

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, April 11, 1988 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 88/04/11

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

At the beginning of this week we ask you, Father, to renew and strengthen in us the awareness of our duty and privilege as members of this Legislature.

We ask you also in your divine providence to bless and protect the Assembly and the province we are elected to serve.

Amen.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to file several reports today. The first is a report pursuant to section 31(6) of the Legislative Assembly Act for March 31, '87, a report pursuant to 43(4) of the Legislative Assembly Act for March 31, '87, and Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation annual statement for the year 1987.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. PENGELLY: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, 20 students from the Salem Christian Academy. They are accompanied by their principal, Mrs. Carol Loney, and two bus drivers George Loney and Jon Darlington. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to rise and get the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the Minister of Tourism, the Member for Wetaskiwin-Leduc, I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, 25 bright young people from the Leduc junior high school grade 8 class. They are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Greg Fedor and Miss Jodean Hapienko. They are sitting in the public gallery; if they would rise and receive the Assembly's warm welcome.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, 80 grade 6 students from the Riverview elementary school in Devon. They are accompanied by their teachers Mrs. J. Watson, Mrs. J. Nicholson, and Mr. R. Petesky, and parent Mrs. Greenwood. They are in both the public and members' galleries, and I would ask them to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome.

MR. CLEGG: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and privilege to introduce to you and through you, Mr. Dave Allison. Dave is the superintendent of the Fairview school division. He is accompanied today by his daughter Darilynn. I would ask them to

rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Principal Group

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the Premier. In 1984 the assistant deputy minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Mr. Darwish, pleaded with the government in a very urgent way to take action to protect innocent investors in the two failed investment companies of the Principal Group. My question to the Premier: does the Premier intend to answer why warnings were ignored by this government for three years while more investment contracts were sold to an unsuspecting public?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier.

The Chair has been growing more and more concerned day by day by the attempts to be asking questions on an issue that is clearly sub judice, no matter which interpretation one wants to refer to, whether it's Standing Order 23(g)(i) or the relevant quotations within *Beauchesne*. The responsibility is clearly upon both the asker of the question as well the person whom the question has been addressed to. Let's watch it.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I still expect an answer to the question. If he doesn't want to answer it, that's fine. This has to do with a public document; it has nothing to do with the Code inquiry. The people of Alberta want to know that and not hide behind this Code inquiry.

MR. SPEAKER: Next question.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there's nobody hiding behind the Code inquiry. As a matter of fact, this government made sure that there would be a Code inquiry. We've also made sure by an order that there would be an inquiry by the Ombudsman. We've also made sure that all members of the government are free to be called to speak at the inquiry. I have talked to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, requesting -- and she's agreed -- to remove the normal oath of secrecy that members of cabinet must observe. All files and records are available. There is nobody hiding at all behind the Code inquiry.

Obviously, this is the third time the question has been asked in our Legislature. You have now responded in the way you have to the hon. member. I think he should observe your comments.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, it's not up to the Premier to decide this.

My question is to the Premier. Along with this, a public document from Mr. Darwish, he'd also talked about the Trustee Act. He went on to suggest that this company should not be allowed, clearly, back in 1984, to continue as a trustee investment. Does the Premier intend to answer for this government why it was not removed by the cabinet at this time?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Chair passes on to the second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I will move on to my third question now, if you're going to rule that one out,

and the third one is definitely in order. [interjections] That's all right; they can continue to hide and laugh, but the people in Principal want to know.

My question to the Premier: does the Premier have any explanation why it is that even today -- even today, Mr. Speaker -- First Investors Corporation remains on the list as an approved corporation for investments under the Trustee Act?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, First Investors is part of the Code inquiry, and I don't feel I should deal with the matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The question, the last question.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the last had nothing to do -- even today this company remains, and my question is: why is this company still listed under the Trustee Act today at this particular time? Not even you can hide under the Code inquiry from that.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, obviously, as I said before, no one is trying to hide behind the Code inquiry. That company is currently before the inquiry.

I repeat that it makes no sense to have a public inquiry ordered by the courts and then try to have the opposition in some way try and do the same thing in the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Are there any circumstances, Mr. Premier, under which the government would compensate investors before the completion and report of the inquiry?

MR. GETTY: Well, that's a very speculative question, Mr. Speaker. I can't guess at a bunch of circumstances.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I want it to be on record that we want a point of order on the previous discussion.

MR. SPEAKER: It's already been noted, hon. member, before about four minutes ago, yes.

MR. MARTIN: After question period, Mr. Speaker.

And even though the Premier has selective hearing -- he wouldn't even answer the last ones -- I'd like to direct my second question, Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

Premier's Travel

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier about his recent trip home from Palm Springs, where it was discovered, I guess this weekend, that he was for some reason able to catch a personal flight thanks to his buddies at NOVA Corporation. I don't want to ask him about the circumstances that required him to come home; that's his business. But I do want to ask the Premier if he's not concerned that public perception is that the Premier is taking advantage of his political office by not waiting in queue like everybody else, that he's able to hop on a flight that's brought specially . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Is that the question? We've had five sen-

tences so far.

MS BARRETT: No, you've had two carefully constructed compound sentence structures, the latter of which included a question, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I will speak only briefly to this because it is a very personal matter. But yes, there is always some concern when something happens like this where, in my case, I am able to obtain assistance on a very emergency, urgent matter of a personal nature. Of course, I never ever do it; I would never do it.

In this case, I had commercial passage there and back. Something did arise that was of a very personal nature. I asked my staff if there was any way I could get on any flights back. I was unable to. But I did have to come back, and I appreciate very much that NOVA was able to help me come back. It worked.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question.

MS BARRETT: Yes, supplementary to the Premier. One understands, of course, that sometimes those circumstances dictate, but most people don't have the cozy relationship with NOVA. Given that the government has more than \$100 million invested in NOVA, is the Premier not concerned that the public is going to view this as very special, uncommonly special treatment, that Nova isn't going to bite the hand that feeds it?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the public have a much fairer appreciation of things than that.

MS BARRETT: He should have been at my house last night when the phone was ringing.

A supplementary question to the Premier then. Is he now prepared to offer to pay NOVA personally, as it was personal business that brought the Premier back to Alberta?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that is impossible to do; it's illegal for NOVA to receive payment for such a flight.

MS BARRETT: Final supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier make attempts to do what his predecessor did when he found himself in this awkward situation and find a way to straighten it out, find a way to pay NOVA, so that people don't believe he's taking advantage of his office?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, as I said earlier, I don't believe people believe that at all. As a matter of fact, the previous situation of Premier Lougheed, I guess that's being referred to, was something to do with a commercial airline, where paying for it was something that was simple to do. There is absolutely no comparison between these two cases.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, it's further to the Premier. I'm sure many of us have experienced family emergencies, and I can understand the Premier having to make use of a possible plane. But knowing, in fact, that this corporation maybe gets \$8 out of every \$10 it makes out of regulations made by this province -- and I have checked the department of transport -- I think it's . . .

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question, please, hon. member? [interjection] Order please, hon. member.

MR. TAYLOR: It's all in the same sentence . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, it's all in the same paragraph. Could we have the question, please?

MR. TAYLOR: It's what you call a Diefenbaker sentence, Mr. Speaker. I thought you'd be very familiar with it.

I have checked the department of transport. They cannot charge you, yes, but you can indeed pay for your fare.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, the question, please. The question.

MR. TAYLOR: Would you send NOVA a cheque? Whether they put it in their ear or donate it to charity doesn't matter, but it looks good for all politicians if you would send them a cheque. It is not illegal.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the only thing that looks bad for politicians is when politicians like the opposition try in some cheap political way to take advantage of something like this.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary question to the Premier, and it's a general question with regards to matters such as this. Could the Premier indicate what written or unwritten guidelines or policy are in place in reference to items such as this that may be encountered by the ministers of his cabinet?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's virtually impossible to try and write all of the circumstances that might conduct themselves and lead to a decision like this. Basically, I think the word is "emergency." If in judgment there is an emergency and that emergency can be helped in some way, that's the way people are in Alberta. Whether it's a corporate citizen or an individual citizen, we all try to help each other.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Westlock-Sturgeon.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These are two half-Diefenbaker sentences.

This first one is to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, and possibly the Minister of the Environment. In view of the huge jump in costs of disposing hazardous wastes, anywhere from 24 times up to in some areas of drycleaning 1,700 times, and to meet costs of handling hazardous wastes -- the Environment minister has correctly said that safety is more important than money. In view of this being a public service, would the Premier now ask his cabinet to reconsider the whole idea of having a private entrepreneur in here making a huge profit from what is a public service, and would he consider going back and asking the government to buy it out and operate it as a public service without this private entrepreneur in there?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary question then. This may be more to the Minister of the Environment. In view of the fact that we're going to continue to reward someone 60 percent of

the profits in that, and we want to get the hazardous wastes to the plant, would the minister consider a tax on the sale of hazardous materials before they are used, giving back a rebate as a system in order to ensure that waste will be turned over rather than hidden in the alleys and in the sewers of this province?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in the original question forwarded to the Premier by the leader of the Liberal opposition the member quoted some figures that are completely unknown to me. My understanding is that of the new waste regulations that have come into effect in Alberta as of April 1, 1988, which are the most stringent regulations to be found anywhere in terms of looking at all of the disposers and the creators of waste, in fact the increase in cost will be in the neighbourhood of three-quarters of 1 percent to 2 percent of gross volume sales. So I would ask the member to kindly give me examples of increases in the neighbourhood of 2,400 percent or 3,000 percent. I know that he may have read an article in a daily newspaper out of Calgary last week which contained many erroneous statements, and that may be the reason for his question today.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I will fight off the urge to answer his question and continue with my questions, in view of the fact that he has not answered the first one.

Mr. Speaker, there is a question, and I think the minister has been right in forbidding much more being dumped into dumps. But we have to somehow or another make sure that this material is being delivered to the hazardous waste plant. Would he, then, consider some form of subsidies for hauling some particular materials in order to make sure we clear out the 30,000 tonnes of waste that appear to be in this province, hidden in different storage spots?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the cost of the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation in Swan Hills is approximately \$50 million. Those \$50 million have been put forward by the taxpayers of the province of Alberta, so in one way one could make the argument that the public, the taxpayer in our province, has already invested in this particular system.

I should also like to point out as well, Mr. Speaker, that there are four other alternatives to the disposal of hazardous waste in our province, other than the directing of those hazardous wastes to Swan Hills, that would not require anybody to dump these wastes in back alleys or in other locations in our province. First of all, waste can be recycled. Under the regulations we've had and the identification of the thousand hazardous or toxic wastes we have in this province, we've allowed the provision. We want to stimulate a recycling industry in this province so some of these wastes can be taken to a recycler.

Second alternative, Mr. Speaker, is that we have created in this province an Alberta waste exchange, which is a stock market, so that a creator of waste can be put in touch with someone who wants the waste. That particular waste exchange operates with the Alberta Research Council, which is a very bona fide scientific research facility in our province, and it might not cost anyone any money.

A third alternative, of course, is a provision in the waste regulations to allow a generator of waste to dispose of those wastes on site, providing they get authority from Alberta Environment for the particular plant they want.

The fourth alternative . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you hon. member. Perhaps a

supplementary.

MR. TAYLOR: The last supplementary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You were able to stop more of the hazardous waste floating around here than anybody's been able to.

Mr. Speaker, could we go on to the last question? Is the minister aware that the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation -- when you dial their number here in Edmonton and say you are a householder and have hazardous waste to get rid of, they do not know what to do with it. They tell you to hold on to it; they don't know where to deliver it.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, we made it very clear in the regulations this government passed on December 17, 1987, that came into effect on April 1, 1988, that there was a provision for small generators, i.e. households, to be exempted from this particular regulation in point

Mr. Speaker, I think it's extremely important that when Mrs. Taylor in her home decides that she has to dispose of the aerosol cans that Mr. Taylor uses in his home, she need not contact the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation. Hazardous waste would include aerosol containers. She might dutifully just take them, put them in a black plastic bag, and await further news as we go through 1988 to see how we will determine that small generators, i.e. households, in this province would be asked to deal with hazardous waste. First of all, we're going to deal with the massive, major amounts that we have in this province that have come into effect April 1, 1988, and we will deal with the households of this province as we go through 1988.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the Premier: in view of the many millions of taxpayers' dollars that are being used to subsidize disposal of hazardous waste in the province, would the Premier recognize that it would be much better to use those millions of dollars to subsidize the disposal itself rather than use them to subsidize the profits of the government's friends in Bow Valley Resource Services?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's obvious the hon. members don't like the fact that Alberta is leading the world in disposal of hazardous waste. When we opened that plant up there, people came from all over the world, and they were envious of what we have here in Alberta. I know the hon. members don't like positive things like that, and I know they're going to try to somehow make people think negatively of those types of first-class operations in this province, but we are going to protect the people of Alberta, and we're going to do it within the kind of Conservative principles we believe in. If they don't like it, that's tough.

