

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**Title: Friday, December 4, 1987 10:00 a.m.**

Date: 87/12/04

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

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

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

Amen.

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file the annual report of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer.

MR. SPEAKER: Associate Minister of Agriculture.

MRS. CRIPPS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the annual report of the ADC and the Canadian/Alberta crop insurance corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the annual report of the Alberta Art Foundation, year ended March 31, '87.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report of the Alberta Liquor Control Board.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, 25 students of Rosslyn junior high school in the riding of Edmonton-Glengarry. They are accompanied today by their teachers Gordon Bushewsky and Gene Gillen. I would ask them to rise in the members' gallery and receive the very warm welcome of the Assembly.

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to introduce through you and to members of the Assembly on behalf of my colleague from Edmonton-Beverly, 27 grade 6 students from the East Edmonton Christian school in the Edmonton-Beverly constituency. They are accompanied by their teachers E. Vandergrift and G. Monsma and parents J. Tabak and G. Oort. I would ask them to stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly today on behalf of my colleague for St. Albert, 23 grade 6 students from the Neil M. Ross school in St. Albert. They're accompanied by their teacher Imelda Borodawka and a couple of parents, Pauline Commandeur and Chris Huitema. They're seated in the public gallery, and I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of members of the Assembly.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**Free Trade**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the first question to the Premier. Each day we keep hoping the Premier will give us some honest facts about the Mulroney trade deal.

Mr. Speaker, on November 10 the government released a propaganda sheet to the news media. It's called the Canada-U.S. free trade agreement: questions and answers. This is the one that promises 40,000 new jobs for Albertans and an \$800 pay raise for everybody in Alberta. We'll all be rich beyond our wildest dreams. The interesting part of this document is that all the figures come from one single source, the Economic Council of Canada study of September '87. I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, that this was done before the Mulroney trade deal. My question is to the Premier. Why did he choose the Economic Council report to justify this government's position?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the document was prepared by my colleague the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs with consultation with other ministers. I'd ask the minister to deal with it.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the particular study in question was one of any number which painted an accurate and we thought useful picture of what would occur. We recognize, of course, that it was done before the deal itself was signed and was done on the assumption that certain industries might have been included in the trade deal which were subsequently excluded. Therefore, it was even more conservative in its approach than it might have been had, for example, the brewing industry or the egg and poultry business or those agricultural marketing boards which might have been part of the deal -- were in fact excluded. Therefore, we felt that its credibility was even more enhanced, and we therefore used the figures associated with that study.

There will of course be an update by the Economic Council of Canada based upon the actual agreement itself, and we're looking forward to that. We think the figures that will then come forward will be even more optimistic for Canadians. I know that won't please the hon. Leader of the Opposition, but that's life.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad. I'm glad that this minister has said we will be even more impressed by it, because I want to come back to this particular study.

We talked yesterday about the service sector, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier seemed to be unconcerned about the job losses there. My question to the Premier as the leader of this government: is he aware that this Economic Council report that they so fondly paraded in front of Albertans and which his government has used to justify this deal assumes that the service sector will be excluded from this agreement and that all tariff and non-

tariff barriers, such as the FERC decision for natural gas, would be eliminated? Of course, this didn't happen under the Mulroney trade deal. Is the Premier aware of this?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the issue of inclusion of services and investment and those other aspects of the trade deal which were finally arrived at were not conclusively dealt with, because there were of course assumptions which had to be made. But the fact of the matter is that it is the view of the government, having analyzed the situation after the trade deal was arrived at, that the Economic Council of Canada report still forms the best analysis to date.

There are a number of others which could have been used. The Canada West Foundation studies -- which are voluminous and all of which indicate that as far as the trade deal potential for western Canada is concerned -- are even more optimistic than the Economic Council of Canada report. We could have used those figures as well.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's very important in this document that you level with the people of Alberta, because it was assumed that the service area would be exempted. You didn't say anything about that in the report, and fully 83 to 90 percent of the new jobs that they talk about being created are in that sector. Was this minister then aware of this fallacy before he put this out, or did they deliberately mislead the people of Alberta to put the best possible light on it?

MR. HORSMAN: The document, of course, as I indicated, will be updated now that the actual deal has been concluded, and when it is signed, the hon. Leader of the Opposition will have the benefit of that study, the Canada West Foundation studies, and many other studies on the potential impact that there will be for the benefit of Albertans and Canadians. We will of course be putting those figures forward. We are of course, like anyone else, unable to predict the future with absolute accuracy. But based upon best-known economic standards in the free-market society, with which the hon. member is unacquainted, we believe we have given the facts to Albertans in an appropriate way.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, what has happened is this government has lied to the people of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, my question is simply to this minister: why did this government deliberately mislead the people of Alberta by giving out this irresponsible information with a faulty study? And they knew full well it was a faulty study.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I won't respond to the obvious effort on the part of the Leader of the Opposition to become agitated by his agitation.

In fact, the document put forward by our government for the benefit of the people of Alberta reflects the facts as we know them to be. We do not mislead. [interjections] It is really unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that this opposition in this Legislature has so little faith in the market economy in which the North American economy must work that they have to try and shout me down while I try and give an answer. The Leader of the Opposition, in his agitation, should actually try and find something positive. Because what is positive about this deal is that it will mean thousands and thousands of new and higher paying jobs for Albertans. Unfortunately, the opposition doesn't like that, and that's too bad.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair requests the hon. Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his statement with respect to "lie" and "deliberately lie." [interjection] It's nevertheless referred there within the matter of unparliamentary language.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I refuse to take that back, because I was talking about a study; I was not talking about the minister lying in this Assembly. There is a difference.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair requests the Leader of the Opposition please to review 320 in *Beauchesne* and perhaps at the end of question period do what would be the appropriate thing.

MR. TAYLOR: A supplement to the hon. minister, after assuring him that the opposition has all kinds of faith in the people of Alberta; it's the government they're losing faith in.

With respect to small business, which we all want to see developed in this province and which the government has paid a great deal of service for, could the minister tell us whether or not the continued guaranteeing of loans or grants to help small businesses start up in the service sector will be legal under the new trade agreement?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the question of the government's ability to work with small business in ensuring their economic future is not impaired by this free trade deal with the United States of America. In fact, it should be noted that the Canadian Federation of Small Business, which represents thousands of businesses in Canada and hundreds and hundreds of businesses in Canada, has come forward and told me personally that they fully support this initiative, and we appreciate their support. Those are the type of people who have faith in Alberta, not the Liberal Party or the NDP.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary to the Attorney General. In light of many positive studies that have come forth, does the Attorney General have any studies which show the negative impact that would happen if we did not get this free trade agreement and became victims of the rising protectionist feeling in the United States, figures that might help the shortsighted paranoia of some of the members opposite? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, there are a number of studies, and I should perhaps refer hon. members back to the most extensive review of the Canadian economy in decades, which was the Macdonald royal commission. That study -- which should appeal to some members of the Assembly because of the fact that the chairman was, of course, a former federal Liberal cabinet minister who happened to have some foresight and judgment -- is perhaps the most extensive study, and it was clearly aware of the inherent dangers to Canada as a result of the enormous protectionism which is rising in the United States of America relative not particularly to Canada but in fact to the rest of the world in regard to the world trading environment. That was a very important study. In that, of course, there are many examples of what might happen to Canadian industry if protectionist measures were contemplated.

That was completed even before the omnibus trade Bill --

sometimes called the ominous trade Bill in the United States Senate and House of Representatives -- was before the United States Congress. That of course, Mr. Speaker, is something that all members who think we can maintain the status quo in our relationship with the United States should read, because if that Bill comes into effect without giving Canada a special relationship that the free trade agreement will do, it will devastate many segments of Alberta and Canadian industry, not the least of which will be the red meat sector and the petrochemical industry, and I could go on.

MR. SPEAKER: Further supplementaries? The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition on the second main question.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to designate the second question to the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

Emergency Shelters

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, this weekend's Lions Club telethon on violence in the family will increase public awareness of the problem and will thereby create greater demand for services for battered children, women, their children, and batterers. We know that more than 4,000 women and children were turned away from the shelters in 1986 due to lack of beds. To the Minister of Social Services: what provisions has the minister made to ensure that battered women seeking shelter as a result of the telethon will find the support and treatment that they need rather than being turned away?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, indeed it is my hope that there will be a far greater level of awareness as a result of the very excellent work done by the Lions Club in putting on the telethon and speaking to a whole host of areas that are presently not covered in terms of the whole area of family violence in particular. With respect to the hon. member's precise question, when we see that there are great additional needs in this area, we will have to respond with the emergency services and the counseling that is necessary.

MS LAING: Is this a commitment to increased beds by next week when the increased demand for services will in fact begin? What about batterers? What about treatment programs for them?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is raising some questions that are obviously a matter of discussion in many parts of the province. There has been a difference in view with respect to the treatment of batterers or the counseling that batterers have received and whether or not in the longer term this has been successful. I am of the opinion, and I have spoken to several of my colleagues about this, that it is one area where we do need research to ascertain in the longer term if the treatment programs that are presently used, presently being made available, are successful. If they are, it would be my view that we should further support them.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, batterers do not change their behaviour as a result of no treatment. Inasmuch as shelters have raised concerns that the telethon will create further competition for much needed community funds and as they are already suffering difficulty raising the funds they need, will the minister commit herself to ensuring that any shortfalls in fund-raising

from the community will be met by the department?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, this government has been very supportive of the excellent work being done by the women's shelters across the province, and when it has been possible, we have increased funding. That was done just over a year ago. It is true that there continues to be a need. I'm not sure that I would share the hon. member's view that there will be a decrease in community support for shelters. If anything, I believe the telethon, with the level of awareness that it will raise, will make all citizens cognizant of the fact that the shelters do need community support.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, it's the shelters themselves that have raised the concern that the funds will be diverted. In addition, shelters in Calgary and Red Deer, as well as satellites in Whitecourt -- which faces closing its doors in two weeks -- St. Paul, and Grande Cache are in desperate need of emergency funding. Will the minister at least commit herself to funding so that these shelters do not have to reduce already limited services?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the shelters in the province have been aware of the budget that has been made available to them and I believe have done their very best to plan on a year's basis as a result of that budget. It would certainly be my hope that where communities see additional need, at this point in time they will be fully supportive.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the Member for Clover Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: it's clear that the people of Alberta are sickened by this situation, which is far more extensive than we dreamed. It is also clear that they would be very supportive of increased funding. Has the minister now requested access to the residue of lottery funds to put into this service?

MRS. OSTERMAN: I'm not sure whether Mr. Speaker is nodding his head in the affirmative or the negative in terms of the appropriateness of the question, but I would say that I am endeavouring at all times to seek additional funding, certainly where organizations as worthy as women's shelters have indicated it to be necessary.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the minister. Can she enlighten the Assembly as to what is done when the battered women's shelters are completely full and an emergency situation comes up? What department policy is in place to look after these people on a one- or two-day interim basis?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, until a shelter bed is opened up, in the case where it is full when a family approaches the shelter, there are emergency services available as well as emergency counseling.

Racing Commission

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Minister of Career Development and Employment. I will use my two sentences by reading out of a Racing Commission report.

The report says:

This meant a healthy increase of almost 100 percent in purse supplements and breeder grants since the Commission's overhead remained constant.

First sentence. Second sentence:

The exercise was achieved without cost to the general taxpayer when the former capital grant to racetracks from pari mutuel revenues was replaced by an increase in grants from lotteries.

From lotteries, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know from the minister how in the world he could be giving grants to racetracks after turning down requests from food banks, requests from community schools, requests for health services. How could he possibly be giving money to racetracks?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know whether the hon. member's memory lasts 24 hours, but I believe yesterday the Premier responded by indicating that our support in this particular area has to do with support for the rural economy, particularly in the area of breeding and employment in that sector.

