

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, April 7, 1987 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 87/04/07

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head:

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

As Canadians and as Albertans we give thanks for the precious gifts of freedom and peace which we enjoy.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly we rededicate ourselves to the valued traditions of parliamentary democracy as a means of serving our province and our country.

Amen.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we are very honoured today to have a distinguished guest in your gallery. He is visiting our province on invitation from me and from the government of Alberta. I'd like to introduce to you the Hon. David Peterson, Premier of the province of Ontario.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the annual report for the year ended December 1986 of the Alberta Health Facilities Review Committee. This committee, chaired by the hon. Member for Cypress-Redcliff, visited unannounced a large number of health facilities throughout the province during that year.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file copies of a very important announcement that was made earlier this morning with respect to a proposed \$270 million petrochemical project to be located near Edmonton.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the annual report for the year 1985-86 of the Alberta Department of Housing.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to the members of this Assembly, 28 members of the Avonmore 60 and Over club, who are with the United Church. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure for me to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, 33 grade 6 students from the G.W. Smith school, located in the constituency of Red Deer South. They are accompanied by four of their teachers and three of their parents: their principal, Mr. Hornby; Mr. Rae Molzan, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Cousins, who is a teacher intern; and parents Mrs. Savage, Mrs. Carvell, and Mrs. Rollinson. I would ask that they all

stand in the members' gallery and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and members of the Assembly some 39 grade 6 students from the Norwood -- I would like to stress community school. I spent a lot of time in this school, and I can assure members that it is one of the best in the province. They are accompanied by two teachers, Mr. Stuart McCormick and Miss Helen Kortess. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask them to stand and receive the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured today to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, a colleague and good friend from another government, Mayor Jerry Doyle of Edson. Mayor Doyle is in the public gallery, and if he will rise, I'm sure we'll give him our traditional welcome.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce 38 grade 6 students from the Robina Baker school in Devon. They are accompanied by teachers Mrs. Duperron and Mrs. Nicholson and parents Mrs. Cassis, Mrs. Hartman, Mrs. Szyndrowski, and Mrs. Doyle. They are seated in the members' gallery and, I believe, the public gallery, and I'd ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Community and Occupational Health

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to advise the House that today, April 7, is World Health Day, as recognized by the World Health Organization and allied health bodies.

The theme this year is "Immunization: A Chance for Every Child", and this ties in with a significant activity of this government. As was announced in the throne speech, the government is expanding its immunization services by purchasing a supply of haemophilis influenza B vaccine which all Albertans will be able to obtain at their local health unit to help protect their children against meningitis. As well, in the next few weeks we will be launching a campaign to encourage Albertans to have their children immunized against measles, a serious disease against which immunization provides almost total protection.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this World Health Day will remind us all of the effectiveness of immunization against unnecessary and preventable diseases and will raise the awareness in the public's minds of the importance of immunization for all Albertans.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I agree.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Hospital Funding

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. We've been receiving a number of letters about the W.W. Cross Cancer Institute. Apparently, they've decided to discontinue the callback service previously provided for cancer patients, and the reason given for this cutback is the 3 percent cutback of funds to hospitals in Alberta. My question to the minister is: how can

the minister justify this punitive, shortsighted measure for cancer patients, who are already facing a great deal of stress?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that that situation exists.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, we've talked to the people at the Cross Cancer Institute. I wish the minister would learn what's happening in his own department. But he will have to take my word for it: there will no longer be callbacks . . . [interjections] Somebody has to help him out with his portfolio.

My question to the minister: is the minister saying, then, that he is not aware that they have instituted that there will no longer be the callbacks so that people can go back for yearly checkups? This is one of the things happening in the Cross Cancer Institute. Is he not aware of this?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Cross Cancer Institute, like other hospitals across the province, has been asked to operate in the coming fiscal year with 97 percent of the funding they had last year. The hospital is in the process of determining how they will adjust their internal delivery of services to meet that budgetary target. I have not yet had presented to me from the hospital the final decision of the board as to how they will meet that target. My understanding is that it does not include the kind of cutbacks the hon. member refers to, but that may well be part of the discussion that's presently going on. But I'm not aware that that has been finalized by the board of the hospital.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm absolutely amazed the minister doesn't know what's going on in his own department. This is a letter that's gone out from the director of the Cross Cancer Institute to cancer patients, probably affecting over a thousand people. Is the minister saying, then, that he was totally unaware of that? If he was totally unaware of it, would he look into this and bring back this needed remedy for cancer patients in the province?

MR. M. MOORE: Two things, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has a little bit of confusion between the Cross cancer clinic, a Crown-owned but independently operated hospital in terms of its board of directors, and the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care. The department does not operate the Cross cancer clinic. Insofar as the clinic's decisions with respect to how they serve their patients, I am not in a position to either approve or disapprove of whatever steps they take except with respect to the closure of beds, which must receive the approval of the minister of hospitals or his designate.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, that the matter the hon. Leader of the Opposition is referring to is a direct result of their budgetary cuts or not or whether or not it's been finalized. I have to say I have not seen the particular letter. There are dozens and dozens of letters and directives that go out from hospital boards every day. I don't keep track of them all.

We have a responsible board in place to operate that hospital that in my opinion are doing a very good job. I have to live with and abide by, as the hon. member has to, some of the decisions that they make. But if the hon. member has a specific problem with the particular move the board has made, I'd be happy to look into it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to this minister. Would they be

cutting back this callback procedure if you hadn't cut back the resources by 3 percent? So the direct responsibility is with this minister and his department. My question to the minister is simply this: will he look into this, and if this is in fact happening, will he give them the funds to bring this procedure back to the Cross Cancer Institute?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I just answered the first part of the hon. member's question by saying that if the hon. member has a specific concern or problem, then he should let me have the information, and I will look into it.

In terms of providing additional funding, the answer is that that institution, along with a lot of others, has to find ways to live within a budget that's 97 percent of what it was last year. If we are to make exceptions to that every time the hon. Leader of the Opposition or someone else figures that there's a hardship because of a 3 percent reduction in funding, there's simply no way we'll ever meet the target of maintaining our health care system in this province and preventing the costs from going above what we can afford to pay.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the minister is doing a hospitals review, announced in the throne speech, to rationalize utilization of beds throughout the province. But with the 3 percent cutback it's now evident what's going to happen: surgical beds are closing all through our cities.

To the minister: will the minister take the initiative now to consult with the Alberta Hospital Association to determine some means to deal with the immediate situation so that persons in our province are not put at risk?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, it's not a matter of consulting with the Alberta Hospital Association. I think the proper procedure is one of the administration of each individual hospital making their own decisions about how they meet their budgetary targets, working with the staff of my department, which many, many of them are doing, in trying to develop ways to meet the budget targets. Thus far I haven't seen anything in terms of the decisions those boards have made that's extremely alarming. Certainly, there are some bed closures going to occur, but in most cases I think they are prepared to make better utilization of the existing beds and thereby maintain a level of patient care that's equal to what they had before.

There has been in the past, the hon. member should know, a great deal of waste occurring in our health care system, and I find that health care professionals and those who are operating the hospitals right across this province are now looking much more carefully at the dollars they spend and where they spend them. I have every confidence that we're going to come out of this 3 percent reduction in funding with an even better delivery of health care by hospital boards than we had before.

MR. SPEAKER: Second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to designate my question to the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

Minority Language Instruction

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Education, le ministre de l'éducation. Mr. Speaker, these questions are pertaining to section 23 of the Constitution Act signed by this province on April 19, 1982. Les franco-Albertains attendent impatiemment depuis 1982.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. The Chair rises with great hesitation, but the hon. member and the Chair had discussion last June with respect to the use of the French language in the Assembly. Permission was indeed granted for that to take place within debates, but at that time there was mutual consent that that would not occur during question period. En anglais, s'il vous plaît.

MR. PIQUETTE: Mr. Speaker, when I rose in the House last year, I claimed the right to be able to speak in French in this House, and I don't think that right has been abolished by your statement. Les Franco-Albertains attendent impatiemment depuis ...

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. The Chair directs that the questions will be in English or the member will forfeit the position. [interjection] Order please.

MR. PIQUETTE: Okay, if you do wish the translation. But I want to rise on a point of order relating to this, because I think my rights are not being abided by, by this Legislature.

To the Minister of Education: Francophone Albertans have been waiting since 1982, since the signing of the Charter by this province, to have the School Act recognize their rights to their minority language rights legislation. I hope this minister is aware that under section 31 of the Charter individuals or groups who are denied their constitutional rights under section 23 can sue this government for their noncompliance. Now, will the minister indicate today that the proposed School Act will respond to the demand of section 23 of the Charter?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I will respond by saying that the School Act will certainly address the matter of the language of instruction in our schools, but as to specific content of the Act, obviously that will have to await its introduction, which was committed to by our Speech from the Throne earlier in the year.

MR. PIQUETTE: When will the minister be introducing this new School Act? Will it be in this spring session or next fall?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as was clearly indicated in the throne speech on March 4, the School Act will be introduced during this spring session and will be preceded by a framework document.

MR. PIQUETTE: I'm very glad to hear that, Mr. Speaker. Will the Alberta School Act instruct or ensure that school boards provide French language minority homogeneous facilities where there are sufficient numbers and where such a request has been made by parents that are properly defined under the Charter?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my first answer, the specific content of the School Act is not something I can speak to in the absence of the legislation. The matter of the

language of instruction within schools will certainly be part of that document.

MR. PIQUETTE: My last supplementary. So as not to burden the local school board, will the minister indicate whether sufficient education funding by both the provincial and federal governments will be made available to school boards to provide French minority language instruction in such facilities?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, the matter of minority language instruction in our schools is an exceedingly important one, important enough that I introduced a Bill in this Assembly, Bill 31, during the last sitting to recognize the importance of the language of instruction and to recognize the importance of the rights in section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The matter of how we will implement French language instruction through our school boards is one which is obviously part of the overall School Act. It is also one which is subject to interpretation and is currently before the courts. However, I would like to highlight that the interest of Albertans in French education is clearly indicated by the fact that the students in our French-language programs, be they for Francophones or immersion programs, have tripled over the past 10 years, and certainly that growing interest in French-language education is one of the many matters that will have to be part of our whole discussion on the School Act.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. As the minister well knows, my constituency, Westlock-Sturgeon, is one of the pioneer spots for Francophones settling in Alberta. We are concerned about the Francophone schools. In spite of the commendable record for French immersion classes in this province, there's much left to be desired on the actual Francophone classes. In other words, how would you like to go to an English immersion school? Is there any possibility that you could review the grant system, even if you'd not the Act changed, so that it is easier for Francophones to attend school, particularly the intermediate and high schools, and put them together so that people can attend them for a quite a distance around?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite sure what the hon. leader of the Liberal Party means by "easier ... to attend school." Certainly the matter of French-language rights as espoused in section 23 of the Charter is one of the Charter issues that we are addressing within the overall context of the School Act and as Bill 31 addressed during the last session.

I fully recognize that an immersion school is not perhaps, in the fullest context, a Francophone school. However, what I do think is important is that school boards are recognizing the uniqueness within their communities, and some communities in Alberta are, in fact, happy to have an immersion kind of program to recognize their section 23 rights. Others are looking at the whole way in which section 23 rights will be addressed. But as I have said, the matter is currently before the courts, and I am awaiting eagerly the decision on the Bugnet case.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I had been thinking of elected Francophone boards.

Vencap Equities Alberta Ltd.

MR. TAYLOR: This question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade with respect to continuing

the questions yesterday on Vencap. Yesterday the minister admitted that Vencap had not been making the venture investments as fast as they'd been expected to, but this could be because of a lack of business opportunities or a lack of initiative in pursuing these opportunities. But regardless, there is a pool of some \$200 million of government money sitting there doing nothing to create jobs. Can the minister tell the House if he has given Vencap management a timetable from which he expects their pool of \$200 million to be invested in diversifying this province?

