

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, May 18, 1988 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 88/05/18

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

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

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

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 31

Calgary General Hospital Board Amendment Act, 1988

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 31, the Calgary General Hospital Board Amendment Act, 1988.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is designed to provide an opportunity for the government of Alberta as well as the city of Calgary to appoint members to the Calgary General hospital board for the operation of the Bow Valley site and the Peter Lougheed Centre, which are the new names being proposed for the two hospitals they will be running.

[Leave granted; Bill 31 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: Olds-Didsbury.

Bill Pr. 10

Brandon Paul Lumley Limitation Act

MR. BRASSARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I beg leave to introduce Bill Pr. 10. This is the Brandon Paul Lumley Limitation Act.

It's a Bill to enable pursuit of legal action.

[Leave granted; Bill Pr. 10 read a first time]

head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to file with the Assembly a document titled Dioxins/Furans in Fish from Wapiti and Athabasca Rivers, dated May 17, 1988.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the annual report of Olds College, as required by statute.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure earlier this afternoon to meet with 28 grades 5 and 6 students from Virginia Park school out in the hallway, in the rotunda, and down in my

office. They had some really good questions to ask and, I know, were looking forward to the proceedings this afternoon in the Assembly. They are accompanied today by their teacher Mr. Gary Humeniuk and moms Mrs. Sheila Edgar and Mrs. Maigret Keinzler. They are seated in the public gallery. I'd ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of all members of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Red Deer-South.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure at this time to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, 50 grade 8 students from the Eastview community school. They are accompanied by their teachers Kevin Shilling and Ray Tulp and parents Lorette Rusnak, Caroline Hunter, and Brenda Halford. They are bright and enthusiastic students, and I say that because I, too, attended grades 8 and 9 at Eastview community school, and things haven't changed a bit. I would ask them to rise in the members' gallery and receive the warm reception of this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Red Deer-South, again.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also have the pleasure this afternoon of welcoming 39 model students from Mountview elementary school in Red Deer-South. They're accompanied by their teachers Glenn Macleod and Greg Atkinson and parents Charles Murray, Hank Sims, and Dawn Macleod. [interjection] Somebody asked if I went to that school as well, I used the word "model," and no, I didn't go to that school, but my two daughters attend Mountview. I'd ask that they would rise and as well receive the warm reception of this Assembly.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, there can't be anyone left in Red Deer.

I'm pleased to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, representatives of an incredible association. Mr. Speaker, Alberta leads Canada by establishing Alberta Heritage Day, and here we have representatives today of leaders in Canada. In *The Book of Best Festivals*, which lists 100 best festivals in North America, Edmonton's Heritage Festival Association, Edmonton's Heritage Days, is 12th in North America. They're here today in the members' gallery, and I'd ask if they'd rise as I introduce them: Mr. Alan MacLean, president of the Edmonton Heritage Festival Association; Miss Meha Timpeilley, chairman; Mr. Wayne Ellis, first vice-president; Mr. Dennis Fahlman, second vice-president; Mr. Michael Ford, secretary; Mr. Ralph Melnyk, treasurer. Would the members please give this association's representatives their applause.

head: ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Policing Strategies

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Solicitor General. The last decade has seen a significant rise in the rate of criminal offences in Alberta. In fact, the incidence of crime is growing about 10 percent faster than population growth in this province. Alberta was -- this was 1986 -- 11.5 percent and 14.6 percent above the national average for incidence of property crime and violent crime respectively. Much of that increase has been concentrated in the inner cities. I can assure the minister that it's one of the top concerns of the residents in the inner cities. My question to

the Solicitor General: will the Solicitor General advise what provincial planning has gone into dealing with this very serious problem?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I question some of the statistics that were used by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. But I can assure him that everyone in Alberta shares the concern that there is crime existing within our inner cities. There's crime wherever there's a congregation of people. It seems to be a part of human nature. The policing in all of our inner cities is the responsibility of the police commissions in those particular cities.

I can take Edmonton as an example. The Edmonton Police Commission with the Edmonton police department has instigated a program of crime prevention, and not only, crime prevention but a way of involving the citizens in fighting crime through neighbourhood police units. Inspector Braiden of the Edmonton city police has been a spearhead in this initiative. Relating back to the Sir Robert Peel of the U.K., it's shown that with the new technology that came with police departments using cars and radios, we got away from having the officer on beat within a particular city area where they get to know the people and there's good rapport. It is indicated that crime prevention is augmented that way, and that's happening now in Edmonton on a test basis and will be expanded to other areas as well.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that's fine, and I will come back to that. But that's in spite of the Solicitor General's department. It has nothing to do -- I was asking what his department is doing. That's the city of Edmonton.

But, Mr. Speaker, when I look at the funding and the cutback policies of this government, I notice that the support for policing is now at its lowest point in seven years. That's at the time the crime rate is going up. My question to the minister: how can the minister justify cutting back on support for policing at the same time that crime rates have dramatically increased?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, again I question the statistics that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is using. The crime levels have not increased substantially in 1986; they're in fact at a level progression.

As far as the funding that comes from the Solicitor General's department, we fund police departments on a per capita basis. It decreased in 1986 by 2 percent; it went up again by 1 percent last year. But I would like to put that into perspective as well. If you take, again -- and I'll just use, because we are in it, the city of Edmonton. The city of Edmonton police department has a budget of \$78 million. The per capita grant that they receive from us is not of very large significance within their departmental budget. In fact, our decrease affected them less than one-half of 1 percent.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that's precisely the point that we're making. Surely there must be responsibility from this minister's department dealing with a skyrocketing crime increase. I'll show him my figures if he wants, because they're correct.

The Solicitor General has already talked about the very innovative program based in Edmonton. I think it's an excellent program, but they're having trouble funding. My question to the Solicitor General. It wouldn't cost a lot of money. Will the Solicitor General at least agree to assist this program by funding an assessment and review of this initiative to determine its use-

fulness on a broader basis? Will he at least do that much?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, not only do we do at least that much, we do far more than that. We have initiatives for many, many crime prevention programs. I just gave the example of one. The Solicitor General's department is given a mandate to ensure there's adequate and effective policing within the province. It's delivered under a policing agreement outside of urban areas. Under the present Police Act, in populated areas of over 1,500 those communities develop their own contracts or, in urban areas much larger, have their own municipal police forces. It is then up to the citizens of that particular community to decide what element they want to have their policing in their community.

The city of Edmonton has an exemplary police force, and I don't doubt that people may want more policemen in their particular neighbourhoods from time to time. That's where this community policing, neighbourhood policing, is combating, because they will have, then, police where they need them rather than police driving around in a car in a neighbourhood that perhaps does not have a very high crime rate, but it gives everybody a warm feeling.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's precisely the point that I'm trying to get to. Why doesn't the Solicitor General's department, saying that this is a good program, provide some funding? He must be aware that the Edmonton police are canvassing private foundations all over North America. Instead of them spending their time doing this, why doesn't he put some money into this program to see if it works, and we can bring it in on a broader basis?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I won't make the comment. The funding, as I mentioned -- using Edmonton as an example again, there's \$78 million for policing. This is an innovative program. We are participating with the Edmonton city police department in this innovative program. The research that's done and the development of this type of policing comes from the States and is augmented and initiated through a foundation. Of course, they're asking that foundation for funds, because they are the ones that developed and are implementing with the Edmonton city police and with the Solicitor General's department that innovative initiative.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Calgary-Buffalo, supplementary.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year I expressed concern to the Solicitor General about the large number of crimes of violence involving the use of knives and suggested that the ALCB rules be passed prohibiting knives in licensed premises where they are being carried openly. I'm wondering whether the minister can tell us whether he has taken or plans any action with respect to the carrying and possession of knives in licensed premises?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I well remember that question, and I think my response at the time was that then we would also have to change the food requirements, because nobody would be able to eat.

But along that line I have discussed with the Attorney General many ways that we could maybe cut down on the use of knives not only in licensed premises but on the streets, and we

are trying to develop, but you also then have to have a policing mechanism as to how you check your knife at the door or check whether you are in fact carrying one, other than with putting in X-ray equipment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker; I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods.

Medicine Hat College Appointments

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, my questions today are to the Minister of Advanced Education. Some three weeks ago the faculty association of Medicine Hat College got together and took the unusual and unprecedented move of passing a vote of nonconfidence in the president of the college, Mr. Chuck Meagher. After a meeting yesterday of the college's board, called to discuss these matters, they decided after a great deal of community pressure to conduct a review of the college and the president. They then, to demonstrate their total inability to deal with such matters, endorsed the president, who has no faculty support, for another five and a half months and just this morning fired the vice-president academic, who'd been at the college for some 20 years and had the support of the faculty.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the question?

MR. GIBEAULT: My question to the minister is simply this: how long is he going to let this untenable situation fester before he steps in to salvage what's left of the integrity of Medicine Hat College?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I won't respond to that in detail because I've explained the self-governing principle that's applied to these autonomous colleges before in this House. I do want to correct one misunderstanding that perhaps the hon. member didn't want to leave with the House when he referred to this as an "untenable situation." The advice I have is that the board of governors responsible for governing the college passed, on a 9 to 1 vote, a vote of confidence in the president. That included the student member on the board and the support staff member on the board as well as the community citizens at large. The only person casting a negative vote, of course, was the academic faculty member who was present. But the board has undertaken to have an external review done not only of the office of the president but of the entire operation of the college as a whole. In my view, that's a good thing for any institution to do from time to time.

MR. GIBEAULT: So I guess the views of the faculty association don't count for anything.

But let me ask the minister this: even though the president of Medicine Hat College had no experience as an educational administrator before his appointment and he has now completely lost the support of the faculty of the college, can the minister confirm that the real reason he is refusing to take any action on this matter is simply that not only is Mr. Meagher a loyal Tory, but he was past president of the Medicine Hat PC Association?

MR. SPEAKER: Next supplementary question. We're not here to deal with . . .

MR. GIBEAULT: The truth hurts, I guess, Mr. Speaker.

If he won't answer that question, let me ask him this: will the minister now correct an injustice and direct the board of governors of Medicine Hat College to reinstate Mr. Dick as vice-president academic and thereby clearly indicate to the people of this province that at the public colleges of Alberta merit, qualifications, and dedication count for more than partisan brownnosing?

MR. RUSSELL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the hon. member knows -- and I don't know why he's trying to indicate otherwise -- that the boards hire their own presidents, that there's a system for doing it. It's interesting that the present board of governors of the Medicine Hat College, who apparently are so incompetent, contain among their membership the ND campaign chairman for the last election in Medicine Hat. The advice I have is that he fully supports the actions taken by his colleagues around the boardroom table.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, given all the problems that have been associated with colleges in this province due to the current system of the government appointing board members on a patronage basis from whatever party, will the minister make a commitment today to the people of Alberta to introduce amendments to the Colleges Act that require board appointees to have some legitimate representational basis for being on the board and not that they're friends of any party?

MR. RUSSELL: No. We have no plans under consideration at the present time to make such a change, Mr. Speaker. The system that is used is not unlike any governing body throughout Alberta. The various municipalities have options under hospital legislation whether to appoint or elect board members, and that's mixed throughout the province. We like to appoint board members to these community educational institutions, and it's worked very well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Calgary-Buffalo, supplementary.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you. I'm wondering whether the minister would acknowledge that the problem in Medicine Hat and indeed many other colleges is in fact the result of too much political interference in the appointment of members to the board, in this case the appointment of a president who is not only a PC supporter but who reportedly picks up the Attorney General at the airport when he makes his sojourns to Medicine Hat.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Thank you very much. That's nonsense. Such nonsense.

MR. RUSSELL: Well, I'm surprised at that last question coming from the hon. member, because I expect more from him. It's not unexpected from other sources, but . . . [interjections] Well, he's a constituent of mine. That's why I expect more.

Mr. Speaker, the system that's in place, I believe, is a good one. They refer to a system of disarray and confusion and unrest throughout the college system. That doesn't exist. There are some faculty associations that want amendments to the legislation which they know are under consideration, but that's the extent of it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Westlock-Sturgeon, main question on behalf of the Liberal Party.

Business Immigration Program

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One question today is to the minister of career development and manpower.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Employment.

MR. TAYLOR: Manpower and employment I'm sorry: and employment There's so little employment, I really made the mistake there.

But the federal government, Mr. Speaker, has recently agreed to allow the provinces to guarantee investments of investor immigrants who qualify under the business immigration program. Of course, many people, even natives of this province, would love to get investment guarantees for some of their life savings. But anyhow, the government of Quebec has a program that will guarantee investments of over \$500,000, over a half a million dollars. My question to the minister is this -- since taking knives away in restaurants disturbed the minister of transport . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Let's get to the question.

