Does he plan to equalize the eye examination fee between the op-

tometrists and the ophthalmologists?

MR. M. MOORE: First of all, Mr. Speaker, I resent the accusation by the hon. member that the answers that have been provided by me have been untruthful, and I might invite him first of all to deal further with that matter before I answer his question.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I would love to. He's asked me to answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry, hon. member, the supplementary question has been asked. Second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. TAYLOR: Does he have a right to ask a question, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

Deficiency Payments for Grain Producers

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my second question to the Premier. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Agriculture told this House he would not prepare a proposal for continued deficiency payments under the Canadian special grains program. I believe the minister said he would wait and see what the federal Tories have to offer. My question to the Premier: would the Premier instruct his Agriculture minister to prepare a strong, made-in-Alberta position that demands additional commitments from their federal cousins in Ottawa for Alberta farmers?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as I recall the hon. Minister of Agriculture's comments -- and I'm sure he will want to respond himself -- he said he would wait to see the agenda and how the items are on the agenda and whether that would be the right place to present his case on deficiency payments.

MR. MARTIN: A supplementary question. It's nice that we're going to trust the federal Conservatives and wait and see what they have for us, but my question for the Premier . . . The financial crunch has hit all Alberta farmers. Would the Premier be prepared to push the federal government for a continuing cash income support program for our farmers so that they can compete with the unfair competition from the United States and Europe?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Agriculture to deal with this matter. He's been dealing with it in the House.

MR. ELZINGA: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We've just seen another example of the distortion and hypocrisy of this party, whereby . . . [interjections] The hon. member is very well aware of what I indicated yesterday, that I wished to see the agenda so that we would know what topics were to be discussed. We don't need to take any lessons from them, because if we look at what the New Democratic Party does in the province of Manitoba . . .

MR. FOX: Answer the question.

MR. ELZINGA: They support their agricultural sector the

smallest of any province in this nation. So we know exactly what the New Democratic Party will do.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the balance of the minister's response could deal with the province of Alberta. [some applause]

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see they acknowledge the fine work we are doing for agriculture in this province. But I can indicate to the hon. Member for Edmonton Norwood that had it not been for the western Premiers, our Premier included, we wouldn't have had that billion-dollar payout, because it was at their initiation that this suggestion was forthcoming. We're going to continue to underscore our commitment to agriculture through representations to the federal government, but we're not going to simply blame them for not doing enough, even though they've done more than other governments in the history of this country. We're going to continue with our consistent and strong support of the agricultural sector as we have done in the past.

MR. MARTIN: My, he's touchy. You're going to have to toughen up if you want to be Premier -- you know, not be so defensive. My question, then, to either gentleman, whomever -- I'm asking specifically: would this minister be prepared to fight for Alberta farmers and demand a permanent deficiency payment? Yes or no?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we've indicated on a consistent basis that we're going to fight for farmers as we have done, and our facts are going to be correct, unlike the hon. member, who in the House the other day indicated that net farm income was going to drop. He used a quotation, but he didn't use the rest of the sentence, and this is just another example of their misleading tactics within this House as they've done consistently for the last number of days, and quite frankly I think it's disgraceful.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Alberta will be interested in the rhetoric from the minister when we hear that 25 percent of them are probably insolvent at this point. Is the minister saying that all they've done so far is all they're prepared to do and they're not prepared to push the federal government for a permanent deficiency payment? Is that what he is saying to Alberta farmers?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, that's not what I'm saying at all. If the hon. member would be willing to listen rather than just yap consistently, he would recognize that we've said in this House on a regular basis that we are going to continue to push the federal government for considered support on an ongoing basis, as I indicated to the hon. Member for Little Bow. In addition to that, we're going to continue our many worthwhile programs, which are in excess of double what the New Democratic Party does in the province of Manitoba, and maybe he should talk to his own counterparts in that province.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate what opportunities are provided by the federal minister for the provinces to affect the agenda? As well, when would the final period be in order of time for the provinces to affect that agenda, and when will the agenda be made public in this Legislature?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we just received the agenda, and

I'm more than happy to review it with any member that's interested. If they would like a copy of it, we're more than happy to forward it to them. A number of issues that are going to be discussed are the follow-up papers and strategies as it relates to the national agricultural strategy. In addition, they've asked us for our comments as it relates to the deficiency payment and any concerns that we have as it relates to the payment, and I will be relaying to our federal counterparts the suggestions that have been forthcoming from the Member for Little Bow rather than simply the nonsensical questions coming from the New Democratic Party.

Agricultural Assistance

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, as a supplemental back to the Premier, because I know he will bring some common sense to some of the ridiculous actions brought by his ministers, will the Premier agree to at least impose a provincial moratorium on farm foreclosures at least equivalent to what his federal cousins have done for those farmers that have borrowed from the federal government?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that question has been answered by the Minister of Agriculture twice or three times in the House so far.

MR. TAYLOR: It never has; he's weaseled out every time.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, order please. Since this has been raised at this point by the hon. member, it's been something that has been happening in question period from time to time in the last number of days, and it is time for the Chair to remind members of *Beauchesne* 363:

A Minister may decline to answer a question without stating the reason for his refusal, and insistence on an answer is out of order, with no debate being allowed . . . nor is it regular to comment upon such a refusal, and that was just what took place. The Chair now recognizes the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon for a supplementary question.

MR. TAYLOR: No, I just finished my supplementary. I think it's my main question, Mr. Speaker. Actually, I didn't ask him; I knew of the futility of it. I asked the Premier.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. TAYLOR: *Beauchesne* says I can ask . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. TAYLOR: All right, we'll go on; we'll take his point. Can I make a point of order, then, for later?

MR. SPEAKER: Absolutely.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay.

MR. SPEAKER: Love to entertain it.

Women in the Public Service

MR. TAYLOR: Now we're onto the main question. The throne

speech noted that the government was committed to removing obstacles which prevent women from enjoying a wider range of career alternatives, yet there's been no real movement in that area in which the government can actually do something about it. The public service is something where we could do something about it. Recently three deputy ministerial positions have become vacant; two were filled by men while the third, Deputy Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I think, is going to be announced today. This is to the Minister of Labour. As the minister responsible for personnel administration, can the minister tell the House if there are at present any female deputy ministers in the Alberta government?

DR. REID: With regard, Mr. Speaker, to the lead-up of the hon. member, the positions of deputy ministers are advertised in most cases openly. There have in some cases been as many as 70 applicants from which a shortlist has been developed. Those applicants are interviewed, and the best choice is put forward. Whether they are male or female is completely irrelevant.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. Can we take it, then, that this government's message to the public service and the people of Alberta is that there are not qualified women in either the public service or the private sector?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure there are qualified women, but if they don't apply, then it's not the government's responsibility to go and look for specifics. We are an employer who believes in equality of opportunity and equality of access, and we hire on that basis.

MR. TAYLOR: So now they're not applying. That's interesting, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister register his concern about the lack of female deputy ministers in this government by pressing his colleague the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs to promote an able woman to the position of deputy minister in her department? Will he do that?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my earlier answers, if qualified women apply and if they are the best applicant, then they will be appointed. But we are not going to indulge in what some people would suggest, that we appoint women or native people or immigrants or bilinguals or multilinguals because they have those characteristics, if they are not the most suitable applicant.

MR. TAYLOR: This is unbelievable. Twenty-four departments, Mr. Speaker, and he can't find one. Can the minister assure the House that he will put the noble words from the throne speech into action and see to it that an active search for qualified women is made upon each and every deputy ministerial vacancy?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I think I indicated in my first answer how the process functions. I should add that in the Alberta public service the number of women in the levels immediately below the senior management level has been increasing dramatically in the last number of years and in some levels of the public service is now just on 50 percent. It's from those people that further promotions will occur, and the natural process, I would imagine, will indicate that a considerable number of women will enter the senior management levels, including the deputy minister level, as they are suitable for it and as they wish to apply for

those senior management positions.

MISS McCOY: Supplementary information, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to advise the House that the cabinet has indeed made an appointment of a deputy minister in Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The process was a lengthy one. We advertised in all daily newspapers in Alberta only. We had 70 applicants. We had a lot of women apply, partly because I took it upon myself, among people I knew here in Edmonton and Calgary, to ask them to ask women to apply. The selection panel was composed of two deputy ministers in the service of the province of Alberta and two private-sector people: a lawyer from Calgary, Cyril Mullane; and a woman in business here in St. Albert, Lois Hole. The committee has unanimously recommended the successful candidate, whose name is Robin Ford.

MS BARRETT: Supplementary question to the minister who has become famous for studies. I wonder, given the fact that less than 4 percent of the women in the Alberta public service are actually in management positions, if the minister will undertake a study to determine the merits of an affirmative action program to ensure that women are being promoted into management in the Alberta public service.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I think my last answer to the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon answered most of that question. The second question that was asked in that supplementary -- we have programs in the Alberta public service run through the public service commissioner's office. Women in the public service are given access to programs for upgrading their capabilities, for increasing their educational standards, and also they are given indication of how to apply and how to develop their capabilities so they can progress to the management levels. Those programs are already in place.

Premiers' Conference on Constitution

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The Prime Minister has requested that the Premiers attend a meeting on April 30, 1987, to discuss Quebec's constitutional proposals. Could the Premier indicate the position of Alberta on those proposals at this time?

MR. GETTY: Yes. Mr. Speaker, it is accurate that the Prime Minister advised all Premiers on Monday that he was requesting us to attend a meeting on the Constitution -- Quebec's proposals -- and it would be April 30 at Meach Lake. The province of Alberta will be attending that meeting. The province's position will be that Canada can only be a strong and fair country if it is made up of equal provinces. We will not be supporting a request for special status; we will be asking that all 10 provinces are treated equally. What we will not do is pander disgracefully like the NDP and the Liberals -- anything to get a vote -- and in that way, Mr. Speaker, let down Albertans and other provinces in the west in order, as they feel some sense of public acceptance, that they just have to pant after every vote that they possibly can get.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to the Premier, and it's with regards to the process that will proceed following this meeting or during this meeting. Quebec at this time is asking for five items: distinct society recognition, veto rights, limitation of federal spending, increased immigration

powers, and nomination of the Supreme Court judges. Albertans, to be treated fairly and to be heard on a fair basis, are asking for the Triple E Senate. Would it be the intention of the Premier to horse-trade some of these items for our Triple E Senate concept in Alberta, or would the Premier take a position of just vetoing those five requests?

MR. GETTY: I will, Mr. Speaker, be attempting to convince all of my colleagues, including the Prime Minister, of the wisdom of a Triple E Senate and Senate reform. It will be something that I hope will get considerable discussion at that meeting. It would not be my intent to in some way try and lose Alberta's status as an equal province, though, in order to obtain fair representation.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the other Premiers of Canada, and specifically the other three western Premiers, would it be the intent of the Premier to have discussions with those Premiers prior to the meeting of April 30, 1987?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I have been having discussions with them, and it is my intent to continue to have those discussions with them and other Premiers, including Premiers from central Canada and eastern Canada.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the Premier. Could the Premier indicate at this time whether there is support beyond the boundaries of Alberta for the Triple E Senate; for example, in the provinces of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I know there is definitely support but not whether that has transformed itself to a government position in other provinces. I do know, though, that all of the western provinces completely reject the kind of special status that the NDP are supporting because they believe Canada can only be strong if they're all equal.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Norwood.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before pandering to the right wing, did the Premier have occasion to even read the resolution that came out of the convention, or did he just read it from the *Edmonton Journal*? Secondly, is he aware that there are already in the Constitution language rights and culture rights? Is he even aware of that?