MR. SHABEN: No, I have not, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure it would be useful for the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon to review and refer to the annual report of Vencap with respect to their investments and the consequences of those investments in creating employment in Alberta.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have done that, and as you know, only 20 percent of the money has been spent. But is Vencap's \$300,000, for instance, investment in the SPURT investment fund, which the minister mentioned yesterday -- the SPURT fund provides venture capital to small business -- not more or less an admission that Vencap's half million dollar investment guideline, which is the minimum they've been working on, is too restrictive and prevents small business from accessing Vencap's funds?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, when Vencap was established, it was clearly the government's intention that Vencap would concentrate on the larger projects and that the role of Alberta Opportunity Company would be to continue to respond to the needs of the smaller entrepreneurs or the smaller businesses. And the investment in SPURT is, in our view, a useful investment by Vencap within the parameters that were given to them and in being of a size appropriate to the guidelines as well as providing venture capital for smaller companies.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister. I appreciate your point that SPURT is a good investment then. Therefore, would the minister consider asking Vencap management to look for or help set up other SPURT-type funds in order to increase the flow of funds from Vencap through to the small business sector?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, Vencap is doing that right now.

MR. TAYLOR: I'm very glad to hear that, although it's been three years in the making. Then in view of the government's January 8 announcement -- possibly, Mr. Speaker, I can switch it over to the minister of telecommunications, really -- his January 8 announcement that they had put an additional half million dollars into SPURT with a commitment for another one and a half million dollars over the next three years, can the minister tell the House why this investment was not done through Vencap?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, at the time of the original discussions, and I think one must go back to that time, when the SPURT concept was being developed, I'm not at that time aware of how much involvement there had been with Vencap. But the SPURT concept was seen as a very desirable concept, one that would assist in the government's announced intention to support small business, and accordingly the decision was

made to support SPURT directly in the manner that we're doing through that form of investment.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question, Member for Edmonton Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Given that all the guidelines Vencap has were in fact set by Vencap, why has the minister taken his arm's-length approach to the level where he has abdicated his responsibility for the \$200 million of taxpayers' money?

MR. SHABEN: Before responding to the question, Mr. Speaker, there is a Bill, a private member's Bill on notice, I think introduced by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, that would provide an opportunity for members to discuss further the role of Vencap, but I would suggest that the hon. member check *Hansard*, and the instructions that were provided to Vencap are not only those contained in the legislation, but by way of a letter filed by the Premier at the time.

Senate Reform

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Over the weekend the Premier made a very strong case with regards to the Triple E Senate, which is a formula by which there could be stronger representation in the regions. Could the Premier indicate at this time whether he has been able to formally introduce a Triple E Senate discussion to the agenda of the upcoming April 30 Meach meeting of first ministers?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the Premier indicate whether that matter will be a discussion of western Premiers on May 27 and 28 held I believe in Humboldt, Saskatchewan?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in neither case, of course, am I the chairman of the meeting; however, I feel confident that in both of those meetings, the matter of Senate reform will be discussed.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Could the Premier indicate whether other Premiers, not only those of western Canada but certainly the regions of Canada and certainly those representing Ontario, Toronto, and Montreal, may support or have indicated interest in the Triple E Senate at this time?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, in cases like this I usually prefer to have the Premiers speak for themselves. I don't believe any have publicly endorsed the concept of the Triple E Senate, although the second portion of the hon. member's question was: have any expressed an interest? And I think it's fair to say that most of the Premiers, being reasonable people, are prepared to look at the concept. In the gallery today is Premier Peterson of Ontario, who has expressed that it is an option that should be considered in reforming the Senate. He agrees along with me that the Senate really does not appear to serve any really effective purpose right now and that it should be considered for reform. However, we do have some differences of opinion as to how that reform might be expressed.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the Premier. Could he indicate whether in implementing or putting forward the concept of the Triple E Senate there are any plans of the Premier's or the various ministers of his cabinet to travel across Canada and speak on the subject and not only inform other people with regards to this objective but as well to sell the concept?

MR. GETTY: Yes. Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier, although I must admit I've had more success talking to the Premier of Quebec about an elected Senate than I have the Premier of Ontario. I won't blame the school that he went to, Mr. Premier. What I would like to ask the Premier, though, is: in the discussions of an elected Senate is he prepared to sit down and negotiate with Quebec in return for some of the exclusive rights that they have asked for in language and culture? Would we give up certain exclusive rights in language and culture in return for an equal, elected Senate?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we would not negotiate any rights that we would not have ourselves, and therefore we feel strongly there is no special status for provinces. We think the Triple E Senate is an excellent idea for Canada's Parliament and one that should stand on its own merits.

MR. MARTIN: What's the Minister of Energy yapping over there again? You'll get your chance. My question to the Premier is: after discussing it with other Premiers -- we know the stand of this government -- have there been any other serious proposals laid out that the Premier is aware of about Senate reform?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there have been some discussions on a very preliminary basis where other Premiers have expressed their views about the Senate, but that is up for them to express. I think all of them, though, generally agree with us that one of the real benefits of a more effective Senate would be to prevent such disgraceful legislation as the NEP, backed by the NDP and the Liberals, that devastated this province in the past.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Stony Plain, followed by the Member for St. Albert if there's time.

Proposed Petrochemical Plant

MR. HERON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade and follow up on the exciting news release put forth in this Assembly just a few moments ago regarding the announcement of a feasibility study for a new petrochemical plant. Can the minister provide some details regarding this project?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to provide some additional details. The proposed project and plant would produce a product known as MTBE, which is an octane enhancer. The required capital to develop such a plant is about \$250 million to \$270 million. A very important project in the sense of value adding to a basic feedstock in Alberta, our natural gas, because the ingredients that go into the production of MTBE are methanol and butane, producing an octane enhancer which is in great demand in the United States because of their requirements

for the reduced use of tetra ethyl lead.

MR. HERON: Supplementary question then, Mr. Minister. Could he outline some of the reasons that the three international firms were attracted to Alberta in this project?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, this morning's spokesman for the partners in the project indicated that there were a number of reasons, the first being a readily available feedstock that is competitively priced, which is a key reason. The second key reason was the taxation environment in Alberta and the overall economic climate, which was very positive in terms of the Alberta government's continued view that the economic climate and the total taxation regime is a key factor in encouraging investment in Alberta, and it was confirmed today.

Another factor, Mr. Speaker, and I think it was an important one, is Alberta's history of undertaking innovative research. A number of years ago we provided funding with Trans Mountain Pipe Line to examine the feasibility of piping methanol and coal in a slurry to the west coast, and this was one of the factors that attracted Neste to Alberta.

MR. HERON: Mr. Speaker, supplementary question. And I know by the catcalls to my right here that they have a hard time making some doom and gloom out of this announcement. But bottom line, Mr. Minister: could you indicate the number of jobs that this project will make available to Albertans? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, for a moment. The Chair would like to point out to all parts of the House that the catcalls are one thing, but indeed, all members should realize that they're wasting the time of a number of people; I've got about eight more who would love to get into question period.

Hon. Minister.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, this project, along with other recent announcements, is very important to Alberta's economy not only in the direct job creation but the spin-off that occurs as a result of sourcing of engineering and materials. But directly on the project, the investors have advised me that some 700 man-years of labour will be required in the construction of the project as well as 100 additional permanent jobs on the Celanese site.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary.

MR. HERON: Mr. Speaker, final supplementary. Given that this announcement now follows on the heels of two major diversification projects recently announced, could you give us in terms of the broadest figures what this means in terms of total dollars and total employment since we're so anxious to hear of good news for diversification in this province?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I refer to the positive announcements recently made, this being the second related to petrochemicals, between the two totalling nearly \$700 million, plus a very important announcement in the forestry industry, so just in a recent number of months, major capital investment in our province of approximately \$1 billion. It's not only important in the direct effect on our economy in terms of the creation of construction activity, but also important in terms of the climate within Alberta and the response by Albertans and other investors in recognizing that Alberta is the best place in North

America in which to invest.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Given discussions of government loan guarantees for this project, what steps if any is the government taking to find a Canadian company to replace the Finnish government in this consortium?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, we welcome Neste as an investor in Alberta. Neste has an excellent track record around the world in terms of the manner in which it participates, not only directly in its economic ventures but indirectly as members of the community. We have an entirely different view, Mr. Speaker. We welcome Neste's involvement in Alberta.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Yet another megaproject, still in the energy industry. In light of these tremendous commitments to not diversifying our economy, can the minister tell us how he justifies reducing the amount of financial assistance for small businesses at a time when we should be doing everything possible to create long-term jobs through measures which broaden our economic base?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I find it unbelievable how far the hon. Member for Edmonton Meadowlark must reach to find a negative in a positive story.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for St. Albert, followed by the Member for Edmonton . . . Excuse us, hon. member. May we carry on? Thank you. Member for St. Albert, followed by the Member for Edmonton Calder.

Right-to-work Legislation

MR. STRONG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour. Albertans now know that it's always a dangerous thing for some in our society when too many overly excited Conservative convention delegates get together, and this past weekend was no exception. At their most recent convention these exuberant delegates passed a resolution calling on their government to consider implementing legislation that would allow employers to further ignore, subvert, and destroy employees' unions by considering right-to-work legislation. To the Minister of Labour. Can the minister assure this Assembly that neither he nor his government has the slightest intention of heeding the wishes of these extreme right-wing loonies who apparently took over his party's weekend convention? In other words, can this minister assure Albertans and this Assembly that he is not going to implement right-to-work legislation in the province of Alberta?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it certainly was an exciting convention. I was there. I don't know which resolution the hon. member is discussing. I didn't see that one on the resolution book.

MR. STRONG: It sounds like the only thing that was productive was that you didn't remove the word "progressive" from in front of the party.

To the minister, supplementary. Can the minister assure us in this Assembly that he will undertake to educate these convention delegates as to the true meaning of right-to-work legislation at your next convention?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, there was not a resolution passed that mentioned the words "right-to-work." I don't know what the member is talking about. There was a resolution relating to membership in a trade union, and perhaps the member isn't aware of the current legislation in the province.

MR. STRONG: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Pay attention to this one; maybe you'll understand this one. Has the minister had any discussion with the Provincial Treasurer on the adverse effect right-to-work legislation would have on retail sales statistics, due to the reduced weekly earnings of Albertans under such legislation? Have you had any discussions?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I've not had such discussions with the Provincial Treasurer. It is the utmost in hypothetical questions as again there was no resolution on the order paper suggesting a mass reduction in salaries and wages.

MR. STRONG: My final supplementary. It's obvious that the minister doesn't understand. Is this minister aware that even the Social Credit government in British Columbia didn't go this far and at least has a collar around their more right-wing delegates that go to their conventions in regard to right to work?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I'm not prepared to discuss British Columbia legislation in this House. If the hon. member wishes to do that, perhaps he should go to B. C. and be elected there.

On the other hand, it's gradually getting to me through his questions, which are decidedly off the point that I think he's trying to address. I think he is referring to the motion that I mentioned. Perhaps he is unaware of the current state of legislation in this province. With the exception of the members of the Alberta Teachers' Association, those who teach in the provincial schools, there is currently in this province no requirement that anyone belong to a trade union. However, there are a number of collective agreements where that has been negotiated fairly and openly between management and the unions on behalf of the employees. If management and the employees through their unions come to that decision, then it's perfectly reasonable that they can have either a pre-entry or postentry closed shop, as it's referred to. I have no problem with that, and I don't think the rest of the delegates at the convention did have.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, if we may forget that meeting of the flat earth society last weekend for a minute and just get right on to the subject, could the Minister of Labour enlighten the House as to whether or not anyone employed under a union contract, or newly employed, could opt out of the union, refusing to pay dues. Has that been a consideration of the legislation he's going to bring forward to the House?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, there are currently in some negotiated agreements provisions for people who do not wish to join the union for due cause, whatever that may be, to opt out of union membership. In some cases they can send the equivalent of the union dues to a charitable organization. There are arrangements like that within current collective agreements within the province of Alberta, but again, and as it should be, it's negotiated between the employer and the employees through their union.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Calder.

Mapleridge

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you. Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Social Services. The minister in her budget for Social Services has decreased funding for social support by almost \$7 million. She has decided to close Mapleridge, a treatment centre for children suffering from behavioural and emotional problems. In effect the minister is attempting to save money on the backs of abused children, children who have already been victimized, many since birth. To the minister: was the decision to close Mapleridge made before alternatives were thoroughly investigated, as was done in the case of Hilltop House?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fact that the estimates for Social Services will be back up again tomorrow afternoon and we will have an opportunity to get into detail, I can assure the hon. member that all options were explored, and basically our philosophy is that children should be treated in their home surroundings and, where possible, not subject to institutional care.