MR. TAYLOR: Does this government plan to implement a program similar to that of the government of Quebec?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, the business immigration program has been very good to Alberta. In 1986 it generated about \$10 million to this province, and since we moved our office to Hong Kong, it has generated \$100 million for the province. The bottom line is that it must create employment and it must invest in the risk side of the economy. Now, the business immigration program has been modified, to some extent unilaterally, by the federal government and includes a new provision that allows for collateral guarantees. We will be looking at it and examining whether or not it will be appropriate for Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. TAYLOR: Yeah, Mr. Speaker. Then if they are going to provide guarantees for these rich immigrants, bearing in mind that Alberta was built on the backs of poor immigrants, just what numbers was he thinking of in order to be competitive with Quebec?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will recall my last answer, he is presuming that we will be participating in that program.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, possibly the minister could tell us, then, what was the average investment per rich immigrant over the last year while the program has been under his supervision?

MR. SPEAKER: Looks like the Order Paper.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I could go into great detail. There are, in fact three categories -- the self-employed, the entrepreneurial, and the investor category -- in the business im-

migration program. Within the investor category there are three criteria, and it would be very difficult for me to say. I can say that up until the changes the minimum investment in the investor category was \$250,000 with a net worth of a half a million dollars. On the entrepreneurial side wealth is far from the main criterion. In the entrepreneurial category experience as a businessman and an individual who can participate in the Alberta economy and create jobs are the bottom line.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, there's something disgusting about selling Canadian citizenships for money.

Could the minister tell this House, then, whether or not this government guarantees a portion of investments for immigrants who come in with \$200,000 or more?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I should make it clear to the hon. gentleman that there are no visas or passports being sold under the program, that the criterion is very strict. It must create jobs in this province, and the investment must be on the risk side of the economy. I can assure the hon. gentleman that in Alberta to date there has been no provision for collateral guarantees.

Now, I must indicate to the member that there has been a new category offered by the federal government, and for the third time, Mr. Speaker, we'll be examining that category and determining whether or not Alberta will participate in it.

Beverage Container Legislation

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of the Environment. I understand the minister has recommendations for changes to the regulations under the Beverage Container Act before him, that Act and regulations being very important to recycling, to keeping the roads clean, to the environment in this province, and also supporting some 200 small businesses across the province. Could the minister indicate what those recommendations, are and when we may hear of the changes here in the Assembly?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is absolutely correct. The hon. member will recall that in recent weeks there have been additional questions with respect to the Beverage Container Act in the province of Alberta. We do have a regulation that's due to come into effect on July 1, 1988, but over the last several months we've created a discussion advisory round table that's made up of a series of players in the province of Alberta. I met with them just recently, on April 27, 1988, and the group made a series of recommendations to me with respect to changes.

There were four, basically, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member asked the question, and I'll be very happy to give him the four recommendations that were made to me. There was unanimous agreement among all the members of this round table council. The first one was that deposits must be separated from the prices of contents at the retail level. Secondly, the current voluntary handling charges being paid to the depots be included as mandatory handling charges. The third one is that all manufacturers who want their nonrefillable containers sorted for one of the existing reclamation systems should pay an additional half cent per container for the extra sort. Fourthly, the implementation rules proposed and agreed upon by the beverage container council and the Department of the Environment for the transition period must be acted on by the department and these transition rules must ensure that all beverage consumers are treated fairly by the

refunding of the actual deposits paid.

In addition to that, there were two other recommendations provided to me in which there . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Let's leave some room for supplementaries.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister. My concern is with regards to the payment for various beverage containers when they're taken to the depot. I understand that recommendations are that it'll be only 2 cents for small bottles and some 5 cents for large bottles, which is a change from a range of 5 cents to 30 cents. Could the minister indicate whether he supports that recommendation, or will there be further consideration of a higher level of payment at the depots?

MR. KOWALSKI: Just for clarity, Mr. Speaker, the payments that the hon. member is talking about are the tariffs that we have in the province of Alberta; in other words, the deposit tariff that a consumer, the one who goes and purchases something, would pay on that deposit. The recommendations provided to me are that the system we currently have in our province, which ranges from 2 cents to 30 cents depending on the size of the container, is too complex and too complicated and basically say that these tariffs should be reduced. The recommended level is from 2 cents to 10 cents per container. Now, that has absolutely nothing to do with the charge that a sorter, an entrepreneur in the field, would be receiving for their sort. This is the tariff that we as consumers pay to ensure that we return these containers to the bottle depot system.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Could the minister indicate what studies there are in place or what information the minister has with regards to whether a consumer will return the bottles or not at the 2 cent payment level?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, I'm informed consistently, Mr. Speaker, by all of the players who have come to me with respect to the recommendations -- and they include the Alberta Bottle Depot Association -- that experience throughout North America clearly indicates that consumers will return the bottles to the bottle depot system. All members should remember, as well, that Alberta is the only place anywhere that has a mandatory bottle retrieval system that includes a bottle depot system. No other province or state in America has a bona fide entrepreneurship system as we have in our province, with some 225 bottle depots in this province.

We've now been in this business for some 15, 16 years with respect to it. The return rate for most of the containers we have in our province tends to be at the 90 to 95 percent level. It's a very, very well received program in our province, and it's one that will continue to be received very favourably, I believe.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, final supplementary to the minister. The program has worked well to this point in time because we've paid a fair amount for the bottles when returned. My question is specifically on the small bottles that the price that will be paid will be 2 cents. Can the minister indicate whether there's adequate information to assure us that our roads will stay clean and that consumers will bring those bottles back at 2 cents each? I doubt it myself.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, there's no change in reducing anything from a higher level down to 2 cents. The 2 cents a can would remain the same under the proposals and recommendations provided to me. It would not be a case of reducing anything from 30 cents to 2 cents. The 2 cent item would remain as it is in effect. What in essence would change under the recommendations provided to me by all of the players in the industry in this province is that basically the 30 cent tariff that a consumer pays today is not the thing that would drive a consumer to returning and to being concerned about antilittering and concerned about the protection and the enhancement of our environment.

I want to make clear, though, as well, Mr. Speaker, that these are only recommendations provided to me at this point in time. I have not made a decision; nor has the government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister mentioned the system of bottle depots. In view of the restrictive nature of the conditions for setting up bottle depots in terms of distance between them and population, was there any consideration given to modifying those to allow for a little greater flexibility, say, for creating a second bottle depot in a city like Sherwood Park, where they have a large trading area, although not the centralized population?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, that matter has been under review for about a year now. The entrepreneurs who are involved in the Bottle Depot Association of the province of Alberta are adamant, totally adamant, that we should not do such a thing. Remember that when we created the Beverage Container Act in this province it was antilitter legislation. It was to put up a system whereby people would be encouraged to return their bottles and containers to an organized system throughout out province. So we set up a guideline that basically says that for each population of 25,000 I as the Minister of the Environment would allocate a licensee to operate in that particular locale, and in all other communities there would be one per community.

That, of course, is not private enterprise. That, of course, does not provide an opportunity for individuals to come to me and get licences. I've asked the Bottle Depot Association if they would be prepared to see us open the system to allow more people involved in the Bottle Depot Association, and they've responded to me adamantly, "No, because that would destroy the whole system."

So I'm weighing both of them. On the one hand, we've got to protect our environment. On the other hand, we've got to make sure that if we move in a way that we're going to have a bottle depot on every corner, then ultimately we will have no bottle depots, because none of them will be able to survive.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Main question Dunvegan, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona, Edmonton-Gold Bar, Bow Valley, Calgary-Mountain View, Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon, on a supplementary. The Chair is a bit concerned about the length of some of the questions and answers.

MR. TAYLOR: I'd like to ask the Minister of the Environment then: in view of the change in pricing in the glass area and in view of the fact that he appears not to be stopping the four-litre plastic milk bottle, is he contemplating, if the four-litre plastic milk bottle comes in, some sort of rebate with reference to the glass equivalent?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's purely hypothetical. But there's one product that is exempt from the Beverage Container Act, and that is milk. We have determined in our province that milk is the food of life. It is incredibly important that we would not penalize the consumer or provide him with a disincentive to going out and purchasing milk. So there is no tariff. Milk is not part of the Beverage Container Act. We have no intention of bringing milk into and forming anything under the Beverage Container Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Dunvegan.

Dioxin and Furan Levels

MR. CLEGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of days ago the federal government released results of fish samplings in Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and New Brunswick. While the general conclusions from National Health and Welfare are that dioxins and furans in edible portions of fish do not constitute a health hazard, could the Minister of the Environment provide this House with specific results for Alberta?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, on Monday of this week a statement was issued by the federal government, three ministers of the Crown, that basically indicated that in terms of their assessment of dioxins and furans in the country of Canada and the various assessments that have taken place in edible portions of fish samples, there were none that were considered to pose a health hazard to consumers. A little earlier, before the question period, I filed a document which covers the results of the testing that occurred in Alberta on both the Wapiti and the Athabasca rivers. In both cases there were five fish in each case sample, ten samples in all. In all cases the combined toxicity of the edible portion of the fish expressed in parts per trillion for one form of dioxin was beneath the level that Health and Welfare Canada and the United States Food and Drug Administration consider to be a safe level.

MR. CLEGG: I look forward to that document that was tabled in the House earlier today.

A supplementary question to the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker. It appears difficult to draw a scientific conclusion based on a one-time sampling. What assurances can the minister give the House that samples will continue?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, on previous occasions in this Legislature I indicated that Alberta Environment had also undertaken samples, and I also indicated that those samples have been forwarded to Wright State University in the United States. They have been forwarded, and they are being tested. We still do not have the results of those tests yet. When they do become available to us here in the province of Alberta, we will make them available and public.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I've indicated before that there is a national task force in the country of Canada looking at the impact of dioxins and furans. I've also tabled in this Assem-

bly a copy of a document that the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers had published in 1987 in the country of Canada. We, of course, do view this as a very concerning, serious matter, and we will continue to address our energies towards a complete understanding of the impact of dioxins and furans in our environment.

MR. CLEGG: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What programs does the minister have in place to cut down on the amount of dioxins and furans which may be produced by the pulp and paper industry in Alberta which will both ensure a healthy environment and a prosperous forest industry?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've established as a principle for the governance of such mills in the province of Alberta that those mills should have something known as "best achievable technology." In terms of the applications for licences that have come to us from Champion, from Millar Western, from Alberta Newsprint, and from Daishowa, we are going to be working in those particular areas. In the case of both Champion and Daishowa, of course, they're going to have to have sophisticated new equipment called oxygen delignification equipment in place.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that in the U.S. they close rivers down that have in excess of 5 parts per trillion of dioxin per fish and in the Wapiti we're getting up to 44 parts per trillion, how can the Minister of the Environment possibly say that we're not in any danger? Why will he not close down these rivers until we take some preventive action?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the leader of the Liberal Party would want, once again, to avail himself of the correct information, and the correct information was filed in this Assembly a few minutes ago by myself. In the case of the Wapiti River, the combined toxicity levels of edible portions of fish expressed as parts per trillion for 2,3,7,8-TCDD, which is one of 75 types of dioxins, the most toxic one, were 0.7 to 17.6 parts per trillion. I would like to point out that one part per trillion is roughly the equivalent size of a grain of salt in an Olympic-size swimming pool or, to put it in another scenario, it's roughly the size of a \$1 bill hidden someplace in a land mass as great as the total geography of the country of Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary on this. The minister has made quite a big deal in the past about there not being protocols for testing dioxins, so I see this with some amazement. I'm wondering if he could explain whether or not the same protocols were used in coming to the readings for the fish in these two rivers as were used for coming to the recommendations of the USFDA and Health and Welfare, or did they use the Swedish protocols, which might be much better?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, there's a lot of suggestion in that question, Mr. Speaker. When one says they "might" be quite better and the reality is that they're not quite as good, of course, it leaves the wrong impression. So I think that for clarification we would have to deal with that.

There's no doubt at all in my mind that it's clear when I say that there is not one internationally recognized protocol with respect to the measurement of dioxins, and there is not. There

are guidelines that are used by other agencies throughout the world, and I've quoted two of them this afternoon in this question period. I've also pointed out in previous question periods that what is extremely important is that everybody must agree on what the protocol is so that we're all speaking the same language irrespective of where we live. Nothing can confuse people more than to say, "Well, here it means something; there it means something." To me it must be definitive; it must be scientific. We must all agree in the world what it really means. When I tell the member that I love him, the word "love" means something. It doesn't have a different meaning for me and a different meaning for him.

MR. SPEAKER: The whole topic is starting to boggle my imagination.

May we now move on to Edmonton-Strathcona, followed by Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Foundation for the Literary Arts

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister of culture. It concerns the Alberta Foundation for the Literary Arts. In his letter of April 21, 1988, to the foundation's chairman that announced a \$500,000 grant to the Banff Television Foundation, he specified as follows:

Alberta Foundation for the Literary Arts will not be required to enter into discussions with the Banff Television Foundation on the uses of this money. The amount and how it is to be used will be the subject of discussion between the Department and the Banff Television Foundation.