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the first question could be answered only.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I find the thin skin showing up again. I guess if you want to ask the questions and the answer comes back and you don't like it, you just can't sit there and take it, can you? The old thin skin comes up.

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware of what's in the Constitution, I'm aware of what's necessary for a strong Canada, and I'm aware that the kind of thing they're talking about will not be a strong Canada but will break Canada apart.

MR. TAYLOR: Also supplementary to the Premier. It is surprising to hear somebody accuse other parties of pandering for votes when he ran this province into a \$3.5 billion deficit just to buy the last election. I note the Premier says he is not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, hon. member.

MR. TAYLOR: I just asked . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Call to order, hon. member. The Chair has allowed on this series of supplementaries one sentence before the question. Now the member seems to be going into a second sentence before doing a succinct supplementary. Please continue with it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I thought I'd . . .

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Premier didn't answer the question and went into about eight supplementaries.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry my punctuation wasn't obvious. I'd thrown in a comma, not a period.

To the Premier. He mentioned that he didn't like to see any province with special status. How is he going to handle the case for our western provinces, where we like to have special consideration for our oil and gas rights and that they can't be tampered with by the rest of Canada?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I guess that's why the Liberal Party brought out the NDP and they both support it. All we have ever asked is for equal treatment and fair treatment. That kind of thinking is what has led to the unfair, disgraceful treatment from central Canada, when there was a coalition of these two parties down there trying to rape Alberta. Now listen to them, because they can give it but they can't take it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Member for Wainwright, followed by, if there's time, the Member for Edmonton Beverly.

Rail and Truck Transport

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister of economic development, concerning the government's presentation yesterday to the National Transportation Act standing committee and the importance of this Act to Alberta. Could the minister tell us what the government's position is in regards to the National Transportation Act?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the Alberta government is generally supportive of the package of provisions contained in Bill C-18 and Bill C-19. We did in our presentation raise what we thought were important areas that would improve the legislation. Of course, this position resulted from the burden study that was undertaken by the province two years ago, where we examined the amount of rail transportation coming in and emanating from Alberta and our contribution toward those costs. That examination told us that Alberta accounts for 28 percent of Canada's rail traffic and yet contributes 70 percent of the overhead of the railway system. So it's vitally important that there be rationalization of rail freight rates, and the National Transportation Act is positive in terms of moving in that direction.

MR. FISCHER: Supplementary to the minister. How is this going to affect the closure of our branch lines then?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, this is an area where we think

there were some improvements required in the draft legislation, and we believe there needs to be a third option to the two that are now contemplated. The two options contemplated are either closure or continuation of branch lines, and we believe the third option would involve the provision of payment to the users of the lines. Under the agreement by the federal government all branch lines remain open until the year 2000, as we presently understand the situation.

MR. FISCHER: Supplementary. The unfair trucking regulations between the provinces have been quite a problem. Does our presentation address this, and just how does it affect our trucking industry?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, we also made representation with respect to the matters contained in Bill C-19, and my colleague the minister of transportation may wish to respond to that question.

MR. ADAIR: Well, Mr. Speaker, in response to the question there is no question that we support very strongly the Bill C-19 side of the presentation that was made and the fact that trucking within the province of Alberta has been deregulated for some time. This is a major move in getting the rest of the country to get into line, if I can say that term, with the province of Alberta and the work they have done in deregulation. We think very strongly that it will be a major benefit to the industry, and we've been working with the industry for some time to in fact see that that occurs.

MR. FOX: Supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. I wonder what assessment his department has made of the economic and social impact on small communities in Alberta that will result from the inevitable closure of elevators and branch lines based on a widespread variable rate system?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, the subject that was dealt with yesterday was not the matter of variable rates but the overall package of attempting to lower transportation costs for Alberta shippers and receivers. Alberta, being landbound and not having access to tidewater, depends very heavily on its rail transportation system, and in order for us to compete internationally and nationally, it's necessary that our shippers have the opportunity to move goods at the best possible rate. We believe this is vitally important.

Our alternative that we brought forward to the standing committee provides an option to those two that were offered in the Act, and that is that those who may be subject to branch line closure would receive funding similar to eastern communities where branch line closure could occur but isn't presently available for people served in the west. We thought that people in the west should be treated in a similar way to the manner in which the options are available in eastern Canada.

MR. CHUMIR: Is the government firmly opposed to freight rate subsidies to stimulate coal sales, as the Premier has been reported to say in public statements?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member must be referring to my comments with regards to the committee that is chaired by the Hon. Don Mazankowski, Deputy Prime Minister, and made up of the three western Premiers of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia and the Premier of Ontario.

We agreed as a committee that the wrong way to start to put the sale of coal on a sound foundation to eastern Canada would be to start off by asking for subsidies, and so we are not doing that.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Beverly followed by the Member for Calgary Buffalo.

Recreation Grants

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Recreation and Parks. The municipalities throughout the province are presently in the process of dealing with their community recreational/cultural grant applications. Consequently, various groups and organizations are also waiting to learn what amount their grant is going to be this year. Will the minister tell this Assembly why he has not informed the municipalities as to the amount of their eligible grant for this year?

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's quite obvious, and I'm sure the hon. member should be well aware that that's information that will be revealed by the Provincial Treasurer in the forthcoming budget. But in fairness to those mayors and municipalities we had written a letter outlining that there would be a short delay and that they would be anxiously awaiting the response from the Provincial Treasurer at that time as well.

MR. EWASIUK: Well, Mr. Speaker, is the minister not aware that he is in violation of his own regulations, which clearly stipulate that he must advise the municipalities by not later than February 1 of each year so that the municipalities in fact can deal with these grants?

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Speaker, we're certainly not aware that we're in violation of any regulation. We certainly take that under advisement and would be pleased to report back on it.

MR. EWASIUK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to table the regulations which very clearly state that. How can the minister justify these delays in light of the fact that the groups and organizations that have submitted applications for these grants have to submit budgets to municipalities? How can they do that if you're not advising them about how much money they might be getting?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, the Member for Edmonton Beverly has indeed indicated a tabling. I assume that then means copies for the whole House, but as I only see one particular piece of paper there . . .

MR. MARTIN: He said he'd be prepared to table it.

MR. SPEAKER: I think it's more than that. The tabling or the filing, is that to take place now?

MR. EWASIUK: Now.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Hon. minister, please.

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that all community recreation groups are aware that they could deal with, on last year's budgets, their submissions, and we've always encouraged them to do so. In fairness to those municipalities and culture/

recreation boards, they would be looking at those applications, but the final dollar value has not been determined, and they were aware of that fully in advance. I am indicating, though, to the hon. member and to the members of the Assembly that I don't think any group or organization has certainly suffered as a result of not having received the advance notice as far as the actual dollar level of funding. In particular, when the city of Edmonton last year received some \$11 million, I am certain that they were well rewarded in those funds.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is to the Premier. Does the Premier condone the practice of his ministers to act in contravention of the regulations that they themselves pass?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I'm sure that the people were advised well in advance of February 1 of those matters that we had in our budget in the year that's currently in existence, and I'm sure they were receptive to that. Might I also say that if there are any regulations that seem to in some way force the government to break its normal budgetary process, then those regulations obviously would need to be changed. Nevertheless, I'll look at the representation from the hon. member to see if there's something there that is inconsistent.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Recreation and Parks. Is the minister aware that these CRC grants go beyond their impact in providing important community services to play a very critical role in job creation? Since they are capital grants, they are matched by public money; therefore, their impact is doubled. Could he therefore confirm to this Legislature that these grants will not be cut in this budget?

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to confirm any such remark as based on the question by the hon. member. But I would like to inform him that all culture/recreation groups are well thought of. The volunteer hours and labour put in by those individual members is certainly taken into consideration in their individual applications. And all applications cannot be dealt with on a one-spot or onetime basis. Those applications come in over a period of three, four, and five months, so all groups out there in the communities are not ready with their applications. I would suggest to all hon. members of the Assembly that we'd look forward to receiving them over the next several months to proceed with them on an ongoing basis.

Oil and Gas Industry Incentives

MR. CHUMIR: To the Minister of Energy. Last week the Canadian association of oil drilling contractors predicted that 1987 will be the worst year in recent memory for drilling contractors, with only 28 percent of rigs working. The conventional oil industry, particularly small and medium-sized oil companies and drilling contractors, are in deep recession, yet the government talks about nothing but megaprojects. Will the minister, in light of the drilling contractors' view that the government's program to stimulate activity is not going to do the job, bring in some new measures that will revitalize the conventional oil industry?

DR. WEBBER: Well, Mr. Speaker, last week the hon. member raised a supplementary with respect to the megaproject type of question. I informed him at that time that I'm glad to see that he

is concerned about the conventional side of the industry, as we are in this province, and we've demonstrated that in the past year, since the prices fell, in a number of ways.

The hon. member would recall that we introduced a number of incentive programs in April and in June last year. Because of cash flow problems for the smaller companies, they were unable to raise the money to invest, and it wasn't until we announced a substantial \$1 billion program in October for the conventional oil industry in this province of royalty reductions, royalty holidays, and a continuation of the Alberta royalty tax credit program at a 95 percent level -- a tremendous benefit to the small producers in this province. In addition to that, we've announced the formation of the Small Producers Assistance Commission, which is in place in Calgary right now and receiving applications from those companies that want assistance in working out any problems that they have.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken many steps in the past year to assist the oil and gas industry in this province, and in addition to that, we are concerned about the longer term security-of-supply problems of this country, which apparently the hon. member opposite is not.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, the many steps obviously aren't working. Why won't the government even try a price stabilization plan, such as that proposed by the Small Explorers and Producers Association of Canada, for a limited time in order to see whether it will work and start to create some jobs and activity in the province?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the programs that I just reviewed a few minutes ago in fact did work. We saw many people go back to work in this province because of those programs. We saw activity increase to levels higher than anyone had anticipated towards the end of the year because of the benefit of the incentive programs as well as the announcement at the end of October. In fact, the hon. member is listening to the wrong people if he's talking about the worst year yet. I encounter many energy people across this province who are looking forward to 1987 as a year better than 1986. In fact, many people recognize that with the prices stabilizing as they are in the \$17 to \$20 range and up to \$19 today, with the finding costs in this province the lowest finding costs anywhere in North America, and with the fiscal regime of this government, there's no better place to explore in North America than right here in Alberta, in the conventional oil capital.

MR. CHUMIR: Sounds like a tourism ad, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address the next supplementary question to the Premier. I was wondering why the government, as in the Premier's comments on January 13 and the Minister of Energy's statement at the energy ministers' conference on January 30, has recognized the need for stabilization of megaprojects but has not recognized the equally valid need of stability in the conventional oil and gas industry. Why one over the other?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's been almost completely answered by the hon. Minister of Energy. I might say to the hon. member that, in fact, stability has been brought to the energy industry. Members may not know, because they just grab figures out of the air, that in fact we are up 15 percent to 20 percent this year in drilling over last year. It is true that there is an abnormal number of rigs in the province and that when you have 200 rigs or better drilling, which is normally a fairly decent

level of drilling, it is still a small percentage of the total because we do have this abnormally large number available. That has to work through the system. But the energy industry has stabilized.

As a matter of fact, people are starting to come to Alberta with dollars and with ideas on how to invest in this province in the energy industry. This is reflected in resource stocks. It's reflected in the people like the gentleman from Hong Kong who came here with \$1 billion to put into Alberta's resources. This is, as the hon. minister said, the best place in North America to invest in oil and gas.