MS MJOLSNESS: A supplementary. These children need treatment, Mr. Speaker. The department has indicated that these children will go to parent-counselor homes. What studies has the minister conducted to determine the cost-effectiveness of the training for parent counselors, social service support for these families, and continued treatment of these children as compared to the treatment that they were receiving at Mapleridge?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, as always when one gets into the so-called treatment/counseling area, one deals with many subjective opinions, and the observations by professionals differ a great deal when speaking to the effectiveness of various kinds of counseling. If the hon. member is looking for guarantees, those cannot be provided.

MS MJOLSNESS: Supplementary. Is the minister aware that these children are in need of professional treatment and that foster homes and parent-counselor homes will not meet the needs of these children?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, that is the opinion of the hon. member.

MS MJOLSNESS: Well, 20 hours of training for foster parents is not sufficient. [interjection] In view of the fact that the minister is reducing her expenditures by withdrawing adequate services for these children thereby endangering their well-being, will the minister reconsider the decision to close Mapleridge?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the department has very excellent professionals both on staff and in a professorial capacity that are on a contract basis who can speak to the needs of the children we're talking about. And I can assure the hon. member that the very best interests of the children are kept in mind at all times by the department. And as for the Leader of the Oppositions' continual snide comments, I would say that with respect to people who come from the farm community, I believe we can exercise as good a judgment as anybody.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Meadowlark, main question.

Hotel Tax

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker. The Treasurer indicated last Tuesday that he was unwilling to consider our suggestion to limit the 5 percent tax on hotel rooms to new bookings only. Yesterday the Minister of Tourism split from his cabinet colleague and joined our calls for the Treasurer to re-evaluate this earlier decision. It is unfair to apply this tax on reservations that have already been booked on the basis of no hotel tax. To the Treasurer. Will he now accept the advice of the Minister of Tourism, and do as we first suggested last Tuesday and apply the tax only to new hotel bookings?

MR. JOHNSTON: Gosh, Mr. Speaker. I thought he was making another speech. I must have mistook it for question period. I think the answer to that is yes.

MR. MITCHELL: Fantastic. [interjections] I actually prepared a question in light of that possibility. Would the minister please admit to this House and to the people of Alberta that his decision to change this earlier decision is the result of our persistent and incisive questioning?

MR. JOHNSTON: Now the member is into fantasyland, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question? Succinct, finished. Member for Red Deer South.

AOSTRA

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Energy. The chairmanship of the Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority has been vacant for some time now. Could the minister tell us when we might expect this very important position to be filled?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is accurate; it has been some time since the position has been vacant. However, we hope to be able to fill the position within a matter of a few days.

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, supplementary . . .

MR. SPEAKER: First, hon. member, may we gain the permission of the House to continue this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Member for Red Deer South.

MR. OLDRING: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister of Energy advise us of the process utilized for selecting a new chairman, and why has it taken so long?

DR. WEBBER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the process included finding an executive search consultant to advertise across the country, and as a result of that we had approximately 60 applicants for the position. The consultants recommended eight names to a committee consisting of a number of people, including public representation. These people were interviewed, and a short shortlist was provided to me. I interviewed those can-

didates, and I must say, Mr. Speaker, that given the time that it has taken, we had many, many good candidates in terms of technical and management expertise.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary? Thank you.

Might the House . . . One hesitates to interrupt the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon and your agenda; however, the . . . Is it indeed a supplementary? Good. The Chair also wants to point out that there are at least six or seven issues that we must deal with before we get around to Orders of the Day. Supplementary question.

MR. TAYLOR: A very, very short supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In view of all the pressure we've put on the government and our recent success with the Treasurer, could the minister tell us whether he is considering any women for the job of chairperson?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, I indicated that there were approximately 60 applicants in the whole process and that we have interviewed a short shortlist, and the hon. member will have to await the outcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Additional supplementary, Member for St. Albert.

MR. STRONG: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister assure us that he will hire an Albertan for the job?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will find out soon enough.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair neglected to point out, so therefore now a request for unanimous consent of the House for the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care to give supplementary information in response to the question as raised by the Leader of the Opposition on this day. That would then allow response from the Leader of the Opposition. Agreement?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Hon. minister.

Hospital Funding (continued)

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition asked his first question today. Since that time I've had an opportunity to have staff in my office contact the Cross cancer clinic, and the Cross cancer clinic began changes in their callback program in February 1986, over a year ago. The reason was to allow patients to use their own physicians, particularly in areas outside of Edmonton. They expect some savings in their program as a result of that and also significant savings, of course, to patients because of their being able to be cared for in their own communities rather than traveling to Edmonton, and of course would not expect any deterioration in patient care. That may explain the letter the hon. leader has.

MR. SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, supplementary question to the minister. Instead of receiving follow-up cancer treatment at

the Cross Institute then, I suggest cancer patients are now being instructed to attend family physicians. They will then bill the medical services plan for a referral back to the Cross Institute. Will the minister explain how this saves taxpayers' money?

MR. M. MOORE: Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is that it's significantly less costly to the patients themselves and to the entire system if the family physician can determine whether or not there's a need for a referral. Close to every patient traveling to Edmonton or Calgary, as the case may be, on a regular basis . . . And this, I might add, Mr. Speaker, is the direction that we're trying to go in treating cancer patients, to have them treated in their own community-based hospitals. The program was implemented in Medicine Hat, I believe, and Lethbridge earlier, and we're expecting implementation of other major programs throughout the province, connected with the Cross cancer clinic. I can only conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that I believe it is an appropriate direction to go, when it was implemented by the Cross cancer clinic 14 months ago, well before any 3 percent reductions were proposed.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, point of order during question period?

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Referring to oral questions, under 359(10), where it says, "A question ought not to refer to a statement made outside the House by a Minister." Usually we've been used to in this House people coming and making ministerial announcements during that period rather than having backbenchers lead into questions so the minister can make his statement that way. There's a reason for that. Nobody would deny that it is a significant proposal, and I would have suggested that it should have been done in the ministerial announcements.

The reason I refer to 359(10) is because after I'd finished my questions, I got an Alberta news release about the project. That was the first I'd heard about it, Mr. Speaker. So I would suggest that rather than going this route, ministers make their ministerial announcements in the proper place.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, this morning in making the announcement we had in attendance the principals of Neste, Celanese, as well as Trans Mountain Pipe Line, and that is the principal reason the announcement was made outside the House. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Point raised, advice given, advice received. The House will stand by for further developments as to future ministerial statements.

The Chair understands that the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche wishes to stand on a purported point of privilege.

Question of Privilege

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, it is my contention that in directing me during the course of today's Oral Question Period to put my question to the Minister of Education en anglais, you breached the privilege enjoyed by all members of this Assembly and you exceeded your authority. The basic right of all Albertans to conduct their

business through and with their provincial government in either of Canada's two official languages predates the constitutional statutes which created Alberta and was never effectively extinguished by those statutes.

Accordingly, it is the right of each and every member of this Assembly to conduct their business in this Assembly at any point in the Assembly's proceedings in either official language. This is one of the privileges enjoyed by Members of the Alberta Legislative Assembly. This privilege can only be denied under the authority of some instrument superior to those constitutional instruments providing for the creation and governance of our province. No such authority exists, and therefore your direction to me earlier today can enjoy the sanction of no such authority.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I ask you to reconsider your ruling in light of the privileges of this Assembly, and I ask the unanimous consent of this Assembly to grant me that right.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the point as alleged by the hon. member that language of this Assembly can be conducted in either English or French pursuant to the issue of what was in the North-West Territories Ordinances is now before the courts. That issue is before the courts relative to a case in Saskatchewan, a case in which the Alberta government has intervened because it would apply to the province of Alberta as well as to the province of Saskatchewan. The hon. member's allegation is not based on a decided case in law, and until such time as that matter has been dealt with in the Saskatchewan case now before the courts, no such right exists. Until that is established by the courts, I would suggest therefore, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member has improperly raised a matter of privilege before this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, followed by the Member for Edmonton Highlands.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, if I may make a point -- it will be a small one -- I think the Attorney General and the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche are on two different points. Admittedly, whether or not to conduct debates in the operation of the Legislature in two languages is in the courts, but the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche was just asking the right to address his government, his cabinet, in English or French. In question period I would think you could easily submit that he has the right, or any of us has the right, to ask of our government a question in French or English, which is entirely unrelated to carrying out the business of the House and doing the debating of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Speaking to the point of privilege, Member for Edmonton Highlands and Member for Red Deer North.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect to the comments made by the Attorney General, the fact that this issue may be in front of the courts regarding a Saskatchewan matter is no basis upon which we cannot determine by our own will whether or not the official languages will be upheld in the Alberta Assembly.

I also refer the Speaker to citation 297, *Beauchesne Language of Debate*

297. The British North America Act guarantees that a Member may address the House in either English or French;

Now, that's right, and it goes on to say, after a semicolon:

the simultaneous interpretation system ensures that debate may flow freely and intelligently.

The Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche indicated his perfect willingness to provide the translation to the minister, who, by the way, I understand is also bilingual.

It goes on to say:

Examples may be found of other languages being used in debate, but in recent years the Speaker has tended to discourage the use of anything but the two official languages.

I think that this citation speaks for itself.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Red Deer North.

MR. DAY: I thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I refer to *Beauchesne* on my points here, the point just raised by the member opposite specifically dealt with debate. In Oral Question Period we are given very clear guidance from our hon. Speaker and from *Beauchesne* that questions are not to provoke debate. So her reference was entirely confined to the question of debate and not Oral Question Period.

Looking directly at the area of Oral Question Period as referred to in *Beauchesne* 359, I'd like to look at two citations, Mr. Speaker, one being (6), and I am respectfully asking for your ruling on these.

A question must be within the administrative competence of the Government.

Now, certainly this question . . . [interjection] Yes, just hang on. Certainly, the question was within the competence of the minister to whom it was directed, given her own knowledge and study of languages. And certainly the ability to translate in French is within the competency of the good offices and clerical offices of this government. But *Beauchesne* is referring to government with a capital "G", referring to Executive Council, and there are members of this Executive Council who would be able to handle questions competently in French, as indeed many of the MLAs here would be able to.

But it talks about administrative competence in Oral Question Period. This would be in some doubt when a question is delivered in a language which a person may not be able to understand. Now, Mr. Speaker, having many constituents who are French-speaking and in talking with them in the past about this issue, none of them has ever been as ridiculous as to assume and demand that question period be conducted in French in this House, given the demographics of our province. That's the first point I'd like to raise.

The second is citation 359(4), saying: a question -- and before the members opposite blow their stacks here -- "ought . . . not be frivolous." And I'm using the *Webster's International Abridged* definition of frivolous, which says: not practical in content or form. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, given the continuous concern expressed by the members opposite that question period move along quickly and efficiently, though the intent might have been good and though the actual subject matter of the question might have been good, it is not practical in content or form, and I suggest that there were frivolous reasons for phrasing it in French. Those are the two citations, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, very briefly. The hon. Attorney General dealt very thoroughly with the allegations and argument

raised by the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche when he tried to advance support for the purported question of privilege.

With respect to the hon. Member for Edmonton Highlands and the purported support for a question of privilege as she tried to sustain in her comments, Mr. Speaker, I would just point out that those comments relate to a reference, *Beauchesne*, which applies in the Canadian Parliament and does not in that respect apply here. I simply point out the references to translation equipment, et cetera, and the ability to translate. There are a good number within this Assembly who could probably understand that conversation in either French or English and in some other languages. But, Mr. Speaker, it is important for all members of the Assembly that all should have an opportunity to understand the conversations and the debate within the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reply to the hon. Attorney General and relying on *Beauchesne*, section 16, the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche may be right or may be wrong in his argument -- I happen to think he's right -- but certainly it is a matter of privilege, and one of the few cases of genuine privilege raised since I've had the honour of being in my seat.

MR. ZARUSKY: Mr. Speaker, since this is a multicultural country and province, am I allowed to ask questions in Ukrainian? That way maybe I would ask more questions, if it was allowed.