MR. TAYLOR: Well, it's disappointing that the man in charge of lottery funds thinks the only way he can help rural people is by helping build racetracks. It's very interesting.

Mr. Speaker, the second question I would maybe direct to the Premier then. How can he authorize an extra \$3 million to the Racing Commission whereas the Premier's government is referring welfare recipients to the food bank, while he's giving an extra \$3 million to the Racing Commission?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for the Racing Commission dealt with that matter yesterday. I'd refer the question to him.

MR. TAYLOR: He didn't; he danced all over the place.

MR. SPEAKER: Inappropriate comment, member. The Solicitor General.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, if I could get the hon. member to repeat the question. I know that will be difficult.

MR. SPEAKER: In one sentence, member, please.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, in one sentence: how can this government increase the awards and assistance to racetracks and race owners' purses and still ask people on welfare to be referred to the food banks for adequate food to eat?

MR. ROSTAD: Thank you. The hon. member has obviously not had luck with his horses.

As I mentioned yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the financing of the Racing Commission is paid for by those people who place bets. That's called the handle. Five percent tax is made on that handle, 4 percent of which goes into purse supplements, which helps to employ 6,000 people in the industry and adds to the \$2 million equine industry in Alberta.

AN HON. MEMBER: Billion.

MR. ROSTAD: Billion, sorry. Thanks for the correction. Also, 1 percent of the tax is then paid out to the exhibitions to help them generate upgrading of tracks. This added employment obviously would have an offset as to the people that would be required to go to the food banks.

MR. TAYLOR: It's a sad comment on this government's priorities, Mr. Speaker, a sad, sad comment. This is back to the Premier. Now that we find that the lottery funds are going to help build racetracks, would he agree now to put the funds from lottery funds into general revenue so this House can decide how it should be spent rather than the minister for career development?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Vermilion-Viking was on the speaking order.

DR. WEST: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I have one more . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Indeed, but I, strange to say, didn't see you leaping up.

MR. TAYLOR: Oh come on now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, please.

MR. TAYLOR: You're not even standing.

MR. SPEAKER: All right, I'll stand, hon. member.

MR. TAYLOR: This is ridiculous.

MR. SPEAKER: No. Hon. member, please hold on a moment. The Chair was about to recognize you. Please don't react in high dudgeon; it doesn't become you. The Chair recognizes, for the final supplementary, Westlock-Sturgeon, indeed, followed by Vermilion-Viking.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I'm gun-shy, it is not without reason.

To the Premier then. If he will not put it into general revenue, will the Premier at least prepare a budget that is approved on how to use the lottery funds in the next session of the Legislature? Will he at least go that far?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'd think about it.

MR. SPEAKER: Vermilion-Viking.

DR. WEST: Yes, a supplemental to the Attorney General in the same vein. Lottery funds originally were, by Albertans, supposed to go to amateur sports, recreation, and culture. To the Attorney General: is there any process being involved at the present time to go to Albertans to see whether they want to take lottery funds into general revenue and therefore legalize gambling in this province in order to balance the budget or to use general revenue funds?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is a fair amount of legality to gambling in Alberta at the present time, and it involves a number of ways of doing that. All members should be familiar with the fact that there is a Gaming Commission, and of course the revenues which are derived from the licensing fees do in fact flow into general revenue and in fact barely cover the cost of the administration of the Gaming Commission. But

there is no additional consideration being given to seeking opinion outside this Assembly. I am interested, of course, in the views of the members.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. I'd like to preamble by saying that I believe it is time that we do have a discussion in the Assembly with regard to the dispensation of lottery funds. We have had some experience now as to its earning power and dispensation therefrom. Would the Premier consider in the spring session a government resolution to discuss the matter, looking at the various priorities possible in terms of the lottery funds and their dispensation?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, every member of the House has the opportunity to bring motions before the House, and then I'm sure the House would deal with them in a serious, detailed manner.

Western Diversification Fund

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister of economic development, and it's a continuation on the subject of the western diversification program fund. Could the minister indicate at this time whether the amount of funds for Alberta has been determined and whether that allocation will be available for delivery in this 1987-88 winter?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, no, there has been no allocation of funds to a specific province. The western diversification fund is a fund to respond to economic or industrial initiatives emanating from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, and so the amount of funds that flow to a particular province will be the result of the initiatives that arise from within that province.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. Could the minister indicate whether the personnel or the government of Canada is prepared to accept representation either in an advisory capacity or in a working capacity in the office of the western diversification fund headquarters, which is located here in Edmonton?

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what the hon. member means by his question. If he means are they prepared to have employees of the provincial government work in the Western Diversification Office in western Canada, I haven't asked that question, and so I'm unable to answer it. If he means by his question is there a process by which consultation takes place with respect to the analysis of projects and obtaining the view of the province with respect to individual application, yes, that is going on.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate whether the some \$1 billion that's going to be made available, whether that is all money that will be provided in terms of grants, or will there be an administration reduction in terms of that amount of money available to western Canadians?

MR. SHABEN: My understanding is that the fund is that amount that has been described by the Prime Minister, the \$1.2 billion, and that the administration is separate from it. That process of developing the administration for the Western Diver-

sification Office is going on right now and is evolving as a result of changes to DRIE in the federal government.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A final, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In terms of the Husky Oil upgrader, is there any consideration that some of the funds from the western diversification program would be diverted to that Husky upgrader, or is that a program that's outside the limits in terms of a diversification allocation?

DR. WEBBER: Mr. Speaker, discussions up to this point have been centred around the participation of the different levels of government as well as the participation of Husky. No discussion at this point has centred around the source of those funds.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Taber-Warner.

Sugar Beet Industry

MR. BOGLE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. The national tripartite sugar beet stabilization agreement was signed in Taber this spring. That agreement goes a long way in providing support to our domestic sugar industry. In working out the mechanics of the agreement, all items save one have been resolved. The one outstanding issue relates to cash costs. There was no clear definition in the agreement of what constituted cash costs. Can the minister update this Assembly on progress made to resolve this one outstanding matter?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to report to the Assembly that presently it is before the Agricultural Stabilization Board as it relates to the flexibility of the specific cash crops. I'm happy to report to the hon. member that we have had discussions with Charlie Mayer, who has been so instrumental in putting this together, whereby they have indicated and in turn we have indicated a flexibility as it relates to the specific cash cost. But we have encountered difficulties with the province of Manitoba in accepting that flexibility.

Agricultural Trade

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the hon. Premier. For several years the United States has been using its financial muscle to outsubsidize the rest of the world and sell a huge stockpile of wheat. However, the trade deal clearly states, and I'll quote, if I may, from page 14, that

each Party has agreed ...

That's past tense.

... to take into account the export interests of the other Party in the use any export subsidy on agricultural goods exported to third countries ...

Mr. Speaker, the deal was no sooner signed than the United States violated it by offering huge additional subsidies to steal our traditional customers away. I'm wondering: how does the Premier justify his blind faith in Mulroney's deal with the Americans when they demonstrate to us every day that it's not worth the paper it's printed on?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's remarkable how far the members will go to try and discredit something that the people of Alberta need so badly. However, the details are matters that the hon. Attorney General has been working on. I'll ask him to respond.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, this question, of course, has arrived now on the desk of the hon. Member for Vegreville from his leader in Ottawa -- or Oshawa. That, of course, was the question that was raised in the House of Commons. If ever there was an example of the need for a deal between our two countries to be signed and in place, that might very well be one of them. You know, that's the most incredible overreaching on an issue of that kind, and in fact, there is of course nothing we can do until such time as the GATT has dealt with the issue of how to deal with international trade in agriculture, which is not now part of the GATT. [interjection] The hon. member keeps laughing. Perhaps he doesn't understand. [interjections] Well, Mr. Speaker...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. The minister is giving an answer.

Allright. Supplementary.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I'm directing my questions to the Premier because he claims to be committed to agriculture and he claims to care about the future of Alberta grain producers. I would like to ask: it was clear through the negotiation process that a commitment was made to put an end to these subsidies through the negotiation process. It hasn't happened. It was clear that the standstill clause on page 35 was supposed to put an end to the subsidies, and it hasn't. I'm wondering if the Premier will have the courage to stand in his place in this Assembly and admit to Alberta grain farmers that this deal is not and will not protect them from having their markets stolen by the Americans under the terms of this deal. [interjections]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, if I'm going to be permitted to answer the questions, I would ask that the hon. members in the New Democratic Party refrain from drowning out my remarks in laughter. If they think it's a laughing matter, they shouldn't ask the question in the first place. [interjections]

Well, the Leader of the Opposition continues to make snide remarks. If he thinks that the people of Alberta want this Assembly turned into the House of Commons in Ottawa by this type of behaviour, well, then the people of Alberta will judge. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has had representations from time to time throughout the week, especially from this side of the House -- certain members -- that the wasting of time in question period... And the Chair would respectfully point out to members that the more the heckling goes on or the noise level, well, the clock keeps ticking, and so be it.

MR. FOX: I better go back to the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. We know that Mulroney's trade deal will put an end to the two-price wheat program and take \$40 million of legitimate earned income out of the pockets of Alberta's grain producers. It may or may not be replaced by a government subsidy in the future. Can the hon. minister offer Alberta grain farmers something more out of this deal than wishful thinking, knowing that Mulroney's deal damages not only our domestic market but our export opportunities as well?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm more than happy to assist the hon. member in bringing forward the correct facts. It is contrary to what the hon. member is suggesting, whereby he said, I believe, that 23 percent of the domestic wheat production ex-

isted in Alberta, whereby under the Two-Price Wheat Act only 5 percent of that relates to Alberta because the Two-Price Wheat Act only is directly related to the wheat that is used for domestic human consumption. So again I am happy to assist the hon. member in making sure that his facts are correct, because he had them very distorted to date.

MR. FOX: Well, that's a great answer, Mr. Speaker. I tried to point out to the hon. minister that in fact the benefit...

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, final supplementary. A succinct question.

MR. FOX: Well, I'll ask the minister then if he concurs with the statement made by an official in his department, Dr. Joe Rosario, the director of the Agriculture department's trade policy secretariat, when he said that the dispute settlement mechanism that these guys are relying on wasn't what we'd hoped for. I can provide the quote. Does he concur with that statement?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I regret that the time is so limited during question period, but I am happy to debate with the hon. member the pros and the cons as it relates to the trade agreement. We recognize that the New Democratic Party wishes to have Alberta in isolation. They endorse supply management for every sector within the agricultural community. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. minister, please be seated until there's silence in the House. Hon. minister.

MR. ELZINGA: I'd like to point out some other figures to the hon. member, if I might also. In the event that he wishes to pursue his isolationist attitude as it relates to the province of Alberta, we're going to have to do away with a large portion of our agricultural community. We export outside of this province 77 percent of our beef production. We export 60 percent of our pork production. We export 50 percent of our barley production. We export 80 percent of our wheat production. What the New Democratic Party wishes to do is have us do away with that production within this province. If I could, I'd like my hon. colleague from economic development to supplement this, because he has additional information. [interjections]

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, all of us in the Assembly, I know, recognize how important agriculture is to our economy. It's tremendously important. So the question of the impact of the trade Bill upon Alberta agriculture is very important.