My question to the minister is: how does he square this with his mandate under the Act, which merely reads that he

may give directions to a foundation for the purpose

- (a) of providing priorities and guidelines for it . . . and
- (b) of co-ordinating the work of the foundation

so it doesn't duplicate with government or private institutions.

MR. STEVENS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that question has been asked on a number of occasions. I've responded, and I'll respond again. When the announcements were made about the five foundations, at that time, and the six other lottery dollar recipients under the umbrella of Culture and Multiculturalism, six lottery recipients were provided lottery dollars this year under the foundations that now exist, including the Banff Television Festival, the Alberta Choral Federation, the Alberta Band Association, the Alberta Museums Association, and a number of other associations. They will continue to receive their lottery dollars, but to reduce the bureaucracy and the administration, those dollars will flow through the four foundations.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, it may be convenient, but on the face of it, it looks illegal.

My question is concerning the other part of the letter accompanying the news of the \$300,000 to film and video support, where the directions are every bit as specific and are as follows:

This money should not be allocated in any way until further direction is received from the Government.

I've read the minister the mandate. How possibly can he square such directions with the mandate?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, in the letter which the member is quoting from in part -- and I'll be happy to file with the Assembly a complete copy of the letter so that we don't have dribbles and drabbles of it put out at the member's convenience. I think

it's important to notice that in the letter that has been released to the chairman and discussed by the board, moneys are provided to publishers, provincial service organizations, writers' grants, and film and video support. As I mentioned the other day, to write first a script, to write or edit a script is essential for video or film or commercials in those areas.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair would indeed like to have a copy of this letter filed for the House.

MR. WRIGHT: That will be done, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. WRIGHT: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. I don't seem to be able to get through to this minister. I'm talking about the terms of the grant of \$800,000 and whether it's within the Act. The minister says in his letter nothing about confining the \$800,000 to script writing, which, being a literary exercise, is the only thing that would bring the grant within his powers. Eight hundred thousand dollars for audio and TV scripts is a 7,000 per cent increase over the amounts . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member, but let's have the question. [interjection] Order please. We also had this matter on May 16, so let's get to the question.

MR. WRIGHT: With respect, we didn't, Mr. Speaker.

In the last two years of record will the minister either explain this sudden and astonishing golden shower upon hitherto lowly and unsung TV and audio scriptwriters in this province or admit that he has been as suddenly and as astonishingly exercising beyond his powers?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I have just handed to the page a copy of the letter, so it is filed with the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, the \$500,000 allotment to the Banff Television Festival, as I mentioned earlier, is to a television festival. It is continuing a program of nine years. This program is world renowned, and Banff's Television Festival is now either the second or the third of its kind in the world.

The other \$300,000 is under discussion by the department and when the department and the industry and the people involved are comfortable with the option of this \$300,000 for film and script and video writing, that money will be made available through the foundation. They will determine the recipients, not the government as they do in all of the other categories.

MR. SPEAKER: Final supplementary.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It does seem that he's confirming to us that it's all for script writing. As noticed, the minister in his letter . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, it's coming. . . . attempts to forbid the foundation from consulting with the objects of its enforced munificence, one of them in the minister's own constituency, as we know. Is the minister afraid . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. All right if we're at the question.

MR. WRIGHT: This is the question. Is the minister afraid that the foundation will discover what is undoubtedly the truth, that the greatest part of this grant of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. This question has been going on at great length. You really must frame the question much more succinctly in these supplementals. [interjections] There are still six other members who wanted to get into question period, and it's supposed to finish at 3:23.

MS BARRETT: Point of order after question period, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: All you want. Sure.

MR. WRIGHT: . . . that the greatest part of the \$800,000 is not for script writing but is illegal?

MR. STEVENS: That's an opinion, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: It's a previous question.
Additional supplementaries, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister undertake to file with the House the letters to all of the other foundations funded by lottery money, along with the correspondence related to the literary foundation?

MR. STEVENS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd be pleased to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Clover Bar.

DR. BUCK: A supplementary question to the minister. Can the minister indicate: is this not an ongoing festival that has been going on for quite some time?

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question. It is the ninth year this year of this festival . . .

MS BARRETT: You've already said that.

MR. STEVENS: I beg your pardon, if you want to interrupt, culture critic. I hope to be the culture supporter.

This is the ninth year of a festival of this type, and it is now one that is known throughout the world. Award winners are receiving awards from South America, North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Representation of Women's Issues

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1986 this government established the Alberta Advisory Council on Women's Issues. The purpose of the council is to identify and make recommendations to the government on matters of importance to women. The council recently has come under attack for inadequate representation of women's issues to government. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the focus should more properly be on the unresponsive government. To the minister responsible for women's issues. Despite the council's recommendations on quality day care, family violence, pay equity, we have yet to see this

minister respond with any action. Can the minister outline a concrete plan of action following from these recommendations? Are they accepted, rejected? What's going to happen?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to share with the member for Edmonton-Clover Bar the government's co-ordinated response to the the women's . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Gold Bar.

MS McCOY: Gold Bar, with apologies.

DR. BUCK: Get the right bar.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar would move a little further to the right into Clover Bar, I think we'd all be happier.

As I was saying, the women's council did put together some recommendations, all of which had emerged from a public meeting in Calgary last March. The recommendations to government were received in the fall, and in short order the government had a co-ordinated response to the council in which we outlined our agreement with some and our studying of other issues which they raised.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?
Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, farther to the right if I'm facing the north, but otherwise not.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister consider amending the council's enacting legislation so that it will report directly to the Legislature rather than to the minister and thus is given some independence?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, the council is an advisory council, and it has got independence. It has control over the budget, which of course this Legislature allocates to it, and it is then free to set the priorities on the issues that it wishes to raise with the government. It is an advisory council through the minister responsible for women's issues to Executive Council, which gives it a good focus and a good forum in which to put its views, as you might imagine.

I do want to say this. The member raised questions of day care and pay equity and when this minister would be responding with activities and programs. I want to remind the Assembly that the responsibility for women's issues is more that of an advocate and a catalyst. The responsibility for programs and policy implementation are with each of the ministers responsible for those areas. In day care it is the Minister of Social Services, and any employment strategies are, of course, with the ministers of Labour and Career Development and Employment. So those ministers may wish to supplement my answers.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, that's precisely the point I think we need to know how the minister is operating as an advocate with her colleagues.

Has the minister asked the council for comments on Bill 21, the Employment Standards Code, which of course does gravely affect women, to discuss and transfer on to her colleague the Minister of Labour.

MS McCOY: The answer to the first comment -- how do I advocate with my colleagues? -- again perhaps that might be better put to my colleagues. I can assure the member that I have been a most active and vocal and sometimes, I suspect, irritating advocate for women's issues among many of my colleagues.

The answer to the question as to whether I have directly asked the council for a reading on Bill 21 is no.

MRS. HEWES: Well, I would hope that that situation is corrected immediately, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister, then, ask the women's advisory council for comments or advice on the potential exploitation of immigrant women in the labour force? Is it happening? How can we correct it? This is a matter that has most recently been before the House.

MS McCOY: The question of the working conditions of immigrant women in Alberta is certainly a question of great importance, and as the member knows, the minister responsible, the Minister for Career Development and Employment, has in fact put a committee onto that question to find out the facts.

As to the women's council making comments either on the labour legislation that is currently in front of this House or on the specific question that the member has raised, I would remind her that the council is an independent body and has therefore the independence to set its own priorities and to bring that advice forward to us as it sees fit.

MS LAING: To the minister. Inasmuch as the council has not addressed these issues, will the minister commit herself to consulting with the ministers responsible for Bill 21 in order to ensure that there will be benefits and job security attributed to part-time workers, who are for the most part women?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I can definitely give that assurance, particularly since the Minister of Labour and I have had discussions on that subject already.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point of order that I wanted to raise has to do with your interventions today in question period during questions that were being asked by my colleague the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona. I've been through the rules on a couple of occasions and have never been able to find any reference to a provision which says that compound sentence structures, whether in the preamble or in the actual question, should be prohibited and which specifies that, you know, subjunctive clauses and subordinate clauses are not allowed.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, why it is that when in the middle of a question particularly -- and I know, because I've found myself in this situation -- being called to order is deemed appropriate, given that the indications of the question are already made clear by the use of certain words, certain indications that a question is

already approaching. It just happens to be framed in a compound sentence structure.

I think my objection, Mr. Speaker, is that for those people who are inclined to use more complex sentence structure, it seems wrong to penalize them right in the middle of their question, when in fact the call to order might be more appropriate if someone has gone to, say, her or his fifth preamble, which I happen to know is not characteristic of the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona. [interjections] No, that's quite true. If you look at *Hansard*, you'll see that he is able to craft his sentences carefully, and where commas and semicolons would ordinarily show up in *Hansard*, I think it should be understood that those are not meant to be periods, which constitute, you know, the stop of one sentence and the commencement of another.

Now, I've talked to the Chair before about the issue of not being allowed to ask questions on the same broad subject matter. It seems to me that if the issue is demonstrably different in its angle, in the perspective that it is pursuing, that also must not be an issue when it comes to calling to order by the Chair, and I wonder if the Speaker would take these observations into account.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I'd refer to *Beauchesne*, sections 359(1) and (2), where (1) says:

It must be a question, not an expression of an opinion, representation, argumentation, nor debate.

I would submit Mr. Speaker, that we have had sentences that are filled with conjunctions which manage to include a good variety of all those things that they're not supposed to include. It's quite possible to use "and" and "then" and "therefore," et cetera, and go on for three minutes, and I believe some of the preambles are very close to achieving that. But, Mr. Speaker, that is quite inconsistent with 359(2), which starts off by saying succinctly, "The question must be brief."

MR. MARTIN: What about the answer?

MR. YOUNG: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am challenged about the response. The questioner, of course, lives with the response if the questioner chooses to ask the particular question and ask it in an argumentative, debating, challenging, or misrepresenting manner, and that occasionally happens. Accordingly, I submit that there is no point of order; there is simply a complaint, and the rulings you have made, Mr. Speaker, have been quite consistent.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, you can find out what section it's in. I'm just finding that I think we all are guilty, because from the many years I've been in the Assembly, the rules have been very, very tough as to the length of questions and the preambles. In speaking to all the members of the Assembly, the preambles seem to be getting longer, the supplementaries seem to be getting longer, and we're all defeating the purposes of question period if we allow this to keep going.

MR. SPEAKER: The issue as raised is one which is indeed covered in *Beauchesne* 371, whereby the Chair does indeed have the authority: "The extent to which supplementary questions may be asked is in the discretion of the Speaker." That's the authority for it at which the Chair intervenes. The Chair will continue to intervene, because, as mentioned by the Member for Clover Bar, the practice of this House is developing that

it's getting longer and longer and longer to get a question out. One also does comment that some ministers in particular do tend to take longer and longer to answer the question. Nevertheless, the House leader of at least one political party has come to me complaining that there aren't enough questions from that party being able to get into the House. The Chair has been trying to speed up the process so that more questions can be asked, so when the Chair then intervenes to try to promote the process, the Chair is not terribly thrilled then to be sort of given a little bit of a gentle nudge that the Chair's not doing its job in the correct form.

But indeed, when it comes to supplementary questions in particular, they're getting too long, and too many members are then going on and trying to cram in a second and a third question on what is supposed to be one supplementary issue. And more and more when this happens, when two questions are being asked in a supplementary, the Chair will give direction to the minister to answer the first question but not the second and let's get on to it.

In terms of the other thing that occurred with the questions between Edmonton-Strathcona and the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism, of the four questions, he'll find that at least one of them was repeated on one of the supplementaries. But the real matter here is: let's get the questions out, let's get the answers out, and let's get on with question period.

MR. DAY: On a separate point of order, Mr. Speaker, in reference to the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona and a word which he chose to use in his final supplementary. I, unlike the Member for Edmonton-Highlands, will cite my point of order, being a citation out of *Beauchesne*, 320(2). I've cited it at your request, Mr. Speaker, rather than just vaguely mentioning I've been doing some reading. The particular word has to do with the word "illegal," which the member used in reference to a particular grant, and that's unparliamentary language according to *Beauchesne* when referring to a member. The grant falls under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism; therefore, that particular word reflects back on the member. I don't think the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona intended to do that. He sort of spit it out in a spat of frustration, for lack of another word, but I would ask that he do the honourable thing and withdraw the term "illegal" in reference to that particular member.