MR. SPEAKER: In response to the Member for Redwater-Andrew, the Chair's ruling would be exactly the same. [interjections] I'm still speaking to the point of privilege.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I think I rather resent people saying that a matter like this, when we're talking about the future of the country, is frivolous. I think that was rather a senseless comment, but something I would expect from the member. But I think this is an important issue, and rather than our just deciding here -- and I think there are grounds, that we do base most things on *Beauchesne*. The Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche said clearly that he was prepared to do it in the two languages because of the lack of translation. He hasn't tried to do it with every minister. This minister was alerted and I'm told is bilingual.

It seems to me that this is an important point and one that perhaps the Speaker should take some time to consider rather than just ruling it out of order out of hand here, because I think it has implications far beyond our Legislative Assembly here in Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Rest assured that the Chair is not only deeply sensitized to this issue but fully aware of the significance of it. The Chair also wishes to state that because the matter is of such importance, the Chair is disappointed that the issue was raised in this manner. Now, it's not up to the Chair to decide whether or not one wishes to get a little more media time, but it's a question that because of the significance and seriousness, and in addition to the fact that the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche and the Speaker had some discussion with this last year and sympathy for the Chair was expressed, that hopefully the whole issue could have been raised in a far different context.

Having said that, the Chair is also aware that there are a

number of issues at point here, and the Chair would like to point out, not only to all members of this Assembly but those who may be readers of *Hansard* or watchers of ACCESS television, that indeed in no way the debate here is directed at all as being less than sensitive to what the issue truly is. What we have been listening to for the last number of minutes is indeed dealing with a point of privilege as to the matter to be raised before this Assembly, not the issue of French language; it's a matter of a question of privilege.

The Chair would also remind all quarters of the House that our *Standing Orders* take precedence over even *Beauchesne*. The Chair respectfully directs that Standing Order 15(2) will come into effect, and therefore it directs the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche to conform to Standing Order 15(2) and have the information to the Speaker's office tomorrow.

head: **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

MR. SPEAKER: Might the House revert to the introduction of guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**
(reversion)

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, it's indeed my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly, 39 special guests from Camrose and district. Usually, when we have an introduction of 39 people, they're a class of students from a school, and in this situation it's 39 retired teachers from the Camrose and district Retired Teachers' Association. I would like to welcome them to the Assembly. I would like to acknowledge that they are being led today by their president, Mrs. Eva Ledene, and accompanied by their driver, Mrs. Shelly Dyer. I'd ask that they rise and get the traditional welcome of the Assembly.

MR. FJORDBOTEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce two individuals in the members' gallery today. They were here a couple of days ago to hear the debate on Motion 209, but because of points of order and points of privilege we never did arrive at that debate. Luckily enough, I can assure them that today we are going to arrive at the debate on Motion 209.

In the members' gallery is the president of the Alberta Hotel Association, Mr. Al Browne, and the executive director of the Alberta Hotel Association, Mr. Jim Hansen. I would ask them to rise and receive the welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I move that the questions and motions for returns on the Order Paper stand.

[Motion carried]

**MOTIONS OTHER THAN
GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. members. The Chair might invite you to sit for a bit.

Slightly irregular practice. The Chair has received a request by the Member for Litde Bow that there might be unanimous

consent given to the House that the member might withdraw a motion standing on the Order Paper in his name.

Is there is unanimous consent to deal with the matter first?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Member for Little Bow.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, on that basis I'd like to request that Motion 217 under Motions Other Than Government Motions be withdrawn from the Order Paper, and I wish to submit it in an amended form, in a short form.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there unanimous agreement of the House?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

209. Moved by Mr. Nelson:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to consider amending the Liquor Control Act to allow the following:

- (1) privatization of the retail and warehousing operations of the Alberta Liquor Control Board;
- (2) reduction of the regulatory powers of the Alberta Liquor Control Board;
- (3) expansion of permitted off-sales by hotels to include liquor and wine;
- (4) equalization of the permitted number of seats in beverage rooms, dining rooms, and night clubs;
- (5) expansion of the hours of sale of alcohol products;
- (6) Sunday opening of licensed facilities in hotels for registered guests and their visitors;
- (7) creation of a community club licence; and
- (8) a hearing to be held prior to the cancellation or suspension of a licence or permit.

[Adjourned debate March 31: Mr. Nelson]

MR. NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to conclude my remarks which I commenced a week ago. I'd like to start by suggesting that breweries who invest capital dollars in beer outlets obviously want a return on their investment. Why should the ALCB walk in and take over these premises and operate them in the hours suitable to the Liquor Control Board? The brewery who has made the investment is competing against hotels and extended-hour liquor stores at a disadvantage. Does the Alberta Liquor Control Board run the private-sector wine stores? Why then should they run the beer stores? Let us show that we are a free-enterprise government.

Small business have been hurt by restrictions of the hours of the operation of liquor stores in many malls. Supposedly, we are here to assist small business entrepreneurs. It seems sometimes when we do something, we hurt those we're trying to help the most. We must consider the broader issue here in dealing with the overall picture of balanced retailing in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the final aspect of my motion deals with the cancellation or suspension of liquor licences or permits. I suggest that proper hearings would be held prior to any cancellations or suspensions. The present situation in this regard has shown itself to be simply ineffective. Currently, as I understand it, the Liquor Control Board has the power to suspend the opera-

tions of a business without a hearing. At this point the onus is on the licensee to prove that he or she is not guilty of a wrongdoing. Generally, hearings of a sort are in fact held before such action. However, I wish to stress that these hearings are simply not good enough, being more kangaroo court than a fair hearing. I proposed that an improved system of hearings be instituted to ensure a fair situation for Alberta liquor licence or permit holders.

Mr. Speaker, prohibition is alive and well in 20th century Alberta. Let us come out of these dark ages and allow people to make their own choices. Who are we to deny intelligent, progressive-thinking Albertans their choice? We hear in this Legislature all the time that we should allow more freedom for our citizens, freedom of choice and to decide for themselves. We sometimes think ourselves *prima donnas*, that we know best. Well, we do not always know what is best. Government regulation and legislation do more to hinder our citizens than to offer them a freedom of choice. I challenge my caucus colleagues and members of the Legislature to have the courage to offer our citizens a freedom of choice. Or are you concerned that offering our citizens some measure of freedom, we could lose some other control of their lives?

Let our citizens be somewhat free to choose and free free enterprise. Let's create new jobs, help start the engine of growth to our economy. To create a diversity of growth, we need to be progressive. Removal of prohibition and, yes, even opening of casinos to bring in and help tourist dollars here certainly is an attractive balance. Balanced job creation throughout the province in our hospitality industry would certainly be assisted by some of these progressive thoughts.

These, Mr. Speaker, are the basic aspects of my proposal to amend the Liquor Control Act of Alberta. I believe that the changes I have outlined are necessary and urgently so for reasons of commitment to free enterprise in all areas of endeavour. For reasons of a happier and improved hospitality industry and for more satisfied Albertans, I urge that this Assembly support this motion for a much improved liquor control system. Do you have the courage to support freedom of choice?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Calgary McCall made some closing comments that certainly stirred me to respond when he mentioned somehow in this Motion 209 his support for the concept of casinos, and since that is the subject of another debate, I won't enter into that one.

I do compliment him, though, Mr. Speaker, for developing a motion which, in eight parts -- and which he has had, because of our rules, the opportunity to commence the debate a week ago and has now concluded today -- expresses very well the issues of privatizing the Alberta Liquor Control Board and reducing its regulatory powers; permitting wine and liquor sales by hotels; by equalizing permitted seats in the various outlets that are licensed in the province; by expanding hours of sale; by opening hotel facilities for guests and their visitors on Sundays, the licensed facilities in those hotels; and as he said today, creating a community club licence; and for providing for hearings prior to those difficult decisions involving suspensions or cancellations of licences.

On March 31, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Calgary McCall -- and today as well -- eloquently identified not only his supporting reasons for this proposal, but he outlined and addressed a number of social concerns, and I listened very carefully. Three concerns I would like to remind us about. He said on March 31

that his motion "would not necessarily create a situation of confectionary and grocery store liquor sales." That I fully support and accepted as part of his motion that it did not include extending liquor sales in that area. He did, however, go on to say that that might not necessarily be "all bad," and I think I would like to be on record -- and there is my courage, Mr. Speaker, to the member -- that I disagree, that I believe that would be indeed all bad, and that that would change the society in Alberta, the society that we know today, and present a number of problems for our families and for our children throughout Alberta. That has been debated on another issue, and I just record again that I would speak against that type of concept.

The member also said that the motion he was discussing would not increase consumption necessarily, and he pointed out that when there is increased availability and there is increased consumption therefore, the people turn towards government and say the government therefore is in the wrong business. And he has therefore developed a different strategy for dealing with that.

I do wish to indicate that while I support the components of part of his motion, I do wish to be on record that any changes, any changes at all, will increase the availability of liquor or spirits or wine or beer, that that increase in availability will lead to increased consumption, and that will lead to increased problems. I think we have to understand that. And, of course, then there has to be a balance as to how we discuss that, how we debate it, and be very careful as to why we make the changes that we may believe should be made for the majority of people in the province, because we're not dealing only with tourists from other countries, we are dealing primarily with the concerns of Albertans.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

The member also said that we should not be trying to instruct the public on what, where, when, or how to drink. I'm going to come back to that, because the member has made some excellent points about the regulatory powers of the ALCB and the kinds of detail they get into; in fact, the size and the type of chairs, the glasses, the lighting, and all of those things that other authorities can well determine, including many of them that should be determined by the operator himself or herself.

But I do wish to bring a point of caution. I believe there is a responsibility on government, on the operators, and on the consumers to understand the consequences of the where and what and why of drinking, of chemical abuse or solvent abuse, of addiction to tobacco, or any of the other concerns that are part of our society. And there is a role for government. There is a role for the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, a role for the Alberta Restaurant Association, a role for the various hotel operator associations, the manufacturers and distributors of beverage alcohol, an obligation on society in general. Because the abuse of these products, the overconsumption of these products, does mean a heavy penalty not only to those who do these things but to society in terms of health care.

I said, Mr. Speaker, that I agreed with a number of issues he has raised, and I would like to confirm that I would support some, but not all, of the intent of his motion. There is no question in my mind -- and I represent an area of tourism activity that's probably second to none in the province -- that the hospitality industry is overregulated. And there are many of the regulations, such as the food service requirements or the need for the ALCB approval of the size of the glass or its shape or its

container to serve liquor, that are not, in essence, control policies, but rather remnants of what we once called the era of Prohibition. The power of the ALCB is known to every operator, and the visit of an inspector can be very difficult for that operator. Fortunately, the vast majority of our operators are good, corporate business citizens and there are very few infractions that require the wrath of the board to descend on them.

But certainly the type of control that has been established in the Act goes far beyond what is necessary in the opinion of many Albertans, and certainly in the opinion of the people that I represent in the restaurant and hotel industry and in the municipal authorities, as well. In fact, many of the powers that the board exercises would be better served and would be better performed if they were carried out by the municipal authorities. They are best able to determine traffic areas, best able to plan for development, best able to decide on fire and other regulations that are established by other codes of their own, as well as those of the province. They already have the zoning and development and building codes in place that regulate all of our construction, and certainly the additional load put on by the ALCB is unnecessary. There is a need, I think, to clearly define the discretionary powers of the board.

I think, in speaking to this, Mr. Speaker -- and I believe the Member for Calgary McCall touched on it -- the Solicitor General has an advisory committee which is represented by a number of the hospitality component agencies and associations. From my own constituency there is a member from the Canadian Restaurant Association, zone 7, and there is also a citizen member. Both of those gentlemen, and I think all of the members of that committee, are very frustrated with the working or nonworking of that committee. I believe the Solicitor General should consider very carefully whether or not there is validity to the working of this committee, whether he does receive good advice, or whether he can use that advice in a way to help with the regulations that are established and enforced therefor by the liquor board. I appreciate that there would possibly be a conflict between the board and that committee. But surely if we've established a committee, if it's representative of the industry, there should be some way in which that committee can have meaningful input to the board and to the minister so that the board either exercises its authority in a more appropriate way or the board recommends to the minister changes to the regulations, and we can get on with our lives in this province.