Farm Foreclosures and Quitclaims

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. R. SPEAKER: On Tuesday last the minister was made aware of a submission by the Association of Municipal Districts and Counties of the province of Alberta, which indicated their concern about the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation policy, specifically with regards to a lease-back arrange-

ment for young farmers. Could the minister indicate what consideration she has made of that resolution that was passed unanimously by the association, by all member counties and municipal districts? Has the minister determined what to do with regards to their . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The question's been asked.
Associate minister.

MRS. CRIPPS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I was made aware of the resolution that was passed, and I am looking at it along with a lot of other suggestions that I've had this weekend at the very valuable Progressive Conservative conference which we had, and which we have a clear indication of how successful it was by the total ignoring of it by the opposition parties.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. Could the minister indicate when she will respond to that resolution? Will it be this week?

MR. SPEAKER: Two questions there, so give two answers. We'll go on.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I may respond this week. I can understand the member's consternation.

I'm kind of tired of being the good guy in this, because the member raised on a point of privilege on November 13, 1981, where he had helped people fill out forms. On October 16, 1981, the member said:

Just down the road, a father and three sons -- the sons want to get into farming. We've been working for over a year trying to get an ADC loan to help them, but to no avail.

Four or five miles down the road is [another] farmer I helped get into business.

Mr. Speaker, the member may have given some people bad advice, and I can understand him squirming about their problems.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the minister. The minister may get smart with regards to the answers, but I've helped young farmers then, and I'm intending to help them now.

There are a lot of rural people out there who are waiting for answers, for this minister to start doing her job. Could the minister indicate -- and we must have a response in a positive way this week -- when her proposals will be presented to this Legislature in a ministerial announcement so that the public knows that the government of this province is doing something for agriculture today?

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated on a number of occasions, as soon as I have a final decision on any new propositions or policies which I have, I will be presenting them to the Legislature.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, if the associate minister is a good guy, Sweeney Todd is my godmother. Could I put . . .

MR. SPEAKER: [Inaudible] the supplementary questions as questions, not comments, sir, please.

MR. TAYLOR: My question is to the Premier. Is it not rather obvious that what this government is doing is trying to hasten the vacation from the land of our small farmers, our young farmers, and has no intention of trying to keep our farming and

rural communities going? His idea is to move them to the city and put them on welfare.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I've never heard such a foolish statement in my life in the Legislature. As a matter of fact, there is nobody in Canada that does more to help their farming population or young farmers than this government does.

MR. FOX: Supplementary to the Associate Minister of Agriculture. Given the fact that the ADC now holds title to 800 quarter sections of land and her report muses about restructuring another 2,200 quarter sections of land, I'm wondering when the minister's going to recognize that we've got a crisis in rural Alberta and that it's going to demand some thoughtful action immediately.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there are some stressful situations in agriculture. I also recognize that they do take some thoughtful responses, and that's one of the reasons we're taking such care in deciding on what those responses will be.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Mill Woods, followed by Edmonton-Meadowlark, then Athabasca-Lac La Biche, and then Edmonton-Beverly.

Labour Legislation

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, on the weekend the delegates to the Conservative Party convention voted overwhelmingly, by a margin of some 10 to 1, to request the government to introduce so-called right-to-work legislation; that is, legislation that would eliminate Rand formula dues check-offs and closed union shops.

My question to the Minister of Labour: will he take this opportunity to renounce this kind of regressive legislation and indicate clearly to the working people of this province that his government has no intention whatsoever of introducing so-called right-to-work legislation in Alberta?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, the situation in Alberta is that there are really only two situations where one could say there is a legislative closed shop. One is with the employees of the government itself, and the other is in the teaching profession where, of course, the Alberta Teachers' Association is a professional body as well as being a union. Other than that, there is no requirement in legislation in this province for a closed shop. They may well be negotiated between the employer and the union representing the employees, but that's a matter of civil contract that should not be interfered with by this government.

MR. GIBEAULT: Supplementary to the minister. Could the minister advise the House and table for us if he has any research before him that would indicate any value to so-called right-to-work legislation or any effects of such legislation other than lower rates of pay for workers and more hazardous and dangerous working conditions?

DR. REID: Perhaps the hon. member could do his own research.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, the minister must be aware, I'm sure, and given that he is aware of the shameful record of

labour legislation in jurisdictions in the U.S., can he not give us today his assurance publicly, say no to so-called right-to-work legislation and no to Alabama North here in Alberta?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I think the member is forgetting that this is a provincial parliament, and it's in Canada; it is not in the United States of America. I have no responsibility for what happens in Alabama, nor even in Saskatchewan.

MR. GIBEAULT: This is the free trade government, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister now admit that this so-called flirting with right-to-work legislation is simply another indication that his government gets its labour policy from the Pocklington faction of his party?

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, I'm not a flirtatious person by nature. We have had a very thorough review of labour legislation in this province over the last 18 months to two years, more thorough than any other government in Canada has ever indulged in. If the hon. member would like to wait just a few more days, he will be able to see the results of all that consultation with Albertans.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: when will the minister introduce the labour Bill so that Albertans finally will know what this government is up to?

DR. REID: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should visit her physician -- it will be covered by health care -- and see if her ears need unplugging. I just answered that question.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

Privatization of Crown Corporations

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. Alberta Government Telephones states clearly in its recent annual report that its priority is to be more competitive with the private sector. On the other hand, this weekend the Progressive Conservative convention stated that Crown corporations should be privatized. To the Premier: is it this government's policy that Crown corporations should in fact become more competitive with the private sector?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I must say I'm thrilled that both opposition parties are hanging on the results of the most successful provincial convention in the history of Alberta and that the hon. members were so wrapped up. I invite them to come and join, and they can actually participate . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Meanwhile, back at AGT . . .

MR. GETTY: . . . in the discussions, and then they wouldn't have to ask questions here. My colleague the minister in charge of telephones will want to deal with this.

I would just say one more thing about the convention, because the hon. member raised the convention, the annual meeting. It gave me a chance to point out to our party that our nominating meeting in Youngstown was larger than if you

added up the annual meetings of both these parties together.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary question, perhaps to the Minister of Transportation and Utilities.

MR. MITCHELL: I'm continuing to pursue my line of questioning with the Premier. This is not a frivolous exercise, Mr. Premier. The fact of the matter is that AGT is emphasizing competition with the small business sector and undermining the ability for small businesses to create and develop in this province. Could the Premier please clarify what his philosophy is, what his government's philosophy is, about Crown corporation competition with the private sector?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, if I can respond to the hon. member in the question of competition, Alberta Government Telephones has the responsibility to be competitive in an industry which is shifting from one of a high level of government regulation and monopoly to one of competition. At the same time, we're trying to be very careful to remove AGT from certain areas where there is a good infrastructure of competitive capability by small firms in Alberta. One of those areas is the supply of acoustical equipment in halls and hospitals and schools and that sort of thing, and there has been a policy shift there to recognize that there is a good capability already existing in the province.

The same thing is occurring in some of the attachments to telephones, but I have to advise the Legislature that this is a more difficult area because there are some very large international firms also supplying -- and doing so in a very competitive way -- in Alberta in this particular area, as they are in the rest of Canada, for that matter.

MR. MITCHELL: AGT is still selling computers.

Back to the Premier, because this is a philosophical question. This is a question of how government should relate to the private sector. Is the Premier, then, accepting the statement by his minister which infers that taxpayers' money is being used to undermine the activity of taxpayers; in this case, small businesspeople who can't compete with subsidized Crown enterprise?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, philosophical . . . Small businesspeople: did you mean in height?

Mr. Speaker, the minister of telephones will want to respond.

MR. YOUNG: On the matter of computers, Mr. Speaker, the direction of telecommunications is that part of the communications system now is computer installation and the processing and manipulation of data bases in a very extensive manner. Alberta Government Telephones is involved, if you will, in computers because every switch that's manufactured now is, in fact, a computer, and that is the case with many of the consoles in offices and whatnot. So to meet the requirements of businesses, some of which are linking a variety of offices through one installation, there is competition in that area, and I appreciate it. On the other hand, there is also an area of free-standing, if you will, personal computers which, as far as I am aware, AGT is withdrawing from.

MR. MITCHELL: This question has broad implications for this party's stated policy to privatize Crown corporations. Could the Premier please indicate to the Legislature upon what basis he will determine which Crown corporations or which parts of

Crown corporations will be privatized and which won't be? Upon what basis should government be involved in Crown enterprise, and upon what basis shouldn't it be involved in Crown enterprise?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, these are matters of judgment. Normally the government would be governed by this kind of thinking: if these things can be done by the private sector, that's where we'd like them to be done; if there are things that the province and the people of Alberta need and the private sector is either unwilling or unable to do it and we feel that in the public interest it has to be done, then the government would get involved.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Fish Creek, followed by St. Albert.

MR. PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question and supplementals from the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark have to do with AGT's competitive sale of equipment in the marketplace. I wonder if I could by way of a supplemental ask the same minister to comment on the leasing side of AGT's behaviour in the marketplace. That is, would the minister be prepared to comment on the appropriateness of the leasing rates presently used by AGT, which are nearly half those that can be offered by private-sector competitors?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the questions which we've been discussing in the last few minutes are ones which come to my attention from time to time. The question of the lease rates has been brought to my attention by the hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek, and I have taken it up with Alberta Government Telephones. I do not want, and for that matter I do not believe it is a policy of the commission, to have staff of the commission engaging in business practice which may be at a noncommercial rate or manner. I have accordingly taken complaints as I receive them to the commission with that in mind.

I may also advise all hon. members that since I've been minister in the last almost two years, I have twice, I believe it is now, had discussions of a general philosophical nature with the commission so that we would have a mutual understanding of this area and the intent of the commission and of the kind of general direction the staff would be receiving. It is an area of judgment, however, and I've come to appreciate that more and more as I've received questions about it. The whole area of telecommunications is a very dynamic one, changing very rapidly because of technology. On the one hand, I'm getting complaints from companies from time to time who want the services that only very large corporations can provide on a tied-together basis, a systems basis. On the other hand, the corporation I think must be sensitive and responsive to the need to back away from some of the areas that they had been engaging in earlier on.

MR. STRONG: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister of telecommunications. Since we're talking about privatization of Crown corporations, one of them being Alberta Government Telephones, could the minister indicate whether there is any truth to this: that Alberta Government Telephones is laying off and offering early retirement to some of their employees and then turning around and hiring those people back as consultants? Is that part and parcel of the move to privatize Alberta Government Telephones?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I've had occasion, as the hon. member obviously has, to follow the news story and to pursue some of the detail. I think I'm in a position now to assure the House that there were roughly, I believe, 11 persons who may have been re-engaged by Alberta Government Telephones -- and I think seven of them in one area -- since taking early retirement. That is contrary to the policy involved in early retirement. It is also, however, not a very material impact upon the total employment question. In other words, the numbers are pretty small.

The direction of Alberta Government Telephones in connection with the individual line service area has been to contract. I believe that of the 11 cases that I've mentioned, to the knowledge of Alberta Government Telephones there may be four or five people who have indirectly gotten employment by appearing on the payroll of a subcontractor to Alberta Government Telephones. Now, that's based upon the quick check that was made, Mr. Speaker, but I do not believe that the story as I have seen it represents the situation in a fair way at all in terms of what's happened. I think it's been a very minor involvement, and one which . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister.

May we move on to Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

Trucking Regulations

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister of transportation. During the past year many small Alberta trucking firms have complained about gouging by the department of transportation. Your department has dramatically increased the vehicle licensing fee from about \$1,200 to \$1,400 a year and instituted a new \$50 annual permit fee. Now, since many diversified small trucking firms require up to 18 of these trucking permits, an additional \$900 a year is added to their costs. Is the minister aware that these dramatic tax and permit increases have resulted in an economic hardship for many small diversified trucking firms in Alberta?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, the question should properly be addressed to the Solicitor General. He's not here at the moment, but I think it should be passed on to him for response.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Take it as notice. Supplementary questions that might be directed to another minister?