One aspect I think a lot of members fail to recognize is the potential for value adding within Alberta, and that potential has never ever been achieved in this province. The two-price system for wheat mitigates against value adding in Alberta in terms of the production of all sorts of baked goods. In terms of the trade in baked goods between Canada and the United States, there is virtually no milling going on in Alberta. As a result of the trade deal, there's a potential for value adding. We cannot continue as a province to depend upon the livelihood of our agricultural community to be from the production of raw commodities. We have to work toward the opportunities for upgrading, whether it's in meat packing, in milling, in processing of food products, and this trade...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Member for Little Bow.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture. I certainly agree with the minister of economic development in that objective, but a question of clarification in terms of the federal government policy when the two-price system of wheat is eliminated because of the free trade arrangement. The minister has indicated that the federal government will provide compensation in terms of that transitional period. But an assistant to the federal minister, Gordon Bacon, has made this statement, which I've heard. He said, "This is not a policy that is set in stone." Could the minister clarify that? Possibly from his meetings this week he has heard the truth of the statement.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to confirm what I indicated to the House a couple of days ago as it relates to statements that have come out of the discussions. Charlie Mayer, the minister responsible for grains and oilseeds at the federal level, has indicated that compensation will be forthcoming as it relates to any detrimental impact with the removal of the two-price wheat system. I would assume that the minister would be speaking and advocating government policy rather than an individual who serves under the government policy-makers.

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, it seems since my first day in the Legislative Assembly the NDPs have always tried to take good news ... [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Hon. member ... [interjections] Order please. Supplementary question.

MR. OLDRING: Could the Minister of Agriculture then, Mr. Speaker, please advise this Assembly: has he had an opportunity of meeting with important groups and bodies like the Alberta Wheat Pool and the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association? What do they think of the free trade agreement?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to report to the House, and I'm more than happy to go through a list of groups that have endorsed the agreement in principle: the Alberta pork producers, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Western Stock Growers. Groups such as the Alberta Canola Growers, the Alberta Wheat Pool, have indicated that they do agree in principle with free trade but they are waiting for the fine print of the agreement. It's interesting to note too, Mr. Speaker, that the United Grain Growers has completely endorsed it. So the major grain companies have endorsed the principle of free trade, recognizing the importance that it will play to the development of the agricultural economy in the province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Oldman River Dam

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of the Environment: our Department of the Environment is the laughingstock of the world as the only department of the environment in the world which builds dams. This places the department in a tremendous conflict of interest as applicant, as evaluator, and as grantor of licences for dams [interjections].

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. CHUMIR: In 1986 the government-appointed Environ-

ment Council of Alberta recommended that the responsibility for water development projects be transferred out of Alberta Environment. I'm wondering whether the minister can tell this House why this sensible recommendation of the Environment Council of Alberta was rejected by his department.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I've had a very interesting last six months: an opportunity to meet with other ministers of the environment in this country and to have recently been in Europe where, I want to make it very clearly known, the Department of the Environment and the support of environmental protection in this province by this government is considered to be at the forefront in terms of the reputation that the government of Alberta has and Alberta Environment has. So for the hon. member to make a statement of the type he's made is, I think, very unfortunate in terms of the truth.

I would point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that fundamentally we've always viewed that there are three important aspects to the environment. We've talked about land, we've talked about air, and we've talked about water. Water management, water conservation, water preservation, and the maximization of the use of this very rare and precious resource is extremely important. The government of Alberta has viewed that it should be a very protective department like the Department of the Environment that should be responsible for the management of such a very important and precious resource.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we have unanimous consent to complete this series of questions and in addition to have the Minister of Social Services give additional information to questions as raised in the House previously this week?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Supplementary question, Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, could the minister perhaps -- that under this lionized system in Alberta his department did not even order an environmental impact assessment prior to approving the Oldman River dam?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the debate and interest in water management in our province goes back really since the turn of the century, the time in which Alberta became a province. If the hon. member would recall the history of western Canada, the hon. member would recall that some hundred years ago a surveyor by the name of Palliser came west and basically indicated that a large portion of the province of Alberta would forever be devoid of people because it didn't have enough water and an availability of water.

Since 1905 when Alberta became a province, there's been a great deal of discussion and debate with the need to manage water resources in the southern part of the province. That debate was really focused between the years 1978 and 1984 when numerous studies, hearings, debates, opportunities for virtually everyone in our province to participate in the discussion with respect to the need for an Oldman River dam ... The debates, the discussions, the hearings all formed part of a very important environmental impact assessment, as we knew the definition of the term at that time. Hon. members should also know that sophistication with the current phraseology, meaning, of en-

viromnental impact assessment has only been basically determined in the last year and a half. It was in 1985-1986 that a formal document and a formal mechanism was arrived at in terms of determining environmental impact assessments. The decision for the Oldman River dam was made in 1984.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, the current system is equivalent to asking Colonel Saunders to babysit your chickens. I'm wondering: why won't the minister recognize the common sense of separating the watchdog responsibility for the environment from that of promoting environmentally sensitive projects?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I think that when we talk once again about the protection of the environment, we have to recognize we're talking about land, air, and water. In terms of the protection of that environment, the protection of the waters is extremely important.

I would like to invite the hon. member to join with me and the Environment Council of Alberta this afternoon at 1:30 in this city, when I have an opportunity to speak to the Environment Council of Alberta on this and other very important matters. If the hon. member unfortunately does not have an opportunity to attend, he can be assured I'll provide him with a full and complete copy of my remarks next week.

MR. CHUMIR: The minister has mentioned how impressed other departments of environment across Canada are with our system. Can he then tell us whether he knows of any other department which builds dams or has expressed an interest in emulating our system here in Alberta?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I think we have to put Alberta in the context of Canada. Half of the irrigated land in the country of Canada is found in the province of Alberta. We've also had our history with respect to the write-off of the southern part of our province a hundred and some odd years ago by the surveyor Palliser, who basically said that if we had no water management, we would have no life. Alberta is rather unique. I might also add that Alberta is also very bold, adventuresome, and determined that we will protect and enhance the water resource of our province. This government has taken the issue very dramatically since 1971, has allocated literally hundreds of millions of dollars for the improvement and the preservation of this very precious and rare commodity that we have in the southern part of the province.

I think all North Americans daily sit in awe, looking at the massive commitment that we have under our irrigation headworks and management program, the construction of water management projects that have gone on in this province, whether or not they'd be in the North Saskatchewan River, the Red Deer River, the Oldman River, the Paddle River. And the Hutch Lake project in northern Alberta . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Stony Plain on a . . .

MR. HERON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Would the minister please confirm that the national task force on the environment -- which received the Bruntland Commission report, Our Common Future -- operating under the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers singled out Alberta as being a leader in its environmental controls and its strategy for reforestation and soil reclamation?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, that's absolutely correct. I'm also proud to reiterate once again to the members of the opposition, who have obviously forgotten about the fact, that it was in October 1986, when the current Minister of the Environment in the province of Alberta served as the national president of the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers, that a decision was made to commission a national task force report on the environment and economic development, and five ministers of the environment, leaders of industry in this country, and leaders of the major environmental groups across the country wrote a very important document that recently has been tabled in the United Nations, where it received recognition from a number of countries around the world. I might also point out, Mr. Speaker, that recently I was in Germany, and the German . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Additional supplementaries. Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the obvious conflict of interest -- the department that decides whether or not to build a dam for agricultural purposes is also the department that decides whether or not it shouldn't be built on environmental grounds -- can the minister explain what formal mechanisms he has in place, besides the environmental impact assessment that he decided not to do, to deal with this serious conflict of interest?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker. I'd like to repeat once again what I've said in the House now on numerous occasions and I've said outside the House as well: management of water, a precious and rare resource in the southern part of the province of Alberta, is a major commitment of this government. The construction of the Oldman River dam involves the protection of and the need for a regulated supply of water to some 55 communities in the southern part of the province of Alberta. It will permit and provide for growth of people and industry; it will provide for the protection and the enhancement of our wildlife resource in the southern part of the province of Alberta; it will afford a recreational opportunity for people that currently do not have a recreational opportunity and will also provide for agricultural enhancement.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister for Social Services.

Social Allowance Cuts

MRS. OSTERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday there were several comments that needed response -- I believe they were raised by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands -- with respect to Department of Social Services' policy or funding.

First of all, I wanted to note that there is no ceiling on the funding that is made available to the Department of Social Services for people who come forward and qualify under the social allowance or any other type of emergency program. There is no ceiling on that funding. Unfortunately, someone somehow has information that they believe they didn't receive funding because money had run out, and so I wanted to set the record straight there.

As well, the Edmonton Food Bank apparently has raised a question through the hon. member with respect to people being sent to the Food Bank by the Department of Social Services.

Over the last number of months the Edmonton Food Bank had indicated to our regional staff here in Edmonton that they were having some difficulty ascertaining whether the information provided to them by potential clients was correct, and in that vein discussions took place about how that may be resolved. The discussion now centres around an individual from the department that will become a liaison person between the department and the Food Bank. But in the interim, so that the information could be ascertained as correct as presented to the Food Bank officials, individuals who don't qualify under our program or who have used all the benefits available to them -- in order that the Food Bank be able to ascertain that that is indeed correct -- a letter, a small statement, was supplied to those individuals by those who requested it. And that was the response, Mr. Speaker.

MS BARRETT: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her explanation. I would like to ask a supplementary based on one of the comments that she did just make. She said that people can be refused or denied if their benefits have been exhausted; in other words, if they've come to the maximum. Is the minister planning any particular measure for this winter, for the cold months, so that people who are trying to live on \$4.80 a day don't have to take from their food money to pay additional heat bills? Is she making any special provision for that in the upcoming months?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the department, through the appeal process, certainly provides information to clients who believe they haven't been given sufficient resources to manage on and so are invited to access the appeal process.

MR. SPEAKER: There was a point of order during question period. Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I refer to *Beauchesne* 320(2), wherein it's considered unparliamentary to use terms like "distort" or "distort the facts" or "deliberate distortions," the same section that you might be referring to later. But I want to state that I'm not thin-so-skinned nor tongue-so-tied that I'm offended by that and demand a retraction, because I recognize I will have the chance in debate on the Mulroney trade deal next week to teach the government and these ministers how the two-price system really works. The information that they claim I distorted came from the Canadian Wheat Board information officer. I gave the minister a chance to check that.

But my point of order, Mr. Speaker, is *Beauchesne* 358. It deals with answers having at least something remotely to do with the question asked. My supplementary question was asking the minister if he concurred with the statement made by the department and his official involving the dispute settlement mechanism. His answer didn't relate to that in the slightest. Then the minister of economic development got up and told us all a bedtime story about something totally off topic. I think that's inappropriate and ask for your guidance on it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

[Mr. Taylor rose]

MR. SPEAKER: On the same point of order?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. I think what we're seeing here is a sort of filibuster in answering -- as Tinker to Evers to Chance -- every time you get over, and of course there's always a chance when you ask these people a question. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that somehow or another you keep them from flipping the ball along, because we're not getting an answer from the first one or the second one or the third one. What they're doing is reading the press, realizing they're under pressure, Mr. Speaker, and they're hoping you will allow them to keep tossing it back and forward to extend the question period so they don't have to answer, so they get away with those mealy-mouth returns. So I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that you really step down on these irrelevant answers.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order. The general question had to do with the impact of the tentative trade deal on Alberta Agriculture and, particularly, on the grain sector. If the hon. member would check the Blues, I believe the previous questions in that question dealt with precisely that subject. I was simply supplementing information, which is in order in this Assembly.

MR. DAY: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Whoa. Here comes the reverend.

MR. DAY: . . . not wishing to strike fear in their hearts, but it seems to have worked that way.

Standing Orders is very clear, Mr. Speaker, that how a question is answered or, indeed, if it is answered at all does not constitute a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the purported point of order as raised by the Member for Vegreville, the quotes from *Beauchesne* as listed by the Member for Vegreville really dealt with the matter of questions. Again, with regard to answers, we have *Beauchesne* 363:

A Minister may decline to answer a question without stating the reason for his refusal, and insistence on an answer is out of order, with no debate being allowed. A refusal to answer cannot be raised as a question of privilege, nor is it regular to comment upon such a refusal.

And the difficulty is that the insistence upon an answer is, indeed, not part of what the parliamentary process is, no matter how high the level of frustration it engenders in the person asking the question.