The member also spoke, Mr. Speaker, of the hours of operation. But I should indicate, too, in saying that I concur with the member, that the way in which our hours of operation are presently enforced is rather foolish and in fact may lead to problems. It may lead to problems where the availability of approved products, products that are not lethal in the sense of the wrong product at all -- chemicals and other products, bootlegging and so on -- and it would be preferable, in many of our rural areas of the province especially, that access to the products that are normally available in liquor stores would be available.

Most of the stores in the province are open only five days a week. There are some exceptions, but in many parts of Alberta, including the constituency I represent, of the three liquor stores -- one in Canmore, one in Banff, and one in Cochrane -- the Banff store is, I think, third in the province in amount of sales. I believe there's one store in Edmonton and one store in Calgary that exceed the sales of that store. They have special hours to recognize the impact of tourism. The store in Canmore does not share those same hours, and to me -- and I've made this representation to the Solicitor General -- that is wrong. There are

many tourists who are living in Calgary or elsewhere in this province who arrive in Banff or who arrive in Canmore and the stores operate on different hours. It makes no sense at all to them and no sense to me.

In Cochrane the hours are like they are in other parts of our province: from Tuesday to Saturday. But when the ranchers and their spouses are shopping, the store is closed in the morning. It opens at 12 o'clock and it closes at 8 p.m. Well, there's nobody shopping in downtown Cochrane, as beautiful as it is, between the hours of 5:30 and 8 o'clock at night. They're at home or they're running their ranches or they're perhaps attending political meetings where they're presenting views about the budget to me. But certainly the unusual arrangement of having liquor stores operate at hours that are not meeting the needs of the buying public is absolutely silly.

I would much prefer to see, and I've made representations to the Solicitor General, that in fact the store in Cochrane be open on Friday night, when the other stores are open, and be open during the day in the morning on the regular days when the other stores are open. I think that probably other members in this Assembly who represent urban constituencies must have the same kinds of experiences when the stores provided by the liquor board are closed when the malls are open. Again, it makes no sense.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to lose sight of the fact that when we make these changes, if these changes are accepted, there will be more consumption. There will be no doubt more consumption. There are problems with that, and we can talk about them. We shouldn't overlook them, and I think it's significant that the motion is being debated today for the second time during the beginning of a very important public two weeks that are being sponsored by People Against Impaired Drivers. I notice that in addition to the honorary chairman Hugh Campbell, the Deputy Speaker, the Member for Lethbridge West, is the honorary chairman for Lethbridge. Here we have an organization of citizens who have received funding support from the federal Department of Justice, hoping to be involved in the next week throughout our high schools, throughout all our shopping malls -- wherever they can be -- showing young people particularly that if you drive . . . I'm sorry: If You Drink -- Think. Obviously, if you drive, you do not drink. I think that the literature that is being made available to us all now for our young people -- I just applaud the work of PAID and particularly the honorary chairmen in both communities for their efforts.

I think I should mention, Mr. Speaker, something that I don't believe the Member for Calgary McCall has raised, and that is, the licensing surcharge of 7 percent. I know that it has been discussed by the tourism industry with various solicitors general and ministers but, from my perspective, Alberta licensees are in a better position to compete for tourist dollars than those in any other province in Canada. All provincial liquor boards charge a licensing surcharge, and it ranges from 5 percent in some provinces to as high as nearly 14 percent in others, and some provinces apply that to beer as well as liquor. In Alberta the 7 percent is charged only to liquor and wine purchases. Even in Ontario the charges are 12 cents per gallon of beer, plus 12 percent on liquor and wine purchases.

So here we have a situation where an industry is requesting an adjustment, yet it has one of the lowest surcharge rates in the country. Alberta licensees also pay the lowest prices for their liquor, often dollars lower than in other provinces. I spoke to the chairman of the Liquor Control Board of our province, and

he advises me that some years ago the Ontario board responded to an Ontario restaurant industry request for a similar reduction of their surcharge. But you know, the interesting thing is that when the Ontario government did that and eliminated the surcharge, the resulting reduction made no difference at all to the public. The operators merely put the difference in their pockets. So it's pretty obvious to me that if the 7 percent tax or surcharge is to be reduced, the traveling public and the Alberta public would never see the benefit.

The thing that's important for all of us to know is that these fees pay for the operation of the inspection part the licensing part of the ALCB, and I know that is one aspect of the member's motion that he proposes not be privatized, that in fact it is important socially to us that it be maintained as a provincial responsibility. I don't believe the member mentioned this, but I would certainly oppose any change in that approach. Certainly the costs are lower in Alberta than they are in other jurisdictions as far as inspection because, for example, some provinces have in fact two liquor boards: one to handle distribution and the other a separate licensing board with its own commissioner, board members, and staff.

So I agree with the member fully that we need to do a better job of encouraging tourism, but I hope we don't do it by taking away that particular surcharge which would not benefit the tourism persons. It would just be lost in the operation.

I should mention, Mr. Speaker, the Alberta Liquor Control Board, in its 62nd annual report which was just tabled in the Assembly recently, had some very interesting statistics, a few of which I'd like to remind members about. Net profits from the sales of beverage alcohol in this province in the year ended January 1986 amounted to about \$316 million. Of course, the budget tabled by the Treasurer recently has indicated that that board has been directed to increase its profitability by some \$40 million as part of our total approach to reducing our deficit and that has resulted in some changes in liquor prices as of last week. But still: \$316 million. The budget for AADAC, which we'll be debating soon, is less than one-tenth of that.

The report goes on to note, Mr. Speaker, that there were 5,100 licences enforced, roughly, as of December 31, 1985, and so on. The interesting thing in the report though, and returning to the member's suggestion that there be a hearing before a cancellation or suspension: there were 37 board hearings in 1985 in respect to infractions by licensees, and those hearings resulted in the suspension of only 11 licences and the issuance of 26 warnings. I'm not sure, therefore, if the member's motion recommending a new procedure is really necessary when we consider that throughout that whole year there were 37 hearings and those resulted in the suspension of such a small number of licences and the issuance of some 26 warnings. There were three licences suspended without a hearing, and the board report is clear as to why that happened. I think I should share with members who may not have read the report that the majority of hearings concern

failure to provide satisfactory supervision which resulted in allowing drunkenness, overserving customers and continuing to serve liquor to persons who were obviously intoxicated.

That's the main area of concern. And that's management. That goes back to management and I think the member's motion clearly indicates that the board would still have a responsibility to carry out the enforcement of regulations provided they were, I believe, as he outlines, changed in some way to be more flexible.

Mr. Speaker, just to identify the problem a little more clearly for us all, I would like to talk briefly about alcoholism. This is a very difficult subject for us to discuss. Some 15 or 20 years ago we didn't discuss it at all. Now when we grew up, many people my age had parents who were involved in the Second World War. Alcohol was never seen at home. My father was away; many other fathers were away; some never came home. Certainly for the wives, the mothers at home, who are now working suddenly, there was no alcohol available. But suddenly we had a change. No longer was alcohol simply a Christmas function or some other special function -- wine for one religious faith or a different kind of product for another. We now found our society changing, and alcohol became very commonplace in our homes and in the workplace at functions. That's declining in the last while, and I'm glad to see that.

What's happened is that we find that alcoholism is a growing problem, in fact one of the more serious problems in our country today. It's defined as an ongoing inappropriate use of alcohol which increasingly causes more serious problems in a person's physical or mental health, work, family or social life. Now there's some debate over whether it's a disease, and I won't get into that today. Different approaches are being used, but I think we can all understand that whether it's a health problem or whether it's a symptom of a disease, it doesn't matter; it's still a very complex question. There is no question though that alcoholism is a problem that requires treatment.

There are a number of current issues, and I think that by focusing debate the member has given us an opportunity to think about these issues. There are about five basic issues in our province and really throughout North America today. There's the question of alcohol advertising. We're only hearing the talk about advertising in the news media, various outlets. What we haven't begun to address is the impact of the beverage alcohol industry, the impact of the tobacco industry in the sporting area, in the area of young people, in the area of young women, in the area of changing our attitudes to come to accept that if we're sports we can have alcohol. If we're heroes we can try drugs, because if we try them and get enough money, we can probably solve them and go back to being normal human beings again. That's a very serious problem for us, and I hope that when we talk about alcohol and advertising, we don't overlook the insidious marriage that's occurring between those who wish to provide young, healthy, active lives to the need for funds to support that and the turning, therefore, to the various companies that are providing these products -- all products, by the way, which are legal to produce.

A second issue today is drug testing. A third issue is smoking in the workplace and, related to that, a fourth issue is second-hand smoke. We can see society changing rapidly, probably outdistancing all of us in the political arena as to their requests for decisions about reducing the impact of smoke to us as second-hand smoke or smoking in the workplace.

The most important issue and a very serious issue in our province -- and I raise it because the Member for Calgary McCall has given us this opportunity -- is impaired driving. I refer to the work of organizations such as PAID. But impaired driving is a very serious problem, and I think there are some changes he has brought forward for us to consider that, with assistance from organizations such as PAID, might lead to changes in our attitudes towards impaired driving. There's a very noted author and lecturer in addictions now in Sydney, B.C., with some history in Alberta. His name is George Strachan. When he was asked what the important issues in ad-

dictions are, he said: "Acceptance of alcoholism as a serious problem." That is the issue -- accepting it as a serious problem. He says that "Alcohol abuse poses greater problems than all other drugs put together." And that is the view that I believe the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission members have taken as well.

Yesterday I tabled in the House, Mr. Speaker, a presentation made by AADAC to the Federal Standing Committee on National Health and Welfare. Members have it, and I hope if they have any questions they will contact me or if they have constituents who wish additional information they will let me know and we'll certainly get it back to them. I would like to note just one aspect of the presentation.

It is essential to consider alcohol and tobacco by far the two drugs most commonly used and abused by Canadians today. It's essential to consider the two of them. And I think a sense of the costs when we do that can be taken from national statistics. If we consider the numbers of Canadians injured and killed in alcohol-related road accidents and then think about the problems that are being addressed by the Minister of Social Services, and we think about the extent of family violence and breakups involving alcohol abuse, and we think of the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care or the Minister of Community and Occupational Health and the number of premature deaths due to cigarette smoking and therefore lost years of life and productive functioning, we can soon see the personal suffering and associated social costs are of such magnitude that they cannot be ignored -- they cannot.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to remind members how other governments and how other countries have addressed these problems. There's a host of ways and there's a host of, I guess, questions that we all have, and there are many solutions. But I do think the member has brought a challenge to us. He has asked us to consider privatizing some aspects of the Alberta Liquor Control Board and its warehouse operation. I think we should consider that very carefully. Perhaps the retail operation is the primary one, with the warehouse operation being one where the government would not only be able to maintain the responsibility for what is brought into the province but would have some idea of testing of the products, because we know there have been some products that have dangerous chemicals in them from other countries and from other areas. So I think it is well worth while to look at that, but part of our assessment should include what the price would be to us in terms of health, in terms of whether or not it would be to the benefit of all Albertans that we did this. If we can show that there is a benefit not just in terms of downsizing or in terms of availability, if we can show that it's a good move for Albertans in terms of health, then I think we should do that, and I think there are some arguments we can show that that might indeed prove the case in parts of our province.

He's also suggested that we reduce the board's powers, and I think we should give careful assessment to the board and look at the market trends and give more recognition of the choice of the individual. Individuals need to have education, need to have information, but when they have those, I think we should give the individual the opportunity to be responsible. That is his or her decision.

As far as expansion of sales in the hotels to wine and liquor, that may be a good thing, especially if we continue as a government or as a board to have the opportunity to provide enforcement, to make sure that those methods of sale, the times of operation and so on, are done to meet the need. It may reduce

bootlegging. It may reduce the sad choice that some individuals make when they cannot find the product or a store nearby open, that they choose to take a different product that may kill them.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

As far as hours of operation, I believe there should be some changes. And finally, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Solicitor General's comments recently about the 24-hours-a-day, 17 days Olympics, I really hope that is not the legacy this government and the people of Alberta thought we would have as a result of the Olympics. That we would in fact have 24 hours a day, seven days a week, two weeks of the year forever operations is not the legacy I wish to be part of.