MR. PIQUETTE: Okay. Well, I guess I can direct this following question to the minister. Has the minister received complaints from the trucking industry relating to the excessive fee increases by the department? Has that been a concern expressed to you?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I should point out that I haven't had any direct complaints raised with me. However, having said that, I'm not the minister responsible.

MR. PIQUETTE: Would the minister agree that economic hardship created by transportation deregulation and by dramatic fee increases is resulting in many trucks being driven on Alberta highways overloaded and with unsafe brakes and tires?

MR. ADAIR: I'll take that one as notice, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PIQUETTE: The minister, I believe, is able to answer this question relating to deregulation and the hardship relating to the transportation industry, because it is in his department. Now, with the reports of hundreds of trucks that are unsafe being driven on Alberta highways, is the minister looking at implementing a stricter type of supervision of these regulations?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I can probably come closer to answering that one in the sense that I would ask first that if he has some information to provide to me of hundreds of trucks that are unsafe, I'd be more than happy to pursue that particular number with the motor transport services people. Our combination, when we put together the motor transport services board and the Highway Patrol people, actually increased the number of inspections of vehicles on the roads in Alberta today, and we have a much safer situation than we had previously.

MR. MITCHELL: To the minister of transportation, Mr. Speaker. Has the minister undertaken to study the effects of deregulation on the small truckers in this province?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, Alberta has been a leader in the sense of deregulation and particularly the fact that in the province itself we have been probably the only province, up till the new deregulation across Canada has come into effect, as being the leader. We certainly have been working with the industry from day one, with their support and insistence that we pursue and continue to pursue the ability to put in place regulations that would meet all of the safety standards and the like, plus the facts on length and weights and the likes of that so that a trucker, in essence, can drive from Halifax to Vancouver through the province of Alberta and all of the other provinces without all of the permitting that had to be done previously. So it has been done primarily with the support of the trucking industry.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Edmonton-Beverly.

Casino Licensing

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Attorney General. In December of 1986 the Alberta Gaming Commission conducted public hearings relative to an application by the Edmonton casino association, which is a consortium of community leagues and charitable organizations, to operate a casino at the Edmonton Convention Centre. Will the Attorney General indicate to the Assembly as to which month the Edmonton casino association can expect a decision on the hearings of the Alberta Gaming Commission?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Gaming Commission, of course, is a body which is established by law in this province, and members are appointed by Executive Council. They have held hearings with respect to the application mentioned by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly. It is a difficult decision they are faced with, and I would not want to try and make the decision for them, because what is being asked in many respects is that 160 or 170 -- I'm not sure of the exact number -- organizations be given a large facility for their exclusive use when there are over 400 approved and licensed organizations in Edmonton that are competing for the same type of casino licences. So it is a difficult decision for them to make.

The hon. member may wish to refer as well to the remarks I made during my estimates of the Department of the Attorney

General relative to my concerns for the issue of increasing casino operations in Alberta to the extent requested. But it is a difficult decision. I can't give an answer to the hon. member as to the timing, but I do take this opportunity to point out that it is indeed a matter under serious consideration by the Gaming Commission at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we have unanimous consent to finish this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the estimates statements the Attorney General did make reference to the application of a Calgary organization as well, and I'm wondering why the Gaming Commission is reviewing the two applications simultaneously, given the fact that each application is quite different in their sponsorship.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the basic issue remains the same both for the Calgary request and for the Edmonton request, and that basic issue is whether or not to permit what are known as upscale or larger scale casino operations. The commission is reviewing the impact that the granting of those upscale or larger scale casino operations would have on the several hundred smaller casino operations that take place now on behalf of religious and charitable organizations who are presently licensed by the commission under the existing regulations.

MR. EWASIUK: Well, since the Edmonton casino association made their application, a licence to another local organization has in fact been granted. Why is the Edmonton casino association being ignored or someone else seems to have more favour over this association?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, there are many organizations which receive licensing from the Gaming Commission. They have not ceased to approve qualified charitable, religious, and community organizations.

That just adds in some respects to the concerns, of course, as new approved organizations come forward, that by granting exclusive rights for large upscale casino operations to either a group in Edmonton or two organizations in Calgary -- as to the impact it would have on the several hundred other organizations that rely to some extent on casino profits for the benefits of the community, really, through their organizations.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is a matter of considerable concern, and I have been advised that the commission is considering other alternatives so that the sharing of the opportunities to raise money through this means can be made available to the widest possible number of eligible organizations in the province. So it is not an easy question, and the commission is, of course, taking some time to wrestle with it.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Edmonton-Beverly.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Attorney General. The fact that the 170 or so groups or community leagues and charitable organizations are withdrawing from ex-

isting locations, where they hold their casinos now, into a new location: would it open up the opportunity for the other groups to get into the older location? It seems to me this would work to resolve the problem for the community leagues and also those who wish to get into the casino activities.

MR. HORSMAN: Well, the hon. member is suggesting a solution which he might wish to advance to the Gaming Commission for their consideration. But the Gaming Commission has, as I have indicated, taken under consideration some other alternatives to try and meet the demand for casino operations.

We must keep in mind this, Mr. Speaker at the present time the size of casino operations is kept quite small in terms of the number of tables and so on. What is being asked for is a major policy change to permit the creation of upscale or larger sized casino operations. I expressed in my estimates concern for the development of that practice within Alberta, that it's not at the present time the policy of the Gaming Commission to permit these large, permanent, upscale casino operations. There are many implications associated with the outcome of such a decision, not just the impact it would have on the hundreds of licensed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Additional supplementaries from any other quarter of the House? Thank you.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, to the Attorney General. Based on the last annual report tabled in the House by the Alberta Gaming Commission, gaming has exceeded \$875 million in Alberta, including \$165 million in bingos alone. That does not, of course, include the lotteries, which are a pretty prospering business. In view of those statistics, would the Attorney General either give consideration or consider giving consideration to the Alberta Gaming Commission to perhaps have them do a review of all gaming activities in Alberta, based on the fact that the Criminal Code of Canada states that only charitable and religious organizations may indeed carry out gaming activities?

MR. HORSMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that is part of the mandate of the Gaming Commission at the present time. And to make decisions with respect to this matter . . . I agree with the hon. member that it does represent a considerable amount of money being expended by Albertans on one area of gaming -- only one area of gaming -- under the control of the Gaming Commission. It is a matter that they must consider, and of course from time to time I expect that I will receive recommendations from the Gaming Commission relative to policy. When those recommendations are received, they will be carefully considered not only by the Department of the Attorney General but by the government itself.

MR. SPEAKER: Points of order, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I believe you ruled some of the questions out of order under section 23(g)(i) and 23(g)(ii), the sub judice rule. What we're dealing with here is a public document dealing with public policy. The fact is that the government has acknowledged that it is now a public document, and specifically we're dealing with the public policy.

As I say, under the sub judice rule it says, "where any person

may be prejudiced in such matter by the reference." What we were asking very clearly, Mr. Speaker, is why the government didn't do something. It's not prejudicing anybody other than the government, which is not a person. We're trying to find out from a public document, that's been made public, why this government in government policy didn't do anything about the situation.

Now, in the case today, Mr. Speaker, even more so under the Trustee Act, we're dealing with the First Investors Corporation. I might point out that they still remain on the list for investments under the Trustee Act. This is still true today; it has nothing to do with the Code inquiry. We've tried to look at this taking in the rules that you made in the fall in regard to sub judice, to basically ask questions very carefully under that direction. We have not changed that. We understand. We're not asking about personal things that have occurred out of the Code inquiry. What we've tried to do is specifically stay with government policy and why the government wasn't doing anything.

Now, I acknowledge -- and as I said the other day, which is true in any question period, whether it be under sub judice or not -- the government does not have to answer the questions. I appreciate that that's a fact under our British parliamentary democracy. But I say that when something is clearly -- when we're asking -- government policy on a public document, I don't know what could be more clear about what questions the opposition should be asking in this Legislative Assembly. I point out that if we weren't allowed to continue whenever there was some government policy in some court or somewhere else, it would almost make question period totally impossible, because I'm sure somewhere along the line there's a court case dealing with the government.

But I want to make the case that we're not trying to prejudice any individual person, Mr. Speaker. What we're dealing with is strictly a government document and government policy. That's been the thrust of the questions throughout the last three or four days.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think there are two main points to be made on this admittedly thorny problem for you as Speaker. The first is that the document of the sort we're talking about here is not a matter in dispute. It figures in a matter in dispute, of course, but it is simply a brick, as it were, building an edifice. There's no dispute that it's genuine or not, for example. That's about the only dispute there could be. It's admittedly a government document. The questions that are being asked about it are simply why the government didn't act in accordance with the documents or make certain other conclusions -- reasonable or unreasonable, it matters not -- based on the document. But that it is a matter in dispute is not true, Mr. Speaker, because the document is there and submitted to be true.

The second main point to be made is that in any event even if it can figure as being a matter in dispute, it is not within the terms of the standing order. It's 23(g):

A member will be called to order by Mr. Speaker if that member

- (g) refers to any matter
 - (i) that is pending in a court or before a judge for judicial determination, or
 - (ii) that is before any quasi-judicial, administrative or investigative body . . .

The Code inquiry is a matter that's pending ultimately in court, because depending on what Mr. Code rules, so the judge will

make an order eventually. It is true that Mr. Code exercises an investigative function, but the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that this is an investigation, as our party has been complaining about from the start, under section 223 of the Business Corporations Act. That section says that

A security holder may apply to the Court . . . for an order directing an investigation to be made of the corporation and any of its affiliated corporations.

Not the government. So as a matter of law, it cannot be a matter in which the government is under investigation or that the judge can properly find either in favour of or against the government. Things may crop up along the way that are useful in considering the government's action, but it is not within the remit of the court.

Section 224 sets out all the orders the judge can make, and it doesn't mention anything about the government in any of them. Therefore, it's not a matter that is under consideration re the government.

The other point we notice is that so far as Mr. Code is concerned, his is not a body within the meaning of the section. A body is a body of persons such as some investigative commission or bodies that can hold inquiries such as the Liquor Control Board, Securities Commission, Human Rights Commission, and so on. But it clearly is not a person, which is what Mr. Code is. In fact, earlier in the same standing order there is a reference to "person," and by an ordinary rule of interpretation, if in the course of a few lines we've changed the term from "person" to something else, it's presumed there is a change of meaning intended.

Therefore, for all those reasons, with the greatest respect, Mr. Speaker, when reference is made to a piece of evidence that's uncontroverted or even accepted, as this is, clearly, in the Code inquiry, it cannot feature as being something against the rule. I suppose I should add, agreeing with my leader, that in any event the government cannot be a person that could be prejudiced by any of this even if all of what I say is wrong, where any person may be prejudiced in such matter by the reference. Now, the government cannot be a person within the meaning of that standing order, Mr. Speaker. If it were so, then there are some 500 pieces of evidence or more currently before Mr. Code and I daresay that if you went through all those pieces of evidence, some of which are extremely lengthy, it would cover about 60 percent of all government business we're doing in this Assembly, all -- if your ruling is correct -- contrary to the sub judice rule as so interpreted.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I'm really not impressed by the arguments of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, who with length tries to achieve what brevity and precision would fail to achieve. I draw the attention of all hon. members to the Standing Orders of the Assembly, and in particular to section 23, to which there has been reference. It says very clearly:

A member will be called to order by Mr. Speaker if that member

- (g) refers to any matter
 - (ii) that is before any quasi-judicial, administrative or investigative body constituted by the Assembly or by or under the authority of an Act of the Legislature . . .

Now, surely the business . . . [interjection]

MR. TAYLOR: Finish it.

MR. YOUNG: All right

. . . where any person may be prejudiced in such matter by the

reference.

We should finish it. It's important to have finished it, as a matter of fact. But my point is this: first of all, clearly the Business Corporations Act, under which the Code inquiry is constituted, is under an Act of this Assembly, and I surely would hope that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona won't debate that.

So now we get to the question of whether it's a quasi-judicial inquiry or an investigative inquiry.

MR. WRIGHT: It is.

MR. YOUNG: Surely it is, and the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona just now acknowledges that. The question is whether any person may be prejudiced in such matter by such reference. Now, that's clearly the unknown of the inquiry. Surely it is. The inquiry process is to determine exactly what went on with the Principal corporation and all the matters that related to the problems before the company.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona in his debate said, and I quote: the document figures in the dispute; it figures as a brick in building the edifice around the dispute. Now, if that doesn't constitute clear relevance to the possible prejudicial nature of any document -- and the hon. member opposite is saying it is this document. He is clearly destroying his own case when he makes that argument. Although he did it in a long-winded, roundabout way, nonetheless the fact is there that by his own evidence in argument, he has undermined the case he's clearly tried to make.