MS BARRETT: On that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Strathcona is the one who's been asked. Therefore, it's Edmonton-Strathcona's privilege to speak first, I would think.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I was putting to the minister the proposition that he had exercised his powers illegally. How can I withdraw that?

MS BARRETT: That's why I wanted a point of order, Mr. Speaker. About five years ago I had the great pleasure -- I was assigned the task, as a matter of fact, as a researcher in this building -- to go and look up various debates with respect to use of the word "illegal" in the Assembly. My recollection is that it is ruled out of order if you charge that a member has conducted herself or himself illegally but not ruled out of order if it forms part of the question. In other words, it's legitimate to ask if somebody has done that, but you can't charge that they have

done that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. The Chair will take the matter under advisement, and we'll scan the Blues to see what indeed was said.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: Now, might we revert briefly to the Introduction of Special Guests.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism, followed by Drumheller.

head: INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS (reversion)

MR. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege today to introduce guests in your gallery. They are from central and southern Alberta, including the constituency of Banff-Cochrane. Our visitors are here today to meet with the Minister of Tourism. I wonder if I might introduce them individually and if they would stand as I introduce them. They are here today visiting with the minister and seeing the Assembly in action: Chief Leo Youngman of the Blackfoot and his wife Alma; Rev. Arthur Youngman and his wife Nora; Mr. Stan Cowley and his wife Gloria, the owner and manager of Rafter Six Ranch; Dr. Warren Harbeck, consultant in native languages. Mr. Speaker, I regret that because of the angle from where I'm sitting I do not know, but I expect that possibly there are other visitors who are coming as well. I can't quite see. Are there other visitors up there with you, Stan? Thank you. Then I would ask that the members of the Assembly welcome the visitors to the Assembly today.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you, the grade 9 class from the Rockyford school. They are accompanied by their teachers Laura Helfrich and Robert Moggey. I'd ask them to stand and receive the traditional warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Recreation and Parks.

MR. WEISS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly, a group of 14 students from grades 7 to 9 attending Father R. Perin junior high school in Janvier. Janvier is located in the northeast part of the Fort McMurray constituency. It should be pointed out to all hon. members of the Assembly that prior to a year ago a trip for these students would have almost been impossible, as until the all-weather road was completed via Fort McMurray the only access was by small private air service or limited rail service. Some of these students have never been to the city. The students are accompanied by teachers David Stainton, Naomi Stainton, and Norma Black and are seated in the members' gallery.

I have a surprise for them today, Mr. Speaker, because I've arranged for two complimentary gold hockey tickets for tonight's Stanley Cup playoffs, where they can cheer the Oilers to victory. I regret I don't have tickets for all, but two will enjoy it I'm sure.

I would ask that they rise, and request all hon. members to join with me in extending a warm welcome to them all.

[On motion, the Assembly resolved itself into Committee of the Whole]

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS**
(Committee of the Whole)

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee of the Whole House, please come to order.

Bill 32
Appropriation Act, 1988

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister, do you have any opening comments?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I thought I would just take a moment to continue with some of the comments which were left as a result of the discussion on second reading, mostly to provide some additional information for the members who raised the questions, in part to add some better understanding to some of the members as well. But very briefly, I want to say that it was interesting to listen to the discussion on Bill 32. While I know we're all bound by the rules of procedure, we have all agreed that the 25-day limit is, in fact, the time period which will be allotted to this debate on the estimates. As I said last Wednesday, everyone who was willing and interested in discussion on the various estimates had an opportunity to do just that. So to suggest that it was not a long enough period or an extensive enough opportunity for discussion is improper, in my view, and does not reflect what, in fact, took place, because all departments had an opportunity to be reviewed, and all ministers were questioned by anyone who wished to question the minister about the responsibility he or she has as a minister in this government.

First of all, with respect to the unsatisfied questions, Mr. Chairman. It was raised that during the various debates on estimates there were some unsatisfied questions or questions which were not fully responded to. In consultation with the House leader, he has assured me that he is co-ordinating all the replies and at some time in the near future those will be tabled in the Assembly so any of the open-ended or unanswered questions will be responded to. In that context, I'm sure it will provide further understanding of the way in which the government operates, and with that further understanding, I know full well there will be a strong endorsement of this budget. Because it is a good budget, as I've explained before, one which deals with those people on low income in particular and, moreover, is able to distribute back to the people of Alberta a fair amount of tax this July. When that tax is in their hands, they will remember who it was that gave it back to them, and we, of course, will remind them of that. No doubt about that. That's a very good way to communicate budget processes, and you know full well across the way that that's going to be the outcome.

I should note as well that in July the federal government will also add to the tax reductions an additional amount of about \$200 million for the province of Alberta. Obviously, that's going to compound very quickly in terms of disposable income. It will show up in sales at varied merchants across this province, and that's important for us.

But in fact, this is a very equitable budget and although the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark claims we do nothing for those people on low income, in fact the stats speak for themselves, that the percentage reduction in tax as a result of this budget, coupled with the tax exemptions which are already implicit in the legislation providing assistance to some 500,000 . . .

MR. McEACHERN: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Edmonton-Kingsway, your point of order.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes. I think it's a very minor one, but I do think the Treasurer made a little slip. He referred to the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, who I don't believe spoke on the budget. I think he was really referring to myself. He did that last year three times at this point in the debate, so I think I would like to correct him on the first instance this time.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, the member is so forgettable, but I do apologize.

In any event with respect to the tax reductions, Mr. Chairman, it is clear that as a result of the 50 percent reduction in the flat tax, we have found a way to address any of the inequities which may be involved in the tax system itself, reducing significantly -- as much as 80 percent in some cases -- the actual tax paid by those individuals. If you couple that with the tax exemption, tax deduction provision, some 500,000 people are already taken off the tax rolls here in this province. The message is clear, and it's unequivocal: in fact, we have the lowest tax regime of any province in Canada and the highest level of services.

Now, on those points. Those are very simply communicated, and I'm not at all ashamed or embarrassed to make those statements, because in fact that's what the people of Alberta want to hear. I know full well that the NDP want to have a sales tax in this province, Mr. Chairman, because they want to tax that consumption. They want to get after the regressive tax base in this province. As part of their policy statement they would certainly have one here right away. I'm going to continue to remind Albertans of that. I'll remind them of that and I would love to be able to debate that anywhere in this province.

In terms of things to remind the people of Alberta about, I love it when the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona talks about his alternative tax regime. He wants to have an estate tax. Now, talk about a regressive tax. Talk about something slipping back into the '40s or the '50s. That in itself is just what it would do. Because under the complete tax regime we have here, where capital gains are already taxed, a wealth tax -- a tax on my mother's home, for example -- would be confiscatory. I would love to let the people of Alberta know about that tax policy, and I think I will. Dam it, I think I just have a commitment to do that, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to do that.

MR. YOUNIE: Point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Glengarry, a point of order. Is it on the contents . . .

MR. YOUNIE: Yes, I'm just curious that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Is the hon. member raising a point of order on the content of the speech?

MR. YOUNIE: Well, I'm raising it on the fact that the last day we were debating this in committee stage, we went on at great length about whether we should have some general comments about budgetary procedures as a whole or restrict speakers to specific budget lines. I felt I was giving enough time for the minister to get through the generalities and get to the specifics, even though other members weren't so courteous to us. So I thought at this point I would ask if it was our intent to change the procedure that was established last time, in which case I'd love to make some general comments about the right-wing budgetary process of this government, or if we're going to stick to the established agreement and the specific items. [interjection]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Chair understands the Provincial Treasurer was responding to questions asked the previous day. That's the understanding the Chair has. If the Provincial Treasurer would contain his remarks to responding to questions raised by various members, it would entirely be in order. Hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, of course I'm humbled by your direction. No doubt it's clearly the intention to provide as full as possible an explanation of what's taking place. From time to time I've even heard the comment that there's not an ample opportunity to discuss and to debate these issues. Gosh, as a government we're just willing, wherever possible, to provide as much information to deal with all the elements and principles and provide the specificities with respect to the questions asked. I'm just trying to do that. Because, you know, I've heard statements about not enough time in estimates. Gee, there's not enough time in Public Accounts; we should have them every day of the year, going right through Christmas. There's not enough disclosure taking place, not enough debate on the heritage fund, not enough information being provided to the members; the guarantees aren't being recorded. I'm just trying to help out, just trying to provide as much information as possible. Now, if it stings a bit in the meantime, then you're going to have to take it. Because I'm not going to back off on this one. I'd love to hear your fiscal plan, and I'm going to make sure it's well understood across this province. It is confiscatory. It does take away from those people with low income, and it is wrongheaded, Mr. Chairman. That's what this policy is, and I'd like to have it on the record.

Mr. Chairman, I notice that we've already had on record the position of the NDP on two principles. That is, they believe in sales tax. They want to allow that creeping tax to creep into low-income individuals, to confiscate their ability to buy food, clothes, to look after their children. That's what they're standing for, and that's clearly on the record now. That's on the record. [interjection] We'll get to you chaps in a minute. Secondly, the second clear element of their policy is one to tax the wealth of those poor senior citizens whose only collection of savings is their home. What they want to do is to tax that away by an estate tax, by a wealth tax. I would even speculate that there'd be an annual wealth tax under their regime. Now, if that is not retrogressive, if that is not archaic, if that is not . . .

MS BARRETT: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. JOHNSTON: I'm getting so upset at these interruptions, Mr. Chairman. I can't concentrate. It's most difficult for me. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Does the Member for Edmonton-Highlands have a point of order?

MS BARRETT: Yeah. I think that misleading the House itself is out of order. I'm quite certain it is, Mr. Chairman. I think the Provincial Treasurer has the right to interpret anything he wants, but he does not have the right to say the New Democrats in Alberta favour a sales tax. I request he do the honourable thing and withdraw that comment. It is not true.

MR. JOHNSTON: They're so sensitive across the way -- just so sensitive.

Now also. Mr. Chairman, the third element of their policy is high taxation.

MR. McEACHERN: Point of order, Mr. Chairman. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order please. One moment, please. There must be something very significant about the 18th day of May, because this committee has not had this experience earlier. Now, hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway, you have a point of order?

MR. McEACHERN: Yeah, I have a serious point of order. When we debated second reading, the Chair was very reluctant to allow me to talk about the generalities of what that budget stood for, because he maintained that to talk about the overall fiscal and monetary policies of the government was out of order because I was supposed to talk only about this document, which is a bunch of numben;. Now, we did persist, and we did get a fairly good debate. There were some questions left over for the Treasurer.

But we are now at Committee of the Whole, where we are supposed to get down to the details. Now, if there were some questions -- and I indicated there were -- that the Treasurer should answer, then he should answer them, but he should not be standing up there spouting what he thinks is New Democratic Party policy. We, Mr. Chairman, can handle that for ourselves. We do not need the Treasurer to tell us what we stand for or what we think, and that is out of order. I'm surprised that the Chair didn't call him to order sooner and that we have to keep interrupting and suggesting that we can speak for ourselves. He doesn't need to put words in our mouth. He might answer some of the questions we asked, and let us get on to the details of this Bill, which is what this Committee of the Whole is supposed to be about. [interjection]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Chair, before hearing further points of order, would draw all hon. members' attention to the fact that we're not dealing with Motion 4 on the Order Paper, which is the fiscal policies of the government. That was the budget debate. We've now come to Bill 32, which is an appropriation Bill which has two schedules, one dealing with special warrants, something of the past that must be approved by this House, and the proposed budget for '88-89. [interjection] Order please. Don't wave your finger, hon. member; that's reserved for the Chair. Perhaps we can come back to committee study of the items within appropriation Bill 32.

The Chair is also advising all members, including the Provincial Treasurer. Now, I hope all hon. members understand if and when questions are put to the sponsor of the Bill, that sponsor then has not only the right but the responsibility of responding.

The Chair would recognize at this time perhaps those questions that have not yet been put. So perhaps we could come back to the Bill before the committee, Bill 32, hon. Provincial Treasurer. The Chair will reserve a decision on the recently raised point of order about the term "misleading," and the Chair will rule before the committee rises.

Hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Gosh, Mr. Chairman, it's sure tough to get the message across. But as the member for wherever it is across the way says, "We're just trying to be sure the people of Alberta know what, in fact, the party does stand for." We're just trying to help them out -- just trying to help them out, Mr. Chairman. I think that's fair, because we take . . .

MR. YOUNIE: Mr. Chairman, point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: When I rose on a point of order last, you said the minister was merely responding to questions put. So I've been waiting. I'm just wondering if the minister could identify which member of the Legislature previously asked him to give a rambling, demented, and totally inaccurate interpretation from his point of view of what New Democrat economic philosophy is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, that indeed could be the question you put when the Chair recognizes you.

Hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. HERON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. You know, it amazes me that today we have constant interruptions of the Provincial Treasurer. Just the other day I looked at Standing Order 62 by way of analogy and drew the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway's attention on numerous occasions to get back to the study of the heritage fund, parks and rec. We did that throughout caucus for some efficient allocation of our time. He totally ignored it, and said it was within his right to ignore the rules. He disregarded the rules of the Chair. Now, today we have the Provincial Treasurer speaking to Bill 32, and we have constant interruptions which can only create disharmony and frustration in the House, Mr. Chairman. So I appeal to your sense of fair play and recall to all our minds the disruptions that occurred the other day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, hon. member.
Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: During second reading on the Bill, there were several references I could cite which were directed to me to respond to. I recall the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona saying: I am putting these forward unsolicited, Mr. Chairman, for the benefit of the Treasurer. They're for my benefit presumably to be called upon to provide some response. Mr. Younie, the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, also indicated a number of serious and good recommendations to the Treasurer. Here we are being asked to sort of respond, provide a bit of understanding about how the relationships of their policies could, in fact, interact with ours. As I said earlier in second reading, Mr. Chairman, during this debate the government looks upon this as an opportunity to vet a lot of ideas. Not all the ideas come from this side. I think it's paranoia on their behalf that they're be-

coming regressive; they're backing away from the exchange. We're looking for ideas. You can't say we're not asking for them. Here you have an opportunity to provide them and they want to back away from it. I'm simply reciting the information that's here in *Hansard* on May 11, 1988. They're ideas put forward by the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona. I'm sure he's not going to back away from the estate tax, the death duty statement. It's right here in the paper, Mr. Chairman. I don't know what it is that I'm supposed to do. I'm trying to serve the people of Alberta, representing the government, providing the widest possible debate, and here we're being cut off.

With respect to Mr. Younie, since he is the one who seems to be fussing about what's . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Treasurer, please use the normal parliamentary form of addressing an hon. member.

MR. JOHNSTON: I'm sorry. I was just quoting *Hansard*. As you well know, *Hansard* records in names. I'll retract that.

The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry goes on to talk about the discussion on special warrants. Now, special warrants are an unusual beast, Mr. Chairman. I admit that from time to time it is a convenient way for the government to spend money. I do acknowledge that from time to time some governments, not this one, have used special warrants as a means to getting around parliamentary responsibility. I for one believe heavily in the responsibility of the Assembly and of the parliamentary system. I recall the Liberal Party in particular being fairly blatant in the way they used the special warrants to conduct government. But I don't think in this past year, Mr. Chairman, it's fair to say that we abused the special warrant process. To the contrary. I have shown that in terms of the statistics, in terms of spending, we have been very prudent in the way our special warrants were used this past year. We did it on special occasions, occasions which I outlined already. In fact a very large portion of the \$300 million or so was spent on unique items which benefited certain individuals within this province, I agree, but in instances where the government was called upon to respond in those unique emergencies. So when you criticize special warrants, Mr. Chairman, you criticize the assistance to tornado relief here in this province; you criticize the assistance to the people of Red Deer and the railway relocation. That's what happens.

Obviously the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, who stands up and prattles about advanced education -- you are not allowing the dollars to flow to advanced education for that very important capital project. Because the Minister of Advanced Education put through some \$40 million, a government response to the capital requests of the universities, compounding the contributions by the private sector, Mr. Chairman. Now that's a lot of money flowing to those universities. So if you don't want us to assist those universities with this unique program -- unique only in Canada -- then we'll hold back the special warrants, but we'll suggest that the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, who happens to be . . . Well, he thinks he's an expert in the area of advanced education. Maybe he can explain it to his colleagues in Medicine Hat, who by the way, Mr. Chairman, received an abundant supply of dollars as a result of that special warrant. Now, that's what special warrants are for, Mr. Chairman. That's the policy statement of this government. That's how we'll conduct ourselves in the future. It's not skirting around the responsibility; it's responding to unique situations. And this past year, during this period of fiscal restraint, we curtailed the size of the special warrants to a dramatic extent. We'll continue

to do that. I think all ministers have the same responsibility.

But one of the special warrants, Mr. Chairman, that does interest me is that special warrant which the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry raised: a special warrant for Special Waste Management Assistance. Now, for the life of me, I can't understand this phony issue that's being raised by the member. I think that when the history of environmental protection is examined, this province has an outstanding record. When it comes to the handling of special waste goods, toxic goods, this province is a leader worldwide -- a leader worldwide. And so this special warrant was to allow us to deal with the unending problem of those toxic storage problems, the ones that the members from across the way historically in the past five years have brought to our attention: Leduc -- or the rotted can or the transformers. That's what that plant is for, Mr. Chairman. It's a unique thing in the world, one of the best there is. It's being copied right now across the world, and in fact I've just been advised that the operators of that plant have been successful in landing a similar contract in Minnesota.

Now, that does two things. First of all, the technology is our technology. It's here as an exportable product. It generates export balances for us here, and we export that engineering information and technology, and of course the dividend income comes back to Alberta. Secondly, Mr. Chairman, once that plant becomes recognized worldwide, recognized in North America, it becomes an incentive for location of industry here in this province. And that's what we need. We need the diversification that we are railed upon by the opposition. It's coming. This is going to trigger it. It's going to assist it, and for the life of me I can't understand why anyone would criticize this development. I'd much rather know that that storage of toxic wastes is safe in Swan Hills than left to the whims of half your life in some barrel somewhere in somebody's back yard. That's what we're doing, Mr. Chairman, and I don't agree with the position taken by the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

Now, let me go on to talk about the questions raised by the Liberal Party. [interjections] I know the sensitivity of the NDP if you're picking on them too much. We know their fiscal plan. We've understood clearly what it's been, we've well-documented where they stand, and it's incumbent upon me, Mr. Chairman, to ensure that Albertans understand it. I know that I'll have a chance to do that in the next couple of years, and I'm sure it'll be well known just how important their fiscal plan is once the results of the next election are in.

Now, with respect to Westlock-Sturgeon. For a while there, Mr. Chairman, I thought we had a reborn Jimmy Swaggart. I mean, we were going back to Genesis, back to 2000 B.C. in some cases, to find an appropriate way to discuss the budget. I wasn't too sure of how it operated, the context of it, but what did amaze me outside of the biblical references was that Mr. Taylor, the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, in fact was quoting from the Walker Institute when he described the royalties as being part of the tax collection of this province. I don't know how that comes about, but I would doubt very much that the member would want to be either mistakenly associated with that group of far-right thinkers or, for that matter, suffer for the same mistake in analysis.

And so again it's my responsibility to ensure that he recognizes these royalties are not a form of taxation, Mr. Chairman. They're not taxation. This is economic grant. These are the dollars which -- I agree that it was by frailty and fluke and good fortune that the liquid hydrocarbons were stored below us here.

^{*}This spelling could not be verified at the time of publication.

But they do belong to Albertans, about 83 percent of them. They're part of the generous base of economic opportunity which we have here, and as has been shown since 1971 during the period when the price of oil increased so dramatically, this government has managed them so well that it's a model of other economic jurisdictions in North America.

We've handled the money well, we've invited the industry to come in to exploit the use, and we've ensured that the people of Alberta get their fair return. And that fair return has gone into making this one of the best provinces in Canada, the highest level of services, and the only province without any accumulated net debt: the only province with net assets. And that's because of the oil and gas royalties . . . [interjection] But well managed nonetheless, Mr. Chairman. Our policies in oil, not just the 1971 policy but Mr. Manning's policies as well, were in fact models of the way in which that resource had to be operated.

So I am surprised, somewhat taken aback, when somebody who has had a long opportunity of experience in the oil and gas business believes that the royalties are taxation in calculations before the province. But we know that traditionally, of course, the royalties going back to the province have been a thorny issue for all members of the Liberal Party. I mean, I won't even go into those periods going back to 1980-81, but of course the policies were clear, that certainly the Liberal Party at that time believed -- and I'm still waiting to see a new interpretation -- that it was a greater right for a central government to have control over the royalties than a provincial government. And nothing, Mr. Chairman -- nothing -- can infuriate the people of Alberta more than that principle, as has been witnessed by the very strong debates which have taken place in this province over that fundamental issue. If that continues to be the issue of the Liberal Party, Mr. Chairman, I will have a great compare and contrast the Liberal Party on its energy policy and the NDP on its tax policy. [interjection]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Provincial Treasurer, the Liberal . . . [interjections] Order please. Do you have a point of order?

MR. TAYLOR: On the point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Treasurer made the statement that in '81 the federal government taxed the oil and gas in Alberta to a great extent, and I just wanted to make the point that the Treasurer may not be aware that the federal government today takes more money out of a barrel of Alberta oil than the federal government did in 1981.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, that's not a point of order. That's a dispute of facts.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the member will have a chance to participate here in a very few seconds, but I wasn't making quite that analysis. Now, I think it's important for me to clarify what the point is because you've raised it. No doubt that other provinces, for example, at various times in fact take more from a barrel of oil than the province of Alberta does. I know the province of Ontario during the period of rapidly rising oil and gas prices had an ad valorem tax on the sale of gasoline, and if you equated it back to royalty, it was higher than ours. So I don't disagree with it. But that's not the issue, Mr. Chairman. The issue is this: that it was clearly understood that the Liberal Party in the period under the Trudeau leadership, between 1980 and 1981 certainly, believed that a greater central control over oil and gas in this province was imperative,

taking away from the province our jurisdiction, our control over production, and our control over pricing.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it's important that that be clarified, because that is the issue I'm talking about. No matter which program you talk about, the Liberal Party, at the heart of its energy policy, believed that it had a greater right to direct the taxation, the production of oil and gas in this province, given to us legally in 1930 by the Natural Resources Transfer Act, than did this province.

So in responding to the comments from the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon with respect to energy policy, again, interesting things are revealed when you watch carefully what is said. Some things they say are casual. But I tell you, it's important that the people of Alberta know just what is at the fundamental heart of the policies of these two parties, extremely important, Mr. Chairman, and that is the responsibility I have. I now know what the fiscal and tax regime is for the NDP across the way. We knew it before, but it's now been put on paper. We know what it is: fairness and heavy taxation, sales tax, regressive movements, tax the poor. Spend, spend, spend. Borrow, borrow, borrow. I mean, that's it in a nutshell. [interjections]

So, Mr. Chairman, let me believe that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Provincial Treasurer, the Chair is having some difficulty. Second reading of this Bill has been passed. It dealt with the principle. We're now dealing with schedules "A" and "B": special warrants and the proposed investments for the year. Perhaps the comments could come back to the proposals the Treasurer's putting forward to the committee for approval and perhaps less on the second reading stage, which really is behind us.

Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Yeah, I apologize. I apologize. I was overcome with the challenge to debate, Mr. Chairman. I'm just a humble boy from Lethbridge. You know how it is.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, this may be wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member, I appreciate your comment. Carry on, Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: I keep losing my train of thought, Mr. Chairman. It's so difficult to debate these issues.

Well, let me conclude by looking at the Appropriation Act itself.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well, finally.

MR. JOHNSTON: As I've indicated already . . . Well, it might take another 20 minutes to conclude; you can't tell. Fair warning.

The special warrants of \$328,077,584 are for the period up to March 31, 1988, the last fiscal year. And as is the policy traditionally in this government, we bring those special warrants forward; they are passed as an appropriation. So, as the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona and I had a small exchange across the way, I think that does clarify that point. These are last year's special warrants. I've gone into that to some detail. I think the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona is fully aware that these are last year's special warrants. I've already commented on the need for the special warrants. I don't think they're inap-

propriate, and I think they are reasonable in the context of the total spending package. I've also talked about and responded to the questions with respect to special warrants raised by the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry in particular.

With respect to the appropriation, Mr. Chairman, the \$10,019,802,191, Schedule "B", again I think I've responded to most of the questions. I've attempted to correct the record so we know full well where the two parties stand on the issues, to provide whatever additional explanation I think is necessary for these appropriations. Moreover, Mr. Chairman, all members have had an opportunity to debate, to ask questions, to deal with the very sensitive issues. I know my colleagues will be more than willing to provide the additional information which has been requested in question period, and as I have indicated, my colleague the Government House Leader will be the one who will co-ordinate those responses.

So if we look through these expenditures, Mr. Chairman, we find very important priorities reflected in this expenditure plan: dollars going to all Albertans, the very best level of services any province can provide to its people. We expect that, we know it's going to be delivered by this government, and yes, we've had to go through that difficult downturn where the economy has dictated a little different fiscal regime. But we think that this fiscal plan, together with the long-term goal to balance the budget by 1990-1991, is one which can be supported by this government certainly, and should be supported by this Legislative Assembly. We do think that it's a fair deal. It balances the expenditure, directs the dollars to all parts of Alberta, provides all levels of society an opportunity to benefit in the services and the transfers and still maintain the commitment to fiscal responsibility.