This also relates basically to a discussion we had in the House yesterday, and as one who formerly occupied another bench in this House, I realize the frustrations full well on the part of both parties. Nevertheless, this is still a matter of complaint.

Now, with regard to another issue which was raised in question period, the Chair has had opportunity to review the Blues with regard to the first series of questions as raised by the Leader of the Opposition. In the third -- the Chair brought to the attention of the House the comments as made by the Leader of the Opposition which occurred in his fourth question. Nevertheless, the stage was somewhat being set for the Chair to have to interject in the last sentence of the hon. Leader of the Opposition's third question, which was:

Was this minister then aware of this fallacy before he put this out, or did they deliberately mislead the people of Alberta to put the best possible light on it?

That then was followed by the fourth question, which is what

indeed brought the -- or it was the other? Anyway, the other question that was involved was this:

Mr. Speaker, what has happened is this government has lied to the people of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, my question is simply to this minister: why did this government deliberately mislead the people of Alberta by giving out this irresponsible information with the faulty study, and they knew full well it was a faulty study.

At the time of the interruption by the Chair, it's there it then said:

The Chair requests the hon. Leader of the Opposition to withdraw his statement with respect to "lie" and "deliberately lie." ... It's nevertheless referred there within the matter of unparliamentary language."

Another exchange:

... the Leader of the Opposition please, to review 320 in *Beauchesne* and perhaps at the end of question period do what would be the appropriate thing.

There are indeed a sufficient number of issues here, and the Chair does indeed look back to its own direction of *Beauchesne* 320, where it sets out: "It has been ruled unparliamentary to refer to a Member . . ." And the Chair does note the matter of "Member," and when is a collective group of members no longer a member? That would take us back to some other of that medieval type of philosophical debate about how many angels on the head of a pin.

Nevertheless, as one looks through the matter of unparliamentary language, on page 109 of *Beauchesne* the reference is still there with regard to "deliberately misleading," "deliberately misled," "lie" and "not telling the truth" on page 108. And then, as always, all of us in the House have to be reminded that *Beauchesne* just sort of slips one in on us on page 110, where it says:

Since 1958, it has been ruled parliamentary to use [some of] the following expressions.

Nevertheless, as you look down there, you do not see the word "lie," nor do you see the phrase "deliberately mislead."

Bearing that in mind, while indeed one supposes that the Leader of the Opposition could give the rationalization that he was not referring to a particular member, nevertheless it causes a great deal of concern to the whole operation of the House. And there are other points of view, with respect, that can be cited in *Beauchesne* as to the matter of the raising of questions such as not questions designed to foment the House, so to speak. Those references are indeed there; I think it's 362.

Nevertheless, coming back to our own Standing Orders, we come into section 23(j):

uses abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder.

So it's language of a nature likely to create disorder, and that indeed is almost a direct printing of what occurs in *Beauchesne*. So one understands the cut and thrust of debate.

The Chair also realizes that there are going to be times when we utter things which we would perhaps phrase quite differently under different circumstances. The Chair does indeed request of the Leader of the Opposition that perhaps he might make a brief statement to the House. But in addition to that, the Chair also really would hope that the House would be just a bit more considerate in the use of some of the language that does take place.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, to go back to *Beauchesne*, if you look under that section that you're quoting, 320, it's under the big section, "Referring to Members in Debate."

Mr. Speaker, I was talking about what the government did, which I believe was misleading when they issue a faulty study

based on faulty assumptions. To me, that is a lie to the people of Alberta. I was not talking about individual members here in this Assembly, and I believe that to be the case.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, this is a sorely troubling situation. If one examines *Beauchesne*, it is quite clear in section 319:

... a Member will not be permitted ... to indulge in any reflections on the House itself as a political institution; or to impute to any Member or Members unworthy motives,

et cetera. And it goes on to talk about then in section 320(1):

It has been ruled unparliamentary to refer to a Member ...

But in 320(2) it is clear beyond question:

Since 1958, it has been ruled unparliamentary to use the following expressions ...

Contained in that list of expressions on the bottom of page 107 is:

LIE
deliberately mis-stated the truth

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that what we have been exposed to today is both demeaning to the House and to a group of members in the House. I believe on close examination of the Blues, which regrettably I do not have at the moment, that it is directed as well at a minister in the government. The hon. Leader of the Opposition may not agree with the study. The study is clearly dated. It is done by a respected institution. I am certain that it establishes the premises for the study. The member may disagree with those premises. He may disagree with those conclusions. That's his privilege. But, Mr. Speaker, to say in this Assembly as he has conducted himself I believe is definitely unparliamentary, and the hon. member I would hope would consider further his comments this morning.

MR. WRIGHT: On this point, Mr. Speaker, the hon. House leader of the government side was referring to that chapter that is entitled "Referring to Members in Debate." The leader of my own party was not referring to members. He was referring to the actions of the government, and collectively the actions of the government, which may result from officials, not anyone in this Chamber, may amount to a lie, and that was the contention of our leader.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're making it worse.

MR. WRIGHT: It's making it worse if it's out of order, but you're begging the question, sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to point out to the thin-so-skinned House leader across the way that when he interprets 320(2) as being unrelated to 320(1), that would completely distort the entire notion. If it were meant that they were distinct concepts, it would be written that way. They would be separate notations; in other words, they would be 320 and then 321. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, when it says "It has been ruled unparliamentary to refer to a Member as ..." and then the following subsection states "the unparliamentary use," they're related with respect to the use in terms of citing "a Member as." In other words, Mr. Speaker, it is perfectly legitimate to refer to a government as having done such and such under the provisions of this, order.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the explanation provided to

the House by yourself by way of introduction of this particular point of order, and then the further explanation provided by the Government House Leader with respect to this, need repetition. *Beauchesne* very clearly states under section 320, page 105:

Since 1958, it has been ruled unparliamentary to use the fol-

lowing expressions:

Included in those expressions are the words:

LIE

deliberately mis-stated the [fact]

not telling the truth

lie.

MISLEAD

mislead

deliberately misleading

deliberately misled.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that *Beauchesne* clearly states on page 105 for all members to read that "it has been ruled unparliamentary to use the following expressions."

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recall in the very first session I spent in this Chamber I rose on a point of order when some rather horrendous insults were hurled at the opposition. I took umbrage to them and thought it was most unparliamentary. I was informed at that time that reference to the Official Opposition did not constitute reference to specific members and therefore it wasn't a point of order. I would recommend that consistency in this case would imply that reference to the government and the actions of the government does not imply reference to any specific members sitting in the Chamber. I would rest assured that the Speaker would be consistent in those rulings.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, as the minister hurled at, yes, by the Leader of the Opposition when he lost his cool this morning -- and I must say that I am a member of the Assembly. He knows that full well. I'm a member of a government, as are several members on this side of the House, and it therefore not only has reflected upon me as a member but it has reflected on every other member of the government -- that is to say, members of Executive Council -- when he lost his temper, and no doubt would have in reflection wanted to use more temperate language, despite the fact that he ...

REV. ROBERTS: He had it in his script here.

MR. HORSMAN: Oh, he had it in his script, did he? Oh, I'm sorry. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre has advised that he had it in his script. Well, if that's the case, then it was more deliberate than ever. It wasn't just the fact that the Leader of the Opposition ...

AN HON. MEMBER: He had your misinformation in the script. It was written in the report.

MR. HORSMAN: Yes, I have a copy of the New Democratic news release, but the term "lie" does not appear in here, so I thought perhaps it was added. On the point of order, though, as the member of the government to whom he directed his remarks, I find them offensive, and I would ask the hon. member to remove them.

MR. SPEAKER: One of the other references in *Beauchesne*

that should indeed be considered is 359(7), which is the one that the Chair was searching for earlier:

A question must adhere to the proprieties of the House, in terms of inferences, imputing motives or casting aspersions upon persons [plural] within the House or out of it.

So that has a bit of an override position with respect to those who would want to cool the person or persons.

The Chair does invite the Leader of the Opposition to perhaps speak for a moment.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that this government did, under a faulty study they knew, mislead the people of Alberta. So I will give it parliamentary language: the government is not telling the truth to Albertans, and they're spreading falsehoods to the people of Alberta. And if you look, that is totally within parliamentary procedure in the wording.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair then understands that by that statement the Leader of the Opposition has indeed withdrawn the previous remark from the House and entered this in the record?

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw the previous remark and leave those two.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair, first of all, thanks wholeheartedly the Leader of the Opposition for the generosity of spirit. The Chair also is intrigued by the level of interest in things parliamentary that has come to the fore in this current sitting. It helps to sharpen us all up with respect to what the parliamentary process is and what some of the subtle nuances are and what some of the hidden issues are when it comes to the whole matter of dealing with the House.

Let's see now. There's a request before the House by the Member for Drumheller, who wishes to ask us if we might revert on the Order Paper to Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees. Does the House agree to reverting to that procedure, please?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Hon. Member for Drumheller.

head: **PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

MR. SCHUMACHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 93 I have taken under consideration the question of the following petitions which did not comply with Standing Order 86 and recommend to the Assembly that the provisions of Standing Order 86 with respect to the deadline for completion of advertising be waived to permit those Bills to be dealt with.

1. The petition of James F. Kalmacoff for the Security Home Trust Company Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, in the Assembly, Provincial Treasurer and others who are engaging in conversation. Thank you.

MR. SCHUMACHER:

2. The petition of Cameron Millikin for the Fair & Millikin Insurance Company Act.

3. The petition of Hermo T. Pagtakhan for the Hermo T. Pagtakhan Bar Admission Act.

I request the concurrence of the Assembly in these recommendations.

[Motion carried]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

17. Moved by Mr. Getty:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

WHEREAS the Constitution Act, 1982, came into force on April 17, 1982, following an agreement between Canada and all the provinces except Quebec;

AND WHEREAS the government of Quebec has established a set of five proposals for constitutional change and has stated that amendments to give effect to those proposals would enable Quebec to resume a full role in the constitutional councils of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the amendment proposed in the schedule hereto sets out the basis on which Quebec's five constitutional proposals may be met;

AND WHEREAS the amendment proposed in the schedule hereto also recognizes the principle of the equality of all the provinces, provides new arrangements to foster greater harmony and co-operation between the government of Canada and the governments of the provinces, and requires that conferences be convened to consider important constitutional, economic, and other issues;

AND WHEREAS certain portions of the amendment proposed in the schedule hereto relate to matters referred to in section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982;

AND WHEREAS section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982, provides that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada may be made by proclamation issued by the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada where so authorized by resolutions of the Senate and the House of Commons and of the Legislative Assembly of each province;

NOW THEREFORE the Legislative Assembly resolves that an amendment to the Constitution of Canada be authorized to be made by proclamation issued by Her Excellency the Governor General under the Great Seal of Canada in accordance with the schedule hereto.*

Attendu:

que la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982 est entrée en vigueur le 17 avril 1982, à la suite d'un accord conclu entre le Canada et toutes les provinces, sauf le Québec;

que, selon le gouvernement du Québec, l'adoption de modifications visant à donner effet à ses cinq propositions de révision constitutionnelle permettrait au Québec de jouer pleinement de nouveau son rôle dans les instances constitutionnelles canadiennes;

que le projet de modification figurant en annexe présente les modalités d'un règlement relatif aux cinq propositions du Québec;

que le projet reconnaît le principe de l'égalité de toutes les provinces et prévoit, d'une part, de nouveaux arrangements propres à renforcer l'harmonie et la coopération entre le gouvernement du Canada et ceux des provinces, d'autre part la tenue de conférences consacrées à l'étude d'importantes

questions constitutionnelles, économiques et autres;

que le projet porte en partie sur des questions visées à l'article 41 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982;

que cet article prévoit que la Constitution du Canada peut être modifiée par proclamation du gouverneur général sous le grand sceau du Canada, autorisée par des résolutions du Sénat, de la Chambre des communes et de l'assemblée législative de chaque province,

l'assemblée législative a résolu d'autoriser la modification de la Constitution du Canada par proclamation de Son Excellence le gouverneur général sous le grand sceau du Canada, en conformité avec l'annexe ci-jointe.*