MR. CHUMIR: Supplementary to the Premier. Well, if the prices have stabilized, have those sponsoring megaprojects withdrawn their requests for some form of price stabilization? Or is the Premier going to go on and make a deal with the federal government which will prefer megaprojects and ignore the conventional oil industry?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member, I guess, isn't listening. Our government is committed to the health of the energy industry in this province, and we are building the strength not only of the nonconventional resource side, but we are assisting in the conventional oil and gas side, and that has been stabilized and is getting stronger. Most people in Alberta in resource development are not like the hon. member but rather have a great deal of optimism about the future. We will see that optimism show itself with strengthening in the resource sector of this province and growth in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we complete the set of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? The Member for Calgary Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Energy. Because of the nature of the way in which the programs that the minister referred to were introduced, much of that activity was compressed into a month-long period, with the result that nine people lost their lives during this period of time.

Will the minister give a commitment to this Assembly that any future expenditures will not concentrate and overheat activities such that green personnel are forced into potentially lethal positions?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member would recall that we introduced those programs back in April and June of last year, so the industry had all the time between then and the end of the year to react to those particular incentive programs. Certainly, when we did announce the incentive program, the \$1 billion program, in October, there was increased activity beyond the levels that we expected or that the industry expected, and it was their prerogative, their decision-making, to go out there and drill and create jobs.

With respect to matters of safety, certainly we are concerned with that, as is the industry, but I would ask the hon. Minister of Community and Occupational Health to respond to that aspect of the question.

MR. DINNING: Well, Mr. Speaker, following a number of tragic deaths in the industry, I consulted with a number of the organizations including the Independent Petroleum Association, the Petroleum Service Association, and others of that industry, consulted long and hard with them. We have carried on a number of discussions over the last number of weeks, and they realize that safety is a shared responsibility. It's shared amongst employers, employees, and the government, and we will continue to do our share to ensure that employers and employees act safely and responsibly on the jobsite.

MR. SPEAKER: Additional supplementaries? Time for question period has expired.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: I believe, Mr. Speaker, you ruled. I guess it was, that I could not repeat a question. I refer you to *Beauchesne*, article 359, page 132, which says:

(8) A question that has previously been answered ought not to be asked again.

Well, that implies that it was answered. You yourself said, when you told me it had been asked before and had been refused answering, that I couldn't ask again, so what I was doing was asking a question that had not been answered before, which it says quite clearly is in order under 359(8). And as a matter of fact, the answer I got from the Premier wasn't an answer again today either, so I would suspect it'll come up again.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member missed the point as given by the Chair. The Chair was referring to an entirely different issue which has been coming from various parts of the House in the last number of days, and the member has again just indulged in violating 363 of *Beauchesne*, where the direction was not with respect of the matter of the asking of a question. But it was the fact that it's becoming all too common a practice in this House to raise the matter that an answer has not been given. And that is the quotation that was referred to in *Beauchesne*.

Any other point of order?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

1. Moved by Mr. Crawford:
Be it resolved that Patrick D. Ledgerwood be appointed Chief Electoral Officer of the province of Alberta.

[Motion carried]

3. Moved by Mr. Crawford:
Be it resolved that notwithstanding Standing Order 4(3), on Friday, March 20, 1987, the Legislative Assembly shall sit also in the afternoon at 3 p.m. to consider government motions 4, 5, and 6.

MS BARRETT: In rising to support Motion 3 on behalf of the Official Opposition, I would like to register one query or objec-

tion -- whichever way the government members would like to interpret that -- and that is about the fact that for the first time, as far as I know, we are having a budget being read to us on a Friday afternoon. As the members are aware, two of the major newspapers in Alberta do not publish on the Saturday. Not only that, but it's extraordinary in any government in Canada to read budgets in the afternoon, given that stock exchanges are usually open, although in this instance the Alberta Stock Exchange might be closed. But I register that as an objection, inasmuch as the very important media will not be able to cover the contents of the budget on the following day to allow Albertans to be familiar with the contents.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this motion. It is not acceptable that it seems to be a cute political manoeuvre simply to break precedent with the past and avoid exposing this budget to full and open public awareness through the media. And it is clear in our estimation that there can only be one reason for choosing Friday at 3 p.m., and that clearly is to co-ordinate the release of this particular budget with the lack of time for the press to cover it adequately and therefore to communicate its implications adequately to the people of this province. That is, whether the government likes it or not, an important part of the democratic process.

If this were simply an isolated attempt to avoid accountability and the proper process of debate, we wouldn't be as concerned as we are. But given that this is one in a long line of efforts to avoid accountability, Mr. Speaker, we would like to register our grave concern. It follows hot on the heels of a decision not to have the Public Accounts Committee, despite the fact that that committee has determined...

MR. SPEAKER: Is this...

MR. MITCHELL: It is relevant to the question of accountability, Mr. Speaker, because the budget is perhaps the most important feature. The Public Accounts Committee will not have the time to look at this budget properly after it's been spent because they're not allowed to meet between sessions of the Legislature. We don't get time beyond 25 days to debate the budget properly, because budget debate is limited to 25 days despite the fact that that is not sufficient time now that we have an expanded opposition and more important issues facing this province. We find irregular accounting practice...

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The Chair appreciates the ingenuity of the member to try to deal with everything under the sun but respectfully requests the member to come back to the motion.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My point is simply that we cannot support this, that this motion is, in our estimation, the height of cynical politics. We want no part of it, and we will vote against it.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, speaking in favour of the motion. I am somewhat surprised by what I'm hearing. It seems to me that people across Alberta have been listening with keen interest to what the economy is doing in this province. I think they're waiting with eager anticipation to find out where this government's going in terms of handling and stating its fiscal policy. And if we in this House are to be determined by the publication schedules of media in this province in determining the provincial business, I think then many of us obviously are serving in

the wrong place. I think the Treasurer and the government are to be commended to get this out to Albertans as soon as possible, and as I understand it, as soon as possible will be 3 o'clock on Friday.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there was a lot that the hon. Member for Edmonton Meadowlark said that there's not any sense getting into a debate on, but the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands I think made some points that do bear concern. I must say that there has been considerable precedent for the budget being brought down on Fridays, and often on Friday nights. As a matter of fact, I've known members who have been in the House some period of time, and not that long ago -- myself, before I came back to public life -- it was customary to always have it Friday nights at 8 o'clock. It became almost an institution where people came as they do to the throne speech.

However, it is true that there are two newspapers -- the Edmonton Sun and the Calgary Sun, I guess, are the two that are being referred to. But in this case, Mr. Speaker, while we recognize the concern about them -- and the government has made considerable moves on other major announcements to recognize their problems -- two newspapers can hardly run the timing of this Legislature. Therefore, we've talked to them, explained it to them, and they recognize that there are circumstances that are causing us to do it this way. They are not pleased that they will come out on Sunday rather than on Saturday, but I think they are perfectly prepared to adjust.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Norwood, then the Member for Calgary Buffalo.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reality is, quite frankly, that whether we like Friday afternoon or not, it would be anarchy if we didn't get on with the budget. It doesn't determine whether we like the budget or not or whether it's the best time or not, but we'd be totally irresponsible at this particular time if we didn't bring down a financial statement from the province. And I would just say, rather than a lot of debate on this issue, that it's going to be Friday at 3 o'clock, and I think we should get on with it now. We will support Motion 3.

MR. CHUMIR: I agree, Mr. Speaker, that we don't need a lot of debate. However, I think this is not a minor matter. I listened very carefully to what the Premier had in support of the actions of the government, and if I heard correctly, he gave one reason and one reason only, and that was precedent. I would like to ask one question. Aside from precedent, which is neutral or is merely often an excuse for repeating the errors of the past, in what way is this decision and this timing a contribution to good government, an element of contributing to public service and communication and information in this province? What public interest is being served by this move rather than the potential goal of surpassing communication and making the budget announcement at a time which is most inconvenient to not just the several newspapers in this province but particularly the electronic media?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to just make one or two remarks, and I want to tell the junior members of this Assembly really why they're having it Friday afternoon: because the one time we had it on an evening, my colleague the Member for Little Bow got up and ruined the Tory party. They were all ready for a big after-budget evening of discussing the budget at Gov-

ernment House. Well, my hon. colleague went on for 45 minutes and ruined the timing of the party entirely. So they're not taking a chance; they're having it in the afternoon so that none of the members of the opposition can do that.

But seriously, the hon. House leader of the NDP says that it would interfere with the dissemination of news. But, Mr. Speaker, the members of the media have the budget long before we, the members of this Assembly, have the budget. So just as soon as the budget is presented in the Assembly, the members of the media have already done their homework so that the information that goes out will be on the 6 o'clock news and will be going out to the people of the province. So I really think we're wasting a lot of time about, really, much to-do about nothing, as Shakespeare says.

MR. JOHNSTON: I simply want to express a couple of other thoughts with respect to the timing of the budget. I recognize that all parties except the Liberal Party have recognized that there are some times that we have to move that we don't have an opportunity to consider fully all the elements which would be to the advantage of the Liberal Party. And I respect the views taken by the Leader of the Opposition party and my colleagues from the Independent party, who recognize that this is a waste of the time of this Assembly.

I will not put on much more time to add to the frustration and misleading statements made by the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark, except to say that the speech on Friday afternoon will be covered by all the electronic media, so the Member for Calgary Buffalo can be well assured that the people in Calgary and Lethbridge and the rest of the province will see the essence of the speech. It does not have to be interpreted by the media. I think the people of this province are mature enough, are wise enough to understand the message which will be implicit in that budget speech, and I will leave it to them to understand what it is, not to have it interpreted by the media.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the timing of this Assembly, all members know that on Friday at noon debate on the throne speech comes to an end, and so at the first possible opportunity we had, we wanted to bring forward a financial picture for this province. Therefore, Friday afternoon, the first immediate opportunity we have, we're going to make that available. Moreover, all MLAs now have an opportunity Friday evening to return to their constituencies to bring the messages back, to explain to their own constituents what it is in terms of the fiscal plan. Therefore, I think this has been a misleading debate by the Member for Edmonton Meadowlark and the Member for Calgary Buffalo, and I enjoin them to vote against this resolution.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, just to speak on the motion a short while. We must remember that the world doesn't rise and set on the four daily papers in this province. There are a lot of other papers in this province, weekly newspapers that have deadlines -- some starting Saturday morning, some earlier. They also like to cover such things as the budget in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: There's a call for the question with respect to Motion 3 standing on the Order Paper under Government Motions.

[Motion carried]

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

Moved by Mr. Alger:

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

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

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

[Adjourned debate March 16: Mr. McEachern]

MR. McEACHERN: Mr. Speaker, as the Assembly knows, I made a start on my comments last day, and I spent a little time talking about my consultations with my constituents and some of their particular problems.

I'd like today to change directions slightly -- in fact, quite a large change of directions. The issue I want to spend some time on is a very serious one. To some 70,000 members of the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union it is anyway. The Credit Union Stabilization Corporation is in the process of trying to rescue the credit unions of this province. The government has offered some \$355 million toward that process. The stabilization corporation has proposed that it set up a subsidiary called capital city financial trust, incorporating some 35 branches of various credit unions in the city of Edmonton. Fourteen of those branches would belong to Edmonton Savings & Credit Union. And I might point out at this time that those 14 branches are what is left of 21 branches, seven of them being closed in the last year in a process of very hard-nosed rationalization -- one of the favourite words, I guess -- of the credit union system for Edmonton Savings.