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome a chance to speak on this motion in front of us. Canada has one of the worst problems of alcoholism in any country on earth, and Alberta is ranked right up around the worst of the provinces for having problems with the consumption of alcohol and drunk drivers on the streets and the wreckage of homes and all the other little problems.

I do want to congratulate the hon. Member for Calgary McCall for sponsoring this motion and also want to thank my researcher for bringing me such a monstrous pile of material here. In Alberta we went with a theory -- we've tried it for years -- that we can solve our problems by just passing some more laws, motions, and so on. We tried that with our alcoholism, with the consumption of alcohol in this province. We've had stricter laws in the past that didn't work, and now we've limbered up and we still have problems. We have much more control and regulations on the consumption of alcohol in this province than most areas of the world. And surprisingly enough, we consume more alcohol in this province than most areas of the world. I think it's been very counterproductive -- our very strict laws and regulations -- but we're not the first to run into this problem.

The U.S. at one time considered herself a Christian nation and frowned upon the demon rum. If you drank alcohol in the U.S. at that time and if your neighbours knew, they really looked down upon you as being unchristian, unwholesome, unhealthy. They finally reached the point where they decided: this wonderful country, the U.S., will just abolish alcohol by law, and then they did it. After that it was very in, very trendy -- if you knew a bootlegger, you were in the in crowd. If you had a little supply of booze in the U.S., you were really somebody. They struggled along with that and as a result had their gangsters, gang wars; everybody went into the manufacturing of alcohol. When they finally repealed their Prohibition, the consumption of alcohol in the U.S. had really taken off. They drank more after Prohibition than they had ever considered drinking before Prohibition. But the U.S. found out one thing from that: it's not the availability of alcohol; it's the mental attitude toward it.

I don't know whether we can take any lessons from the U.S. I would hope we can. But here in Alberta, dear old Alberta, if the high school kids have a party -- and I'm sure many of us here have high school kids -- one of the things they've really got to get is a supply of alcohol, the booze, even though it's against the law to drink it if you're under 18, even though the number of outlets we have are restricted and it's hard to get hold of. But it's not that hard. You find that there are a lot of those parties. A lot of students are under 18, yet they have a good supply of

booze that night. So much for our regulations and our laws. Maybe we had better look at it.

If you go to New Orleans, Louisiana -- it's not that far from here; it's a half-day flight by airplane -- they've never really thought of putting in the strict regulations. You can buy liquor in New Orleans 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. They don't have a liquor control board. They basically even buy it in service stations, grocery stores. You can buy it in the drugstore. Yet they have less alcohol than the average Albertan. And it's not the availability; it's the mental outlook they have on it. So I think we should take a real hard look at the regulations we have.

First off, I would welcome the privatization of the retail and warehouse operations of the Alberta Liquor Control Board. Goodness, I would welcome it. We had one of the brewers at the request and urging of AADAC, our organization, come up with a beer that was an ultralight, only 1.5 percent alcohol. So when they wanted to go to the Alberta Liquor Control Board and say, we would like to market this beer . . . Boy, you can drink a gallon of this stuff and you're not going to get zonked. No sir, they could not get it into the liquor store unless they withdrew one of their other products. They said, "You've got so many name brands in here now, you cannot put that one in." And goodness, they finally did. They withdrew one of their other products, which they were selling quite well, and put in a light beer, thanks to good old Alberta Liquor Control Board.

If we did privatize, I would hope we would go the route that you see in maybe older areas of the world where they've had more experience with alcohol, whether it be Europe or maybe Louisiana or certain areas of the southern States where you've got the little mom-and-pop operation, a little liquor store out in the neighbourhood and maybe a little shopping centre there. A guy and his wife run it, and if there's late-night shopping that night in this little shopping centre, then fine, the liquor store will stay open late at night. As far as us telling Albertans when to drink and how to drink, I don't think it's worked.

The other one, as far as the creation of a community club licence -- goodness gracious, if you go into any of our establishments, we almost gear it that we want you to go in, sit there, drink your booze, get drunk as the daylights, and don't do anything to distract you from that. There are licences -- most of the outlets where you sit and you drink, you cannot really play shuffleboard in certain ones. If you're playing shuffleboard, you're not drinking as much. Or you cannot have dart games. You can't have a deck of cards and play crib or something. You can do nothing to distract. In fact, sometimes you've got to have a special licence in order to have music to distract you from your drinking, and you think, "Now what is the purpose of that?"

Why have they got these licences to get our Albertans to drink more so they get just as drunk as the daylights? Unless the ALCB wants their sales to go up a little bit, more profit -- but I doubt that. I think it's done through pure ignorance. They just don't understand that if you're sitting in the bar and if you have distractions such as darts and shuffleboard games, pool tables, or whatever, the consumption will go down and you'll only drink one drink an hour. If you only drink one drink an hour, your body can consume that alcohol and you're not going to pass .08. But no sir, not our ALCB. They want it restricted down that you sit in your chair, behave yourself, drink your booze and get thoroughly drunk and then go home.

So if you look at this motion, the motion only says that we will "urge" the government to look at some of these regulations. For pete's sake, I am one of those that would sure support this

motion, and I hope all members will urge the government to consider -- and it's only saying "consider" -- these amendments.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

MR. HERON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take a few moments to first compliment the hon. Member for Calgary McCall in drawing attention to Motion 209, and to also compliment the Member for Banff-Cochrane for so eloquently providing a balanced perspective on the motion.

At the outset, I favour Motion 209, and I sure agree with the hon. Member for Calgary Millican that it's not availability that's in question; it's a mental attitude or awareness in education. In saying that, let me as a person who was born and raised in this area just reflect for a moment on some of those changes in attitude that have occurred over the years.

When I was a boy growing up, it was necessary for all of the people in the surrounding area to drive in from rural Alberta to 103rd Street -- which is now the Beaver building -- with your permit in hand, to line up at 10 below and wait your turn to purchase your Christmas liquor. That was an attitude. Yes, there were still drunks and that demon booze was still affecting us in a negative way, but the consideration of the individual was not at all considered in any of the decisions. And I'm sure that these walls must reverberate when we talk about the debate that's occurred in this very Assembly as we move from the days of Prohibition to where we are today and to where I hope we're going to move in more enlightened attitudes towards alcohol. In talking about our change of attitudes, let's just think back a few days to towns like Fort Saskatchewan, Stony Plain, St. Albert, where it was necessary, if you wanted to have a drink with your wife or girlfriend, to drive out to the country, where you could sit with two women and one man, but not two men and one woman, to have a drink. It was supposed that the rural people, of course, were more sensitive to their womenfolk, that they could in fact sit there and have a drink with them. It couldn't occur in the city of Edmonton. So what was the end result? People sat out with no entertainment, no food served in the bars, got in their cars and drove home. And some of the tragic automobile accidents that claimed some of those Albertans are a matter of our history.

Recall the debate that occurred here in Edmonton when the very first cocktail lounge opened out on 118th Avenue. My goodness, we were condemned. For the very first time you could walk in and actually buy a drink of hard liquor in a public place. It occurred right up here in what is now the Cromdale Hotel on 118th Avenue. A few years later we actually eliminated the supper hour, where if you walked in for a beer at a precise moment, you had to look at the clock for you may be shooed out to go home and have your supper. Well, thank goodness that's history. We now can actually have hard liquor and even snacks and, yes, even coffee in a bar, as we move towards more and more liberalization and recognize the hospitality industry in this province.

I think it's a definite trend towards more liberal attitudes towards the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Women are now able to work in bars and liquor stores. Do you remember those headlines and conversations? Remember all the "what ifs"? What if someone swears? How will a woman deal with it if she's serving drinks in a bar? What will she do if she needs a bouncer? Well, that's history; thank goodness we have equal

opportunity for our ladies. Yes, we can even have liquor with meals now on Sunday. And I'm so glad that the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane brought up the issue of the hospitality industry paying retail plus 7 percent. I still think the old values the slowly, and there are still some punitive attitudes around with regard to the consumption of alcohol in public places.

I want to make it emphatically clear that I support PAID -- that is, People Against Impaired Drivers -- emphatically clear that I'm against impairment of operators of motor vehicles. As a pilot, it's eight hours bottle to throttle, and that doesn't mean a big bottle. I've heard of incidents secondhand, but in my years as a pilot I have never heard of a pilot friend saying he consumed alcohol and flew an airplane. I do not know of a single aircraft accident in this province firsthand that's related to alcohol.

I would also like to say that I think it's just a bit ridiculous when a person who sits out in a canoe or a small boat fishing cannot have his choice of beverages, yes, even an alcoholic beverage, that it's necessary for him on occasion -- and I probably have some first-hand experience -- to carry a small hammer to break the empty bottle, the evidence, to throw the cans overboard so you're not caught. How ridiculous. I'd like to relate an incident. Last summer I launched my boat and I noticed a member of the RCMP hiding behind a building. And there was another member in plain clothes with a radio walking among the people picnicking on the beach, with coolers beside them and radios, radioing to the uniformed man to come and issue a citation to those people who were consuming a drink at a picnic.

You know, I still believe it's against the law to walk outside your motor home in most of the parks and picnic areas and consume a bottle of beer. I feel that I'm probably a fair bit away. I find B.C. far more liberal in terms of consuming a bottle of beer on your boat or, for that matter, walking over to a convenience store and buying a cooler of wine or a case of beer. You know, it does not surprise me, when I ski in Montana -- I'm very reluctant to introduce that topic these days -- it doesn't surprise me that so many licence plates there are Alberta licence plates. Why? Well, one of the reasons I ski there -- one of the reasons -- is for the accommodation on the hill. But another reason is that my teenage family can join me, drink their coke, and I can drink a beer in the bars. They can enjoy the music on the hill.

I find the regulations here about the glasses, the size of drinks, and all the various regulations put out by the Alberta Liquor Control Board to be a bit stuffy. I like to go into Moose's Bar in downtown Kalispell with the sawdust on the floor. Could you imagine one of our Liquor Control Board inspectors taking a look at the old archives and the moose and the dust and all that? Why, they would fall over if they saw the "lack of sanitary facilities" for people to drink in. And oh yes, I really didn't change my lifestyle when I stopped in at the Safeway store in Whitefish, Montana, and picked up some cool beer to take up to our accommodation. That's right; Safeway can market it in Montana, but it can't here.

I also draw -- and it'll be a while before we, I'm sure, ever discuss this, but for the purposes of an enlightened point of view, I noticed that a member of the mounted police that I was traveling with opened up a beer in my automobile, and I questioned what he was doing. He said, "No open container law here, not until we reach Whitefish, Montana." So it's not the regulations. A person having a beer in the back of my car does not in any way, I think, change our lifestyles.

I would like to compare the distribution of liquor in this province to the distribution of cigarettes. I don't think it's nec-

essary that we build these skyscraper warehouses to distribute liquor, when we compare it to other facilities in other states and other provinces. And I like the hon. Member for Calgary Millikan's example of what goes on in Oklahoma.

I was up skiing a few days ago in Jasper, and I noticed the police were following them around and asking, "What's in your wineskin? Is it juice? Is it an alcoholic beverage?" I don't think that that's necessary in an enlightened society, that someone could be asking, you know, as to what . . . I personally don't drink when I'm skiing, but I also noticed that when we went down to the air races in Reno, a small truck came by with iced beer and was selling it, and people went up to the stands. There is quite a difference in consuming beer and drunkenness in a public place. I think that earlier we said, "It's not availability; it's mental attitude." I noted that on a very hot day in Reno, Nevada, the beer was welcome, but there was no public drunkenness. The Americans down there seem to have a better attitude towards it.

I applaud the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane in his emphasis on the need for the implementation of educational programs, particularly in our schools, and the dangers of consuming alcohol and drugs and the various things that affect us. It is a problem. It's not going to go away, but I do not think we're attacking the problem at the right area.