Amendment moved by Mr. Martin:

- (1) in section 1, in the proposed section 2 of the Constitution Act, 1867,

(a) in subsection (1)(a), by adding "a multicultural" after "a fundamental characteristic of", and

(b) in subsection (2), by striking out "the Parliament of Canada and" and substituting "the Parliament of Canada to preserve and promote and the role of";

- (2) in section 2, by adding "or territory" after "the government of the province";

- (3) in section 6,

(a) in proposed section 101C.(1) of the Constitution Act, 1987,

(i) by adding "and territory" after "the government of each province",

(ii) by adding "or territory" after "the bar of that province", and

(b) in proposed section 101C.(4) of the said Act, by adding "or territory" after "the government of a province";

- (4) in section 7, in proposed section 106A.(1) of the Constitution Act, 1867, by striking out "is compatible with the national objectives" and substituting "meets national standards";

- (5) in section 9, in proposed section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982, by striking out clauses (b), (c), and (i);

- (6) in section 13,

(a) in proposed section 50.(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, by adding the following after clause (b):

"(b.1) Aboriginal people's rights, including the right to self-government," and

(b) by adding the following after the proposed section 50.(2) of the said Act:

"50.(3) The Governor General in Council shall issue invitations to bona fide organizations of aboriginal people and to the territorial governments to send representatives to participate in the discussions held pursuant to section 50.(2)(b.1).";

- (7) in section 16, by striking out "25 or 27" and substituting "25, 27 or 28"; and

- (8) by adding the following after section 16:

"16.1 Where an amendment is proposed to the Constitution Act, 1867, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, or the Constitution Act,

*See pages 2004-11

1982, neither the House of Commons nor any provincial Legislature shall approve or disapprove the proposal until it has held public hearings on the matter."

- (1) dans l'article 1; dans l'article 2 proposé de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1867,
 - (a) au paragraphe (1)(a), en ajoutant "d'un multicultural" après "une caractéristique fondamentale," et
 - (b) au paragraphe (2), en rayant "le Parlement du Canada et" et en le remplaçant par "le Parlement du Canada à le rôle de préserver et de promouvoir et";
- (2) dans l'article 2; en ajoutant "ou du territoire" après "le gouvernement de la province";
- (3) dans l'article 6;
 - (a) au paragraphe 101C.(1) proposé de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1867,
 - (i) en ajoutant "et territoire" après "le gouvernement de chaque province",
 - (ii) en ajoutant "ou territoire" après "au barreau de cette province", et
 - (b) au paragraphe 101(C).(4) proposé de ladite Loi en ajoutant "ou territoire" après "le gouvernement d'une autre province";
- (4) dans l'article 7; au paragraphe 106A.(1) proposé de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1867, en rayant "compatible avec les objectifs nationaux" et en le remplaçant par "qui va à la rencontre des normes nationales";
- (5) dans l'article 9; à l'article 41 proposé de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982, en rayant les alinéas (b), (c), et (i);
- (6) dans l'article 13;
 - (a) au paragraphe 50.(2) proposé de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982, en ajoutant le suivant après l'alinéa (b):
 "(b.1) Les droits des peuples autochtones, y compris le droit à l'autonomie," et
 - (b) en ajoutant le suivant après le paragraphe 50.(2) proposé de ladite Loi:
 "50.(3) Le gouverneur général en conseil adressera aux organisations de bonne foi du peuple autochtone ainsi qu'aux gouvernements territoriaux, une invitation à envoyer des représentants pour participer aux discussions tenues en vertu de l'alinéa 50.(2)(b.1).";
- (7) dans l'article 16, en rayant "25 ou 27" et en le remplaçant par "25, 27 ou 28"; et,
- (8) en ajoutant le suivant après l'article 16.
 "16.1 Là où une modification est proposée à la Loi constitutionnelle de 1867, à la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés, ou à la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982, ni la Chambre des Communes ni une législature provinciale quelconque n'approuvera ou ne désapprouvera de la proposition tant qu'elle n'aura pas tenu des audiences publiques sur cette question."

[Adjourned debate December 3: Ms Barrett]

MS BARRETT: Thank you, friends. Mr. Speaker, I believe I'm the last person in our caucus to speak in support of the amendments that we're making to the Constitutional Accord. I think most of the cases have been made very succinctly and in-

deed passionately by the members of the Official Opposition caucus. I believe one of the things the government members might want to consider prior to going to the vote on these amendments is that they do carry the weight of people who sincerely want to have the accord amended to allay their fears about how it could be misinterpreted or abused, how it could be used not in the best interests of Canadians and Albertans.

I think they have good reason for being suspicious about that, Mr. Speaker. I recall -- it must have been last April -- the Premier was at a meeting, a national conference of first ministers, and apparently they were trying to get to work on this Constitutional Accord. I think he flabbergasted every Canadian when he said that if the entrenchment of our consideration of aboriginal rights to self-government takes place he would -- and it's like a semiquote here -- you know, take Alberta out of the Constitution. Close that semiquote. Well, he had no authority to do that. He had no authority to say that. He had no mandate to say that. It was a serious threat. I recall how the Lougheed government exploited for years the possibility of Quebec separating from Canada. It was a dreadful situation.

I don't think Canadians liked that. I don't think they liked what was going on with respect to those threats from within Quebec, but I sure think they didn't like the response that was coming from provinces like Alberta and its government of the day. I think, Mr. Speaker, that responsible governments don't ferment that sort of division, and yet that's just the sort of thing that was betrayed by the Premier last April when he made the statement about yanking Alberta out of the Constitution.

I believe that Albertans now have good reason to be suspicious about how this accord is going to be used to manipulate the future, suspicions about why it is that these people, the first peoples of Canada, weren't ever spoken to or consulted with respect to changing the fundamental and supreme law of Canada. Similarly, I think the Alberta government has demonstrated clearly in the way it gets around the spirit of the Canada Health Act that it really isn't committed to medicare. I think a good example, first of all, is the holdout on stopping extra billing in Alberta and, secondly, the deinsuring of certain medically required services this summer by the government.

The Alberta government risks, I think, making cynics out of all Albertans, and it's to their detriment, Mr. Speaker, that they do that. I think that's the fastest way to get hurled out of office with an historic thud, and I believe that the government doesn't want to do that. Now, I think that if they support these amendments, they could at least move to diminish the level of cynicism and skepticism they themselves have engendered in the public of Alberta. And the reason I say that is because these recommendations come with the weight of the people of Alberta; they weren't dreamed up. You know, we didn't sit in some back room and think: well, gee, how can we amend this in a way that suits our own interests? We went to people and talked to them, and they told us the sort of amendments that they wanted.

I must say -- I'd like to conclude, actually, by saying that I was extremely impressed with the sincerity and quality of the presentations that myself and the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona received during that three or three and a half week period. Those people all brought unique subtleties and nuances to their perspectives and to our perspectives on this historic Constitutional Accord. And I urge all members of the Assembly, on behalf of those people who took that time, to agree to ask the government of Canada to go back into negotiations to sponsor these amendments which we believe firmly would do

no violence to the essence of the agreement that was struck in June.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: A call for the question on the amendment. All those in favour of the amendment, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion fails.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Barrett	Martin	Roberts
Chumir	McEachern	Sigurdson
Fox	Mitchell	Taylor
Gibeault	Mjolsness	Wright
Hewes	Pashak	Younie
Laing	Piquette	

Against the motion:

Adair	Elliott	Oldring
Ady	Fischer	Orman
Anderson	Fjordbotten	Osterman
Betkowski	Getty	Pengelly
Bogle	Gogo	Rostad
Bradley	Heron	Russell
Brassard	Horsman	Schumacher
Campbell	Isley	Shaben
Cherry	Johnston	Shrake
Clegg	Koper	Speaker, R.
Cripps	Kowalski	Webber
Day	Mirosh	Weiss
Dinning	Musgreave	West
Downey	Musgrove	Young
Drobot	Nelson	Zarusky

Totals	Ayes - 17	Noes - 45
--------	-----------	-----------

[Motion on amendment lost]

MR. SPEAKER: Speaking to the main motion, the Leader of the Liberal party.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since I have not had an opportunity to speak to the main motion, I appreciate the indulgence of the House. I know most of the words have been said on both sides, and I only want to hit on a few points.

Although the Premier, when he spoke on presenting the motion, and the Leader of the Opposition -- there was one very clear difference of opinion as far as the Meech Lake accord is concerned, although most of the opposition amendments or the omnibus amendment they put forward being the same questions

we ran into as we toured the province ourselves. People that are concerned about Meech Lake, nearly from coast to coast, had the same concerns. But there's one area that of course the Official Opposition didn't dare touch, and that was the doctrine of unanimity and the case of Senate reform. Their concept of a society that's dominated by the huge labour forces of eastern Canada, Mr. Speaker, moved them to do away with any idea of a bicameral system. If they fall asleep at night at all with any dreams, it's 10,000 hard hats marching across Canada singing *Solidarity Forever*, and the thought that this would be balanced out at all by some form of bicameral system is anathema.

Now, in a way I'm going to be very interested in seeing how the Official Opposition reacts to some of the amendments I'll be proposing at the end of my speech and also how they're going to vote on the main motion. Whether or not, like Tommy Douglas used to say about the party years and years ago, they will march up to the mountain and then turn around and march away when they get an opportunity to vote for Meech Lake will be very interesting indeed to see.

The idea that we should support Meech Lake because somehow or another French Canada will be offended is to me rather a ridiculous point, because we're debating this in Alberta. And it's particularly hypocritical if this government argues that, because this government has done more than any provincial government in Canada to restrict the use of French and to try to deny the fact that French is a right rather than a privilege. So if this government has the nerve -- I don't think they will, but I'll be interested in hearing -- if any member of the government has the nerve, the gall, the audacity, and I hope those words are not in *Beauchesne*, to move that we should pass this in order to bring Quebec in to make French Canada feel at home, it would indeed be something that would be so strong I'm sure the bathrooms should be nearby so we could leave in a hurry.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also bring forth to those members that would propose the reason "Just that Quebec has passed it, we should automatically go on line" that no one held Quebec out in the past, for two reasons. First of all, the Quebec leadership at the time -- it was the Hon. René Lévesque, deceased now -- certainly would not have agreed to any Constitution we had. It wouldn't matter what they were saying; he was not going to listen to it. Like a classical Alberta Tory, it didn't matter what was going to come forward, he said he was going to vote against it. Consequently, the classical Alberta Tory says the same thing. No matter what the public says, no matter what the people will want out there, they're going to ignore it and do their own thing.

The second fallacious argument about bringing Quebec into the Constitution: Quebec was in the Constitution. The fact of whether they recognized it or not was the question. They weren't operating outside the Constitution before they came in. The question was whether or not they recognized it.

Now, I agree they should be in the Constitution, and I agree that the Hon. Robert Bourassa -- a great parliamentarian, a great Premier, and a great Liberal -- did a very, very good job in negotiating for his province. Only that we would have had someone of similar abilities and talent at that table also, so that he could have done the same for Alberta that Mr. Bourassa was able to do for Quebec. However, all is not lost. All is not lost. There is every possibility that if we defeated Meech Lake or amended Meech Lake -- and the amendments I will be proposing in no way will hurt the French fact or Quebec; in fact, they might enhance it. There's every probability, I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that an amended Meech Lake along the lines we're talking about would certainly be acceptable to Quebec.