On October 23, 1986, the province issued a press release in which it promised to cover the 1985 deficits for these credit unions, plus interest. Now the stabilization corporation is pressing Edmonton Savings & Credit Union to join this capital city financial trust; in other words, combining it with a number of credit unions which . . . The Edmonton Savings & Credit Union has fears, anyway, that these other credit unions have not rationalized their problems to the same extent that Edmonton Savings has and are therefore in rather poor shape. They feel they may be left part of a group of branches of a credit union corporation called capital city financial trust that is not viable.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it would seem that the stabilization corporation has been taking a fairly strong line on this, to the point where they are saying to Edmonton Savings, "We're not going to give you the money to cover your 1985 deficit plus interest unless you will join this capital city financial trust." Given that Edmonton Savings has done a lot of work on sorting out their problems, it doesn't seem quite fair.

In fact, there are five points that seem to be pressure points being put on Edmonton Savings & Credit Union, the first one being the pressure to merge them into the capital city trust and the second one being dismissal of the chief executive officer, a man who was brought in from outside the province by the credit union system and agreed to and supported at the time he was hired by the stabilization corporation and who did a very good

job of cutting the 21 branches of the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union down to 14 without laying off any people, without losing any depositors. So it seems he was doing a good job but has been dismissed by the stabilization corporation without asking Edmonton Savings & Credit Union themselves whether they wanted him dismissed or not.

The stabilization corporation also told the credit union that they had no right to hold director elections. Director elections were due at a meeting just last month, but I was at that meeting and there were no such elections held because the stabilization corporation said no. They've also told the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union that they cannot engage a legal counsel or obtain outside accounting advice in terms of preparing to fight this merger. So, Mr. Speaker, it seems that the stabilization corporation is becoming rather highhanded with the credit unions.

Now I'm quite aware that if the government is going to put up some money, they should have some say in how the credit unions will rationalize their system. But if there is not some place left for the directors of the credit union to be elected by the membership and if there is not some democratic process involved, if those directors do not at least have some say in the directions in which the credit union is going, then really you're just setting up another Crown corporation, and I guess what the government should do is consider taking over all the credit unions and call them a subsidiary of the Treasury Branches and call it a Crown corporation and run it as they see fit.

Mr. Speaker, the details on this get rather involved, but I think it's worth taking a little more time and talking about some of them.

The other credit unions, it is anticipated, will not all survive; the other branches will not all survive. Many of them are much smaller. Some of them will be cut from five down to zero, from seven down to two, this sort of thing, zero out of five, according to the plans of the stabilization corporation. Now why the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union should be lumped in with other credit unions who have not been able to do their rationalization and be made to worry that they might have to carry some of the burden of those insolvent credit unions is beyond me.

I said the government promised to cover last year's deficit. It was some \$84.5 million plus interest, which would be about another \$8.5 million. Now, if that had been done as promised back in October, the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union system for the year 1986 would have come out neither in the hole nor ahead. As it turned out, they had to record the \$8.5 million in interest payments that they didn't get as a loss, added on top of, of course, the \$84.5 million loss from the year before. And so it was shown that they are still in the hole and, of course, need government help. Nobody is ungrateful for the help, but there is no necessity that the stabilization corporation railroad the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union into anything. They should be able to sit down and negotiate with them.

It was interesting. One of the problems of this government is that -- we find they are very secretive; they don't like to tell us what's going on, and it was one of my complaints about the North West Trust/Heritage Savings & Trust Company takeover. That also has been true in the negotiations and the ongoing problems between Edmonton Savings and the stabilization corporation. For instance, the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union director had to go to the stabilization corporation and demand that they be given their annual statements so they could take them to the meeting which I said I attended some two weeks ago. They were expected to go there, to the annual meeting of the membership, without any annual statement. Some of the

other credit unions which they are supposed to be amalgamated with if this goes ahead have held their annual meetings without any annual statements, because the stabilization corporation would not release the annual figures and numbers for them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you cannot rationalize a system or sort out a problem in the dark. You must know what you're doing. And if the members -- and there are some 70,000 of them in Edmonton Savings alone and many more in these other credit unions -- are to have some idea of what's going on and why, they need to know the facts, and those should be forthcoming. It was only by the stubbornness of the director -- he insisted on having those figures for that last meeting at the last minute. I believe this; I met with the gentleman for lunch that day, and he still did not have the annual statements. He had to go and get them that afternoon for the meeting that night, and he had to fight hard to get them.

On top of that, the directors of the stabilization corporation want to set up this capital city financial trust network, and guess who is going to be on the board of directors of the capital city financial network? The same three guys that are in charge of the stabilization corporation.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, that whole business is very strange, and I would ask the Treasurer to look into it very, very carefully and have some consideration for the democratic process. I know that the credit unions have a different philosophy than private enterprisers, but there is nothing wrong with their philosophy. They have set up this credit union to be of service to members, and they have brought in many innovations that have been very useful in society. For example, we would never have gotten monthly interest rates out of banks, in terms of deposits in banks, if it hadn't been for credit unions. You remember when you used to get your interest paid on the lowest balance for the quarter? We would never have seen daily savings accounts if it wasn't for credit unions. So credit unions have much to offer.

The people using the services know what's needed. They can feed it to the directors, the directors can help achieve those kind of gains in terms of service to memberships, and if the stabilization corporation merely takes over and then runs everything and doesn't give the board of directors any say, I would say that would be unfair.

We could contrast it, to some extent, to what happened with the North West Trust and Heritage Trust takeovers. There are some interesting parallels, but there are also some interesting differences. In the case of North West Trust and Heritage Savings & Trust the provincial government talked the federal government into putting up some \$275 million, not to rescue the trust companies, or at least so they claimed -- they didn't rescue the shareholders of those companies -- but to make sure that the depositors were okay. What that \$275 million really did, Mr. Speaker, was rescue the Treasury Branches. It was the Treasury Branches that were in trouble. All those companies were troubled too. They'd been in trouble for three or four years, and they'd been propped up by the Treasury Branches over a three- or four-year period, to the point where the Treasury Branches had a very heavy loss by investing in those companies to try to keep them alive. Eventually it got to be big enough that the Treasurer decided he'd better talk the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation into coming to the rescue, and so they came and rescued the Treasury Branches and the depositors.

Now I'm not against that idea, but it seems rather strange to

me that at the end of it, the principals of those company, having got the province into that situation -- or I should say, I guess, that the government got itself in by pandering to its friends. And I say that advisedly because the principals in North West Trust were both heavy donors to the Conservative Party and the top investors in the Heritage Savings & Trust Company and depositors were, in fact, prominent Tories. But it seems strange to me that those principals would be left in charge after the government took over. I mean, they got \$275 million from the federal government to rescue the Alberta Treasury Branches and then left the same three people in charge. And yet over on the credit union side, where some particular group of credit unions -- namely the Edmonton Savings & Credit Union -- had already sorted out their problems and had showed that they could put their books in order, they are being taken over and dismissed, being told, in effect: "You have no say. You will do what we tell you, or we'll not give you the money." So, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me we have a double standard at work here.

The problem that seems to be common to both of them, and I think it's more serious in the North West Trust and Heritage Savings & Trust situation, is: where are the details? Where are the annual statements for North West Trust? Where are the annual statements for Heritage Savings & Trust? We don't know, Mr. Speaker. The Treasurer says we will get them one day. I should hope so, and it should be soon, so that we know what is going on with those corporations.

I want to end my last two or three minutes on a different topic. I would like to have raised some points about the heritage trust fund, but I decided that these other two issues became too important. So I'm going to cut right to the end of some remarks I had jotted down earlier and just talk a little bit about the cuts this government is bringing in. And we don't know how many or how severe they will be until we see the budget, but certainly the Speech from the Throne recognizes those problems and recognizes that they are going to do what I believe the government calls "downsizing." Why can't they call a cut a cut, or why can't they call a layoff a layoff? Why do they have to invent words like "downsizing" of government?

Anyway, I guess I would like just to ask: what is it that we gain when we start laying off, particularly at the lower end or the service end of the civil service? I realize that we're far too bureaucratic at the top end and we could certainly do with some layoffs there. But when you start laying off people at the service end -- and in fact you find you can't in the social services right now because the economy is in such a mess and so many people are unemployed and on social assistance that you had to hire more people to hand out social assistance.

But what do we gain when we put people out of work? Well, we gain more people on the social assistance program. We gain more people on the UIC rolls, especially the youth who seem to have no future. The education system gets tighter, and they can't find courses they would like to take to train themselves for an occupation. If they do, they can't find a job when they get out. We end up with more people in jail. We end up with more people involved in crime. We end up with more wife beating, more child battering. We end up with more suicides. In fact, your federal colleagues are embarking on a capital punishment campaign right now. I would like to say that in the city of Edmonton last year there were 22 homicides. That's serious, and that's far too many, but there were 92 suicides. So our society is a very troubled society because of cutbacks, layoffs, because of the deadness of the economy. Society will pay in the ...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Under section 29 of *Standing Orders* the hon. member's time has expired. Perhaps he could conclude in three or five seconds, in which case the next speaker could rise.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In fact, I was just winding down my comments because I was aware that it was right on the margin of time there.

I guess I would just like to issue a challenge, then, as a sort of windup. We put forward an alternate speech from the throne in which we had some 135 positive ideas for getting this economy moving again, and I would like to particularly say to the minister of manpower that he should take particular note because he said the other day that we're always negative. I'll give him a copy, and he can read it.

Mr. Speaker, we have more ideas in our speech from the throne than the government has in theirs. I'll sit down and even count them one by one; I swear we've got two to one on it. I think it's time this government started to look around and started to pick up some ideas from other parties rather than continuing in the old status quo way that they've been doing in the past.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. minister of employment.

MR. ORMAN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Career Development and Employment has been under that name now since, I believe, last July, so I would encourage particularly the hon. member just concluding his remarks to please take note. I think it's important if he represents the opposition and represents a riding of this province that he does refer to the departments in an appropriate manner.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. minister makes a good point, and of course it's with *Beauchesne*.

I believe the Chair's eye was caught by the hon. Member for Calgary North West.

DR. CASSIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to reply to the throne speech presented by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, the Hon. Helen Hunley, a most gracious lady. She presented to us an outline of the policy and the direction that this government will take in the ensuing months and years, alluding to the difficulties we have experienced in 1986 and the transition that this province -- indeed, all western provinces -- are going through at this time.

And to you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for the patience and the endurance in assisting myself and many others. As a newly-elected M.L.A. in the last session I stood before you intimidated and humbled by the aura of this great gallery. When we delivered our maiden speech, fumbled our way through the first question period, perhaps it will be said we asked one question too many.

I must also congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on initiating and overseeing the renovations of the Assembly in preparation for our 75th anniversary. I'd also like to compliment you on the leadership you've undertaken in making the necessary changes within your department. These are difficult and very hard decisions, but they must be made by every minister, every department head, and every project director. These are hard and difficult times. You set an example, Mr. Speaker, in taking the responsibility entrusted to you by virtue of your position, and as required by those in other departments, in carrying out the lead-

ership that we expect of you. The symbols and the signs of your administration will be here to be enjoyed by thousands for many years to come. Your leadership in making this very difficult decision will soon be forgotten, but I'd like to acknowledge you for the superb job that both you and the officers of your department have undertaken in accepting both the change and the increased responsibility. It will be said of you, Mr. Speaker, that you're the Speaker who, in fact, cleaned house.

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Calgary North West is a residential community of approximately some 12,000 homes. It has no industry; it has no institutions. It is schools; it is community and regional shopping centres and some other professional buildings and enterprises. It expands westward from the urban constituency into the rural constituency of Banff-Cochrane. It borders Nosehill Park, and many of its residents can look across the Bow valley, the Bow River, to the Canada Olympic Park, southward to the University of Calgary and the Foothills Science complex immediately beyond that.