It's a model, Mr. Chairman. If you look at the other provinces' budgets over the past few days, you'll find that very few of them have taken the determination to ensure that government expenditures are not out of control. Others have had to increase taxes, others have had to allow their debt to increase, and still others have ignored entirely the fiscal responsibility of burdening subsequent generations by increased debt. We have not done that in this government, Mr. Chairman. We are committed to a fiscal plan which is working and one which is prudent and one which the people of Alberta accept.

So, Mr. Chairman, I apologize for the time, but it is important to get the record clear on these important points. I've now had an opportunity to do it. Albertans now understand what it is that the two opposition parties stand for. More than that, Mr. Chairman, I would like to encourage all members to support Bill 32 in Committee of the Whole.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments, questions, or amendments to Bill 32?

Perhaps hon. members would indicate to the Chair, following Edmonton-Kingsway -- members wishing to make comments to the Bill.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One is left wondering what the Treasurer really -- what goes on in his head. Certainly not very much. It would seem to me obvious that there were some serious questions raised that the Treasurer could have replied to. Instead he said, "Oh, we'll do that by filing something in the House later to answer the questions, if somebody gets around to looking them up in second reading," and spent most of his time telling us what we stand for when, in

fact, we can speak for ourselves much better than he ever will be able to, and was certainly totally irrelevant to his budget.

A couple of very quick general comments, and then I intend to get into details. The Treasurer said that cutting the 1 cent flat tax to half a cent would now give Alberta the perfect tax schedule. Well, I'm not sure that there is such a thing as a perfect tax schedule -- I know nobody likes to pay taxes very much -- and certainly we're a long ways from having it here. The taxes in this province, like in many other places, still allow an awful lot of people living under the poverty line to pay a high level of tax and still allow a large number of people -- and Alberta's one of the worst -- to get away without paying tax.

The Treasurer spoke at some length on the special warrants, and I wanted to refer to those fairly specifically before getting into the Schedule "B" part. Schedule "A" of this Bill has some \$328 million in warrants, government warrants. Now, the Treasurer said that this is down. Well, that's not really true. Last year, the '87-88 fiscal year, we had \$288.9 million in government warrants.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.
Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: This year we have, as I've said, \$328 million in government warrants. So we're in fact up. The Treasurer obviously was thinking about the year before, the year in which Peter Lougheed resigned and the new Premier won the leadership of the Conservative Party. Between them they gave away almost \$800 million in government warrants that year. And I'm sure that's what the Provincial Treasurer was remembering back to in saying that they're now down. That doesn't mean that they're now down as far as they should be. Government warrants should be used with great care, and I don't really see any reason why we should be having government warrants when the House is sitting.

Government warrants aren't just indicated in this; only some of the money ones are indicated in this document. The Treasurer last year had no qualms about announcing that the Treasury could borrow as much as \$2.3 billion out of the heritage trust fund while this Assembly was sitting, and he did it by government warrant. It was never brought before this Assembly and debated. This year we're in the middle of sitting again, and he announces a \$100 million expenditure on the Grant MacEwan facility. There's no reason he couldn't have brought that before the Assembly and had a debate in the Assembly on it. It's not even in here, of course. It will show up next year in a similar position.

So the Treasurer's points about the government warrants were really rather shallow. The fact is that they are far overused in this province, and this year doesn't seem to be much of an exception. It's not so bad as it was two years ago, but it's worse than it was last year, and the Treasurer really should have some second thoughts about handling government warrants in that manner.

Now, I'm not going to try to reply to all the gobbledygook the Treasurer talked about, because it's not really what we're supposed to be onto today. We're supposed to get down into the details of this budget, and I want to do that. One of the things the government said was that education was a priority in this budget. In fact, I have one of their ads here, Mr. Chairman, that says that. I'm quoting -- and there's a picture of Don Getty beside it, so it's very nice. It says that on a school year basis, funds for basic education increased by more than 4 percent.

What gobbledygook. I mean, the budget isn't based on a school year basis and a 1.2 or 1.3 according to the budget document itself. But according to this document, if you look at the 1988 figure for basic education and compare it to last year's, you'd find that you get a 1.2 percent increase. The numbers are right here. It goes from \$1,271,725,400 in the 1987 budget up to \$1,287,456,400 in this year's budget, an increase of 1.2 percent.

So throwing in this "based on a school year" thing and then saying "4 percent" is just a way of fudging the issue and trying to make out that they've done something more or better than they actually did. It's nothing more than that Mr. Chairman.

The government, in producing this budget -- the Treasurer talked a lot about how it was such a good budget. I told him it was an accountant's budget a budget that just has a bunch of numbers in it. It has no heart, no soul. It doesn't seem to imply any vision or any dream other than an accountant wanting to balance a budget. It has no demand-side economic theory behind it; it even has no supply-side economic theory behind it.

To illustrate that point, I looked at some details. The northern development project, under Executive Council, Mr. Chairman, is down 7.5 percent in funding. There are six departments that have to do with economic development in this province. Taken together, along with the northern development project -- Career Development and Manpower is one; Economic Development and Trade is another; Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, Recreation and Parks, Tourism, Transportation and Utilities. Now, if you look at the numbers of each of those in this budget, add them all together, include Northern Development, and compare them to last year's figures -- I've got the old Bill 38 from last year -- you'll find that, in fact the increase is not an increase at all; it's a decrease of 3.7 percent for those six departments plus that project. And this is a government that believes they're going to help this economy get moving again and return prosperity to Alberta? Mr. Chairman, this government doesn't have any economic plan. They don't know where they're going, and they don't know what they're doing. If you consider that there's a 4 percent inflation rate as well, the 3.7 percent cut in those departments means that we really do not have much commitment to economic development in this province.

Now, last time we talked budget here -- a while back when we talked budget -- I asked a couple of fairly specific questions. I still didn't get an answer, so I'm going to ask them again and hope that this time the Treasurer will do that. On page 369 of the details of the budget, he increased the amount of money for Regulation of Financial Institutions from \$1 million to \$7.6 million. What I asked him was how much of that was going to go to the Code inquiry . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. McEACHERN: . . . and how much of it was a new initiative to increase the number of people involved in the regulation of the financial industries. I would like an answer on that question if I might. This is a time to talk of details, and I would like that kind of detail from the Treasurer if that's possible.

Now, I also wanted to know from the Treasurer, and I still have not had an answer on that yet either -- it's vote 2.2 on page 367 of the estimates, a section on Revenue and Rebates. I wanted to know if that drop of 13 percent in that category was a result of administrative cutbacks, trying to downsize government, as this government likes to call it or whether it was a result of a reduction in collection of revenues. I would hope the Treasurer would be able to answer that question for me. Also, I

had asked him if he would explain the 74 percent reduction in the Employee Insurance and Compensation section on page 369 of the budget but, of course, is indicated in the Bill before us under the Treasury Department. So there is a series of questions, then, Mr. Chairman, that I would like the Treasurer to try to answer for me if he might.

There is one particular part of this document, Bill 32, that bothers me most. Oh, there's a number of other ones I guess I could just mention fairly quickly. We've got some reductions here in Fatality Inquiries, the amount of money in that. Crimes Compensation, something the leader of the New Democratic Party raised in question period today: there's a reduction in the amount of money there, from \$1.158 million to \$1.066 million. Public Utilities Regulation is down. Gaming Control and Licensing is down. The government keeps cutting these things back, forgetting there's a 4 percent increase in the cost of living and so therefore they're cut even more than they would appear to be cut.

But the one thing that bothers me perhaps most of all, Mr. Chairman, is on page 6, under Career Development and Employment: Departmental Support Services of \$8,440,722. Now, what bothers me about that particular item is that it includes a fee to pay the minister of that department an indemnity over and above his MLA salary for being a cabinet minister. Now, I know that that happens for a lot of other cabinet ministers, too, and I sometimes wonder whether the Treasurer, after today's performance, really deserves the salary. But it is the Minister of Career Development and Employment that bothers me most, and that is because he has decided that he doesn't need to include in his estimates, in these votes 1, 2, 3, and 4 under his department, the \$113 million of lottery funds that he spent the other day, and that he now thinks that he can make it legal to go on doing that into the future.

Well, Mr. Chairman, Bill 10 will make that legal, I guess, if they insist on pushing it through, but the advice that this side of the House gave him was good advice. We suggested that the minister should not have the right to set up a fund outside of this budget. We suggested that the purpose of the expenditures of those funds should be fairly specific -- that is, for recreation and culture . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. member.

MR. McEACHERN: . . . and not . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Excuse me, hon. member. You're dealing directly now with Bill 10, which is before the House.

MR. McEACHERN: Well, yes, I am.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, hon. member. Members are wanting to address this Bill, and we are in committee stage. The Chair appreciates the concerns raised by the hon. member, but it's not appropriate to discuss Bill 10 during the committee stage of Bill 32. So perhaps the hon. member could move on to other sections of the Bill before us.

MR. McEACHERN: Well, Mr. Chairman. I do have the right in committee stage to make an amendment. So I would like to move an amendment to vote 1. In fact, if I could read the amendment, it says, "Bill 32 is amended . . ."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order, please. It would be helpful

before the hon. member reads the amendment to see that the Chair receives a copy, the Government House Leader receives a copy, and other members receive a copy, and then if the hon. member would speak to the amendment.

Would the committee consider reverting to Introduction of Special Guests while this is being distributed?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any disagreement?

Hon. Member for Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

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

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to members of the Assembly, the mayor of Pincher Creek, Dr. Juan Teran.

Dr. Juan Teran is an enthusiastic supporter of the Oldman River dam and is in Edmonton today to meet with various ministers to discuss government initiatives in the Pincher Creek area and, in particular, the development of the Westcastle ski hill. I'd ask Dr. Teran to please rise and receive the warm welcome of the members of the Assembly.

head: **GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS** (**Committee of the Whole**)

Bill 32 **Appropriation Act, 1988** (*continued*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway, the Chair will reserve a decision on whether or not your amendment is in order. But in the interim, would the hon. member address the amendment? The Chair will rule before the conclusion of the debate.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amendment as circulated reads:

Bill 32 is amended in schedule "B", under "Career Development and Employment", in Vote 1, "Departmental Support Services", by reducing the amount of the Vote by \$40,840 (the amount of the Minister's salary less \$1).

In other words, we think that he should be allowed \$1 because, I guess, the government will probably leave him his title. But for doing such a bad job with the lottery funds in Bill 10, we have decided that that is probably more than enough indemnity for his services.

Now, as I was saying a few minutes ago, we proposed an amendment to his Bill 10 with some good advice in it. We suggested that the lottery fund that the minister is going to have control of should not be outside the normal budgetary process. It should be part of the budget. We suggested that the reasons why he can hand out money from that fund should be specified; that is, it should be for recreation and culture and should not have the clause in it: "or for any other purpose" the minister thinks will advance the public good or is in the public interest, I think was the correct expression.

So, Mr. Chairman, I move this amendment because I believe that the minister does not understand the power of the purse in a parliamentary system is supposed to reside in the Assembly and that the minister should not be handling a fund outside of this

Assembly in a manner than can only be called a slush fund. Now, he said when he was debating this earlier that for 14 years they've been doing it this way. That doesn't make it right. He said that nobody complained. That's not true. For the last three years in a row the Auditor complained, and New Democrats complained before that, and in great detail, and suggested that it should be brought under the control of the Legislature.

So, Mr. Chairman, for those reasons I think the Minister of Career Development and Employment should have his salary slashed down to one dollar until he stops and realizes that it's this place that sets the budget for this province and not the minister, from some slush fund or another. I would urge all members in this Assembly to take this motion seriously and to tell the Minister of Career Development and Employment exactly what the score is in terms of who controls the power of the purse in this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking to the amendment, hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Just one important point on it. I think it's important to note that what is being done here is to show symbolically how little confidence we have in this minister to on his own whim and his own say-so expend what would be approximately a third of the dollars over which he does have any amount of control. We think it is just plain wrong that a minister should even ask for that kind of decision-making power for spending purposes without having that expenditure scrutinized by the Legislature. Now, the fact is that if a minister decides he wants to spend money in a certain way and his cabinet colleagues agree with him and the governing party has a majority of 61 out of 83, then that's the way it will be done in any case. But the fact is that the people have chosen 22 others as opposition members because they want those expenditures scrutinized publicly, not in secrecy behind the doors of the government cabinet room but publicly in the Legislature that represents the wishes and the concerns of all Albertans and not just the political aspirations and concerns of the governing party.

What we have is an attempt to keep one-third of the money spent under Career Development and Employment out of the budgetary process, out of the debating process, out of the public eye, so that anything can be done with it. I think the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona has very clearly illustrated in the last several days exactly what that can lead to without public debate. I think a minister who wants that kind of power must be indeed very hungry for power and should be willing to exercise that power without being recompensed more than a dollar for it, so I think it's perfectly appropriate that this Assembly let him know how we feel.