The second part I want to touch on is the question of Senate reform, Mr. Speaker. The question of Senate reform is something that has been very near and dear to the hearts of westerners for years. The parliamentary process has always been felt to have been flawed in western Canada by the fact that we did not have a bicameral system at work. Even the people across there, the members on the government side, recognize that. The present Minister of Municipal Affairs did a very excellent job of chairing a commission that finally vetted the whole idea of an elected Senate and came forward with an elected Senate. That, I think, will be a hallmark. That minister's name may well go down in the Tory history books for years to come because he was the first person to lead that tribe out of the last century into this century. That report brought the party up to date, Mr. Speaker.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Consequently, Senate reform was something we all desired, and we thought we were going to get that after the Edmonton meetings here last year. Unfortunately, somehow or another the Premier went down there and we did not get Senate reform. Instead, we got the right to discuss it year after year, very much like the Lord's Prayer was always the opening of school in the United States for something like 200 years before somebody finally ruled that it should be thrown out. I would submit that the Senate discussion will probably last just as long as the Lord's Prayer did at the opening of public schools and with probably the same effect on the people involved.

Worst of all, Mr. Speaker, was not the fact that Senate reform had been done in and had not been accomplished but that somehow or another our Premier had been finessed in this national bridge game, if you want to call it, of first ministers. But he accepted, and from what I gather -- although the meeting was in caucus, but as you can gather, being a member of the Liberal Party, there were probably some leaks out of there -- the doctrine of unanimity was not enforced on us. It was one of our own brilliant ideas coming from a defensive attitude and outlook towards Confederation that somehow or another they were out there to get us and not with the idea, as they tried to preach on free trade, that we're big, hairy-chested free enterprisers; just let us at the rest of the world. It was no, we're little tame Albertans, and we'd better have the doctrine of unanimity or those meanies out there are going to gang up on us.

Well, what they fail to understand in this whole anti-meany doctrine or this idea of putting forward the doctrine of unanimity, that nobody could do anything to us -- and he's quite right. Nobody could. But the fact is also that it freezes in perpetuity the present power structures we have in Canada. Unanimity means everything stays the same, and if we think Alberta has it as good as it can possibly get, then the doctrine of unanimity is a wonderful clause. But if we think we want to gain more of a say in running Canada, that we want to balance out Canada and maybe even not be so selfish that we're only thinking of ourselves, that we want to see chances for the Yukon or the Territories and some of the weaker provinces to get together and put something through that is eminently just for Confederation, then the doctrine of unanimity precludes that, because for ever and ever and ever it means that those that have the power in this country are going to be able to say, "No, we don't want change; we like it the way it is." So what it did was hand the club to Ontario and Quebec so that forever they can maintain the present power they have.

Now, there are many other items, and I know the hour moves on. So, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to introduce an amendment to Motion 17, the Liberal amendment, of which I now have 93 copies, if I may hand them out. How's that for moving it along fast?

Amendment moved by Mr. Taylor:

1. Section 9 of the Schedule is amended
 - a) by striking out "Sections 40 to 42" and substituting "Sections 40 and 41",
 - b) by striking out clauses (b), (c) and (i) of the proposed section 41 of the Constitutional Act, 1982.
 2. Section 2 of the Schedule is amended by striking out the proposed section 25 of the Constitution Act, 1867, and substituting:
 - 25 Where a vacancy occurs in the Senate, it shall not be filled until an amendment to the Constitution of Canada is made in relation to the Senate pursuant to section 41 of the Constitution Act, 1982.
-
1. Section 9 de l'annexe est amendée
 - (a) en éliminant "les articles 40 à 42" et en le remplaçant par "les articles 40 et 41,"
 - (b) en éliminant les alinéas (b), (c), et (i) de l'article 41 proposée de la Loi Constitutionnelle de 1982.
 2. Article 2 de l'annexe est amendée en éliminant article 25 proposée de la Loi Constitutionnelle de 1867 et en le remplaçant par:
 - 25 Où un vide est présent dans le Sénat, il ne sera pas rempli jusqu'à ce qu'il y aura un amendement à la Constitution du Canada accompli en relation au Sénat poursuivant section 41 de la Loi Constitutionnelle de 1982.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question. [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

Please bring the amendment to the Chair and to the hon. Deputy Premier, followed by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

The amendment is in order. Perhaps the hon. leader of the Liberal Party could continue while the amendments are being distributed.

MR. TAYLOR: In speaking to the amendment, Mr. Speaker, they would note, I'm sure, that although Parliamentary Counsel has initialed our amendment, I want you to be advised that in section 5 there may be some people who think there's some conflict with the NDP amendment. But this sheet is quite different from the NDP amendment. Section 5 of the NDP amendment, for instance, wanted to leave intact the Meech Lake motion's intent of wiping out article 42 of the Constitution Act of 1982. This article was the means of bringing reform to the Senate. In other words, the Official Opposition's amendment was trying to dissolve or do away with the Senate. This article was a means of bringing reform to the Senate. I wouldn't say maybe wiping it out, but let's put it this way: the Official Opposition was certainly not wanting to reform the Senate in a way that we want to by going back to the general amending formula of seven out of 10 provinces, making up 50 percent of the population.

The NDP amendment also tried to eliminate clauses (b) and (c) and (i) of section 41 of the accord. We are not doing that. The result of their efforts would have been a Constitution with

no means of reforming the Senate, and of course this suits the Official Opposition policy of abolishing the Senate or abolishing the bicameral system, no matter how sweetly they talk. Now, our end result is different, Mr. Speaker. We leave section 42 of the Constitution Act of 1982 intact. This means we leave a means of reforming the Senate. This is what we want, a means of reforming the Senate: seven out of 10 provinces, 50 percent of the population. That's the old amendment formula. Now, in order for this to make sense, we must eliminate the references of the new unanimity clause. In other words, I spoke against the unanimity clause a short while ago, and this is why. So whereas we will still call for the elimination of clauses (b) and (c) and (i) of section 4 of the motion, it is merely a necessary housekeeping addendum to the first section of our motion.

So, Mr. Speaker, the amendments are as you see them there in order, in effect. Legalese and counsel have gone through this back and forward. This is nothing more and nothing less than a means of reforming the Senate out of the old seven out of 10, making it 50 percent, going back to that old system, and also at the same time doing away with the doctrine of unanimity, of course, if we're going to use seven out of 10.

That, Mr. Speaker, is all I have to say on the subject. I thank you very much for listening this long.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the amendment, the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On the amendment, first of all, I'd like to thank the hon. Leader of the Liberal Party for his kind comments with respect to the report, which I and other members of the House had an opportunity to evolve, regarding the topic of the amendment, and that's essentially Senate reform. I might say that in terms of the goal of this government, there's no question and has been no question with respect to our dedication to achieving an elected, effective, and equal Senate for Canada to balance our nation, to ensure that the regions are represented in the federal decision-making process.

We have, I believe, in the Meech Lake accord achieved a step towards that that has not been achieved in all of the rest of Canada's history put together. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that in 120 years of history, we have been unable to take any substantial step towards Senate reform until this accord was proposed. And I, contrary to the hon. leader's point of view with respect to this amendment, believe that what we have currently in the Meech Lake accord will result in reform of the Senate. That's not to indicate that there will be an easy resolution to the many questions associated with that topic or that convincing our fellow citizens and the rest of Canada as to the specifics of our proposal will be easily obtained. Nonetheless, I believe this provides for the process to do that.

Specifically, the amendment does try and abolish the unanimity provision which is currently in the Meech Lake accord. And if all things were perfect, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we would have achieved Senate reform in the form that we wanted here in Alberta prior to that unanimity provision being placed in the Constitution. This is not, however, a perfect world, and what we have achieved is for the first time in the history of the nation the absolute, assured principle that we in this province have a veto equal to every other province in the nation.

The former proposals by the Trudeau administration for Constitutional reform had suggested an amending formula that would have given only two of our provinces in central Canada

the right -- in fact, at one point, for all time -- to have a veto over what takes place in our nation. It would have precluded the opportunity for other provinces, even if they'd evolve population bases as large, from doing the same. We have now done away for all time with that concept and have established the equality clause, which is an important part of the provisions in our report for Senate reform that we want to have achieved.

Mr. Speaker, I fail to understand at all the section they want to take out with respect to the vacancies in the Senate. I think that to have us in Alberta sit while Senate reform discussions take place with increasingly less representation in Ottawa and what is already a small and not as effective as it should be set of people there to represent our needs is not in our best interests. What the interim provision in the Meech Lake accord does by allowing us to choose the list from which Senators are picked is at least recognize the principle established at the beginning of Confederation that the Senate is there to represent the provinces and the federal decision-making process, not as another federal House that is to be dominated by only one region of our nation.

Mr. Speaker, I will only conclude on this amendment by saying that in my time as chairman of the Select Special Committee on Senate Reform, we toured all the provinces of the country; we met with every caucus of every Legislature that was available to meet with us in the nation. Our second greatest problem was convincing the caucuses of the need for an elected, effective, and equal Senate. The single greatest problem was bringing the topic of Senate reform to a priority position on first ministers' agendas so that we could in fact put aside for a while discussions on unemployment or other crucial issues of the day and make the changes necessary.

The Meech Lake accord, for the first time since 1867, brings Senate reform to the top of the first ministers' agenda, assures that the eyes of the nation will be focused upon the first ministers as they debate that issue, and I believe therefore assures that we will have change. That doesn't mean that it will be easy for us to indicate to our confreres in the other provinces the absolute need for an elected, equal, and effective Senate. We know that in particular in central Canada the argument is yet to be made to convince them entirely of that position.

However, I would make the other point, Mr. Speaker, that if we accepted this, if we went to the amendment, what we have in fact is a Quebec out of Confederation but nonetheless able to veto Senate reform by virtue of the Constitution as it now stands. We have a provision which requires 50 percent of the population and seven of the provinces and therefore gives Ontario an effective veto on any Senate reform. Of course, we have always had the requirement that the House of Commons would have a veto over that reform. I don't think there's any proponent of Senate reform who wouldn't agree that those are the three bodies that will be difficult ones to convince in terms of the Triple E proposal. Therefore, the point is moot. The point is in fact certainly not there in terms of saying that we could have easily achieved it with this other formula but not with the unanimity provision. In fact, the unanimity provision does at least give us the argument to say, "We are equal partners. We have been recognized as equal in the nation, and consequently we now require a Senate with equal numbers that will represent us in that federal decision-making process."

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would have to vote against the amendment and would urge other members to do so.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of the amendments presented by the leader of my party. I feel very, very strongly that these amendments should be considered as reasonable by all members of this Legislature. The motion before us, the government motion before this House, is far too important to be passed without adequate consideration of the issues that are implicit in the amendment presented by the leader of my caucus.

I would like to talk to the substance of that amendment, but before I begin, I would like to stress my disappointment with the process under which the Meech Lake accord has been presented to the people of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, this circumstance that we find ourselves in can be compared to 1867, Charlottetown. The matters that are addressed by the Meech Lake accord will be of profound significance to the future of this country, to the future of this province, and to simply have 11 leaders caucus behind closed doors and make a *fait accompli* decision without adequate consultation with Canadians or Albertans is, in my estimation, the kind of decision-making process that we in this Legislature must fight to avoid.

This is not only a decision, a discrete decision about the future of the country, it is also an opportunity, a very important opportunity, for the process of nation building. If it is that this decision will be made behind closed doors, made within the limited confines of Legislatures like this without adequate public debate, then it is also that we miss an important opportunity as a Legislature, as a government to bring Canadians and Albertans into the process of nation building to begin to allow them to buy into what this country is about and to buy into the principles that are inherent in the Meech Lake accord or to have the opportunity to change some of those principles so that they can feel more comfortable with the direction in which this country is going.