It's a constituency of people, people who've enjoyed the benefits the province has provided for them. People in Calgary North West come from all walks of life, but there's an abundance of teachers, engineers, professional and businesspeople, entrepreneurs -- basically hardworking individuals who take a great deal of pride in their work and in their province. These are the people whose main goal is to make it work and continue to maintain and perhaps even improve upon the standards of living we've come to enjoy in this province. These people are interested in the programs and the directions that have been outlined in Her Honour's throne speech on March 5.

Mr. Speaker, the constituents of Calgary North West were particularly pleased, as I was, to hear that this government will introduce mandatory seat belt restraints in this province. I personally took a great deal of pride in introducing this legislation as a private member during the last session. I'd also like to recognize those members who've gone before me who've argued in favour of this legislation for so many years. I at the same time would like to recognize those various groups who have supported and have worked so hard for this legislation, going back to the Alberta Safety Council some 25 years ago, the Alberta Motor Association, the Alberta Medical Association, the hospital groups, the police associations, and all of those other people who wrote in and supported this program.

At the same time, I'd like to recognize those members who represented their constituents and dealt with the other concerns about the infringement on their personal liberties. Their representatives represented them well, and I think we have to recognize that this was a very important role in this whole debate.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Calgary North West were pleased to learn that the new School Act will be introduced during this session and that this government will continue to assist school boards to maintain the excellent quality of education the Alberta students currently enjoy. I also plead with both my government and the school boards to continue to support the concept of the community school. I have one such school in my constituency, that being the Ranchlands community school, and I have been impressed with the dedication, the devotion, and the dialogue that takes place between the community and the teachers. This is a very worthwhile integration of teachers and parent volunteers.

This government supports the family unit, and there should be no one with a more vested interest in the school programs than the parents of our children. I also appreciate the initiatives taken by the Department of Education, attempting to identify

those children with learning disabilities at an early age and addressing these problems within the system. I also appreciate that more work needs to be done in this area.

Mr. Speaker, Calgary North West also appreciates the initiatives that have been taken by Advanced Education, Tourism, and the Department of Career Development and Employment in taking the initiatives to develop special programs for those employables within our province that require retraining during this time of transition in our province, as we move from a dependency on agriculture and the energy sector to provide jobs to a more diversified economy, with more jobs being created in the service sector, tourism, processing, and advanced technology.

Mr. Speaker, I also recognize the impact this transition has had on our universities as an increasing number of individuals have returned to university for further training, either in their own field of interest or perhaps in an entirely different field of interest. These people are our strength. These people will create the new jobs and the new opportunities for tomorrow. I would particularly like to recognize those entrepreneurial programs that helped both these individuals and the small companies that we've seen develop within the incubator facilities in Calgary and Edmonton to help research new ideas and to help market the product of this activity. Such examples are the new venture group at the University of Calgary.

We also like to recognize the new companies that have moved to this province; in particular two such companies that were identified last week as moving to and taking a place in our society in Calgary, one being Carbomedics, which are going to manufacture heart valves, and North Star, which will be manufacturing helmets. This is just a small part of the total type of diversification and the new type of development we are experiencing out there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the new jobs in this province were created by people, however, who are already here, as outlined by the minister of the Department of Career Development and Employment on March 9 in this Assembly. I'd like to maybe just stop and dwell on one example of just such an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur that lives and works in my constituency. This individual is Dr. Gimbel, a physician who hires and has created 72 permanent jobs in my constituency, has provided services to people from 40 different jurisdictions throughout Canada, the United States, Europe, and Africa. These people come to this country and to this province. Usually they come with other members of their family. They spend some time in our hotels. I would think that this particular individual maintains at least two hotels in Calgary North West. They also take advantage of the other services that are available to them, creating, in effect, millions of dollars' worth of business for this province. This individual has spent some \$2 million in providing equipment for his facility. He provides services free of charge for those people who cannot afford it. He lends his audiovisual equipment to the University of Calgary.

It bothered me, Mr. Speaker, earlier this week to have someone in the Official Opposition pan this individual, suggest that we close down this type of entrepreneur, this type of activity that has created so many jobs and so many opportunities for the people of this province. This is just one example of what one individual has been able to do. There are more who have that capability. Please open the door and give them the chance.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Calgary North West recognize the difficulties that the energy sector has had to cope with in 1986. We appreciate the role and the initiatives that this government has taken in bringing about the removal of the PGRT, reduction

in royalties, and the financial incentives that this government has put in place to maintain this industry that is so vital to Alberta. We also share in the vision and the necessity of this province in trying to develop security of supply and support that is given to the heavy oil projects in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we're also encouraged by the initiatives that have been taken by the department of economic development in conjunction with industry, with university, in the area of encouraging and promoting the development of advanced technology in this province, such as the Alberta Microelectronic Centre, the Alberta Telecommunications Research Centre, and the Alberta Laser Institute. We'd like to see that carried through to encourage the processing of our Alberta agricultural product to its end stage. We'd like to see the same thing apply to our petroleum and energy sector, that we carry through with the petroleum to the chemical plastic chain, and that we look at ways of utilizing that product in manufacturing processes here in this province, some of which is already taking place.

Mr. Speaker, the residents of Calgary North West are most encouraged about what we have witnessed in the increase in tourism and the impact the 1988 Olympics will have on our constituency, on our city, and our province. We have already experienced the effects of the pre-Olympic trials and competitions that are taking place at Calgary Olympic Park as well as Nakiska. In the last two weeks we've had contingencies or competitive groups from throughout the world competing in bobsled and downhill skiing. It's not just the competitors; they bring with them representatives of their country. I've had the opportunity of meeting some of these people. They are pleased with what they see here. They are pleased with what Alberta has been able to do for them, and they're going to go back to their home countries and to their communities and tell them what a great time the world's going to have in Calgary and in this province in February 1988. I understand that even the Red Army got lost in the West Edmonton Mall. I'm sure that experience will be repeated many times in the next 12 months.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to maybe just dwell on another area that I have a particular interest in. Alberta is not alone in the problems it's dealing with at this point in our history. We can look at Colorado. Montana. Texas. We can look at other parts of the world that have depended heavily on oil and gas and agriculture to provide for their people.

I'd like to give an example of another area that had a different dependency. I'd like to focus on the city of Cleveland. Ohio, a city that depended for many years, being in the industrial heartland, on steel and coal and manufacturing. Those areas were affected the same as the oil and gas has been affected in agriculture in western Canada. That city developed something else. It developed what we call a health industry. The Cleveland clinic employs somewhat short of 9,000 people. It employs more people now than the whole steel industry of that area. It provides jobs. It tapped into a \$316 billion industry.

I would say to you, Mr. Speaker, that that opportunity exists here as well. It's not a question of "if"; it's a question of "when" and "where." I'm not certain exactly when. I'd like to think that the "where" would probably be in the area of Calgary, where we have some people who have the foresight, who take chances, who take risk -- the people who will take that move to develop that type of industry and use that entrepreneurship. It's too bad and unfortunate that perhaps it might be denied to the

people of this province. I'd like to say, in going back to my colleague who works hard, who makes the blind see, that we will be able to determine the worth of an individual or of a program by the fruit that it bears. I'd like to look at some of the suggestions and the support of the members of the Opposition, and I'd have to say that in that orchard there's a rotten tree. I'd like to say also that perhaps in the forest they can't see the forest, or the future, because of the trees.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Calgary North West look forward to new labour legislation to pave a way for a fair and equitable relationship between the employer and the employees, recognizing the commonality of their interest. It is also important -- if we are to succeed to maintain our standard of living in this country, we can no longer tolerate confrontation, we can no longer tolerate the indifference, we can no longer tolerate the deficiencies of a second-rate product if we are to maintain job opportunities and our market share for our people.

Mr. Speaker, we are also pleased that the province will review its ambulance service and that more emphasis will be placed on preventative programs in the community and on the jobsite, with the development of new guidelines for the oil and gas industry, the chemical industry, and those emerging technologies that are taking place in this province.

I'd like to draw attention to something else that was covered in the throne speech, and that was the implementation of an immunization program for haemophilus influenza. Last year there were 145 cases of haemophilus influenza in this province, primarily in northern Alberta. There were six deaths. Twenty-five percent of those cases could have been prevented by immunization. To put it in perspective, in this province in the same period of time we had 21 cases of AIDS. It's interesting how little in the way of headlines this particular program has gained in this province, and it's of maximum significance to the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Calgary North West are pleased with the initiative this province has taken to reduce some of the unnecessary burden of small businessmen by extending their business licences to five years from the present annual and biennial basis.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, the citizens of Calgary North West have confidence in the leadership of this government to take it through the transition to meet the difficult and hard decisions, recognizing that these changes cannot be made without some pain and some sacrifice. We'll be sensitive to the needs of our people and recognize that no program is perfect and that we'll be humble enough to deal with the shortcomings and make whatever changes and adjustments that are humanly possible within the present financial constraints. If we work together, as we've worked in the past, we'll be a stronger and more resilient province in the future.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for St. Albert.

MR. STRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's indeed an honour and a privilege for me this day to stand in the Legislative Assembly to give my remarks on behalf of the constituents of St. Albert and Albertans too on the throne speech delivered at the opening of the Second Session of the 21st Legislature in the province of Alberta on March 5 of this year.

This speech, Mr. Speaker, certainly does merit a response. We find that this speech is gift wrapped with a lot of lofty

phrases and fine words, but when we take the gift wrapping off, what do we have? The same old lump of coal we've been getting for the last four years in our Christmas stockings as Albertans here in this province. I might add that this throne speech left me with the same feeling of amusement as that little old lady when she gets up on television and tells the viewers, "Where's the beef?"

The throne speech reflects a continued lack on the part of this government of any form of sensible economic thought and places squarely on the backs of Albertans the deficit and also the depression that's ongoing in this province. The throne speech has in its very foundations a continuation of this government's shortsightedness, and this shortsightedness is addressed in four areas: a total lack of any long-term economic policies; an absolute neglect of the serious problems we have with unemployment in this province; a continued failure to address diversification, which we've been promised for years by this Tory government; and the same old, uncaring, unsympathetic attitude and view of small business and fairness for working Albertans.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, Albertans do recognize that yesterday's dreams are nothing but ashes in our present and what we see in our economic future. Nineteen eighty-six was a very, very difficult year for Albertans, and I think one thing the throne speech does say is that it was. What caused this? What caused all these foreclosures, bankruptcies, farm failures, receiverships, growing lines for social assistance? What created it all? Again, this government's total lack of economic thought, total lack of sound economic planning is what created it.

Our government also speaks to this government's commitment to health care, education, and social policies. Fine words, but again, when Albertans look at these flowery statements in this throne speech, they ask themselves: "Well, if our government really does care, why do we see cuts in health care? Why do we see cuts in our future, our children in education? Why do we see cuts all over the place when we talk about social policy?"

In the area of employment, Mr. Speaker, the government indicates to us that they will continue their priorities when it comes to job creation. If this is how this government treats this as a priority, I'd sure hate to see what they're doing in other areas, but I guess we'll find out when we get into the budget debate. But certainly I think what they as Albertans look at are statistics like this: growing unemployment in the province of Alberta, 145,000 people unemployed; 900 interns just lost their jobs as teachers; social assistance again growing. That's what they see. They see their children at home because they can't afford to make their mortgage payments and lost their homes due to foreclosure. They see their children at home because unfortunately they can't pay their rent anymore; they have to move back in with their parents because they can't find a job. That's what we see when it comes to unemployment.

The government speaks of wage subsidies being a short-term goal to support economic growth in this province. Let me assure this government that it is a short-term goal. It's a short-term, shortsighted goal that is not going to do anything to address the serious problems that we're faced with in this province.