He has said that all we want to know is why the government did or didn't follow the advice given in the document. Well, to say that -- that that's the objective of the opposition in posing the question -- having said already that the document is very germane and important in the dispute and figures as a brick in building the case, he surely has made his own argument of why the question should not in the first instance have been asked, let alone by any stretch answered.

He further went on, Mr. Speaker, and on this I rest my . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: If the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon would like to get into debate later, that's quite fine, but not at this moment. [interjection] Not at this moment.

MR. YOUNG: I'm not long-winded, Mr. Speaker. It's the interventions and other calls that are causing the thing to spin out.

I rest my case with a final comment. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona, in raising the question of whether this is quasi-judicial, acknowledges it is because he says "so the judge will make an order eventually" based upon the findings. So he clearly makes it into a judicial case. He has destroyed every one of the arguments that have been advanced here and, I submit, Mr. Speaker, has clearly indicated, cutting through the verbiage, why your ruling should stand.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I simply want to add to the discussion of the point of order raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I think the fundamental arguments have been made with respect to the citations in our guidelines for the operation of the Legislative Assembly. What needs to be put on the table in terms of facts which have not yet been specifically moved deals with the letter itself and the gentleman Mr. Darwish.

I think the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona has properly

noted and I think was quoting from Mr. Justice Berger's judgment when he said that Mr. Code is acting as "an investigator not a recorder," and we all know full well that Mr. Code will be making a report to the court. In making that report, Mr. Speaker, reading again from Mr. Berger's judgment, it states on page 24 that Mr. Code

must of necessity, disclose clearly and unequivocally the Inspector's view of how the various findings of fact relate specifically to the matters under investigation.

The reason I draw the attention of the Assembly and you, Mr. Speaker, to that note is that I want the record to show two things. First of all, along with a lot of other documents the government has made available to the Code inquiry, this specific letter itself is one of those documents which is now the matter of public record before Mr. Code. So in terms of evidential support for Mr. Code's decision, this document itself is an important one. We agree to that. Secondly, it should be noted that along with at least 21 other witnesses on the so-called government side of the investigation, Mr. Darwish will be called before Mr. Code to testify. So what we have here, Mr. Speaker, is the clear fact that this letter is now before Mr. Code. Mr. Darwish himself, the author of the letter, will be appearing to explain to Mr. Code his reasons for the letter and his opinion as to what was the situation at the time.

We have also seen that Mr. Code must evaluate clearly all the evidence, including these two fundamental testimonies -- one of a written form, one of a verbal form -- which I'm sure Mr. Darwish will provide in Mr. Code's report to the court. No matter how you look at it, Mr. Speaker, this evidence and Mr. Darwish's testimony is clearly before the court and clearly *ultra vires* to this court at the present time.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, to put all of this into very plain language, it seems to me that what's good for the goose is good for the gander. We were able to discuss this issue in the fall sitting of the Legislature, and I think the government was actually interested in having this discussion aired in the fall sitting of the Legislature. The Code inquiry is not struck to monitor the government of Alberta. That is the role of elected officials in this Assembly, whether they be government members or opposition members. The questions that have been put over the last few days in this Assembly want to know what the government knew, especially what the government did about what it knew. That is straightforward, plain within the rights of the Legislative Assembly, legalese and bureaucratese aside.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway, followed by Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to take up a point made by the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. He followed the argument down to where we talked about where a person "may be prejudiced in such matter by the reference," part of 23(g) of the Standing Orders. It would seem to me that if that part of the statement is to apply, you would have to claim that the questions we are raising in some way prejudice the rights of some of the contract holders, for example, or some people who had money involved in Principal. The questions very clearly are aimed at asking the government about their policy, and the government is not a person, as my colleague from Edmonton-Strathcona said. So how you can claim that any questions that were asked today, or on the last several days for that matter, on Principal could in any way jeopardize any of the participants in

that Code inquiry or any of the people that have an interest in it other than the government -- and the government is not a person -- I do not see. So I think that the member was quite wrong on the point he made there.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, it's important for all members of the Legislature to understand what the rules are, and I felt that this had been clarified in your ruling on this matter earlier last fall. A number of the points you made at that time were that it was first of all the responsibility of the member asking the questions to ensure that they were not sub judice. Secondly, if the minister is to respond, it's also

up to the minister . . . to be able to interpret and to declare to the House whether the matter is sub judice. It is not the number one functioning of the Chair to become some kind of legal expert with regard to all the court cases that are going on within the land.

So, Mr. Speaker, I felt that in essence you had left it up to the members of the Assembly to determine between themselves when these questions being asked were sub judice.

Also, November 23, 1987, you repeated that the Chair again has to rely upon the member of the House asking the question as to whether or not it is sub judice and not try to bring the issue to the floor when the member knows full well that the matter is before the courts.

So it was indeed surprising to me, having established in precedent the procedure for pursuing these matters in the Assembly, for you to rule the Leader of the Opposition out of order in the terms of the questions he asked today.

I should also mention that it seems to be ruled out of order because a matter is pending before the Code inquiry. Presumably the argument is that because Mr. Code was appointed by a judge to carry out an inspection, the matter is therefore pending in a court. Well, I think it's only sufficient to note, Mr. Speaker, that all those concerned -- Mr. Code, Mr. Justice Berger, Mr. Trawick, the Ombudsman, and others -- have all agreed that Mr. Code's investigation cannot make findings regarding the actions of the government in this matter, that the actions of the government are beyond the scope of his investigation, save only as they might pertain to the actions of AIC and FIC.

Now, in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the Ombudsman has initiated his review of this in response to complaints brought to his attention. Section 12(1)(a) of the Ombudsman Act reads in part:

- (1) Nothing in this Act authorizes the Ombudsman to investigate
 - (a) any decision, recommendation, act or omission in respect of which there is under any Act a right of appeal or objection or a right to apply for a review on the merits of the case to any court or to any tribunal constituted by or under any Act until after that right of appeal or objection or application has been exercised in the particular case or until after the time prescribed for the exercise of that right has expired . . .

Now, the Ombudsman obviously feels that given this authority under his Act, he can investigate the actions of the government in this matter. He must also equally believe that no other avenue lies open to those who feel themselves aggrieved by these actions. So in his opinion, simply by pursuing this investigation, not only is the matter not now pending in a court or before a judge by virtue of it being in front of the Code inquiry, but it cannot be in future either. So if he's right, then obviously, Mr. Speaker, this is not a matter of sub judice, and it's proper for questions to be asked. And if the Ombudsman is wrong, well, one then could presume that he's acting outside the authority of his own Act.

Given that he is proceeding, given that the provincial government has funded his review, provided funding especially for him to pursue this matter, it's our opinion that he's within the authority of his Act, and obviously by virtue of that, this matter by being before the Code inquiry could not be sub judice. Mr. Speaker, given that the Leader of the Opposition pursued the matter by asking questions now for the last number of days, and given that the previous decision on this matter is that it's up to the members to make that determination based on precedent, I would ask that the Leader of the Opposition's point of order be upheld.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has listened with great care to the arguments being espoused today. There are indeed some interesting variations on a theme that has been sung more than once before in this Chamber in regard to this issue. The difficulty of the issue is indeed quite considerable. The Chair has attempted, not only last fall but in this last two weeks, to try to give as much leeway and discretion as possible to all members of the House. Nevertheless, the Chair has indeed been very concerned that some of the questions or some of the commentary leading up to questions has been out of order. The other day the Chair cited one instance of an hon. member who had, in the opinion of the Chair -- unworthy as that may seem to be -- violated the sub judice convention and had attributed blame to certain individuals. That in itself raises concern for the Chair on behalf of the member who made the statement. That's an ongoing concern with respect to the House.

With regard to the questions that are framed, once again it's legitimate for the Chair to comment that the opening question can indeed have extra material in it, one or two carefully crafted sentences. But more and more the tradition of this House has become the fact that people feel they can engage in a lot of backchat, repartee, and other comment, even on the supplementary questions. It's in some of those areas that some of the other variations start to take place which lead members of the Assembly to think they're hearing something else and then all of a sudden the twist of the tail is a different question. So that makes it difficult for all members of the House. Perhaps one could simply attribute that to the fine skills of debating technique.

But the matter before the Code inquiry, the matter before the Ombudsman investigation, the matter as raised today, is of such a very serious nature that not only the Chair but all quarters of the House have to be very careful indeed about what is being asked or said within this Chamber. Because no matter the cogency of the argument or the embroidery of some of the arguments as to when is an inquiry an inquiry and when isn't it an inquiry, it is patently clear to the Chair that it is a legitimate inquiry both for Mr. Code and for the Ombudsman. Therefore the sub judice rule does apply within terms of not only Standing Orders; it applies also within the ambit of *Beauchesne*. It applies even further within the larger ambit, if you will, of *Erskine May*, and in a moment or two the Chair will refer to some of those documents.

With regard to what transpired in question period today on the opening question by the Leader of the Opposition, having examined the Blues, the first question in the opinion of the Chair is still clearly out of order. Nevertheless, questions were allowed to continue. As pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition in his remarks, examination of the Blues confirms the fact that the Chair allowed it to continue, but the other question about why was a certain company still listed was indeed a legiti-

mate question to be posed. And that was indeed allowed to be posed by the Leader of the Opposition.

So it strikes the Chair that once again we're back into the situation of last fall where the statement of the Chair to the House was such that one of the ways to deal with the matter was to have all the questions written ahead of time, if that's what you choose to do. If the members do not want to go along with that, that's quite fine, I suppose. That's the individual decision of a member in this House to make. But then the individual member must be prepared for the fact being called to order. Whether the member then would want to challenge it at the end of question period would be again quite legitimate, able to transpire, and we will deal with it on a procedural basis daily. The Chair is quite prepared to do that, quite prepared to sit here and listen to the argument.

There is the other avenue of course, to put a written question for the Order Paper. That also was suggested last fall and was not really carried through with. The Chair can understand why there was some hesitancy to use that procedure, which is a procedure fixed in parliamentary democracy as a way of being able to gain access to the information an hon. member may wish to seek. That method would be one whereby we would not have to be using up great gobs of time, in terms of the Assembly, dealing with points of order. But once again, the Chair is here to deal with whichever procedure transpires.

The difficulty involved is a bit more complex than that, in the sense that the sub judice convention is there under our Standing Orders and it very clearly states:

23 A member will be called to order by Mr. Speaker if that member:

(g) refers to any matter.

It isn't just simply "asks a question" or "responds to a question"; it's "refers to any matter." So there we are back in terms of the preambles to the question. And then we have our subsections which have been quoted, but I do it again for the *Hansard* record:

(i) that is pending in a court or before a judge for judicial determination, or

(ii) that is before any quasi-judicial, administrative or investigative body constituted by the Assembly or by or under the authority of an Act of the Legislature

where any person may be prejudiced in such matter by the reference.

Now, for a while here the argument was being made as to when is the government the government, when is an individual member of that government not a person, and along such lines and as an interesting development of an argument. Nevertheless, within terms of the inquiry, it has been pointed out that the inquiry

shall have the power to summon Ministers of the Crown in Right of the Province of Alberta and their deputies and employees.

And that is specifically set out. Again, it is referred to -- the matter as referred to Mr. Justice Berger, dated September 30, 1987, the signature of Mr. Code. Section (f), page 6:

generally, the adequacy of the steps taken by the responsible departments of the Government of Alberta to assess and enforce compliance with the above-mentioned matters where the same is relevant to the mandate established by the aforesaid Orders.

The inquiry indeed has the scope and jurisdiction to be dealing with the government, not only as an entity but dealing with the government in its individual ministers, those who have been called or will be called before the inquiry. The unusual step has been taken to remove parliamentary immunity for ministers of

the Crown so that they might indeed appear before the inquiry. Therefore, in their individual and collective right, they may indeed be prejudiced by comments made in this Assembly or by their answers. So I believe the whole matter is indeed still firmly sub judice.

The Chair also realizes that in the fall sitting certain questions were allowed. The Chair is still prepared to have the questions reviewed on an individual basis, some questions which will indeed deal with present and future policy, but not questions dealing with what occurred in the past, matters which indeed will be before the inquiry if they have not already been there.