I also welcomed his introduction to the limited hours of our liquor stores here in Alberta. In my own constituency, we have two of the nicest buildings -- well, actually three now: one in Wabamun, one in Stony Plain, and one in Spruce Grove. If you choose to go to your cottage on a Saturday, you have to set out the door and wait until you can take a jug to the cottage with you. Beautiful monuments, the most beautiful buildings, and I think it's absolutely ridiculous when you look at a return on invested capital that they should have limited operating hours. One of my constituents phoned up and asked if I was aware that he, at 8:30, was looking for a liquor store in west Edmonton. He found four of the five closed at 8:30 in the evening. I think we're moving backwards instead of ahead in terms of our hours of opening.

I would like to, in also touching on a controversial topic, make mention of the topic introduced by the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane, and that is to consider smoking. While somewhat off motion 209, perhaps the Chairman and members of this Assembly may consider whether it is desirable to smoke in this very room during Committee of the Whole or Committee of Supply, if we're going to be that restrictive. But as I said, I introduced that as a controversial topic.

Mr. Speaker, I open my comments by saying: welcome to the 20th century. I still feel that, and in doing so, I support Motion 209.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Redwater-Andrew.

MR. ZARUSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I also want to congratulate the Member for Calgary McCall for bringing a fine motion like this one to the Legislature, because, as all other members, I think it's about time that we did get living in the 20th century.

I just want to tell you that I want to congratulate all the people that are in the hospitality and hotel industry because it takes a special person to be in this business. The hours are long. It's a different kind of business; you're dealing with different people. We should recognize them and give them some free-

dom and congratulate them for doing a good job.

Myself, I am aware of what the hotel industry is about, because my father did own a hotel in the '50s and the early '60s. I can tell you that it was different at that time to own a liquor establishment. The hours were much shorter. The drinking arrangements were different. As the hon. Member for Stony Plain did suggest, you couldn't go and drink in certain parts, women weren't allowed to come in unless they had escorts, and whatever else. So we did change. I think the change came probably about the middle '70s, and you could see it start changing. I think the credit should go to our good government of that time realizing that people were fed up with the way it was being run, and our government did start changing. Right now, with good members like our hon. Member for Calgary McCall, I think we will get these changes soon hopefully.

As far as privatizing liquor stores, I am in favour of that and I will speak that way publicly. I don't think our province is ready for selling liquor in grocery stores, because privatizing the liquor stores would be one step, and then we would need time to adjust the people to a different style of buying liquor. In that way people would realize that it is out there, the hours are different, and slowly we could introduce it, probably in local grocery stores.

As you all probably have traveled through the United States, or anyplace in the world for that matter, you know that you can go anyplace and buy liquor at whatever time you want and wherever you want it. I'm sure that not one of you drank more at that time than you would have here. So I don't think there is any fear of people drinking more or getting involved in more alcohol problems. [interjection] The hon. member probably drank it on a beach on Hawaii.

Going back to regulation and powers of regulating these different liquor laws, being in the business, or being acquainted with it -- I was much too young at that time to get involved. I got involved at nights when the premises had to be cleaned or fixed because of inspectors coming every day and checking that this was wrong or maybe some table wasn't set right or a table was too big or too small. So I got my chance to go in when nobody else was in there. The regulations aren't as strict now as they used to be, and I think we have to deregulate some more of our liquor laws.

AN HON. MEMBER: Tell them about the moonshine.

MR. ZARUSKY: Well, that was many years ago.

Also, in my constituency we've got, I'm sure, half a dozen liquor stores and hotels in every centre, and as you all are aware, these liquor stores in the country are open only five days a week. The hours I think are from 10 till 6 in the evening. I've been approached by many hotel owners asking why we as a government are not allowing the hotels to sell wine and liquor at least during the hours when the liquor stores aren't open. That's why I am speaking to this motion, and hopefully we can get the support of the whole House to maybe change at least in that area. Right now anybody that comes into a smaller town and wants to have a drink or wants to take some home can't do it out of a hotel. So he's probably sitting there for a couple of hours or three hours and maybe consuming too much liquor. And then living out in the country, you've got no taxi service, so nobody to drive him. He gets into his vehicle, taking a chance going down some back roads, trying to get home. And many times that could cause a serious accident. Whereas if he could have walked into this hotel and bought a bottle of rye, rum, scotch, or

whatever, he might have got into his vehicle and went home and drank it there, maybe drank it there with his friends. I would strongly support and urge that we change at least that facet of our law.

Also, you all will know that the liquor and food industry is highly competitive right now. You have to give these premises the right maybe to get more seating facilities and let them get more people in there, because if you are in a competitive business, you have to try to serve your customers as best you can and as many as you can. So I would take some regulations out of the limits on seating in beverage rooms and dining rooms and wherever else.

We also have another problem in this province, and that's serving liquor on Sundays. The only time you can consume liquor on a Sunday in public premises is in a dining lounge or when you are having a meal. I don't think that's right either, because we are getting tourists from the United States now and from other parts of the world, and if they do come and stay at a hotel, I don't think they want to eat all the time and maybe they do want to have a drink. So that's why I think the lounges or beer rooms should be open to the hotel guests and any visitors they might have. We should set a pace as a province that wants tourists and welcome them any and every way that we can.

The hon. Member for Calgary McCall also mentioned the bit about gambling casinos. I think it's time that we as Albertans did look into some sort of gambling and maybe at the same time affiliating it with lounges or whatever else. You have to be aware that -- I'm sure many of you have taken a couple of trips to Las Vegas this last winter. There are many people from all areas going to Las Vegas and taking this Alberta money out of the province. If we did have this sort of gambling in the province, most of that money would stay here. That would create many jobs and that's part of diversification too. Like I said before, there are many ways of improving these laws, and I would urge all members to support this motion and bring it forward to the House and get these changes and get these laws changed as soon as possible.

In closing, I just want to reaffirm that I don't think we'll have more alcoholics or more accidents from drinking and driving because I myself do support that if a person does drink, he should not drive, and our laws should get stricter there. In closing, once again I congratulate the Member for Calgary McCall for this fine motion and ask for everybody's support on this.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for St. Paul.

MR. DROBOT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to leave this Assembly with a poem that was written a long time ago and is still applicable today:

It was an evening in September,
As I very well remember.
I was [walking] down the street
In drunken pride.
But my knees were all a-flutter,
And I langed in the gutter,
And a pig came and lay down by my side.

As I lay there in the gutter
Muttering words I could not utter,
A pretty colleen came walking by

... and said,
You can tell a man that boozes
By the company he chooses,
And the pig got up and [slowly] walked away.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we have adequate liquor outlets in the province of Alberta.

Thank you.

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

MR. GOGO: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Like the gentleman who married the widow with six children, perhaps it's all been said -- the comments by the hon. Member for St. Paul.

But I read with interest Motion 209 before the House today. The Member for Calgary McCall is to be commended for trying to, somewhat erroneously, I believe, attempt to increase the economic activity of either his constituency, his city, or our province, by advocating several items, numbering eight, under Motion 209.

At the outset, it's as though he's zeroing in on the Alberta Liquor Control Board as being the primary culprit. We should point out, first of all: is ALCB really the culprit, or is it in fact those who make the laws? One is reminded very quickly of an old story, that perhaps bears repeating, of a man called Joe who had eight children. Very difficult times economically -- he had three jobs trying to support these eight children, and he said to himself, "If ever another youngster comes into this family, there's no way I'll be able to cope and I'll just have to end it all." Well, sure enough, as those things are prone to happen, his wife reported to him this night when he came home that she was again with child. He was very distraught, went off into the woods, threw a rope over the branch of a tree, stepped up on a box, put the noose around his head, and just as he was about to step off and end his troubles, a little voice in his ear said, "Joe, are you hanging the right man?"

Here in this House we're hearing that ALCB are apparently a law unto their own. The last time I looked it was the Executive Council or the cabinet of this government -- and theoretically, it's the caucus of this government that keeps the cabinet in office -- that makes the rules. So at the outset I'd like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I take some offence with those who point fingers at ALCB as being the villain. ALCB do what they're told.

MR. STRONG: It's your colleagues.

MR. GOGO: It's the responsibilities of this House ... Hon. Member for St. Albert, it's the hon. members of this House that, through the Solicitor General, will tell the ALCB what to do.

Getting, however, to the gist of the motion, the Member for Banff-Cochrane a few minutes ago related to us some of the statistics which were tabled just recently in the House -- a year out of date perhaps but just recently tabled -- and in many ways, I suppose, people listening to this debate would be reminded of what happened in the '20s, as though we had prohibition and they were trying to get out of prohibition to make drinking legal in Alberta. It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, to look at the annual report for just a moment. We have some 5,000 establishments in Alberta now. Is it that difficult for anybody to buy liquor? We have 225 retail establishments -- that's the same number as the hospitals we have in Alberta -- 225, selling on average 2,800

different brands of beverage alcohol per store.

But that's not enough. No, no; we've got to say that that's not good enough. We've found a goose who lays a golden egg, to the tune of \$330 million. Although quite frankly, the only way government can maintain that is to keep driving the price through the roof. Because heaven knows and members know that we sold 52 million gallons at one time, but now we're down to 48,000. I would like to think that AADAC was partly responsible for that and, more importantly, the good sense of Albertans who have come to their senses in terms of what I would view in many instances -- many instances -- as abusing the whole matter of beverage alcohol. And if we were serious about further reducing that, if we could only put a handle on expense-account living, we would drive it down another 20,000 gallons. But as long as the taxpayer of Canada is paying, through expense-account living in the various hotels in this province, I suppose it's going to continue to go up. So I don't want to hear those people crying to me because it's costing them money. I was at a convention on the weekend, and I observed people checking out what their bar bills were. So I have great sympathy for them but not much understanding.

Mr. Speaker, people continue to say all the great difficulties they encounter with regard to obtaining beverage alcohol. Last year, their annual report states, some 200 special permits issued every working day of the year -- every working day of the year. How could anybody imagine it's difficult to get permission to drink booze in this province? And that, for the hon. member's benefit, is on page 3 of the annual report. Almost 50,000 special permits were issued over the course of the year for those wanting to have beverage alcohol, either for consumption or for sale, in addition to the 225 retail outlets.

I have great difficulty in understanding why anybody would want to change the system we now have. I strongly endorse communities such as the village of Lyndon and the hamlet of Harvie Heights, both of whom were given the opportunity by our legislation, through the Liquor Control Board, whether to be wet or dry. They chose to be dry. Surely, Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility as a Legislature to maintain that type of legislation in place so that citizens can have a say as to whether or not their community will be wet or will be dry.

The Member for Calgary McCall, however, raises some very interesting points -- very interesting points -- but some few he didn't raise. Why is it, Mr. Speaker, that if I live in Fort Chipewyan, I can phone ALCB and they will airmail me the booze out of here at no charge -- no charge. I'll pay the same price in Fort Chipewyan as I do on 106th Street in Edmonton. But God help me if I want milk; it will cost me twice as much for milk. Now, if the hon. member wants to change things, I say let's change that. I don't hear him suggesting that. If you live in some of the remote parts of Alberta and pay another 14 to 16 cents a litre for gasoline, then I submit, with respect, in spite of the 225 hospitals you still need a car to get to some of them. Why don't we consider taking 10 or 15 cents per litre off the gas to enable you to get to a place you've got to go? Oh, no; we wouldn't dare dream of that, but we'll send your booze free of freight charge, free of postage.

Now, I would tend to support the hon. member if that were number nine in his resolution, but for some reason it's not there. Why isn't it there? I don't know why it's not there. Maybe when the hon. member closes debate he will talk about why we encourage the consumption of alcohol by ensuring there's no freight charge no matter where we ship it in Alberta, particularly by chartered aircraft.

Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to visualize what would happen if this resolution passed. I could see us with the Alberta Opportunity Company entertaining requests for loans to open liquor stores under the Alberta Opportunity [Fund] Act, with taxpayers' money. I can hear them saying now: "There are three liquor stores around me, but there's need for another one. Lend me the money." I could just hear it happening. Will it happen? I don't know. I do know that sometimes in our great anxiety to open up Alberta to be another Las Vegas -- and heaven knows, we're headed that way. I mean, the gaming in bingos alone has exceeded \$120 million -- in bingos alone. I said earlier in the House: for the first time in Canadian history, the first time -- and we're known as the breadbasket of the world -- the Canadian Wheat Board sales of \$4 billion have been exceeded by gaming, which is \$4.2 billion. One has to ask, with respect, Mr. Speaker, whether or not society is changing because of the wishes of its people or because of its politicians, who sense in whatever way that economic activity at any price is the way to go.