In the area of agriculture, Mr. Speaker, again we have flowery statements, a lofty commitment to the farmers here in the province of Alberta. What I'd suggest to this government is that instead of providing 9 percent loans to our farmers, with the interest rates coming down in Canada, they turn around and take a look at really seriously making a commitment to Alberta's farmers and lowering your rate to 6 percent.

The area of energy, Mr. Speaker. Have we as Albertans been truly represented by our 21 Tory MPs in Ottawa? Have these 21 MPs listened to this government? No, they definitely haven't. Have they taken a look at the serious decline in our energy sector, the loss of jobs, the numerous failures, receiverships, bankruptcies in the oil patch? Have they taken a look at that? No, they haven't taken a look at it, and they haven't provided any assistance at all from what we can see. And that isn't just me talking. It's many, many higher people in that energy sector that are asking for help, not similar to an individual I heard today saying, "Well, things are just fine for some in Alberta, but for the rest of them, they can continue to suffer."

Even this government has recognized that we will not be able to provide what we need in energy in the 1990s. The conventional oil will not fully supply our needs as a country. Now again, it's fine to stand and criticize, but I will offer some constructive criticism. Why doesn't our Premier go to Ottawa and talk to the Prime Minister of Canada along with various other premiers right across this country and do something intelligent? And that is: create a floor price for energy in this country to put hundreds of thousands of people back to work in this country, specifically in this province, by way of developing what we have in this province, and that is heavy oil deposits and tar sands deposits that will fully supply the needs of this country into the 21st century. That's what we should be doing, not just turning around and sitting and doing nothing as you've done -- for how many years? I mean, you can't even get your Tory colleagues in Ottawa to agree with you, because they've been noticeable by their absence.

AN HON. MEMBER: Your colleagues caused the problem.

MR. STRONG: Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, our colleagues did not cause the problem. The problems were caused by the last Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of education, our government talks about the new School Act. I'd like to ask this government: is this new School Act going to take the place of budget cuts? You know, what is this new School Act going to do to replace those budget cuts, that harm to education that's been done by this very government in a major concern expressed by the Alberta Teachers' Association, and that is higher student/teacher ratios and split classes. That's what it's going to create. And it's going to create those school boards out there going back to the property tax payers in the various municipalities across this province and requesting more for property taxes. Why doesn't this government meet its true commitment to represent education and represent a commitment to the people of the province of Alberta?

We speak of two capital projects that will proceed this year, one of them being the Jeanne and Peter Lougheed building at Banff, and another one is the recreation building at the Vermilion campus of Lakeland College. Do you know what I find surprising? There is no mention in this throne speech of a possible 18 percent cut in the budget at Westterra. Why wasn't that mentioned as dedication and commitment of this government to education in the province of Alberta? That wasn't mentioned. But we can mention constructing two capital projects.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: That helps the unions get jobs.

MR. STRONG: Well, just to respond to this backbencher to my left -- he should have been to my right -- it's not going to help

the unions get jobs; it's going to help people to starvation, because there are many of them out there that have worked, and are being forced to go to work through economic necessity, for less than nothing. Perhaps our fellows here to the left could understand that before they get up and start laughing and making comments in regard to the serious problems that are facing Albertans in this province, that's what they should start paying attention to.

The next area we talk to is economic development and trade and our government's commitment to that trade. Might I suggest to this government, Mr. Speaker, that in order to build, thereby creating an end product that will achieve the goals desired, several stages of planning prior to the end product being delivered must be addressed. The first area in this blueprint, in this thought process -- I know there's some difficulty over there on the other side in thinking about this -- is the innovation or the idea; that's number one. The second is the short-, mid-, and long-term objective of the project, where that concept is tested against the economic viability and processes and parameters that either disprove or prove the concept. The third step is detailed planning and design, which results in the blueprint. I don't know of any structure that was ever successfully built that lacked these simple steps.

Where's our blueprint for success here in Alberta? Do we see a blueprint for success? Again, what we see in this throne speech is a blueprint for continued economic suffering and economic disaster in the province of Alberta. That's what we see. Again, I'll ask a question of this government: must this province's unemployed wait until the next federal or provincial election to again be promised jobs, jobs, jobs? Has this government indicated to the Assembly that they're doing anything in that regard by way of this throne speech? Again, not as far as I can see. But what we have heard in this Assembly is that Albertans are tough, Albertans are visionary, Albertans are pioneers. Is this government proposing and promoting a toughness test for Albertans? Is that what they're promoting here?

This government has failed their own toughness test that they forced onto the backs of Albertans. There are many examples of them failing that test. All this government has to do is look at the foreclosure statistics here in the province of Alberta. All they have to do is look at the growth of bankruptcies and receiverships in Alberta, the growing number of welfare recipients here in this province, the massive increase in the ranks of the unemployed, 145,000 Albertans who cannot find a job -- and that's not counting all those unemployed that have come off the unemployment insurance roles because they don't qualify anymore. What about all those Albertans that have left this province? I guess they failed the toughness test.

Mr. Speaker, the time for leadership is now and the time for action is now, and I see very, very little of that in this throne speech. We talk about diversification. Where are we with diversification? We are still stumbling around because we cannot even agree here -- this government can't agree -- to subsidize freight rates so that we can move on and move ahead and create jobs in our economy, turn around and do things like Champion Forest Products, a project, an extension to the mill at Hinton. The major stumbling block, as far as I can understand, with that project is a lack of any government movement when it comes to the difficulties that they are having with transportation costs. The same problem again is dictated when it comes to moving western Canadian coal, Alberta coal, to the province of Ontario and having them buy our Alberta coal here and not make any more purchases from the United States of America.

What are we doing about that?

You know, we heard a minister get up today and turn around and say, "Well, no, we as a government can't support subsidies." Let me assure you, government, that we are providing subsidies. We are providing those subsidies, instead of putting people to work, through things like social assistance, unemployment insurance, a lack of personal income tax payments by people because what they don't have is a job, Mr. Speaker. How can they pay personal income tax to keep this government in the style they've become accustomed to if they don't have jobs?

We see in the province of Quebec that the light-metal industry is being attracted there. Why? Because they utilize great amounts of electrical energy. What did this government do, Mr. Speaker? Delay a Sheerness plant, delay a Genesee power project for numerous months, costing some of those utilities millions of dollars in debt servicing and, I believe with Edmonton Power, \$600 million in debt servicing, because those were the statistics quoted by the city of Edmonton. Is that an efficient use of our capital? Is that an efficient use of our work force? I fear not. And that type of thought process, that lack of economic planning, is what has helped this province get in the economic morass we're currently in. It's not just good enough for this government to turn around -- and their Tory colleagues down in Ottawa -- and tell us, who they think are simple Albertans, that they cannot see the forest for the trees or that we indeed have one rotten tree in the orchard. Listen, there's a whole bunch of trees in that orchard and there's lots of them rotten, and there's going to be more of them rotten if we don't get our act together and don't get some leadership out of this government to solve our economic problems here in the province of Alberta.

The next area, Mr. Speaker, is in regards to labour. I recently heard the Minister of Labour stand on the steps of this Legislative Assembly and guarantee that this government was going to look after working Albertans, whether they were organized or unorganized, and be fair with those Albertans. Well, that is not the case, and this government's half million dollar world tour to determine and establish labour relations in the province of Alberta hasn't worked either. Again, what this government has proved to working Albertans is that they don't want to be fair and they don't want to consider any fairness. They want to continue with the same archaic labour legislation that's been here with us in this province for years and years and years. They indicate that they want to move Alberta into the 21st century. They want Alberta to be at the forefront of labour relations in the province and in Canada. Well, Mr. Speaker, let's get into the reality, the reality of just what is happening out there in the field of labour relations. What I have is reality. I have Zeidler Forest Products, a memo to their employees that says they thank all their employees -- and this is June 25, 1985 -- for the "united effort at the Slave Lake Plant" which is now achieving the required production "to enable the company to survive in the market place." And the congratulations go on.

Right after that, Mr. Speaker, those employees went on holidays for a two-week period and came back to negotiations which opened on October 24, where the company, in their initial tabling of their bargaining package, did not request any wage reduction. They did request for new employees a wage reduction. They wanted to eliminate health and welfare costs that used to be paid 100 percent to a split of 70/30, 30 percent to be paid by the employees. They wanted a two-year agreement, and they also wanted watchmen excluded from a collective agreement.

This scenario went on after they got locked out. They went on strike April 11, carried on that ugly situation that all of us here in this Assembly saw on our television sets and read about in the papers. On August 22, 1986, they asked our Labour minister to appoint a disputes inquiry board. Our Labour minister responded on August 29 that he decided not to accept the application for a disputes inquiry board at this time. Again, those working Albertans, those employees, asked our Labour minister: please set up a disputes inquiry board so we can have some fairness. They finally got a disputes inquiry board on September 10 of last year. The disputes inquiry board, chaired by Mr. Lucas, Q.C., recommended no change in the wage rates. They recommended the pension plan be taken over by the Zeidler Forest Industry pension plan. They recommended the elimination of the floating holiday. They recommended a 70/30 split for the cost of benefits, 30 percent to be borne by the employees; they used to get 100 percent. They recommended no change in the rest periods. They recommended a \$9.50 starting rate for brand-new employees and after three months that they go to \$10.50. They recommended a one-year agreement to expire September 30, 1987. They recommended a \$120 signing bonus. They recommended a travel allowance being increased to 25 cents an hour, and they recommended that the agreement would last for a period of one year, to expire on October 31.

Well, Mr. Speaker, two days after that the company said "We will not accept the recommendations of the disputes inquiry board by a vote of one." The employees in that plant conducted a government-supervised strike vote, secret ballot. The employees accepted. Again, on October 27 the company here in Alberta changed their position in bargaining and asked for a \$2-an-hour rollback in these employees' wages to the base rate. Now, that wasn't asked for when they started negotiations. Almost 12 months later this company changed their position at the bargaining table and wanted a \$2-an-hour wage rollback.

This scenario and joke went on till finally they had a meeting with our Deputy Minister of Labour, Mr. Clint S. Mellors. Mr. Mellors on January 5, 1987, this year, recommended terms of a proposal for settlement of all outstanding issues, including a return to work, and item 2 on that proposal indicates that these employees, just under 100 employees of Zeidler Forest Products, take a wage rollback of \$1.50 an hour for settlement -- that is, \$1.50 an hour less than what the chairman of the disputes inquiry board recommended for settlement -- and the reason he gives is that this 15 percent calculation is because of the Canadian softwood tax. Now, I find it a little more than disgusting that we would have a deputy minister say in writing to almost 100 employees that they should take a 15 percent cut in wages because of a softwood tax that was instituted by this government's Tory colleagues in Ottawa.

What Mr. Mellors also goes on to say is that he would reduce the rate even further for new hires, those working Albertans, to \$9 an hour as a starting rate for the first three months and \$10 an hour after the next three months. Well, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't good enough yet, because I have another letter signed on behalf of Clint S. Mellors, Deputy Minister of Labour, dated January 12, 1987, where Mr. Mellors is suggesting that this unsightly, very, very difficult set of negotiations be concluded not by a \$1.50-an-hour decrease to these individual employees' wages but by a \$2-an-hour decrease in their collective agreement.