Now, the fact that the hon. Leader of the Official Opposition continually refers to a public document, a document which has been apparently filed as evidence at the Code inquiry -- while the document is indeed public, the contents of which are open to a number of interpretations, with due respect, it is not up to the Leader of the Opposition or any other member of this House necessarily to follow up on the contents as to what exactly was meant by the documents in their interpretation. That begins to presume to intrude upon what the inquiry is about and has been charged to deal with in terms of its mandate.

The hon. Leader of the Official Opposition apparently believes that he has the right to ask the question, and however noble his motives are on behalf of parties involved, it is, with respect, the opinion of the Chair that that is not the case, that he has the right to ask any question whatsoever. As pointed out earlier, something that has to deal with present and future policy: quite fine. But in terms of what had occurred during the time period in which the examination of these boards has to deal with, then in the opinion of the Chair that would not be legitimate, would not be in order and, therefore, would be called to order.

There are enough citations in *Beauchesne* where indeed it is the responsibility of the member raising the question as well as the responsibility of the minister of the Crown in making a reply to know whether or not it is sub judice. In this particular matter, in spite of the reference by Calgary-Mountain View to the Chair's not being able to know -- to be expected to know -- all the pending court cases in the province, nevertheless, it is sufficient for us to realize that the two inquiries now under way are indeed issues that call into play the sub judice convention.

Once again, for the benefit of all members and for the *Hansard* record, "The Sub-Judice Convention," 335, applies.

Members are expected to refrain from discussing matters that are before the courts or tribunals which are courts of record. The purpose of this sub-judice convention is to protect the parties in a case awaiting or undergoing trial and persons who stand to be affected by the outcome of a judicial inquiry. It is a voluntary restraint imposed by the House upon itself in the interest of justice and fair play.

Once again, in *Beauchesne* 339

The Special Committee on the Rights and Immunities of Members recommended that the responsibility of the Speaker during the question period should be minimal as regards the sub-judice convention, and that the responsibility should principally rest upon the Member who asks the question and the Minister to whom it is addressed.

But if the matter persists, then the Chair of necessity has to intervene, because we then have the other problem of repetition.

There are other issues that could well be addressed in terms of the Chair calling the House to order. Those references are there throughout *Beauchesne*. The references are there, indeed, for the operation of the House. One I would quote, 368 in *Beauchesne*:

The Speaker, in common with his duties of supervision over the proceedings of the House, may rule out any question which violates the rules or practice of Parliament in the same way as he deals with irregularities in motions and amendments.

While the Chair hesitates to have to use that, nevertheless, the Chair will use it, and we will find ourselves then having to make other references to other documents.

So it is that from *Erskine May*, page 445, under the title "Minor breaches of order":

When any Member transgresses the rules of debate, otherwise than by using disorderly or unparliamentary expressions, or makes any noise or disturbance whilst another Member is speaking, or commits any other breach of order or decorum not amounting to grossly disorderly conduct, it is the duty of the Speaker, if in his judgment the occasion demands it, to intervene and call the Member to order, or direct him to resume his seat.

Now, the real problem still boils down to this. In the opinion of the Chair, it's the responsibility of the member raising the question to keep the question perfectly in order. The difficulty, as pointed out earlier, is some of the surrounding preamble to the question, which makes all members of the House have great difficulty, again, to be able to ascertain what the kernel of the question is. But until any other procedure is developed in this House, whether it could be taken up with House leaders of the various parties, the Chair is most concerned about this attempt to get around the sub judice convention.

If indeed questions persist, then the Chair will just keep calling them to order, and then the next question will have to be asked and go on and on from there. On a daily basis the Chair will have to review after the fact, and points of order that are brought up will be dealt with on the day following, after the full record has had a chance to be carefully examined.

The Chair apologizes to the House, but the matter is of sufficient importance that the Chair would also instruct all members of the House to perhaps reflect a bit more upon what the real importance of the parliamentary system is in this Chamber.

MR. MARTIN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Frankly, I'm still not satisfied in terms of -- I'm just asking . . . [interjection]

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry. It came out as a point of order?

MR. MARTIN: Yes. The point of order that I have, and I still don't understand where it says under section 23 -- I don't need to read through it, but the last part of it says:

where any person may be prejudiced in such matter by the reference.

Now clearly, Mr. Speaker, that means in this case -- there are investors, there are perhaps the people that own the companies. But I do not think in any sub judice rule anywhere that means having to deal with government policy.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask as a clarification that we look into that, because that's a very serious matter. If we're going to rule that everything that's in court, whether people are prejudiced or not, only the government -- that somehow that's sub judice I suggest has very severe implications in terms of what we do here. I'm not asking for clarification at this point, but I'm asking if the Speaker would take a look in this, because I don't understand who's being prejudiced in this whole matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. I think that for clarification the Leader of the Opposition should read the comments as made by the Chair. In that matter the Chair did

delineate the responsibility in terms of individual ministers because they are, indeed, being brought before the inquiry and on a voluntary basis, and therefore they are indeed open to being prejudiced by the comments made in this Chamber.

MR. MARTIN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, then. Can we follow that up? I'm asking: would the Speaker take a look at this whole matter as a courtesy? Because that's unusual, that in terms of government we're now delineating it to individual members of the government. We're asking about government policy. If that's the ruling, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be very difficult to do anything where there's a court in any matter dealing with government, because then we're going to say individual members could be involved. So, Mr. Speaker, rather than continue . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: What nonsense.

MR. MARTIN: It's not nonsense, because we're talking about government policy here. If we're going to say that because individual cabinet ministers are involved they're somehow prejudiced as individual members of government, Mr. Speaker, I suggest, with all due respect, that that has implications far beyond what we're doing here today.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will first point out that this is the last point of order on this issue for this afternoon before one has to get involved with another section of *Beauchesne* with regard to the relationship to the Chair.

But the Chair also points out, and brings again to the attention of all members of the House, the unusual circumstance whereby the government have indeed removed the immunity of their ministers from having to appear before the inquiries; they are now going to inquire, and it has been specifically referred to in the documentation, and therefore it makes for a rather unique situation.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

4. Moved by Mr. Johnston:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly approve in general the fiscal policies of the government

[Adjourned debate March 28: Mr. Piquette]

MR. PIQUETTE: Thank you very much. I'd like to continue where I left off on March 28 on the budget. I want to go back to the economy and talk a bit about economic diversification. This government have bragged a lot about economic diversification, but in fact when you look at the budget there are eight major departments or programs that are being cut. Would you believe, for example, we have Career Development and Employment down by \$10 million? We have northern development down by 7.5 percent. We have Economic Development and Trade down \$2 million, and last year we had the elimination of the REDC funding as well. We have Forestry, Lands and Wildlife down \$3 million, and Transportation and Utilities down \$24 million, for a total of \$53.1 million cut in those areas, in those seven departments or programs.

Now, this government has decided to cut all of these economic departments and programs that could help to diversify the

economy, and then has the gall to stand up and say that they're doing a great job of diversifying the economy. What the government has to start realizing one of these days is that to really build a truly diversified economy, they have to start building the economy from the ground up and not just from the top down. True, we do need economic development in terms of some of our forestry projects, in terms of large megaprojects which develop some pulp and paper and perhaps oriented strandboard plywood, because these are all projects that are very much a part of helping to develop the northern part of the province.

But, in fact, when we look in Alberta for the last five years, that over 85 percent of new jobs created in Alberta are being created by small business, we don't find that emphasis at all in the provincial budget. We find the opposite, that we have cutbacks in those areas and we have tremendously increased the funding to megaprojects. The government has bragged, for example, that it has spent \$1.4 billion in terms of stimulating the megaproject area in terms of loan guarantees and giveaways, et cetera, to the corporations. But I hope that the government does not brag in terms of any kind of special help to small businesspeople in the 1988-89 budget, because I don't see any goodies there, except really more cutbacks in terms of delivery of programs, especially to rural Alberta.

One of the things the New Democrats did last year was to start their own economic task force to try and listen to the people of Alberta -- where they feel we should be going in terms of economic diversification. That was the main message given by many Albertans from northern Alberta and southern Alberta, that many of them are sick and tired of seeing the government building their nest egg in terms of a few areas -- oil and gas, and now targeting forestry -- but that in a sense they have as communities been powerless in terms of being able to build up their own economies. One of the things that we discovered, in terms of many communities -- one example was Wildwood, where it really showed what can be done if a community takes its own resources and has the fortitude to identify its resources and then its people resource and start working together as a community to build up its own economy. You can create a tremendous amount of jobs that way. Lac La Biche, for example, in its creation of the Regional Economic Development Council and LEAD corporation, et cetera, has been very successful in the last few years in terms of creating jobs.

So I urge the government to rethink its small business and diversification policy and make sure that diversification is from a point of view of ground up and not simply top down.

Another important issue for rural Alberta is transportation. It's the key to local development, the key to a lot of resource development in forestry, in oil and gas, in terms of providing tourism loop roads so that tourists will be attracted to follow various parks and recreation areas in northern Alberta and in southern Alberta. We find that a lot of these roads are still not there. Take, for example, Conklin road. We are still awaiting the building of the Conklin road which will finally unite the communities of Lac La Biche and Fort McMurray using an alternate road connection. I'm happy to see, however, that there's been work progressing in that area in terms of surveying this summer, and hopefully in the '89-90 budget we'll start seeing some action in terms of the actual construction.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Highway 36 has always been a bone of contention for people in the Bonnyville/St Paul/Lac La Biche area. I am happy again

to see at least some positive action there this year, where 23 kilometres of pavement will be announced in terms of completing that very important network. Highway 55, if completed, is one area which would make trade and travel through the Fort McMurray-Edmonton corridor much easier and more conducive to local development. We also heard concerns that highway 877 be paved and widened to provide better access to the region's primary highways.

In northwest Alberta we heard many of the people out there participate in telling us they need to complete the 60-mile rail link that would provide Peace-block farmers, manufacturers, and merchants with direct access to the Pacific coast. Other northwest residents were concerned with freight rate structures. So I think it was one area that we were perhaps waiting in terms of an announcement by the government that in northern Alberta we have a rail link which stops 60 miles short of a connection to the B.C. Railway, where everything has to be transported by rail an additional 550 miles in order to access the Pacific coast. That is very, very expensive, and I call on the government to start either pressuring the CN, or through their own resource development budget, to finally take a look at completing that 60-mile rail link. It might mean quite a bit of money, but in terms of looking at the history of that railway, the railbed was constructed many years ago and is still not used today. I think there's been a lot of waste of money in that whole area.

Transportation in terms of urban communities: we've seen cutbacks in terms of funding for local road improvements in towns and villages and urban centres. We are throwing back onto the urban and rural municipalities more and more responsibilities in terms of providing proper maintenance of roads in towns and villages and the cities. And the province, in terms of again providing for economic diversification, making sure we have proper roadbeds in the province of Alberta, needs not to decrease funding in that area but to be putting greater emphasis in terms of sharing with the municipalities the construction and repair of highways.

Many of the people we passed through northern Alberta and many parts of Alberta were very concerned about the agricultural crisis. Many farmers are concerned that through inaction the government is really chasing young beginning farmers off the farm. They have grave concern that the grain price catastrophe of the last few years will be chasing out 80 to 90 percent of beginning farmers who have started farming in the last four or five or even 10 years. They fail to see any government action relating to debts set aside or kinds of legislation which would perhaps forgive some of the interest owed on these ADC loans, and they're really losing patience with this government in terms of responding to an agricultural crisis.

Many of them pointed out that if the province of Alberta and the federal government would perhaps combine a lot of their programs -- which very often have a lot of bureaucratic red tape -- and make them into a grain support program which would pay \$5 or \$6 a bushel for the barley growing on the Alberta fields right now, we'd probably be saving some money if we guarantee at least a minimum number of bushels delivered to the elevators at, say, \$5 or \$6 a bushel. I think the government has to rethink its agricultural policy. The agricultural crisis is not going to go away in six months from now, and the province should be working much more closely with the federal government to develop better programs to answer the needs of farmers today.

In the agricultural industry there's a lot of need as well to diversify in that area. Across the province we heard numerous

and well-reasoned calls for immediate government action to promote the construction of ethanol plants. This imaginative initiative would provide an alternative market for grain, strengthen local economies, and reduce the emission of lead pollutants into the atmosphere. This is very much a political decision, because if the government really wants to get the ethanol industry under way, it can do so by simply mandating the fact that fuel that is sold needs to have a certain percentage of ethanol base. I think we have a tremendous opportunity here to make sure that we're not totally dependent on the international grain prices but can to a large extent provide markets here in Alberta for our grain. So I think the government here has to ensure that we diversify that aspect of our rural economy.