MR. HERON: Mr. Chairman, speaking to the motion . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Stony Plain, on the amendment.

MR. HERON: I must speak to the amendment, Mr. Chairman, in that I firmly believe it shows total disrespect for the parliamentary procedure.

The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry said: we wish to show symbolically. Well, I'll tell you what you're showing and what you're providing me. You're giving me concrete evidence that when I move out to the grass roots, as I have been doing lately, with hard evidence of your disrespect for the parlia-

mentary procedure -- it gives me great satisfaction to say that your days are numbered, believe me. You know, when I looked at the amendment the other day, for example, to reduce the Premier's salary by \$11,000 and I showed it to taxpayers, to businessmen, and to people, they just stared in disbelief that any person who could be elected to this office could be so insensitive and so disrespectful of this fine parliamentary procedure that they could take up the time.

No, I cannot support this amendment, Mr. Chairman, because I think that when action like this is known out there and when we convey to the taxpayers the cost of operating this Assembly for one day and we look day after day at such trivial, irrelevant, time-consuming amendments being presented by the members of the opposition, I can certainly, with all satisfaction, say that these neophyte students of drama seated in the opposition benches won't be here when the curtain falls in the next election.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Allow a neophyte to respond to a Neanderthal. I want to remind the . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: That's unparliamentary.

MR. SIGURDSON: Is that unparliamentary? Well . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speaking to the amendment, hon. member.

MR. SIGURDSON: Yes. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to speak to the amendment. And to the point that was raised by the hon. Member for Stony Plain, this is very much in parliamentary tradition. I can recall that back in 1973 your kissing cousins, the Social Credit Party in British Columbia, once moved this very similar motion to have the Premier's salary, then the hon. Dave Barrett, reduced by a sufficient amount so that he would only have a \$1 salary as well.

Now, I'm glad also, Mr. Chairman, that the member is going around listening to businesspeople, because I am sure they are amazed. They're amazed in my constituency as well that we would only reduce the Premier's salary by \$11,000, because they thought it ought to be reduced by a lot more.

However, specifically to the amendment, Mr. Chairman, is that it seems most appropriate that the Minister of Career Development and Employment, who is charged with the responsibilities of looking after the lotteries in this province, be left with a salary of \$1. Perhaps he'll be able to go out and purchase one of the lucky lottery tickets that we have in 6/36 or 6/49, and perhaps it won't be such a great loss after all; perhaps he, too, will get lucky. Perhaps he'll have the opportunity to watch on a Saturday night or a Wednesday night, whenever they broadcast the winning numbers, and perhaps he'll share in the pleasure, as many other Albertans do that go out and spend that \$1, and perhaps he'll win. It seems appropriate. And if he doesn't he'll be assured that the percentage, whatever percentage of that dollar is spent on the lottery tickets, was going to end up in his office anyway so he can do with it what he pleases. You see, either way he's going to win. He either gets it in his pocket on a winning ticket -- not too likely, because the chances are something like, you know, 1 in 14 million. But if he doesn't get it in his pocket on a direct windfall, he gets to count the surplus in his office. And then he gets to hand it out as he wants to.

Now, Mr. Chairman, some would say, "Well, there's nothing

wrong with that." Well, I happen to disagree. I think there is something wrong with that. I think all of that surplus lottery money ought to be before this Assembly so that all of us, each and every one of us, have the opportunity to carefully look at the proposed expenditure by this minister. If we don't have that opportunity, if the minister isn't required to defend those proposals for expenditure, then does the minister truly deserve that extra \$40,840? If he's not required to defend those expenditures, why should he be getting the extra money? Reducing this minister's salary by some \$40,840 is seemingly just, is seemingly fair, if he's not prepared to defend the expenditure of \$100 million, or perhaps even more. Perhaps even more, because he's able to hold back the amount of money for as long as he wishes, for as long as he wants. If he is not prepared to come and defend the spending of those public dollars in this Assembly, then he ought not to have the ministerial salary that goes along with it, and therefore I support this amendment.

Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary-Fish Creek.

MR. PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have before us an amendment that would propose the reduction of the ministerial salary of the Minister of Career Development and Employment to \$1. As I've tried to address the intent and content of that amendment, I've asked myself the value of this minister. And I think I can objectively say, in view of the fact that there are more Albertans working today in this province than in any time in our history, that this minister is doing his job and we're getting full value for his salary.

So, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to suggest that the amendment is entirely inappropriate, that this minister is worth every dollar of that ministerial salary, and furthermore, could I suggest that this amendment is not worth one plugged nickel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding, the Chair has not ruled as yet on the admissibility or the proper form of the amendment. It may be that members of the committee who are busily engaged in *Beauchesne* would read *Beauchesne* 497(1). Where, in fact, the amendment we're dealing with . . . On page 6 of Bill 32, Departmental Support Services, \$8,440,722, should perhaps be amended to \$8,399,882, as opposed to the proposed amendment. The Chair has yet to rule on that. However, debate is still in order.

MR. WRIGHT: Can you just repeat the number in *Beauchesne* you referred to, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 497(1).

On the amendment, please.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, on the amendment, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is incidental to the debate, hon. member, though the Chair would agree that it would obviously be fruitless if the Chair rules against the amendment before the conclusion of the debate.

Please continue.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. Mr. Chairman, we will get to the question of the form of the amendment in a moment, doubtless.

But speaking on the sense of the amendment, whether in this form precisely or another one, it is, as we I think all know, a

customary form of expressing dissatisfaction with the job being done by the minister. In this case, we are not weighing what he may be doing that's worth while against what he is doing that is execrable, in my respectful submission. We are simply marking our displeasure at what he is currently doing. We aren't talking about spilt milk; we're talking about what this minister is lending his authority to and accepting by way of the handling of lottery funds. So we're not carping about something in the past; we're carping about something in the present. And it is not something that's irrelevant and something that represents just an exercise in vacuity; it is something that is very essential to the purpose of our being here. We've said enough on that on the debate on the Bill.

But surely it is appropriate to mark what should be the consequences of that irresponsibility by reducing the minister's salary. It is something that any fair-minded person interested in the parliamentary process would not lend his or her name to; namely, the removing of the grant of millions and millions of dollars of public money from the purview of the Legislature. It's no answer to say that it comes in in public accounts. We're talking about before the money is spent. Our control is inelastic or insecure enough anyway, even when it goes through the estimates, that we can afford to let even that slip.

I know why this government is persisting in this course. It is because this fund represents a valuable source of patronage. Let's be clear about that. And the minister is the carrier of the slush bag. He shouldn't be the minister on those terms, and since he is the minister on those terms, he should not be paid. Consequently, the amendment is not only a reasonable one; it is a necessary one if we're going to observe proprieties. It is rich irony indeed that the hon. gentleman, the Member for Stony Plain, said that it was a perversion, or tried to establish that it was a perversion of our duties to be making this amendment. It is true that we do talk nonsense in this House sometimes, and that's not only on any particular side of the House. I'm afraid it's endemic in any democratic Assembly. It is an inefficient process, being democratic. A fascist system is much more efficient perhaps more to the mind of some members. But as a great man once said, "The democratic system may be very inefficient, but I don't know of a better."

So it is that we must in fact accept protests by groups such as ours, however doomed they are to failure, as a mark of the respect that ought to be paid to democratic process and is not being paid. And that's why I say to hon. members that if you are fair minded, you will vote for this amendment and mark your respect for the institution.

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I tried to restrain myself from rising and dealing with such trivia. I think, though, I was moved to rise because it is typical of the nonsense and the poppycock and the waste of this Assembly's valuable time when they bring forward an amendment in this fashion. I'm appalled that the opposition would abuse the democratic process and our time and the things that we're trying to accomplish in this Assembly for the people of Alberta by having to deal with this type of amendment.

Mr. Chairman, we stretch our imagination on this side of the House many times when we're dealing with amendments. My imagination can no longer be stretched to wrap around such an amendment and I just beg the opposition in this case to allow them to have their fun in this Assembly. We're trying to deal with a very important matter here. We can deal with Bill 10 in third reading. But I think that if the people of Alberta knew

what was going on from the opposition at this particular moment, they'd be appalled too.

So they've had their fun. Now let's get on with voting on this amendment and just see who sets the agenda for this Legislative Assembly and to whose responsible way this government acts on behalf of the people of Alberta. It's silly, and I'm insulted that it's before this Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Chair rules that the amendment is in order.

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can assure the minister that this is not in fun and this is not trivia, and I would hope that he would think of it in the proper and real terms. I don't perceive this to be funny, nor do I perceive it to be trivia.

I do not support the amendment, Mr. Chairman. However, the reason I don't is that I wish I felt that only one minister is perpetuating this outrageous and inexcusable situation. I wish I felt that he were responsible for this, but I don't. I don't feel that, and I don't support it for that reason. I feel that all ministers and all members are equally to blame for it. It is an outrageous situation, what has happened, and all MLAs and ministers participate in perpetuating the nonsense, in handing out largess, in handing out cheques, and in getting picture opportunities. They all participate in it. Mr. Chairman, I see this patronage as what I describe as purchased friendship, and that's exactly what it is. It's using Alberta citizens' money to purchase their own friendship, and I think it really has to come to an end.

Mr. Chairman, the whole spirit of the lottery funds and the reason there was legislation in the first place brought in to allow lotteries now comes into question. The lotteries were allowed and were put into place to allow support for particular groups, and the foundations were created to distribute those funds. But now we see the flaws in the whole system and have seen them, as has the Auditor General, for some years. Because that's not how it's being used or distributed. It wasn't put in place to serve this group who believe themselves, apparently, to be above the law, which frankly I do not comprehend. Last year when we drew it to their attention that they were not within their own regulations and that this was being called into question by the Auditor General each year, we suggested to the government that they had two choices: they could obey the law or, presumably, they could change the law. To my utter horror and astonishment, and I think to the astonishment of many Albertans, they simply chose to change the law. If you don't like the law, if you're operating outside of it, just use it to your own advantage and change it.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest to you that this minister is not alone in any way in what he's doing here. I think this is a real convenience and a very easy way for the government to buy friendship, to buy up votes, to buy up support across the province. I see changing the law and I see using it this way as a real misuse of power on the part of government, and so do many Albertans. In spite of that, with regret I can't support the amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding, because as hon. members are aware under Standing Order 61 we are going to be dealing with an appropriation Bill in the not too distant future . . .

Earlier the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands had raised a point of order to the Provincial Treasurer on the matter of misleading. The Chair is prepared to rule. The Chair has consulted *Beauchesne*, and as hon. members are aware, under *Beauchesne* 320(2) it has been unparliamentary. However, under *Beauchesne* 320(3), since '58 it has been ruled parliamentary. It's a question of intent; i.e., he/she/they misled and deliberately misled, et cetera, et cetera. It is the rule of the Chair that that, indeed, was not the comment, based on the interpretation of this Chair, by the Provincial Treasurer. So the point of order is not in order.

Hon. Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to have an opportunity to speak to the amendment, because of course this is the traditional parliamentary way in which the opposition expresses displeasure with a particular government policy. There are a couple of ways of doing it; this is the simplest way. But you know, it really is a waste of time, and everyone knows it. You're speaking to ourselves, quite frankly. I know that at some point they'll be able to say that they tried to vote my good colleague's wage down to a dollar. But you know, really, when you look at this in the context of the bigger debate, you've already heard these people across the way suggesting that they haven't had enough time to debate the issues, they've been precluded from making the cogent comments, they've been eliminated from having due process of examining the estimates. And what do they do? I mean, what do they do next? They bring in a noxious, trivial amendment really with no substance, really not debating the point at all, and trying to make some short-term points with the very few people who are here today. That's all they're doing, Mr. Chairman. That's all they're doing.

And they tend to ignore the other fundamental side of democratic government, and it hinges on one important point they assume that a minister himself is not responsible. Now, many times in the operation of government a minister is called upon to do certain things by ministerial order, by discretion of the minister, without coming back to the Parliament for confirmation or authority. He has to make those decisions, and that's why we have the system that it is. You can't possibly expect us to vet every one of the decisions that a cabinet minister makes into the Legislative Assembly. And this minister, Mr. Chairman, has exhibited good judgment in the way in which he has managed this fund. He has directed it to those areas which have been agreed to already: cultural institutions, fairs, those kinds of extra special provisions to those people who are working in partnership with the government to achieve meaningful ends. So saying that this minister is not responsible and saying that this minister has not carried out his ministerial responsibility is saying that the goals and objectives as described in lottery policy are wrong, are misdirected. Again, here we see the clear issues, the clear policy, and we will make advantage of that I can assure you.