Now, this ugly situation could have been settled many, many, many months ago if this government truly did represent and want to be fair with working Albertans, and it didn't matter whether they were unionized or not unionized. It could have

been settled. It could have been settled by going to this employer and saying: "Look, employer, there are many, many other plants in this province. There's Weldwood of Canada; they're settled. There's the Zeidler plywood plant in Edmonton; they're settled, and they got their wage rate rolled over. They weren't asked for a \$2-an-hour decrease in wages to make up for a softwood tax that was instituted by your federal colleagues down in Ottawa. There's a Canadian forest products plant that covers over 500 members; that's settled. British Columbia is settled; they don't have any problems. They didn't ask for a \$2-an-hour cut in their employees' wages to make up for a softwood tax."

I'll tell you something else, Mr. Speaker. There is an individual, Mr. Doug Smythe, an economist and a researcher for the International Woodworkers of America, who has stated that this softwood tax will cost that employer less than 4 cents per hour. What the company stated was that this softwood tax would cost them \$4.84 an hour. Now, who's right and who's wrong? And this company wouldn't open their books.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. member has about half a minute left to complete his remarks.

MR. STRONG: Do I get the 10 seconds that you just used up, Mr. Speaker?

Well, Mr. Speaker, this horror story goes on.

AN HON. MEMBER: And on and on.

MR. STRONG: And on and on.

On January 15, Mr. Munro, the president of the International Woodworkers association of America sent to our Premier, Mr. Getty, a letter requesting a meeting with him, and stating, "I believe, Mr. Premier, that this dispute has gone on quite long enough," and let's get it settled. And I would remind everybody sitting in this Assembly that that letter was sent on January 15, 1987. The response came from the Premier's office on February 20, 1987, almost one month after, when again we get the same simple rhetoric out of this government that we've got for a long time: "I have, however, instructed the Minister of Labour, Dr. Ian Reid to have his department and himself ..."

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Could the hon. member complete his remarks in one sentence.

MR. STRONG: The final course of action here, Mr. Speaker, is a telex that was sent by Mr. Munro to Mr. Getty on February 27, 1987, stating a suggested March 5 meeting, and there is still no response.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Lethbridge West.

MR. GOGO: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am indeed pleased to have the opportunity of making some comments relative to the throne speech, moved by the very eloquent Mr. Alger and seconded by the very eloquent Mr. Day.

Mr. Speaker, I'm reminded each time we have a throne speech of a quotation that is perhaps so appropriate to the times, and it's by Mr. George Ludeke. It may be appropriate just to quote that, and if I may, the quote is:

Our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness
Are fairly safe from oppression,
Except for during those months of the year
When the legislatures are in session.

I say that because having been here for some years, I continue to be intrigued with the various comments I hear, not only in terms of the proposed legislation, but the members observations about where Alberta is. where it has come from, and perhaps where Alberta is going. As the Member for Lethbridge West, one of two that serve that community, I wanted to bring some comments that I believe are relevant to not only the community I represent but the throne speech and how perhaps they might apply.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

My constituents, I believe, feel very strongly that the purpose of this Legislature and the government that occupies the greater part of it has certain primary roles. First of all, I believe they strongly support that the role of government is to help those who are unable to help themselves; secondly, that government should not be the creator of everything as suggested earlier in this House today but perhaps create a climate, a climate in which individuals can pursue the various options that they want, create work or work for others, or create an environment that frankly encourages those who wish to invest in our province, thereby creating jobs; and then thirdly. I believe my constituents feel very strongly that government, the government they want to see. is a government that will maintain traditions that have built this great province and. at the same time, maintain some fiscal responsibility so that those who have built and saved for tomorrow will indeed have that ability to use dollars they have saved for tomorrow that are still worth something.

I say that, Mr. Speaker, because as we see so clearly in the throne speech, at the outset the government said that 1986 was indeed a difficult year for most, if not many. Albertans. Then it goes on to suggest what perhaps government can do to alleviate those conditions. I find it difficult, perhaps because of my age or the era which I came from, that the so-called experts all think you can spend your way into prosperity. The answer is just print more money and you can have whatever you want. How dare you have the audacity to question perhaps the finest educational system in country? It's still not good enough. And why is it that we say it's not good enough? Not because of the literacy rate, not because there are some 400 people at the U of A who couldn't stay because the system didn't accommodate their being competent to attend. Why is it we think that the only solution is more, more, more money?

The one thing I've appreciated is the hon. Member for Edmonton Strathcona, who gave fair recognition to the fact that the province indeed is in some financial difficulty and it's going to have to trim its sails. That's the only comment I've heard from the other side of the House about fiscal responsibility, and it would be my observation that like so many other things, it's so much easier to suggest solutions when you don't know too much about the problem.

I believe most Albertans would support a balanced budget. Most Albertans say that you cannot for a very long time spend more than you earn. Obviously, all members of this House don't agree with that, and we all look with interest to see what the government, through its Treasurer, will do on Friday in terms of next year's proposed spending in the form of the budget.

Now, Mr. Speaker, free trade, or enhanced trade, of course is on everybody's lips, and there's no question, in my view, that the future on this continent lies with free trade. It lies with the ability of nations to lead from strength, to manufacture those matters which they can manufacture economically and find a buyer for, and those of us who are blessed with natural resources, particularly nonrenewable, have to negotiate what's in the best interests of the owners; that is, the people of Alberta represented by 83 members in this House. On the matter of free or enhanced trade, I think of some of the things that have gone on with Canada and America. For example, we sent America Anne Murray; they sent us back acid rain. We sent them Lome Greene; they sent us back Mr. T. Perhaps we should send them Barbara Frum and they might send us back *60 Minutes*. That indeed might be perceived as free trade.

I want to comment, Mr. Speaker, about three specific areas, the first one regarding unemployment. We have a government that's committed, certainly in terms of expenditures, certainly in terms of its energies, a major commitment to creating if not meaningful work then certainly employable employment for many Albertans. We've just heard at length a critic who feels the government has not done enough, but I would suggest that we as hon. members of this House take a moment to try and relate to those that don't have a job, try to relate to those who have perhaps for some 20 years worked to the best of their ability doing whatever they were able to do: raise a family in the finest traditions of this province, pay their bills, acquire a mortgage, doing all the things that are expected of them. And suddenly through no fault of their own -- and it's not a good idea to point fingers -- they find themselves without a job. Let us just for a minute try and understand what those men and women of Alberta are doing when they come home to the dinner table at 5 or 6 o'clock at night, after having looked all day for a job and not being able to find it, and have their kids look at the dinner table and say, "Can't you get a job, Dad?"

Can we think for a moment of the loss of dignity? Can we think for a moment of the traumatic experience many of those people are experiencing and begin to understand the very human need of those who don't have employment in this province, and then try to understand why? What I've been hearing is that there's a government here that's preventing them from having a job. I've heard very few people from the other side of this House saying: why, how did it happen, and what are you going to do? I mean, did this government create the situation with the energy? Did this government encourage the U.S. to have a U.S. farm Bill of \$60 billion to attempt to put in place what America believes is necessary for its own people? We didn't do that, but we must live with it. How can we, representing some 10 per cent of the country's people, expect to attempt to dictate policy of a nation? We must react and plan to compensate for the actions of others. Now, what better way could we do it? I think that's what we should be hearing today, and I would hope we're going to hear some of that in the throne speech, as to how a government, representing some 2.5 million people, is supposed to react and plan for the future of its citizens. I'm not hearing very much of that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Resign.

MR. GOGO: I'm hearing the sort of tripe I just heard: move over; I'll take over. I'll go back to the comment I made a moment ago. Mr. Speaker: it's so easy, so easy, to have the solutions when you don't understand the problem.

I'm reminded of a quotation I heard from the House leader some years ago about a man so well known to the western world, and when this gentleman was asked -- it was the hon. Sir Winston Churchill -- what was the most important qualification in being a politician, he said, and I quote, "It's the ability to foretell what will happen tomorrow, next month, and next year, and then to explain afterward why it did not happen." I'm hearing a comment from across the House, someone who knows all the answers. Well, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I'd like to see his track record in terms of governing, because it's always easy in the bleachers to play the game, but until you get in the pit, I honestly submit that you don't fully understand the problem.

I know we're having trouble, Mr. Speaker. I know we're having trouble economically. Yet at the same time, have we ever considered that in the last year in Alberta some \$120 million was spent on bingo? Have we ever considered the great problems we're in when for the first time in history two things have occurred in Canada? One, we have more voters west of Winnipeg than the province of Quebec -- first time in history; maybe that's significant. I would submit to the NDP that it better be very significant. The second point I think is of great significance is that for the first time in history gaming in Canada in total expenditure of dollars, which was \$4.2 billion, has exceeded the total wheat sales of Canada, the breadbasket of the world. Doesn't that tell us something about the economic conditions? Doesn't that tell us something about the sense of values and how they're changing? For those that don't think it's relative, I suggest they go out to West Edmonton Mall. I have difficulty as a citizen and a legislator understanding how things can be so difficult when we're at all-time records in terms of credit sales, when you can't buy a flight to Hawaii on one of the carriers, yet at the same time we have food banks.

Yet people turn around and say: it's the role of government; government should be imposing itself on people's lives. Well, that's not the view of the government. It may be the wishes of certain members of this House, and I suppose, Mr. Speaker, if that's what the public wants, maybe that's what the public will get. That's what elections are for. But I submit that one of the roles of government is not to follow; a primary role of government is to lead and set examples and determine and separate the needs from the musts and the wants.

Mr. Speaker, mention has already been made that the Minister of Education in the government has promised a new School Act. I suppose if there's any one item that's of great, significant importance to many Albertans, it's the School Act. I've heard comments that it's not a good thing, that the answer to the School Act is simply to put more money out there. Is that what school is all about? I submit, Mr. Speaker, that in my view, as the father of five, it's education we should be interested in. And is education schooling? Is that all education is? Do we want to end up having a nation of economists, where someone has suggested that if you laid them all end to end, it would be a very good thing. Or do we want meaningful citizen participation in our communities to maintain the traditions we've built? I submit -- and that's why I feel so strongly about community schools -- that if we're going to have a sense of community, we have to support it. I for one feel very strongly that it's small comfort to have a good schooling process when you end up with graduates, on the one hand, who can't enter a university and, on the other hand, subscribe to such living conditions and economic understanding that they have Sears' charge cards that charge 29 per cent interest. I mean, what does that say about our system of

preparing individuals for a meaningful role in our society?

I've heard the arguments, and I agree with the arguments, that every dollar invested in education comes back fivefold; I don't quarrel. But you tell me where they're coming from, because the minute you put more there, the less you're going to have for health, the less you're going to have for law enforcement, and so on. Everybody's got the answer for their own vested interest. If you represent a labour union, I know exactly how you'll talk; if you're a teacher, I know exactly how you'll talk; if you're a doctor, I know exactly how you'll talk. And I have no quarrel with that if those are the people who sent you here, but my understanding is that it was voters who sent you. I think, frankly, Mr. Speaker, people should be looking out for the best interests of all Albertans, particularly their constituents, and not certain vested interests.

We have, Mr. Speaker, within our educational system many dedicated men and women who serve as trustees. I think they should get some credit. They work very hard. They try to do what's best. Within that I've got to include not only the separate and public school systems but the private system. Because Alberta is unique. The Alberta government has recognized, contrary to some beliefs in this House, that parents should have some rights about the education of their children. We seem to think that if we turn them loose in a day care and get them out 10 years later, we're going to have a well-rounded, educated, psychologically sound youngster.

I'm reminded of the '60s when everybody worth his salt became a psychologist who wrote a book and anybody who didn't practise Dr. Spock wasn't with it. Well, I'm the last one to say the jails are full of that. But I'll tell you this: never before in the history of Alberta have we had as many problems as we have today. Is that not related in some way, Mr. Speaker, to the family unit in our society? Is that not related in some way that the expert knows best and the parent doesn't know much? Is that not related in some way to my wife, with five grandchildren, and a five-year-old who said to her, "Grandma, you're not qualified to babysit me"? Is our society changing its values so much that we've lost the sense of value for the very things that built this province?