We also heard during our trips in Alberta that there's a fear relating to the trade deal: what impact would it hold on our topic discussion, the development of the Alberta economy? The committee heard the same over and over in the following weeks. In a meeting with the municipal district of Lac La Biche and again with the municipal district of Bonnyville, councillors asked our opinion of the deal. One even stated quite clearly: "You folks should be talking about this trade deal first. Are we going to be able to have any economic development if this deal goes ahead?" Very good questions. Many people wonder whether governments will be able to address regional disparity after the trade deal is completed. Will it be able to offer, for example, cheaper fuel for Alberta farmers, or will that be called discrimination and be negated by the Mulroney trade deal?

Five months have passed since October, and some people have gone through the trade deal documents. There is a lingering doubt that despite its perceived benefit for the resource industries, Prime Minister Mulroney's trade deal will hamper Alberta's ability to reduce our reliance on the international price of oil and wheat.

Lastly, I'd like to talk about tourism. Tourism is our greatest untapped resource. In northern Alberta we are sick and tired every year, when we take a look at the budget, that we seem to have very little for the development of tourism in northern Alberta. When we start looking at the imbalance of government funding through the Alberta heritage trust fund, et cetera, for southern Alberta, we find that northern Alberta is a very poor cousin. We have a very great and untapped resource there that has to be addressed by this government. I proposed a very logical, very well-based recommendation to the government to set aside a \$75 million Alberta North development concept which would basically, over a five-year project, develop provincial parks, thematic parks, and historical interpretive centres in northern Alberta in order to provide this kind of diversification in northern Alberta. Unfortunately, that was turned down, and what it has been replaced with -- a \$20 million five-year project which is spread throughout the whole province of Alberta -- will not address northern Alberta's concern about not being treated fairly in terms of tourism development and government funding.

So I think, in closing, the government has a lot to do yet in terms of providing a sound base for economic diversification. It has to learn that it must build an economy from the ground up and not from the top down, that it must address the needs of small business in order to access a pool of capital at the regional level as opposed to a provincial level, that it must fund and encourage regional economic development councils to be created in its many regions of Alberta, and lastly, it must put the money in terms of transportation and tourism so that these sectors are much more productive in the long term of Alberta.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members of the Assembly, the maiden speech of the hon. Member for Chinook. [applause]

MRS. McCLELLAN: Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and humility that I rise in response to the 1988 budget address, to deliver my maiden speech as a new member for the constituency of Chinook. I wish at this time to pay my deepest respect to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor and recognize her for her grace and dignity. Mr. Speaker, I should also like to extend my sincerest gratitude to you for the kindness and patience that you have shown me over these past months. You have made me feel welcome, and you have made my initiation into this Assembly an occasion to be proud.

Though I am honoured and privileged to serve as a member of this Assembly, I am saddened by the circumstances that brought me here. The death of Mr. Henry Kroeger, the former MLA for Chinook, is sorely felt by all who knew him. Henry had a great love for this province and this country, evidenced in the way that he carried out his duties in this Assembly and served his constituents. Henry's personal philosophy was shaped by events that happened in another time and another country. He came to Canada with his family after fleeing revolutionary Russia at the age of nine. He vividly recalled the violence and oppression of his youth, and was vigilant against similar threats to the freedoms and rights of his adoptive homeland. No one values freedom more than those who have not had it, and we thank Henry for reminding us of our many blessings. He was a remarkable man who left an indelible impression on this province.

Mr. Speaker, the province has seen fit to name a regional water commission after Henry Kroeger. I cannot think of a more fitting tribute. Henry was a tireless champion of water management in the Chinook region, one of the most arid in this province and, indeed, of the whole country. The Henry Kroeger Regional Water Commission will keep his memory and his work very much alive by fulfilling the water needs of the communities of Hanna, Oyen, Youngstown, Cereal, and the Special Areas -- the part of the province he called home.

Henry's home is also my home. I have lived in Chinook constituency all of my life. My constituency falls in the part of the province they call the Big Country. It is big -- about 4,788 square miles -- and it is country. Moving southward it's on the edge of the parkland, changing to rolling hills and changing to plains. It is mostly rural, and the major economic activity is agriculture. It is an area endowed with many resources. It grows the best No. 1 hard red spring wheat and grows prize cattle and hogs. Oil and gas are also to be found within the boundaries of Chinook, and the local energy industry is a source of supplemental income for many area farmers.

But clearly, it's most ample and valuable resource is its people. They are strong, kind, and generous, and they consider it a privilege to live where they do. In paying tribute to the people of my constituency, I would like to acknowledge in particular Mr. John Glazier of Coronation, who recently was inducted posthumously into the Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame. He and others like him have devoted their lives to making their community and Alberta a better place to live.

But despite the many advantages of living in Chinook, several obstacles need to be overcome. Next to a lack of water our greatest challenge is overcoming our isolation. Chinook's largest community lies about 245 kilometres east of Calgary and about 350 kilometres southeast of Edmonton. The isolation is felt most acutely in our schools. Declining enrollment in our

public schools and a low tax base have taken their toll on the education system. Nevertheless, I am encouraged by efforts undertaken by the hon. Minister of Education to listen to and to understand the concerns of rural Alberta. I applaud the hon. minister for her efforts to make access, equity, accountability, and flexibility the cornerstones of the new School Act. Education equips all of our children, urban and rural, to meet the challenges and opportunities that lie before them. An investment in education is an investment in our future and therefore should always be a priority. We may consider the \$2.4 billion to both levels of education over the next fiscal year money very well spent.

For many years now I have been involved in the educational activities in my area. My interest in education and politics and my sense of community were instilled in me by my late father. He served as a member of the Acadia school division board of trustees for 21 years, many of those as chairman. The C.J. Peacock school in Cereal is a tribute to his commitment to education for rural youth. I have learned from his example and from other dedicated members of that board, such as the late Harry Chiliak of Sibbald and Charlie Wilson of New Brigden. I am committed to seeing that our youth receive the highest education possible. It will be my aim to achieve as much as these gentlemen did in their years of service and to approach my duties with comparable wisdom and vision.

Isolation affects other areas of life besides education. It also renders the task of industrial expansion and economic diversification problematic. Firstly, there have been difficulties in identifying industries that would be compatible with the agricultural component of our economy. Secondly, distance and its inherent costs discourage many businesses from locating in the Chinook region. I am optimistic that the moneys allotted to diversification will bring greater stability and prosperity to Chinook.

New momentum is evident in all sectors. The fact that 17,000 new businesses were registered in Alberta in 1987 and a brighter employment picture indicate to me that confidence in our economy has been restored. With better than estimated growth in energy and construction and with major projects such as the Daishowa plant near Peace River and the Alberta newspaper plant near Whitecourt about to start, the prospect for sustained growth are excellent. In my constituency I see opportunities for greater processing of agricultural products, and I was pleased that assistance in this area has more than tripled to \$16 million.

Another consequence of our remoteness is that it increases our dependence on transportation systems. Because the average constituent spends a great deal of time on the road -- more so, I think, than our urban counterpart -- we need a safe, dependable, and extensive network of highways. For us roads are more than a way of getting us to and fro. A reliable infrastructure attracts industry and lays the foundation for economic expansion. Over \$570 million will go to improving our provincial roadway system in 1988-89, sending a signal to potential investors that this province is committed to maintaining and expanding our roadways. I, like my predecessor, promise to make the transportation needs of my constituency heard in this Assembly. But isolation, like most problems, is not insurmountable. I am confident that together with my colleagues we will develop a strategy to attract more industry and proffer greater economic stability and greater prosperity to my area.

One of the economic sectors that I and my constituency are in is tourism. The natural beauty, the diverse landscape, un-

paralleled goose hunting, and the friendly, hospitable people of the Chinook area make it a natural tourist attraction. With the Tyrrell museum, the Rocky Mountains, and other major attractions only hours away, Chinook could easily be integrated into the existing network of attractions in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, I was pleased that two major tourism initiatives were recently announced: a \$20 million Team Tourism joint marketing program and a \$30 million community tourism action program, which will fund grass-roots tourism enhancement projects. Communities within my constituency are excited and encouraged by the prospect of developing the area's tourism potential, particularly around the Sheerness cooling pond and the Blood Indian reservoir.

As I mentioned earlier, agriculture is the major occupation in the Chinook constituency. Farming is also the economic foundation of this province. It sustained us long before energy, forestry, and technology came along, and I believe that agriculture will continue to be a major part of our economy for many years to come. Today agriculture is at the crossroads. In many respects it is an embattled industry fraught with low commodity prices and protectionism. I say it is at the crossroads, but I believe it is about to turn the corner. The events of the past years have left us wiser and more cautious.

I am not going to eulogize the family farm, although it is important to me. I believe agriculture to be a vibrant, promising industry, and I believe in farmers. Some experts predict that commodity prices have bottomed out and can be expected to rise. Higher prices, along with this government's promotion of better management, new farming techniques, higher yielding and more profitable crop varieties are causing farmers to leave behind tired ways. Consequently, Alberta farmers are becoming some of the most sophisticated agriculturalists in the world.

I am pleased and proud that this government continues to back our farmers with an impressive litany of programs which includes the farm fuel distribution allowance, the fertilizer price protection plan, the farm water grant program, farm credit stability program, ADC, the commitment to rural telephone privatization, and the Farming for the Future program, to name just a few. In the next fiscal year support to the agricultural sector will exceed the \$500 million mark, making ours the best supported agricultural sector in the country.

I am excited at the prospect of becoming directly involved in providing progressive legislation to this province's farming community. The hon. Minister of Agriculture has asked me to sponsor a government Bill amending the Soil Conservation Act. This new legislation will enable local municipalities to strengthen their bylaws concerning soil conservation and reclamation of land, and these amendments demonstrate our government's commitment to the preservation of our agricultural heritage. Towards that end the government will also provide \$1 million in additional funding to the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute for soils research programs.

Mr. Speaker, the success of agriculture in my constituency and many others in southern Alberta is contingent upon the availability of water. Stabilization of the agricultural base through assured feed supplies, livestock watering, and irrigation is the most important issue facing Chinook. Efforts to better manage the water in the Red Deer basin have thus far been impressive, and I was pleased that the Provincial Treasurer allotted another \$133 million from the heritage fund and Capital Fund for irrigation and water resource management programs. In my area the Sheerness project will have the capacity to irrigate 11,000 acres. At full capacity the Deadfish diversion will be

capable of irrigating 20,000 acres, and the Hanna/Oyen pipeline will help relieve the chronic water problems in the communities east of Hanna. These efforts are impressive, but parcels of irrigable land are constantly being identified, thus adding to the demand for more extensive irrigation. I commend the efforts already completed or under way and am confident that over time we will develop one of the most enviable irrigation systems in the world.

We in Chinook constituency support this government's efforts to construct the Oldman River dam. Like Henry Kroeger, I advocate careful, strategic planning within the framework of a provincial water management scheme, and the Oldman dam was planned in that context. But I do wish to convey to members of this Assembly the very pressing need for water in the south. Irrigation expenditures are neither frivolous nor merely politically motivated to those of us who regularly face water shortages. We understand the capital costs are high, but the need is critical. The costs must be considered within the context of regional economic development and with the understanding that reliable and safe water supplies are a prerequisite to growth.

Mr. Speaker, I am not interested in growth simply for growth's sake. Growth enables us as a government to better provide for the people of this province. It allows us to build better roads, provide better health care, educate and train our youth, and provide a high standard of living. I think this government can be proud of its accomplishments. Knowing that this government pays attention to the needs of its citizens is a great source of satisfaction to me. Attending to the combined social, emotional, and physical well-being of 2.4 million people is no small task, but I believe it is handled with compassion and fairness.

I believe we as a government must do all we can to preserve the institution of the family. I see a correlation between its dissolution and the cry for more in the way of social services. The underlying causes of many of our social problems can be traced to the disintegration of the family, and until greater unity is restored, social ills too abundant to tolerate will continue to plague us. Services such as subsidized child care, the handicapped children's service program, the co-ordinated home care program help keep families together in times of hardship and crisis, when families need each other most.