Last session I asked the Premier if he would consider public hearings across Alberta in order to solicit the views of Albertans and in order to give them the opportunity to hear the views of other Albertans and to hear the comments and analysis of experts in the area of constitutional reform. Mr. Getty, the Premier, indicated that the process that he would choose would be that each M.L.A. would go out to constituents, speak with constituents, listen . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. member, the Chair is having a little difficulty. There's ample opportunity to debate the motion. We're now on the amendment moved by your leader. Perhaps the hon. member could come back to the amendment periodically.

MR. MITCHELL: I'm indicating, Mr. Speaker, only that were the decision-making process better and improved in the way that I am suggesting, then all of us could feel more confident about the comments that we would be making on this amendment and on the Meech Lake accord more generally, so I will just be brief.

He said that we could go out, speak to our constituents, bring those views back, and comment on them in the Legislature. This is not like any other piece of legislation that this House has had to consider. It is not like a schools Act, that should you disagree with it, you can simply change the government next time, next election, and get a new schools Act. Quite the contrary.

This is a piece of legislation that once in place will be very, very, very difficult to change, and that is why I am asking in my presentation on this amendment that the government consider very, very seriously the intent of our amendments and consider supporting them.

Clearly, our amendments address the issue of an elected Senate. The Meech Lake accord is, I believe, visionary in its approach to the question of including Quebec in our Constitution. It is imperative that this become a complete country, that Quebec have a place, that Quebec be welcomed. I believe very, very strongly in the position and in the role of Quebec in this country; it makes Canada special. It distinguishes us from the United States, and depending on what happens on free trade, that distinction becomes ever more important.

The existence of Quebec in this country, I believe, elevates and establishes a priority for multiculturalism more generally, and multiculturalism and the presence of Quebec provide a tremendous richness to our culture that other countries in the world don't necessarily have the opportunity to share. However, at the same time, the existence of Quebec officially within our constitutional process is only one-half of the problem that has faced this country constitutionally. There are two significant constitutional issues that have been facing this country for 120 years and, yes, one of them is bringing Quebec into this Constitution. The other one is regional imbalance. It is all too well known to people in this Legislative Assembly and to people in Alberta that regional imbalance is an overwhelming issue confronting western Canada and the other eastern region of this country as well. The irony is that the moment we move to accept resolution of the first constitutional problem -- that is, Quebec coming into the Constitution -- we lose an important historical initiative in achieving progress on overcoming the second equally important constitutional problem, and that is the issue of regional imbalance. There are many ways that that issue has to be confronted and has to be overcome, but one of those ways can be addressed in this constitutional amendment, the Meech Lake accord.

One of the most significant ways of overcoming regional imbalance is Senate reform. Structures have to be redefined in order to meet the evolutionary requirements of a country. We have to reform the Senate meaningfully, and in doing that, we would have to achieve equal representation, effective representation across this country for each and every province. If we sign the Meech Lake accord achieving only Quebec in the Constitution, then what we have done is cast away the leverage that we have at this time to achieve comprehensive constitutional reform in a package. Mr. Mulroney needs Quebec in the Constitution. Mr. Bourassa campaigned on bringing Quebec into the Constitution. If we sign the Meech Lake accord now, we lose the important leverage offered us by that need, and that is an historical leverage. If we say to Quebec: "Quebec, we care about what it is that you want in this Constitution. We will give you what it is that you want in this Constitution, but we will not give it to you until we achieve a complete reform package including Senate reform," that is an important issue that underlines the nature of our amendments. Meaningful Senate reform is vital to an adequate level of western representation in the federal government. The Premier of this province has stood up and said, "We need to have stronger provinces; then Alberta will be more adequately represented." I argue, Mr. Speaker, that by shifting power simply and clearly from the central government to provinces, we run a very, very important risk. We run the risk that that amount of power that now resides in central

government . . .

ANHON. MEMBER: Shame on you.

MR. MITCHELL: Let me finish my point. . . . at least pays some regard to regional imbalance. If you shift it to Ontario, you shift it to Quebec, it all goes to two very important powerful centres which pay no regard to regional imbalance and with which we cannot successfully compete. Instead, what we need is to sustain a central government with the kind of power that it has now, by and large a power to create a national vision, but have an effective Senate, a national institution with a mandate to create a national vision which has equal and effective representation from regions like the west, from provinces like Alberta, across this country. That way, Mr. Speaker, Alberta gets the best of both worlds. Any other way . . . [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MITCHELL: Any other way, we will lose tragically.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments to sections 40, 41, and 42 of the Constitution Act almost guarantee us that the type of Senate reform Alberta needs will not take place. We have seen over the last five years that putting constitutional matters on the agenda of the Constitution does not in any way, shape, or form guarantee their resolution. I am thinking, of course, of the issue of aboriginal rights. Over the last five years aboriginal rights have been discussed. They have been discussed as a result of its being included in the Constitution as a must agenda item. There was no resolution.

There was also the case, Mr. Speaker, that if we continue to proceed with the Meech Lake accord under the conditions of a unanimity provision, the discussion of Senate reform will be completely and utterly stymied by the need for unanimity amongst 10 provinces and the central Canadian government to vote for any meaningful reform. At least if it is that we were to proceed with Meech Lake as it now stands, with the amending formula which requires seven provinces comprising at least 50 percent of Canada's population, then we would have a fallback position that might result in some form of successful Senate reform. The Meech Lake accord shifts the ability to alter federal institutions from the general amending formula to a formula which would require unanimous consent of the government of Canada and all provinces.

Mr. Speaker, if under the old formula of seven of 10 provinces it was difficult to achieve amendments, will it not be more difficult to successfully amend the Constitution with respect to federal institutions once all 10 provinces must be brought on side? I believe, as do a great many other Albertans, that if this amendment is passed, we will never see the Senate reform that Alberta and other provinces so desperately need, and there will be a Legislature here with a government that will still be presenting that case to a central Canadian government 120 years from today. No progress will be made; no progress will have been made in another 120 years.

We have been told that Senate reform has now been put on the agenda for future constitutional conferences. I emphasize that putting an item on the agenda for future constitutional conferences is no comfort whatsoever that successful resolution of that agenda item and the issue that underlines it will be achieved. I have mentioned and I want to emphasize, of course, that the question of aboriginal rights is a clear example where inclusion on an agenda does not lead inevitably to success.

We have before us now a proposal to allow provinces to submit names for future Senate vacancies. This is not meaningful Senate reform; this is only a stopgap measure. It is a carrot that has been offered to Premiers who have so eloquently stated their commitment to the Triple E Senate concept so that they would back down in their demands and allow the central government to push on with its own agenda. Unfortunately for us in Alberta, Mr. Speaker, that is an agenda which gives no consideration for the concerns of Canadians outside central Canada. It is equally unfortunate that the very Premiers who were so adamant about a Triple E Senate have accepted the carrot offered by the central government and in doing so have squashed Alberta's hopes for any meaningful change in our federal institutions. This carrot is no incentive to any government to forge ahead with meaningful reform. It is, in fact, quite the opposite. It will mean quite the opposite. We will get a Meech Lake accord, we will have an agenda item, and we will have a unanimity provision that will make it categorically impossible to change the Senate in this country. We will also have missed an important historical initiative that gave us leverage to negotiate at this time with the rest of the country to achieve meaningful Senate reform. If this province were sincere about its commitments to Senate reform, it would be best to alter this section to provide that no appointments would be made to the Senate until meaningful reform of that institution occurred.

Mr. Speaker, we must acknowledge that it is not only advocates of Senate reform who are concerned about the implications of this accord. The accord that stifles Senate reform is also a barrier to any future amendment on native self-government. I note that the first ministers have included Senate reform, fisheries, and such other matters as are agreed upon in the future Constitutional conferences. Aboriginal rights, women's rights, and a variety of other issues are excluded from this accord. They are issues that I will address in addressing the motion, Mr. Speaker.

It is very, very important that this Legislature understand that our amendment addresses the question of Senate reform, that Senate reform is imperative to address the second important and fundamental constitutional issue facing this country, regional imbalance. This government is asking the people of Alberta to lose a very, very important initiative to achieve successful resolution of that very important issue, an issue that, if it is not resolved, will fundamentally change the manner in which Alberta will relate to the rest of this country.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to the amendment, and I speak to it on the basis that my understanding is as follows: that the amendment is talking about the method by which we can amend the Constitution, the suggestion being reverting to the 1982 formula of seven provinces representing 50 percent of the population of Canada. I am not speaking to the comments or the inferred result that it may strengthen the central government of Canada, because I feel there is enough strength there and I am not a supporter of a centralist type of government with powers that can impose various kinds of policies on the regions of Canada to the neglect of our economic development.

So speaking to the amendment, my remarks are strictly towards the method by which we are going to amend the Canadian Constitution. I have thought about the premise upon which the accord was arrived at, that premise being the agreement here in Edmonton that all 10 provinces and the Canadian government agreed that we must bring Quebec into the Constitution, and that would be the thrust by which the accord would be built. Now, if we weigh on the other side the other premise, which I would say is equal and more important -- and I would want to weigh it on the side of the other premise being more important -- and that is building a Constitution for Canada based on the concept of fairness, "What is fair to all Canadians?" should have been the question, rather than bringing a player into the Constitution.

As I observe what has happened, I believe that fairness has been forgotten and put secondary to the primary objective that was established here at the Edmonton First Ministers' Conference. That's the weakness in our whole discussion that's before us at this time. As leaders and as statesmen, I think the Prime Minister, the Premiers of the various provinces should have sat down and addressed that question first of all. Now, we haven't done that. We have proceeded with an accord that has been reached. We have got Quebec in, and there's cheering by the Premiers and the Prime Minister. And I'm not against having Quebec into the Constitution nor recognizing them as a distinct society; that is all excellent. But we now have bound our hands at this point in time with the accord by the unanimity clause. We are saying that what is in Canada will remain in Canada and that fairness exists today across our nation, that fairness does exist.

As a western Canadian, I've got to ask that question: does it? Are there enough reasons where I feel that there are inequities between western Canada and the golden triangle of Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa, that there are enough inequities between the maritimes and that golden triangle that maybe there isn't fairness, that maybe the ground rules established by the accord will not arrive at fairness? I believe that's where it's at at the present time. My feeling as the leader of the Representative Party and a member of this Legislature was that we needed some flexibility in this interim period of time while fairness was built in our nation. If we would have retained even the seven-fifty formula, we would have had a chance to negotiate, to try and discuss some of the issues. And the primary one, certainly to western Canadians, is Senate reform, the reform of the Senate that can give some regional representation to the maritimes, to western Canada so that we have this kind of equity and fairness in our nation, a transitional formula that would have been one to reach a better Constitution.

Let's examine the current Constitution in place. Many issues, many concerns from various individuals and groups in Canada have been referred to the court system. References have been made, I believe, to the Supreme Court in terms of making decisions about our current Constitution, clarification of words in that Constitution. If we have to, after a court decision comes forward or we see as legislators or the Premiers see as leaders as well as the Prime Minister that a change must occur even in defining some of the words, the unanimity clause is going to cause a lot of difficulty, because it's going to be difficult to reach an agreement just to change some of the words for clarification. So I believe the inflexibility that we've built in by this unanimity clause is unacceptable at this time for that first reason.