I sense we're thinking that way and that we can solve all the problems by printing more money. We've heard of a deficit coming up of some \$3 billion because a government cared enough to try and bridge the gap. What credit comes? What credit do I hear coming? Except for the Member for Edmonton Strathcona, I've heard no credit coming, or understanding either, which is even more serious, Mr. Speaker.

I'm not one of those who feels strongly about bricks and mortar within a constituency, but I must bring a concern to this Legislature that the University of Lethbridge, which I happen to believe is the finest undergraduate liberal arts institution in Canada, is not getting its fair share in base funding, and I've got a motion on the Order Paper, 233, to represent that. I think one of the roles of this government has to be decentralization and equality of opportunity for all of Alberta. I also think, Mr. Speaker, that we have many fine examples outside of the two major cities that are proof positive, and there is a sod-turning next week to indicate that in my own constituency.

But I want to come up with a couple of final comments, Mr. Speaker, and that's on the whole matter of family. We seem to think and we seem to practise and we've long believed, both as a government and as a society, that your value to our society, your importance to our society, is in direct proportion to your paycheque. The more you make, the more valuable you are.

We not only believe it; we practise it, which says to me that -- in the throne speech, on page 10, we talk about family, we talk about homemakers, and we talk about the role of those people who raise our children, who get no money at all. Does that not tell us what we think of a homemaker in terms of society? You can't have it both ways. You can't say the highest earner is the major contributor without saying that those who earn nothing are useless. I take exception to that, Mr. Speaker. I happen to think our province and our country and the western world were built on certain fundamentals, and one of those was the unity of family and the support of family and the sharing of responsibility by family. I get very upset when I hear people say that the future of our children lies in day care centres, that the future of our kids lies with people who are theorists in terms of what's best psychologically.

I'd like to see us get back to some of those so-called old-style traditions, and the way to begin is for us to recognize the value of that family and the value of that homemaker. You can be making \$25,000 and your wife can be making \$25,000, but no, you've got to do your own thing, because someone told you that unless you do, you're not going to experience the whole life. So what if you don't see your kids? You've got a corporation raising them. Here we have another mother who wants to stay home and raise her kids, but every couple of months or every three months she gets a little down, you know, because she's burned out with those three kids. Can she hire a sitter at public expense? You've got to be kidding. Can she take it off her tax at public expense? You've got to be kidding. Yet we as a government and as a society continue, it seems to me, to condone and implement those policies that drive apart the family, not bring them together. I would say that if there is one feeling I have as a member of this Assembly, if there is one sense of priority I'd like to see in this throne speech, it's for this government to be committed to not only the sense of family but the recognition that the strength of our society, both in the past and in the future, lies with our family.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to very briefly take part in the debate this afternoon. In light of the fact that I did not partake in the throne speech debate last year because I thought it was time for the new members in the Assembly -- it was their day to shine. So I want to take this opportunity, nearly a year late, to congratulate the new members of the Assembly, because for 12 years I've been waiting for them to get here. The process has to be more important than the players, and I think that the taxpayers of Alberta will be better saved because we have more members on this side of the Assembly. I want to say welcome to you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to congratulate the movers and the seconders.

I was a little bit disappointed in that the throne speech did not lay out, as I think throne speeches should, the long-term plans of this government. I think that if there is a major criticism, that is it. I am proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that when I first came to this Assembly under the then Premier, the hon. E.C. Manning -- if there is a legacy that that man and that government left this province, it is that they did have long-term planning so that the municipalities, the departments of education, the school boards, and the hospital boards had some idea that this government did have a long-range plan. I challenge the members of the government party; if you're going to regain -- and I say "regain" -- the confidence of the voter in this province, you are going to have to provide some of that leadership. You

are going to have to provide some long-term planning, and you're going to have to give the people of this province confidence that you know where you're heading, because if you do not, you do it at the peril of being displaced at the polls.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that there are some programs in the Assembly that I have been striving to get this government to move on for many, many years. The first one I would like to congratulate is my friend the hon. Minister of Tourism. For many years I've stood in my place and I have begged, beseeched, cajoled the minister of small business development and tourism to look at training the people in the food industry business. I am pleased to see that the minister is moving in that direction. I have indicated to the members of this Assembly and the people of this province that I did take a tour of the training school in Montreal where they can train you: a six-week course in being a chambermaid to a two-year course in how you run hotels.

MR. JOHNSTON: How long does it take to be a politician?

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the hon. Provincial Treasurer, being a politician is the only profession you don't need any training for. Sometimes I start thinking that maybe the people who do the best in this business are the ones who think the least. Now, that may be a bit derogatory on the profession, but I'm proud to be a professional politician, Mr. Minister and Mr. Speaker.

I would like to say to my left-wing friends, or my friends to the left, that after the hon. Member for Edmonton Mill Woods discovers where the urinals are in this place, maybe he will be able to contribute. And I would like to say that sometimes it takes a long time to find the urinals in this place, because the hon. Minister of Education and I found out that maybe our paths had crossed and they had changed the signs on the doors. [laughter] Now, I don't know who to blame that on, because tradition goes down difficultly.

Mr. Speaker, the question of cutbacks. I would like to say to the government and I would like to say to the members of the Assembly that when you're looking at cutbacks, when we're looking at reducing the global budgets, I think that maybe sometimes we are too quick to throw out the baby with the bathwater. I challenge the government: look very, very closely at getting rid of programs. I think the way to go is to reduce the overall budget, as the government has done. The people at the local level -- the school boards, the hospital boards -- are going to have to make some reductions, and if they terminate the programs, then they will have to answer to their local people. So it is a time when we're going to have to have some leadership by this government.

I have indicated to my friendly colleague the minister responsible for the budget, the Provincial Treasurer, that I think it's time the people of this province realized that the only people that have been taking cutbacks have been labour. We haven't been getting to the politicians. We haven't been getting to the civil servants. We haven't been getting to the doctors. We haven't been getting to the dentists. If this province is serious about trying to balance the budget, Mr. Provincial Treasurer, then I think we're just going to have no choice but to roll back our own salaries, and then we go to the civil servants. My little scheme is called 12, 10, 8, and 6. Anybody that's making over \$100,000 is going to take a 12 percent rollback.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's all the ministers.

DR. BUCK: Anybody -- and I was surprised, talking about the ministers, that the ministers make so little, to be quite honest with you. I really thought they made \$75,000; they make \$64,000. [interjection] I'll listen to you, little guy, when it's your turn.

Mr. Speaker, anybody in this province that's making, in the civil service or an elected person, over \$100,000 takes a 12 percent rollback. Anybody between \$50,000 and \$100,000, which includes the cabinet ministers and some of the high echelon civil servants, takes a 10 percent rollback. Anybody between \$35,000 and \$50,000 takes an 8 percent rollback, and anybody under \$25,000 -- and you can juggle those numbers any way you want to, Mr. Speaker and Mr. Treasurer -- takes a 6 percent rollback. Because then we can go to Alberta health care and we can go to the doctors and say, "You've just had your salaries rolled back 10 percent." And you go to the dentists and you say, "We've just rolled your salaries back 10 percent." And we go to the Alberta Teachers' Association and say, "We've just asked you to ask your members to take a 10 percent rollback." Because if we're serious, we're going to have to have the will to do it. [interjection] All of us, hon. member from Red Deer, all of us.

But we have to set the example, because I think it's lime to quit playing games in this province. We have lived so high off the hog in this province in the last 15 years that we're starting to take the candies away from the kids, and it's hard; it's hard to cut back. But, Members of this Assembly, I would sooner take 85 percent of any loaf than no loaf at all. I have seen the devastation of unemployment in my constituency, some of my patients and some of my friends. Not only is it a fiscal devastation, it is a psychological devastation, and I worry about what's going to happen to rural Alberta because of a downturn in our agricultural economy. What's going to happen to the Derwents, the Myrnams, the Elk Points, the St. Pauls? Are we just going to roll up the carpet in rural Alberta? No, I don't think we can do that.

So the problems are obvious; the solutions will take some strong leadership. When I talked to the vice-president of a major bank in this province and in this city whose daughter had worked for a rival bank for six and a half years and had just been laid off, I said to this vice-president -- and I think he was in that group that I was talking about, the 12 percent rollback -- "Bill, would you take a 12 percent rollback if everybody else did, so that your daughter could have a job?" He said, "Without any hesitation, if we were all doing it." I think that Albertans have the backbone. I think Albertans would be willing to say we will all sacrifice together. That's how drastic a measure we're going to have to take. So when we're looking at some of the cutbacks, let's remember that 85 percent of a loaf is better than no loaf at all.

I would like to say that the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Advanced Education, has to take a long, hard look at some of the professional courses at our universities. I teach a little bit over at the university. I thought the first 25 years of your life you have to work to put bread on the table and then, God willing, the next 25 years you want to have a little bit of fun at what you're doing, so I teach a couple of mornings over there. I don't make any money at it, but I want to do it and I enjoy it. I don't think we need 52 dentists graduating every year, Mr. Minister, and I don't think we need 188 doctors graduating every year and 200 lawyers graduating every year. And I don't agree with the minister of health when he says, "Well, we just won't give them a licence." Let's solve the problem at the end where it should be

solved at: up in that ivory tower. You talk about inefficiencies. I'm going to be popular when I go over there Monday morning, I'll tell you. But this is exactly the way I feel, because the University of Alberta or any university is exactly a small example of what goes on in government at any level. If you have a budget of \$100,000, when the clock strikes midnight on March 31, make sure you spend all the money, because if you are going to ask for an increase next year, if you haven't spent it, how can you justify an increase? That's the difference between the government sector and the private sector. You can't do it that way in the private sector. If you are going to build an \$85,000 house, that's all the money you've got. But the government builds an \$85,000 house and the low bid comes in at \$120,000 and they take it. We can't keep going like that in this province.

I say to the minister who's responsible for building those government buildings, if you really want the private sector to participate, when you build a liquor store in some little town in Alberta, get 40 people to put up the money and you rent it back from them. Maybe that sounds a little bit too much like the old Social Credit second income philosophy. Let those people build a building; let them make a little bit of return on their money. The building will get built. That will provide employment. Governments shouldn't be in the business of owning buildings; governments are there to legislate, pass laws, not to be in the real estate business.

Mr. Speaker, I was going to only speak a couple of minutes, but I do want to say that we must encourage the private sector. We must realize that tourism is a great source of 100-cent dollars, and I challenge the Minister of Tourism that there's still a great potential to sell this province. I want to say to the government: Mr. Minister of Health, don't tamper with medicare. If you think that you want to be the ex-government of this province, bring in a sales tax, and the issue of medicare is just as

devastating politically. I want to tell a little story about a survey my colleague from Little Bow, who I think probably . . . I'll be finished in 30 seconds, Mr. Speaker. Are you getting twitchy? My colleague conducted a poll in, I think, really conservative southern Alberta, and 95 percent of those people said: don't tamper with medicare.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to this government: you have to reduce some budgeting, but don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. Make reductions in budgeting, but don't throw out some of those programs that are serving the people of this province, that have been in there for a long time and are serving the people well.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Member for Edmonton Avonmore to adjourn debate.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour of the motion, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

The clock which the Chair has shows one minute to go. Government House Leader.

MR. CRAWFORD: Good, Mr. Speaker. I should advise the House that it is not proposed to sit tomorrow evening.

[At 5:30 p.m. the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]