I am most pleased that the food component of social allowance will rise by 13.5 percent. Children need a healthy start in life, and this substantial increase will mean that no child in this province need go hungry. I am comforted by the fact that this government provides for the victims of family violence and has seen fit to increase funding for women's shelters by 8.5 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of hundreds of volunteer organizations throughout the province which offer a wide variety of support services to their communities and come freely and nonjudgmentally to the aid of those in need. They can be credited with turning many lives around, and I do not think that our society shows enough gratitude for the tremendous services they provide. The Calgary Olympics demonstrated what can be accomplished through volunteerism in this province, but it is by no means the only event that was made possible by volunteers. Every day in every region of this province volunteers make things happen. I live in a constituency where the volunteer component is dedicated and results-orientated. This is most noticeable when a project is begun and a veritable army responds to a plea for assistance. Most of our community centres, recreational areas, community halls have been built with volunteer hands. In recognition of the thousands

of hours of selfless dedication to many different causes, I salute the volunteers in my community and across the province.

I would also like to direct attention to the accomplishments of this government in the area of health care. We are fortunate to have a system that denies no one high-quality medical care through a network of excellent facilities in all parts of Alberta. Rural hospitals allow the healing process to take place closer to home, and these facilities are very much cherished in the more remote areas of our province. I was very pleased to announce to the appreciative residents of Hanna that an extension to their hospital will provide the community with 30 auxiliary beds. Besides these excellent regional hospitals we should also consider ourselves fortunate to have access to first-class medical facilities in the larger centres.

But like many Albertans I, too, am concerned with the alarming rate at which health care costs are rising. I am confident that several government-commissioned reports will reveal innovative ways of controlling these runaway costs without compromising patient care. I was very impressed with the suggestions coming out of a recent study undertaken by the Member for Calgary-Glenmore and her commission on long-term health care needs. My constituency has one of the highest concentrations of seniors in Alberta, and I am pleased that the province has allocated resources to the advisory council on the status of seniors, chaired by the Member for Highwood, in order to address the concerns of seniors in our province.

In my conversations with them seniors have expressed a desire to remain close to home, if not at home, in the event of illness. I therefore strongly support the concept of deinstitutionalization, of looking at alternate ways to care for the sick through home and outpatient care. Not only are these forms of treatment preferred by the patient, but they are also cost-effective.

I am also a proponent of preventative health care and believe the increase to \$102 million for public health units will, in the long term, save us money. Organizations like AADAC, through their education and treatment services, also serve the very commendable purpose of promoting healthier life-styles, especially among our youth, and play a very important role in our health care system. I fully endorse greater expenditures in support of these programs.

Mr. Speaker, my decision to enter politics was influenced by a concern for the economic future of Chinook. I wish my children and their children and future generations to know the joys of growing up in rural Alberta. I would like this government to be remembered as the one which was able to preserve this marvelous way of life by opening up opportunities for our youth in the hinterland regions of our province.

The youth of my community have always been a source of pride for me. I became even better acquainted with my area's youth during the nomination and election process during last fall's by-election. Their dedication and involvement were nothing less than outstanding. I pledge to keep the youth of our province very much in mind in all that I do during my term.

I am aware that the repercussions of our actions today here in this room may be felt many years hence. We must labour to leave behind a legacy to be proud of, a legacy of opportunity. I believe that by enthusiastically pursuing the policies of economic diversification and free trade, we can better protect our province against economic downturns. Doing so means that our children need never leave this province, their home, in order to find work.

We must also strive to enrich the lives of our youth by pro-

viding excellent libraries and cultural facilities. Libraries are our window to the world, and I am pleased that with grants to municipal, regional, and community library systems in the neighbourhood of \$11.3 million we will be able to maintain a high quality of service.

It is likewise important that we convey a sense of the past in order to strengthen their sense of self. Facilities such as the Tyrrell museum and the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump give us all a better understanding of what it means to be an Albertan.

It is also important that we protect our natural resources for the enjoyment of future generations. The Hand Hills ecological reserve, located east of Delia, will preserve the largest remaining parcel of fescue grassland in the world, and I am proud of other efforts around the province to preserve our natural habitat. I also believe it is important to ensure that our renewable resources are renewed and fully support the allocation of \$6 million to forest regeneration.

Mr. Speaker, the events of the past months have been thrilling, humbling, and overwhelming. I am very fortunate to have the loving support of my husband, Lloyd, and my children, Mick and Tami. I also thank friends such as Lil Hertz and Mervin Meers, to name just two, who assisted me in my campaign and who, incidentally, had never before run a campaign. Their intimate knowledge of the constituency was very instrumental in my success.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we are fortunate to live in the finest province in Canada. By providing the best in people programs while at the same time exercising fiscal responsibility, this province has set an excellent example for all of Canada to follow. With only 10 percent of the population, Alberta has shown that it is indeed a strong partner in Confederation. The strong leadership exhibited by our Premier will ensure that this continues.

Mr. Speaker, I promise to fulfill my term in this Legislature with dignity and to conduct myself in a way which conveys the utmost respect for my honourable colleagues. I pledge to uphold the traditions of this great institution and hope that what we accomplish here in this Assembly may stand as a shining example to our youth. I also hope that through my actions I can honour the memories of both my father and Henry Kroeger.

4-H clubs are a very important part of rural life. 4-H clubs in Canada will celebrate their 75th anniversary this year. Because I believe in 4-H and would like to pay tribute to the many volunteer leaders who enable the organization to flourish, I would like to close, with your indulgence, by reciting the 4-H pledge, a pledge that many members will be familiar with but one that perhaps we should all consider.

I pledge

My Head for clearer thinking
My Heart for greater loyalty
My Hands for larger service
My Health for better living

For my club, my community, and my country.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your indulgence and, hon. members, for your kind attention.

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence I would like to wander off the topic for a moment to congratulate the Member for Chinook on the quality of her maiden speech this afternoon. I'm quite confident that she'll add a positive dimension to the proceedings of this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to basically base my remarks on the speech that was given by the hon. Energy minister on March 21 during this debate. He began his speech by questioning the Leader of the Opposition's ability to understand the meaning of

the word "reality." My sense is that it's the members on the other side of the House that have some difficulty with reality, at least as evidenced by their budget projections over the last few years. When we first came into this Assembly, the budget deficit was estimated for that '86-87 year at \$2.5 billion. The actual deficit was \$3.4 billion. Last year a deficit was anticipated of almost \$2 billion. Very fortunately, when we looked at the books for last year, we're probably going to come in a lot better than that, probably with a deficit of much less than \$1 billion. This year we're forecasting a deficit of some \$670 million. This is all predicated on the assumption of \$18.50 U.S. a barrel. Well, to date since this budget year has begun, we've been nowhere close to that. The price of oil has gone up somewhat in the last few days, up to about the \$17 mark, so whereas I admire optimism, I don't admire foolish optimism.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

Another point that the minister made in his remarks was to focus on the positive contribution of the Alberta royalty tax credit program, and he singled that out as an explanation for much of the drilling activity that has gone on in this province. In some respects I can agree that the program has been somewhat helpful. There have been companies that have remained in business that otherwise would have gone out of business with that tax credit program. But in some years that tax credit program has cost the people of this province as much as half a billion dollars, and have we really got a commensurate economic benefit from that level of expenditure? The funds go out at the moment -- at least until the end of last fiscal year companies would get a remission of the first \$3 million they paid in royalties. It didn't matter what the size of that company was.

At the moment the program has been changed. Companies will get a 75 percent remission of their royalties up to the first \$2 million they would normally be paying in royalties. Now, the program applies equally to all the companies that are in the oil business and paying royalties, and it's pretty hard to make a case that Shell and Texaco really need a subsidy like that. On the other hand, it's true that we do want to keep many of the small producers in business. After all, there are at least 700 of these firms located in the city of Calgary, but they don't pay royalties that are anywhere near that amount. It would make much more sense, at least it would seem to me, to reduce the amount of royalty relief that's provided in this way down to perhaps \$1 million and then restore the amount to the full 95 percent level that it was before.

As the members of this Assembly are probably aware, there are a lot of problems with this program at the moment. Many companies buy up smaller companies, or at least they buy up part of their assets, just so they can get ahold of the royalty credit opportunities that these companies present. So there are some medium- to large-sized Canadian companies that are in the business of pulling companies together just to get the ARTC, and it really does very little to encourage the development of the oil industry in this province. So again I think the answer to this question is to lower the limits for ARTC grants and raise the percentage of return.

While I'm talking about the smaller oil companies in this province, another problem they're experiencing at the moment has to do with corporate average pricing. This is a new concept that the province had to introduce this year because they were having problems, which the Auditor General drew attention to, in terms of collecting the fair share of royalty revenue that be-

longs to the province. There was no effective or efficient means of tracking those costs, and because of the tremendous competition that was going on out there, companies were cutting each other's throats. The price of natural gas in the province fell to incredible lows. Gas was leaving this province at less than \$1 an mcf. So the province came in with this corporate average pricing concept, which many of the small producers find difficult if not impossible to calculate. There is a solution to that. The small companies could get together and enter into negotiations with the government and in that way establish a fair price, an elected price, that wouldn't involve these immense and very difficult calculations.

Although the budget was quite confident in predicting \$18.50 a barrel oil and basing all of its revenue forecasts on that figure, it was really quite silent on the whole question of gas prices. We know that they've plummeted. We know that the province has been encouraging export of gas outside this province. In fact, those volumes have really gone up with not a substantially greater return to the province in terms of revenues coming in. We've seen the price take a tremendous decline, and the gas that we're exporting often tends to be the lowest cost gas in the province in terms of being able to find it and discover and market it.

In his remarks the minister also drew attention to the upgrader that's been planned for the Lloydminster area of the province. Now, that would be an important project. It would create all kinds of jobs; there's no doubt about it. It's a megaproject on a scale of \$1.2 billion, but when you look at the economics of that plant, you really have to question whether or not it's a valid economic proposition. My understanding from talking to a lot of people in the energy industry is that that plant does not become profitable until you begin to get about \$25 a barrel oil. It would perhaps be foolish on the part of the province of Alberta to go ahead and push for that upgrader on our own terms, but if the Canadian people want some kind of security of supply, then maybe Canadians should look at helping to get that plant off the ground by providing either loan guarantees or even grants. In fact, some officials from the Husky Oil company did come out with a proposal along those lines. They suggested that there should be a bid price where governments would go out and they'd bid for oil at a certain price over a long period of time. If that proposal had been enacted by the federal counterparts of this government here in this province, perhaps that Husky Oil upgrader would make sense and we could get it off the ground.

In the meantime there's another project that's being proposed. This is a major tar sand project, which perhaps makes much more sense given the current price of oil. This is an approximately \$4 billion project. It involves the other six leaseholders up in the McMurray area. It's a process that would involve mining bitumen and upgrading it, and it would add substantially to our daily production ability in this province. But again, the oil companies, given the price of oil, are looking for government support at all levels to ensure that this project goes ahead, and it's my understanding -- I don't want to pre-empt the minister of energy for the federal government, but the federal government, in order to bolster their federal electoral hopes in this province, are looking at putting almost a billion dollars, \$860 million, into this project in one form or another. My concern and the concern of our party here, with this kind of public funding going into the province, is that the people of the province don't take a ride, that they get some value for whatever public dollars go into this project.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Energy chose to talk about a New Democratic federal policy document called *A Time to Choose Canada*, which he accused of being a revitalized form of the national energy program. He said that any savings that would result from prices that would be calculated to stimulate industrial development in this province would be disastrous for Albertans. But I just want to again remind the members of this House that when prices were very high for oil in this country, the federal government didn't hesitate to intervene whatsoever, and that when prices fell, there was no intervention and Alberta really got hammered.

So given that the feds will come in with some kind of pricing mechanism if prices being to soar, why is it that we don't begin to think about a range of prices at which our oil would be sold to other Canadians? This would mean that Albertans would benefit in a number of ways. We'd be protected from the swings of the market. We'd get some benefit if prices fell to lower levels, and then if prices went too high, it means that all consumers in Canada, including our own industrial users here, would have some kind of price protection as well.

So with those comments, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that I think the budget estimates for this year are seriously problematical. There's no justification for setting the price of oil at \$18.50 a barrel. I think the government would have been far wiser to try and establish some kind of fixed control over prices so that we don't get those tremendous boom and bust cycles that occur in this province, so that there's more stability. As it is, we've seen an incredible amount of instability in the oil patch, where we've had fewer than 25 rigs working on one occasion, and then we rush in with all kinds of incentive programs. I could just mention some of them. Not only have we given actual drilling assistance in terms of dollars, but we've also given incredible tax royalty relief or royalty forgiveness, in fact, to oil companies on wells they've drilled in this period of time. It started out with a five-year royalty holiday, then a three-year royalty holiday, and a one-year royalty holiday. There's no evidence that those holidays and those kickbacks to the oil industry have really added any more activity to what would have gone on in any event. It just tended to speed it up, concentrate it in short months, so we sometimes have 300, 350 rigs working with green crews, and we've had all kinds of accidents associated with that kind of unplanned drilling activity.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, that we should begin to think about developing procedures in the oil industry that would level that out so we don't get the booms and busts. After all, we only have about nine years left of conventional oil that's discovered in place. Now, I'm not saying that we just have nine years of conventional oil left. What I'm saying is that we've got that much on hand: nine years of deliverable oil that's already been discovered. Sure, as we replace some of that oil, we'll be adding to our oil reserves, but what's the point of creating all kinds of activity now for those drilling companies drilling up those reserves? Why don't we develop plans and programs that would see a more sustained, regular growth over a longer period of time?