Secondly, the leaders, the Premiers and the Prime Minister, have said that we all have an equal say in everything because we all get a vote on any type of constitutional change, and that's

what unanimity is all about. It sounds good in theory and philosophy, but the practical aspect of it and the other side of it is that under the ground rules established now by the accord, which is supposedly our final place of fairness, Ontario and Quebec have the power in our Parliament to decide whatever they wish for the rest of us as Canadians. And our Senate, which is on an agenda -- and many people besides myself have said this, who have more experience and authority in the area: that that item will stay on the agenda for many, many years. How could a Premier of Quebec or Ontario that has greater right in putting Senators into the Senate -- and they have more Senators -- ever go to their voters and change that formula? We have no negotiating power left to make a change. I don't know what we'd have to trade off with them. The threat of separatism again in western Canada? A terrible option, and this option could possibly be the result of the inflexibility of the formula that's in the present accord.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to support the amendment that's put forward by the Liberal caucus because the essence is there, and it's what I believe to be true at this point in time in our history. And we should look at it, not only as members of the government but as all members of the opposition, as to what is fairness at this point in time in the building of the base, the rules of the game for Canada, the Constitution for Canada. We as legislators -- and it's sometimes a fault of ours -- accept what our leaders have agreed to with other leaders of the country. We are afraid to stand up and ask them the questions about what is really going to happen. I know as government -- and I have sat on that side of the House for a number of years, not only as a backbencher but as well as a minister. That's not to try and infer anything to yourselves as backbenchers or ministers, but once my Premier made an agreement when he was off in a meeting, I stood up and supported him and gave him 100 percent argument in debate in favour of what he had done. But we've got to ask at this last moment: is it all right; is it what we want? Because if it isn't, we still have time even in this Legislature in the next two weeks to maybe change the history of Canada. If we agree to it here in this Assembly, other provinces may agree. I think there is one province in Canada that may have a little difficulty, and this accord may not reach its final conclusion. But if we agree, and that's where it is, well, I guess we have to accept that, and I'm ready to accept it as a member of the Legislature and a Canadian as well. But let us examine the options that we have, and I believe that the options recommended in this amendment are ones for our consideration.

In that light, Mr. Speaker, I intend to support the amendment.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to speak briefly this afternoon on the amendment that the leader of our party has put forward. Much has already been said about the flaws in the Meech Lake amendments, both the substance of those flaws and the process, and of our bounden duty to take whatever possible action is open to us to ensure that these decisions are made in the full light of day, that everyone knows precisely what we are committing to in the Canadian Constitution here and in the future.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that the Meech Lake amendments will make a profound difference in the face of our nation and its characteristics, in the relationship between provinces and between provinces and the federal government, in the decision-making processes, in decision-making about issues that affect the entire nation, and certainly will make a profound difference in our capacity as Canadian decision-makers to deal with fairness and justice on behalf of Canadians from all parts of the country.

I believe the accord is seriously flawed in its substance in a number of ways, Mr. Speaker. This amendment addresses one of them, but there's another one that I would like to speak to in regard to it. Because if we don't like the present process and if we are trying to change what is being suggested here, just let's wait until we see what the process will be like if the Meech Lake accord is in fact passed. We are removing one potential, and that is for an elected and an equal Senate to occur, and we're substituting another one, and that is enshrining the process of the First Ministers' Conference. I think that is a part of the accord that has perhaps escaped us. As I say, I believe that we will in future months and years, if it is passed, see the error in that particular substitution, removing one potential and putting in another one.

Mr. Speaker, our amendment is absolutely necessary, because there are two major elements that will be affected if in fact the unanimity clause is allowed to stand. The first one the leader of the Liberal opposition has spoken to, as have others, and that is the potential for Senate reform. The second one, not yet referred to this afternoon, is the incapacity, I believe, with unanimity to allow for new provinces to be formed. Now, a representative of the Territories recently made a submission in regard to this. It was interesting to me and I'm sure to many members in watching this in the news media to see the response of our Prime Minister who, in responding to the territorial representative who claimed that this would make entry of the Territories or the Yukon as a province far more difficult, said unanimity -- and it was a very noble statement -- has often been achieved in this country. We have done it before; we will do it again.

Everyone was very cheered by that. However, that particular clip was juxtaposed with another one, later on the same day, of our Prime Minister saying unequivocally in regard to free trade that unanimity cannot be achieved in this country; we all know it. So how, Mr. Speaker, are we as Canadians expected to have faith and rationalize those two statements. We all saw it, and we all heard it said.

Mr. Speaker, I think the chances of a new province being formed are minimal if this Meech Lake amendment is passed. I think the chances for Senate reform are negligible, if not totally unachievable, within the context of the Meech Lake amendments.

We have all bleated out here in the west about the regional inequities in our country. What will redress this imbalance? We know the numbers aren't there in our present political processes. So this government, along with others, has quite positively taken steps to review and analyze what will redress the imbalance and has come up with some very interesting and positive recommendations. Yes, political reform can redress the imbalance. Yes, it can make a great difference, because I believe that in spite of the fact that the examples of inequities are legion in western Canada, that can be changed by political reform of the kind that has been suggested and has been supported by our Premier. Well, we've given away our last chance.

We've just given away our last bargaining chip to achieve it.

Now, while we talk about political reform, it is being suggested and recommended for a very specific purpose, and that is to achieve economic reform, that in fact economic reform and economic equity and balance in our country, in our nation, is what we all seek and desire. The potential for economic reform without the kind of political reform that's being done away with in the Meech Lake amendments is also negligible. So we have given it away if we sign this accord. We've given away our possibility to put Alberta and the western provinces on the Canadian national scene. To be sure, it's on the agenda for the first ministers' conferences; to be sure, it's there. But we saw what happened at the First Ministers' Conference on aboriginal rights. There is no guarantee whatsoever, Mr. Speaker, that there'll be any change of any kind. I believe the amendment is extraordinarily significant at this point. There are many other flaws in substance in the Meech Lake amendments, but this perhaps is the one of primary significance to Albertans and people from western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, if we substitute the possibility for first ministers, we are giving to 11 people the opportunities to make decisions for the entire country. We are enshrining that in our Constitution at the same as we give away our last opportunity for true political and economic reform in the country. I suggest that if we wish to bind our nation together and if we want to nourish the Canadian spirit, we have an opportunity now. Lose it now, let this one slip away, and we may forfeit our potential forever. Mr. Speaker, I'm determined that the Meech shall not inherit the earth.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, the first part of this amendment is the same as section 5 of the proposed amendment we have just voted on -- and I'll be glad to support it again, because a second go-round is an unexpected bonus under parliamentary procedure -- except for one puzzling exclusion; that is, that section 43 of the 1982 Constitution still stands. In the amendment to the Constitution that is the main subject of debate today, of which this is an amendment, you will notice that section 42 still stands, because in the main document sections 40 to 42 are repealed and replaced just by sections 40 and 41. This amendment repeals only sections 40 and 41, leaving 42 standing, which is just confusing actually, because it's inconsistent with section 38. But that's nuts and bolts; someone else can sort that out.

The fact is that we do want to remove the unanimity provisions in respect of Senate reform and some other things. We debated this before. The leader of the Liberal opposition was mistaken in thinking it was our proposal to abolish the Senate; it wasn't so. We had to choose between that and making our resolutions consistent with doing justice to the Northwest Territories and the Yukon by giving them the right to appoint to the Senate, and we chose the latter option. Subsection (b) is the method of election of Senators, subsection (c) is the number of Senators and the qualifications, and subsection (i) is the creation of new provinces. We're in favour of that.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, as to what to do with the Senate, as I have just indicated, in the proposal that was just defeated, we wanted to give the process a chance and not abolish the Senate in the meantime. Personally, my preference would have been for this proposal, but some people could not stomach the idea of an ever shrinking Senate so that in the end the power of the Senate

would be in the hands of possibly a few people. But I rather like the idea because it is a very powerful impetus to having Senate reform or Senate abolition, whichever is chosen. On the whole, speaking for myself at any rate, we'll support this amendment.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just some brief comments on the amendment which, in spite of its technical anomalies, I'm inclined to support too.

I just want to talk about Senate reform and what it means and how difficult it is going to be, indeed if not impossible, under the Meech Lake accord. Our party has on occasion been inclined to support the notion of a Triple E Senate in spite of the fact that I think there's some unresolved difficulties about the juxtaposition of a republican form of government with a British parliamentary form of government and trying to make it work.

There are also questions, as yet unanswered, about what sorts of powers that upper Chamber devoted to sober second thought of issues would have, and I think they would likely take it from the provinces, which is something that ought to be debated at some point in the future. I do think it is something that Albertans are concerned about. Certainly addressing regional disparity is something that's absolutely essential in this country, and if we want to remain a strong and united Canada, we've got to address that. I'm not convinced Senate reform is the way to go about it, but I will, I think, support this amendment.

I am a tad skeptical when I hear Liberals talking and, indeed, demanding Senate reform, because I know what the Senate is and what it's become. It's largely a patronage playground for Liberal largess, and it's been institutionalized and ritualized by that party, and I certainly hope that . . . [interjections] Well, the Conservatives have been in government from time to time federally and made use of it too. You know, I'm not so cynical to think that my hon. colleagues moving the amendment are merely trying to generate or support or pander to voters in a part of the province, largely the southern part of the province, where they have no presence. I'm not inclined to believe that. I believe their motives are pure.

I can't bring myself to say anymore than that, Mr. Speaker. It's close to lunch, and I'll support this motion.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All those in favour of the amended Motion 17, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion fails.

[Several members rose calling for a division. The division bell was rung]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Barrett	Martin	Speaker, R.
Fox	McEachern	Taylor
Gibeault	Mitchell	Wright
Hewes	Mjolsness	Younie

Against the motion:

Adair	Drobot	Nelson
Ady	Elliott	Oldring
Alger	Fischer	Orman
Anderson	Fjordbotten	Osterman
Betkowski	Getty	Reid
Bogle	Gogo	Russell
Bradley	Heron	Schumacher
Brassard	Horsman	Shaben
Campbell	Isley	Shrake
Cherry	Johnston	Stevens
Clegg	Koper	Webber
Cripps	Kowalski	Weiss
Day	Mirosh	West
Dinning	Musgreave	Zarusky
Downey	Musgrove	

Totals	Ayes - 12	Noes - 44
--------	-----------	-----------

[Motion on amendment lost]

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a call for the question on the main motion?

The Minister of Career Development and Employment.

MR. ORMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon I, too, would like to add my voice of support, and that large voice of support is consistent with the large majority of the people of the province of Alberta and, I daresay, the balance of this country who support the Constitutional Amendment, 1987, signed on June 3. At this point, I'd like to acknowledge our Premier, Premier Getty, for the leadership role he has played in bringing forward the signing of this most historic amendment.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard in this Assembly from other members, particularly of this government, on the various aspects of the accord. The members have heard that the accord provides the long-sought-after mechanism that will bring Quebec to the table as a signatory and thereby what the federal Liberals were unable to achieve under Pierre Trudeau, and that is the signing and bringing forward of Quebec to the status of full and willing partner in the Canadian Constitution. As members of the Assembly know, this has been a stated goal of this government since the Constitution Act, 1982, was proclaimed on April 17, 1982. This one accomplishment makes it worthy of the unanimous support of this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, the accord has other provisions that I think are very important and that are worthy of further support of this accord. As we know, the accord entrenches the fundamental principle of equality among the provinces. As we know, western Canadians have unfortunately not always been able to believe that this equality exists in this country of ours under Confederation. The accord entrenches a very important component, and that is an annual First Ministers' Conference on the economy, which will have the effect of strengthening provincial input into the national policies and particularly those programs that impact

the provinces.

Certainly, from our view, from the government of Alberta's view, Mr. Speaker, the accord is deserving of full support because it makes Senate reform a top priority. There are a number of areas of the accord that are most important to Canada and Alberta. There is a particular aspect that is very important to my responsibilities as Minister of Career Development and Employment, and they relate to the immigration provisions extended in the Meech Lake accord.

In view of the hour, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate and continue my remarks at the next opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion to adjourn debate. Those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion carries.

For the record, the Chair also wishes to point out that there's a possibility the Chair failed to say that the previous amendment failed, but indeed it had failed by reason of the count as recorded.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, before moving to adjourn this afternoon, I would indicate to the House that it is our intention on Monday to call again Motion 17 and, if that's completed, go to Motion 19. It's also intended at this point that we would sit in the evening.

[At 12:57 p.m. the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]