Rumour has it that Calgary, Alberta, with the Olympics, is wanting to have 24-hour bars -- open 24 hours a day, just for the Olympics, no longer. Well, British Columbia wanted 24-hour bars just for Expo. Expo's behind us. The bars are still open. That's because people don't have the political fortitude to say no. [Some applause] That's why we get that kind of applause. People seem to think that the wishes of that silent majority shouldn't be heard. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that it's the vocal minority that people are listening to, and just as sure as ... Those who are familiar with the Sunday shopping question: "Turn it over to the municipalities; let them decide" -- knowing full well that once people had experienced Sunday shopping, they weren't about to turn backward. If we open bars in Calgary for the Olympics, you'd better be certain that pressure will be so strong we'll suddenly have a new order in council allowing them year-round, and I suggest that is wrong.

I want to talk a little bit about the hotel business. I think, quite frankly, they have a very legitimate claim. If one considers for a moment the history in Alberta of its drinking laws, it's not that long ago, Mr. Speaker, where to get a permit to sell beer, you had to have a hotel with rooms for people to spend the night, huge investments of capital in order to have the privilege of selling beer -- not wine, not whiskey, but beer. And over the years those hotel owners, most of them members of the Alberta Hotel Association, have maintained those investments because there was no option. It's a little bit like farming. Farming might be a great business, but try and sell your farm. No one wants to buy it.

Similarly, these people with hotels I think are faced with great difficulties. They employ many people in our communities, yet they're watching as government allows people to come into various communities. They don't have to build a hotel with rooms; they only have to pay a month's rent in a properly zoned area of a mall and suddenly they're in business. It's gradually strangling them and putting them out of business. I think the hotel owners have a very legitimate complaint when they say that because of the changing regulations in this province -- not tightening up but, on the contrary, loosening up and being more liberal, allowing a bar or a lounge in every corner -- they're making it extremely difficult for those hotel owners to survive. I think that's a matter that could be addressed. One method I think has been suggested, and that's the 7 percent they pay which, theoretically at least, was for licensing them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a couple of comments. If I've

sounded positive to date, I want to make a couple of comments that may not be so positive. We in Alberta have a health care budget that's going out of sight. We hear the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care telling us that in the aggregate of Community and Occupational Health, Social Services, and his own department, health care costs are approaching 30 percent of the budget, \$2.5 billion. I saw some figures recently that said that the aggregate cost to the system -- just talking about doctors, hospitals, social services, law enforcement, we're approaching maybe \$600 million a year related almost directly to booze. Never mind the number who are killed with regard to impaired driving. I'm not a moralist and I'm not preaching; I'm simply saying that if we intend to create further liberalization by passing Motion 209, we're simply asking for more trouble.

I haven't heard in the debate yet Chief Lunney of Edmonton, our capital city -- he's the chief law enforcement officer -- what he has to say. Does he want more liberalization? The chief of police of Calgary -- have they been asked? Have the very people who are expected to enforce the law been asked their view on this? Have we talked to doctors who have to sew bodies together as a result of impaired driving, drinking and driving, and auto crashes -- not necessarily those who have been drinking? Have they been asked for their views? I haven't heard them to date.

Mr. Speaker, I am trying to think of a good reason why we should support Motion 209. The one about sawdust on the floor: I don't think that's bad but, heaven knows, we've got a Public Health Act that wouldn't allow that anyway. Because you see, we have other laws that prevent things happening. We seem to have a lot of laws.

The one thing I tend to agree with, in terms of the hon. Member for Calgary McCall, is number 7, the creation of a community club licence. I think that's a very positive thing. Calgary to my knowledge has the greatest number of community centres in North America. Calgary is a great volunteer-oriented society. I think there is strong merit in granting a community club licence for some of those communities and the community organizations. The same obviously could apply to Edmonton. And we have good authority for that. Some 14 years ago Mr. Ron Ghitter in the Ghitter report recommended that, and I think there is great merit in adopting that.

But when we talk of privatization of the retail outlets, who are we kidding? I mean, the very basis of privatization is maximization of profit. And surely, Mr. Speaker and hon. members, if we as individuals were in business and owned a liquor store, it goes without saying we would not be paying the minimum wage to our people; we'd put them on commission. And the more product they sold, the more money they would make, but the more money we would make. Because the name of the game is profit; I don't care how you shake it. And I have great difficulty in trying to combine something like beverage alcohol with profit.

Down in California, and I'm sure we'll see it here if this goes through, you pull up to a 7-Eleven which sells gas -- traditionally it sold a coke in the evening or a loaf of bread; that's when stores had reasonable hours, but of course that's gone because stores are open all night. But you gas up and you get four quarters and put them in the machine and get a six-pack so that you can go down the road with cold beer. Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that's in anybody's interest. If I saw any good reason why liquor laws in this province should be further liberalized, I would be the first one to accept it. And to date I frankly just haven't seen that at all.

I'm well aware that hotels in this province depend on off-premise sale as a major source of their income. I think that in smaller communities it's 30 to 40 percent of their income. So be it. Why shouldn't it be? But that doesn't mean that you have to sell off an agency like the Alberta Liquor Control Board -- which would be the first in Canada; that shouldn't stop us, I guess, because we're the first in a lot of things. I mean, that really doesn't rate the highest on my priority list. I think we've gone a long way. You can drive a mobile-home, go into an Alberta park; it becomes your home. You can have a boat, and as long as you can sleep in it, you can drink in it. I think we've gone probably as far or further than anybody in Canada in terms of liberalization.

I would just like to say in closing that for those members who are conscious of and aware of some of the social problems in our society related directly -- directly -- to alcohol: the abused families, the fact that the paycheque never reaches home because it stops in a certain place . . . I believe Albertans are mature, but I don't think they're any different than anybody else. The only reason we sell sanitary pads on television is because people buy them; that's the only reason they're on television. And the more we advertise beverage alcohol, the more it's going to be consumed. I cannot think of a better way of increasing the sales of beverage alcohol in this province than by adopting Motion 209, and I think that would be a very sad day for Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One advantage of being in this House for more than one term is that this motion has come up a couple of times and I've participated on it both times. So has the hon. Member for Lethbridge West and perhaps we'll both make about the same speech in terms of our feelings on the subject.

I suppose one could look at the motion and say it goes too far and we should go back to Prohibition days. And indeed, in those days did we have absolutely no alcoholism problems in Alberta? Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that really that wasn't true, from the stories I heard from my grandfather and from others in the early days of the rumrunners that used to pick up the moonshine in the States and run it across the border through the ports that weren't existing, on trails. If you managed to get through four times with the car that was lent to you by a person along the way, it was your car and the profit thereon was yours.

I would suggest that there are many hotels in this province and hotel industries and chains that were started by people involved in those early years. Indeed, in my area there are many farms that that's how they held onto the farms in the early days. In fact, even some of my relations were driving those cars, and you hear stories about them parked in town with bullet holes in the back where they'd been shot at -- but not good enough to get them stopped.

I think that a few years ago there was a story on TV in Lethbridge about those days. The only way the police finally caught some of these individuals and slowed the trade down was that they managed to get a little better with their rifles and shoot out some tires. In time they used those cars to chase the other cars, and then they had the power to catch them and gradually

stop the traffic across the border.

Mr. Speaker, I remember my grandfather telling me the story of when he bought the farm when he first came to Alberta. He was there for six or seven months, and it started caving in around the well. He wondered what was going on; he thought the well was caving in. So he got somebody to let him down on a rope in the well, sees this wooden side in the well -- a litde wooden door -- and wondered what was going on. So he gets a lantern lowered down to him and pushes the door open and holds the lantern in there and, lo and behold, there's a nice litde room about 10 or 12 feet below the ground with a whole bunch of bottles in it. He said that unfortunately none of them was full, but obviously somebody who had that farm before him made some moonshine.

And there are probably members of this House that have drunk some of that homemade moonshine, maybe not made in the early days but made since. Some of it really wasn't bad stuff compared to what you buy in the hotel today. At least in those days it was pure liquor. You needed one drink and that was it; you were done for the d a y . [interjection] Somebody says, "Speak for yourself". Well, Mr. Speaker, I was younger in those days, and one drink was probably enough.

Getting more on to the motion before somebody suggests that I would be out of order . . . Mr. Speaker, when I spoke on similar motions before, one of the parts I put more emphasis on was that of attaching to a local hotel the provision of off-sales in either liquor and/or wine as well as beer, especially in areas where it's quite a distance to the liquor stores. I think, for example, in my constituency, of Hilda and Schuler -- even Irvine, although it is only 20 miles from the Hat -- and then places like Manyberries where you're getting 35, 40 miles to the liquor store. I would suggest that attaching an outlet either to a grocery store or to a hotel in the small areas makes that business more profitable. You know that the alcohol is going to be bought and consumed; why not get it off the road? If they're picking the alcohol up at these places and going home maybe 10, 12 miles, maybe shorter, rather than 30 or 40 miles or where it's being picked up in the early afternoon and they don't get home till late at night, I think the temptation of drinking that alcohol is probably greater than if they would be able to buy it closer to home. We would take a lot more of that alcohol off the road, and it would get home with the seal still on the bottle.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, perhaps if some of the laws and some of the regulations were changed we would see, instead of people going out and they decide to have a drink . . . And I think the hon. Member for Stony Plain described the situation in the early days -- maybe not so early, but a few years ago -- where people once they opened the bottle would tend to drink all of it because if you were having a picnic or were camping and you were caught with a partially full bottle in the car, you were pinched. So instead of pouring it out, you drank it -- poured it inward. I think even just a small change where we allowed partially full bottles to be carried in an automobile, as long as it's out of the reach of the driver, would probably save considerably on consumption. It's often small changes like that . . . If one wants to be melodramatic about it, you say it's opening up the consumption of alcohol, but in reality it closes down or reduces the consump-

tion of alcohol.

The motion also talks about the powers of the board and regulations of the board. I think some of those regulations do indeed need to be looked at. Mr. Speaker, when the Member for Lethbridge West was speaking, comments were made about the board only enforcing the law that is given to them to enforce. But I would suggest that there is a vast difference between enforcing the regulations that exist . . . In the dealings I've had with the board with problems of some constituents and some community clubs, the senior management of the board is very willing to work with people and attempt to find an answer to the problems. Yet some of those inspectors out there that are checking read one thing, they read it definitely, they won't change. They make one decision one day, and they make another decision the other day. I think this is where the problem comes; it's not with the board or always with the regulations. The interpreting of those regulations causes a great deal of problems.

I remember one hotel owner at home telling me that they'd just renovated their hotel and before they would continue the liquor licence, he checked the rooms upstairs that had been just renovated. There were new mattresses on the beds, but not new springs. The inspector said, "Well, you've got to take those old springs off; that's old fashioned." He says, "Well, the people that are staying here like it." "That doesn't matter, you take them off or you don't get your licence. You make up your mind." Mr. Speaker, why should inspectors be looking at that? If it's passed by a health inspector or passed by people using the facility and those things related to public health, why should a liquor inspector come along and indeed overrule those people? Why should he say what kind of chairs? Maybe you want to develop a kind of stand-up bar or stool bar or something. Why isn't that up to the individual putting that bar in? I mean, if he doesn't have any patrons, he'll dam soon change the decor of his bar or he'll be out of business. So that would be an economic decision.

Mr. Speaker, relating to community clubs and community club licences, I think if we can get better community club licensing -- there has been a lot of movement in that area in the last few years -- so that small communities can have functions without having to go to the liquor store to get a permit every time they want to have a function . . . It may be simple in the city; there may be 200 permits given out a day. But let's take again places like Manyberries or Hilda. People have to go into town 35 miles, pick up the permit, pick up the booze, take it back to the function, and have it at the function. At the end of the function -- the next day -- they have to take what's left over, if there's any left over, to the liquor store, get the credit, and then go back home. If they had a community licence, they could have a stock there. I would suggest that there wouldn't be any more alcohol consumed and that if the penalties were there, if that stock was tampered with, used other than for the functions that were outlined in a permit, that licence could be removed. People then would very quickly change their attitude.

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

[Motion carried]

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