With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I'll conclude.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-North West.

DR. CASSIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to address the budget speech, but before I do that, I would like to comment that we all miss Henry Kroeger in this Assembly. He left be-

hind a big country, a large constituency, and very big shoes to be filled. When Henry spoke in this Assembly, he provided the wisdom of a sage who loved and understood his country, particularly the drylands of this province. I would like to welcome the Member for Chinook, and I would think that after this address those of us who were here would say that those shoes have been filled.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Treasurer on meeting the challenge of 1986, addressing the problems and developing a plan to balance the provincial budget by 1991, on have successfully achieved that objective, surpassing our wildest expectations in having reduced the deficit to \$1 billion rather than the projected \$1.9 billion. Mr. Speaker, this is a most successful step one.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

The Treasurer developed the plan, but I would be remiss if I did not also compliment those ministers and their departments who had to make the tough decisions, who had the responsibility to carry out the plan and reduce the expenditures. This was not just an expenditure in dollars but an expenditure in human resources, early retirements, and the limitation and reduction of some programs. We must also thank those individual Albertans who had to make adjustments, sharing more of the tax burden, taking back some of the financial responsibility for special programs and services that this government provided during years of prosperity and growth in the energy sector, providing support beyond that which is available in other parts of Canada. Albertans, Mr. Speaker, responded to the challenge, played as a team, and we were all very successful.

We now have to prepare for step two, step three, and eventually step four. Step two, Mr. Speaker, is of course to maintain the program, not to lose sight of the original target, to make the necessary adjustments. We must massage those programs that need help after the reductions of last year. You did that, Mr. Treasurer, by addressing the problems in education and increasing the grants as your first priority. There is never enough money to provide all of the services or all of the programs that we'd like to see initiated. However, the overall 2 percent increase in grants to education, with the 4 percent increase to total operating support for basic education, along with the additional moneys for implementing the new programs in the junior and senior high schools will be greatly appreciated by the teachers, by the school boards, by the parents, and most importantly by our sons and daughters, our students. I would also like to compliment the Treasurer and the Department of Education in addressing the needs of the remote parts of this province with a special distance education pilot project. Mr. Treasurer, the \$1.4 billion this province spends in basic education is money well spent on our most important resource: our human resource, the young people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, our postsecondary programs have also received a 1.5 percent increase in grants in 1988 and '89, but our universities have been caught in a very difficult situation, having expanded very rapidly. Demands from industry, from professions, and an expanding population, an expanding economy during the 1970s, compounded with the downturn in the economy in the early '80s, when there was even more demand for postsecondary education, and a response to changes in our labour force, with the loss of jobs in energy and related occupations and professions, resulted in demands for postgraduate programs to either change careers or to update their skills to improve their oppor-

tunities in a very tight labour market. Many of these institutions, Mr. Speaker, have attempted to provide education for all Albertans who desire a postsecondary education and who meet the entrance requirements. This has resulted in large classes with inadequate teaching staff and support, which will be reflected in the quality of our graduates.

I appreciate that many of these programs already have limitations based on numbers and academic achievement, such as engineering and physiotherapy and dentistry, to mention a few. But I do appreciate the difficulty experienced by university boards and presidents, who in order to maintain a level of excellence of their graduates need to make further reductions in the number of students they can accommodate within these financial constraints. I do recognize, however, that an additional \$5 million has been allocated to other institutions of postsecondary education to allow them to provide for some of those students who cannot be accommodated in our universities. I understand that the transfer of credits will be simplified to allow some of these individuals to access university programs at different stages of their development and into the postgraduate programs.

Economic development and diversification has also been addressed in the budget. Mr. Speaker, those of us who were fortunate enough to be in the city of Calgary and experience the 1988 Olympics witnessed the excitement and the participation of our people in staging a world-class event. We were able to communicate with visitors to our city and through their eyes were able to appreciate the opportunities available for this province in the areas of tourism. I understand that already Calgary is reaping the benefits, with increased bookings for conventions and for their stampede.

Mr. Speaker, this Olympic doorway is not just to the city of Calgary but is to the province of Alberta. We have the world's attention. We can now show them what else this province has to offer in the way of holidays, conventions, hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, museums for the paleontology buffs, our traditions, our heritage, and a multicultural mosaic that is readily identified in Alberta, preserved in ethnic culture, food, dress, and customs, an experience that would ordinarily only be available if one were to travel to the four corners of the globe.

Mr. Speaker, a balance has also been provided in the initiatives taken by this government to develop the forest, the pulp and paper industry, with the development or the expansion of three new mills and a paper plant in the northern part of this province. This will not only create 5,000 new jobs in northern Alberta, but the city of Edmonton as the gateway to the north will also benefit as the commercial and trading centre for a good portion of the supplies to the north and the export of those products to other parts of Canada, to the United States, and to the world.

Mr. Speaker, it has been reported that there are now over 1,000 high-tech companies operating in this province. I've had the opportunity to meet with some of these people, and they're very optimistic both in their future and the future of this province and this country. They're looking forward to the free trade agreement, which will open up even more markets to them.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget our traditional strengths in energy and agriculture. It was good to see energy come back in 1987. Yes, we've been criticized for selling our gas at too low a price, but we did increase our market share. As projected, the price of gas has bottomed out, and it'll improve over the next two years and will be reflected in our economy, as will the investment in heavy oil and the increased exploration in conventional oil that has taken place in this province during the last

year. As of today the price of oil increased some \$1 a barrel, and that is certainly welcome news to the province of Alberta.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, we must also recognize the potential impact of the free trade agreement on the petrochemical industry, which is state of the art, underutilized, and will take advantage of these larger markets. I also welcome the initiatives taken by this government to increase funding for research and development, including the \$8 million Alberta Research Council oil sands and heavy oil research activities, the \$4.5 billion for the Centre for Frontier Engineering Research, and the \$11 million that'll be invested in developing new applications in biotechnology and other emerging technologies. Just west of my constituency of Calgary-North West, Alberta Genetics corporation is just one example of the breakthrough in biotechnology that has enhanced the quality and the productivity of our dairy herds and established markets throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased that this budget supports greater processing of our agricultural products, that this government will triple its commitment to the processing firms, providing \$16 million in assistance as well as \$1 million in matching funds in each of the next three years to support the marketing programs for the Alberta Food Processors Association. It should be noted that in 1987 the food and beverage industry in this province grew by some 16 percent. The establishment of the processing industry in this province will create more jobs. It'll be state of the art; it will address those new markets that will be opened with the free trade agreement.

Mr. Speaker, it would also be in the interest of Albertans and all Canadians, as we move to the 21st century, to remove where possible those interprovincial barriers to trade, commerce, and service. That will allow us to be more effective and more competitive in the marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, step three is providing an exceptionally well-trained work force with good labour laws and working conditions. Alberta is a leader in providing training programs and educational opportunities for its people. Alberta trains 23 to 25 percent of all the apprentices in Canada. Alberta is one of the few if not the only province that provides provincial funds over and above those funds that are provided through the Canadian jobs strategy program for apprenticeship training. This year those funds have been increased by some 8 percent to \$110 million. This program is supported by both the federal and the provincial governments and by industry. This province and its people recognize that those parts of the world that were more successful after the postwar era are those countries that continue to use their resources to train and to update the skills of the work force.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget Address covers many other initiatives that will continue to promote the growth and development of our economy and to put in place the necessary infrastructure, in the way of roads, water management, utilities, and communications, that allows our province to continue to grow and to prosper into the next century. This is reflected in the total government capital expenditure for 1988-89 of some \$2.5 billion. This government has been able to focus this expenditure in the areas that will stimulate growth and development and continue to provide services to its citizens, whether that be in the support of child care, the handicapped children's services, social assistance programs for seniors, or quality health care, where we'll spend some \$3.3 billion, or nearly \$4,000 per household.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased that the Premier has established the Premier's Commission on Future Health Care for Albertans, and I'm looking forward to the report in December of 1989. It is important that our system of delivering health care be revised, reviewed at this time, as we look very closely at the changing pattern and identify the needs this system will have to address in the next 20 years. The needs for services will increase dramatically as a larger percentage of our population reach the advanced years, and more demands will be placed on the health care system, requiring more dollars for support and maintenance of chronic problems. There must be more emphasis on health and maintaining our citizens in a community setting rather than an institutional setting, and I certainly applaud the work of the committee dealing with the problems of our extended care facilities and programs.

Mr. Speaker, we must look at what we are presently doing and ask ourselves: can we do it better? Are we using our professionals and our resources in an efficient manner? Are we allowing various jurisdictions, boards, professional groups that have their own vested interest to protect to interfere with the proper management of this system, which is now funded 100 percent by taxpayers' dollars? The government as a planner and an administrator will have to make some very tough and very difficult decisions within the next few years as it attempts to control the expenditures to meet the demands that will be placed on it by the health care system. It is therefore extremely important that a group of citizens is now studying the problem and hopefully will provide us with a plan for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I also have to acknowledge the continued support that this government has given local municipalities to assist them in the development of their parks and roadways and other services that not only improve the amenities of these communities but also help to support these communities through public works programs.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth and final step is the reduction of the size of government and the return where possible to services to the public by the private sector. There are a number of initiatives that have been taken, and these have been alluded to by my colleague from the constituency of Chinook.

I would like to move on and ask ourselves why Alberta is number one. Mr. Speaker, I feel that we've been blessed by living in a land with wealth in the ground, clean water, and clear air. But that isn't what really is the bottom line for success; success really is the management. It's the attitude and atmosphere that encourages companies and people to come here from all over the world. It bothers me that the opposition doesn't recognize the importance of the profit motive, of the rewards for those individuals who are prepared to put out. They would far sooner see large governments provide all of those services. This will destroy this province and this country. It will destroy the initiatives that have made us great. We must continue with the direction that the Treasurer has set for us in reducing the deficit and preventing this province and this country from descending into bankruptcy and a status less than all of us would like to perceive as a great and powerful province and taking its rightful place in this great dominion.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Beverly.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I waited for an opportunity to get into debate on this issue, on the budget, but first of all I want to take the opportunity to congratulate the people of

Calgary: the city administration, the government there, the members of the Olympic committee, and particularly the volunteers who so freely gave of their time to make the Calgary Olympics such a success in this province, in Canada, and of course for the world to enjoy. Having had some experience with the Commonwealth Games and Universiade here in Edmonton, I can only again sort of feel the kind of pride they must feel there and also the contributions that the volunteers made to ensure that something like the Olympics gets carried off well. So to them again, congratulations.

I want to also allude to the fact that as a result of the Olympics we of course will hopefully be able to attract a great many tourists to our province, and indeed I'm sure we will. The beautiful television shots that were exposed across the world as a result of those Olympics will, I'm sure, have an impact on people throughout the world to come and visit Alberta and of course Calgary and the Rocky Mountains, Banff and perhaps Jasper. The concern that I have is: will the tourism extend itself to the northern part of our province? I have the impression that while we may get some of the residue from those visits to the southern part of the province, perhaps we're not going to benefit the northern part of the province as we might have had we had some initiatives taken to in fact develop tourism in northeastern Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the hour, I move adjournment.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion, those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. The motion carries.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, by way of information for the members for the balance of this week, it is intended that the Legislature will sit tomorrow evening in Committee of Supply and deal with Economic Development and Trade. On Wednesday I understand that under the rules the opposition has designated Treasury, and we have so arranged. On Thursday evening, Mr. Speaker, Energy will be the estimates under study and on Friday morning Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. I would anticipate that we will have the appropriate ministers present on Monday afternoon next to deal with the estimates of Executive Council.

Mr. Speaker, I would move that when the House adjourns this evening to return at 8 o'clock, it do so in Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER. Having heard the motion by the hon. Government House Leader, does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried

[The House recessed at 5:29 p.m.]