Now let's come back to the reporting side, Mr. Chairman. In a normal parliamentary process, it is the requirement that we report these kinds of items. And I can assure you, as the Treasurer of the province, that the Auditor General will pass his views on the appropriateness of the expenditure, will ensure that the dollars are properly accounted for, will confirm that the decisions are wisely made. I know they can't absolutely say that in fact the dollars are totally effectively spent but they will. We know that the wisdom in the decision is there. I can hardly wait

until the Member for Calgary-Mountain View gets up and, tells us that they're misdirected spending. Now, I'd like to hear that statement.

In any event, there will be a full reporting, a full report. There are a variety of processes which are already in place which allow for the debate in the reporting. This is a separate fund, separate from the General Revenue Fund. It has all the characteristics of the General Revenue Fund and all the responsibilities for reporting, Mr. Chairman. So this fund will come back here, and the minister will be held accountable in front of Public Accounts. I'm sure that once he tables the annual statement of the fund, he'll be held accountable in question period. And he'll have to be accountable to the people of Alberta.

Now, that final test is the one that I would love to be involved in, Mr. Chairman, because the people of Alberta know full well that these dollars are being well managed and well used and well directed. I have no trouble at all justifying to my constituency, the Lethbridge fair board in particular and the cultural groups in my city, that these dollars are for their purposes. They understand it. They know that this is a parliamentary system where ministers have as much responsibility as the Legislative Assembly itself, and if they are not responsible and not accountable, then you vote someone else in. I think we're going to take that risk, Mr. Chairman. We're prepared to do it.

Let me look at the other-side-of-the law question which was raised by my colleague from Edmonton-Gold Bar. I recall we had a little discussion here about a year ago on the appropriateness of my colleague, my friend from Calgary-Buffalo, initiating legal action against the minister and myself. We went all through that, but as I understand it, the legal process is still operating. That is to say, the Member for Calgary-Buffalo, and I guess the Liberal Party as well, is probably suing the Minister of Career Development and Employment and myself. Well, if it is a matter of law, Mr. Chairman, I leave the question here. Will that action continue? Because if the member is accurate and it is as she says, outside the law, then I presume the action will continue. And we will see in court as to whether or not it is legal or not. Now, if that's the case, I don't want to put my good friend and myself in a difficult position. If that's the case, it'll be sorted out in the court process as well. So the legal side is beside us.

The Auditor General has said that if this fund is set up, the lottery funds are put in a special fund. As far as he's concerned, that's the reporting requirement he wants. It satisfies his test. There'll be no qualification, and the full reporting will take place.

So I wanted to make those three points, Mr. Chairman, simply focusing in that this does satisfy the Auditor General's requirements, that ministers are responsible, and they finally must satisfy their own electoral constituency, and I'm sure that'll be done. We don't mind carrying this debate in terms of process and spending direction to the people of Alberta. We don't mind that a bit. I know that the fair boards, as I've said, and the cultural groups in particular will benefit from these dollars. And finally, on the legal side, I'll even challenge the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar. If in fact you think it's illegal, as you're suggesting, then let's go to court. Let's see what happens in court. I bet you, Mr. Chairman, that with this movement, the test of legality will in fact be confirmed. This is a legal process, so let the record show that it is, in fact, a legal process, because it is within the authority of this Assembly to pass that law, and debate on Bill 10 will continue.

So, Mr. Chairman, I want to be sure that the record is clear

with respect to this, that in fact, fourthly, here we have spent a lot of time debating a very wasteful motion, one which detracts from the fundamental fiscal plan discussion and one which I know is not going to carry us anywhere.

So, Mr. Chairman, I move that the Assembly defeat soundly this amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

Hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View on the amendment.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Chairman, I guess the true colours of this government have come to the fore this afternoon. The obvious disdain and the arrogance which they have towards this place has certainly come forward in the debate and the comments we've heard this afternoon. It's clear that they don't consider what happens in this Assembly to be anything important. Clearly, all that it is to them is an irritant. It gets in the way of them being able to have their own way and to do things just the way they want to do, without having to answer to anyone for anything. That is the attitude that has certainly come forward in the comments we've heard this afternoon. That saddens me. Regardless of what our partisan differences might be, what happens in this Assembly should be important to the people of this province, not simply to be considered an irritant by the members of the government.

Now, it's not only the Member for Stony Plain; it was the Minister of Career Development and Employment. They had virtually the same words in their mouths for this particular amendment. It showed disrespect; it showed an abuse of the democratic system to criticize government policy. My, my, my, my. What have we come to in this province when a criticism of this government is somehow, all of a sudden, disrespect and abuse of the democratic system? I can't believe my ears that they would have that kind of arrogance and disdain, when it would be unparliamentary to criticize what this government does as being wrong. Because, Mr. Chairman, surely it is wrong.

It seemed to me that when the Member for Stony Plain stood up, he said: what a waste. The Provincial Treasurer echoed those comments this afternoon. All the money that goes into keeping this House running for one day to be used to try and bring some parliamentary principles back into the way business is conducted in this province: somehow the Member for Stony Plain thinks it's a waste of money.

MR. HERON: Trivial.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, you know, if he wants to take that argument to its logical conclusion, why don't we just get rid of this Assembly in the first place? It wouldn't cost anything. Is that what he wants? That's certainly the kind of thing he's arguing for in this Assembly. What he and his gang would like is just to simply be rid of this Assembly. Where these kinds of uncomfortable questions aren't asked, where they don't have to be answered . . . That's what we're making this government do, is answer for its arrogance, answer for its disrespect for the democratic process. They don't like it. Obviously, they don't like it.

They've had the run of this province for 17 years. They now have to deal with an opposition in this province, in this Assembly. They don't like it, but by golly, Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of people in this province who are dam glad that some-

body finally has a voice to bring these issues to the Assembly and remind this government that it is, in the final analysis, a parliamentary democracy that we have in Alberta, where ministers shouldn't have the power to simply dish out and dole out public money as they wish, without being accountable to anybody. Those days are going to be over with whether this government wants to do it willingly or is forced to do it by being embarrassed into it or finding that they're no longer the government.

Now, I would have liked at least somebody on the government side to stand up and thank the opposition, not for upholding parliamentary democracy, but look at the wonderful opportunity we've given members of the government to stand up and score brownie points. Think of all the wonderful things they could say about the minister of career development. Because what have we got in this province now? With the way that lottery funds are going to be distributed in the future, one minister will have it within his power and authority to determine who gets lottery money and who doesn't. Now, if the members for Lethbridge-East, Lethbridge-West, Calgary-Fish Creek, Wetaskiwin-Leduc, Stony Plain, or any of these ridings want something from the minister of lotteries, what are they going to have to do? They're going to have to go and curry favour with that minister, because he is all-omnipotent when it comes to the distribution of lottery funds. So now what we've done this afternoon, Mr. Chairman, is given all of these members the opportunity to set up political IOUs. They could all say wonderful things in defence of the minister of career development so that when it comes time to lobby him for money out of this political slush fund, they can go and say, "Look at all those wonderful things we said about you. all the complimentary things we said about you and told the Assembly about you."

You know, that's what's being set up in this province, Mr. Chairman. When one man has that power over public money, it's a personal slush fund that he can dish out at his whim if he likes. So what we're doing here this afternoon -- inadvertently, but nonetheless there's the opportunity there for government members to stand up and come to the defence of what a fine fellow the minister of career development really is. It will help them when it comes time to lobby him for lottery funds for their favourite projects in their ridings. That is the abuse and the potential abuse that can be placed on the way the lottery funds are going to be distributed. That's the potential abuse when you give the kind of power to one minister that is being requested by this minister, the minister of career development.

We're being accused of wasting the time of the Legislature. The fact that such an important principle escapes members of the government only tells me how this is such a vital and important principle governing the use of public funds in this Assembly, and the fact that it's escaped them is not only saddening, it's alarming. I certainly hope that as a result of all the things we've said in this Assembly, somewhere, sometime, somebody on the government side of the Assembly is going to realize that politically this just is not going to sell any longer. It offends not only the parliamentary principles of this Assembly; it offends the people of Alberta.

They say that they want to tell the public of Alberta about what we're doing, the opposition here this afternoon. I want them to do that. I would defy them to do that. I would ask them and beg and plead for them to go out and tell the people of this province that somebody, the opposition in this Assembly, is still standing up for the principles of parliamentary democracy. I'll be happy to do that. I'll be happy to tell the constituents of

Calgary-Mountain View anytime, anywhere, and any other provincial constituency in this province, that a minister of government has to be accountable to this Assembly for the spending of public money. I'm going to be happy to tell them that that's what I've stood up for. I'll be happy to tell them that that's what the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway is doing with his amendment this afternoon. I'd be happy to tell the people that any government minister ought to take requests for public money through the Legislature and defend those requests in estimates debate.

I'd be happy to tell them, Mr. Chairman, that this minister, the Minister of Career Development and Employment, believes that when it comes to him, these normal constraints of parliamentary democracy don't belong to him, that when it comes to lottery funds, this process of defending and being accountable for the use of public funds does not apply to him. I'll be happy to tell any member and any person in the public of the province of Alberta that that's his attitude and that I, as a member of this Assembly, did what I could to tell this minister that that attitude needs changing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

MR. NELSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to somehow thank the opposition for showing us this amendment and their arrogance, their ignorance. [Mr. Nelson tore a paper in two] That's what I think of their amendment.

Mr. Chairman, it's interesting to note, with an amendment of this nature, that we in this Assembly put a lot of hours into the jobs we do. I know that the opposition members -- particularly the one for Calgary-Mountain View has probably never earned that much money in his whole life. Any activity he's done -- and I say "activity" because I don't know that he's had a job. [interjections] In any event, it may be . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order in the committee, please, hon. members.

Calgary-McCall.

MR. NELSON: . . . that in dealing with the issue at hand here, maybe the opposition members should have their salaries reduced to a dollar, because that's about what they're worth.

Mr. Chairman, we talk about a democracy. We have a democracy, and it is not, as one member indicated, efficient. It is not efficient. It is one of the most inefficient systems in the world. Just ask any of us that are in the private sector. Fortunately, because the private sector and my business is able to function in an efficient manner, we're still there.

However, the terms "disdain" and "arrogance": I'd like to reverse that back and identify the fact that the members that have spoken with such irresponsible comments about disdain and arrogance and what have you, I think they ought to look in a mirror more often. What they may see might frighten themselves so badly that they might turn the mirror away from them.

Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm prepared to go out and answer to my constituents on the actions in this Legislature. Anytime. Any member of this Legislature, whether he's the minister or a private member, receiving a monetary compensation for the job they have to do is certainly not underpaid for doing those jobs.

MR. YOUNIE: On a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order. Edmonton-Glengarry?

MR. YOUNIE: Yes. It's 320 in *Beauchesne*, subsection (2). "Irresponsible" is considered unparliamentary and imputes a false motive and in this case is also factually inaccurate, and I would ask the member to withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary-McCall.

MR. NELSON: Additionally. Mr. Chairman, we have terms of "disrespect" "abuse" of the system. If we want to talk about words and so on and so forth, I think these types of words -- "disrespect," "abuse" -- reflect on the integrity of some members.

Mr. Chairman, we talk about the responsibilities, and I would suggest that the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary-McCall, the Chair hesitates to interrupt, but under Standing Order 61(4) the amendment has now died. The Chair must put the question to hon. members on appropriation Bill 32.

[The sections of Bill 32 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I move that Bill 32 be reported.

[Motion carried]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Yes. Mr. Chairman. I'm wondering if the Chair would indicate when the Chair would be making a decision on the point of order that was earlier raised by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair will rule next time the committee sits.

MR. DAY: Point of order. Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order. Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Speaking to the point of order, Mr. Chairman, the member opposite . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Chair has already ruled. The Chair will defer decision and report to the committee next sitting time.

Bill 13, the hon. Member for Stony Plain.

Bill 13 Surveys Amendment Act, 1988

MR. HERON: Thank you. Mr. Chairman. The support of Bill 13 by opposition members at second reading leaves little requirement for further or extensive remarks, and I therefore ask for the co-operation of all members to pass it through this stage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any comments, questions, or amendments to Bill 13? Are you ready for the question?

[The sections of Bill 13 agreed to]

[Title and preamble agreed to]

MR. HERON: I move that Bill 13 be reported.

[Motion carried]

Bill 11 Motion Picture Development Amendment Act, 1988

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question?

Hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Good heavens, Mr. Chairman, you speak quickly sometimes. I thought you'd called the Member for Calgary-McCall and was looking for a Bill with his name attached to it under Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Chairman, I do have a couple of questions with respect to the specific allocations that are to be approved by the minister in this additional infusion of funds for the Alberta Motion Picture Development Corporation. As I've indicated under second reading, I do support this Bill. I again reiterate the point that when it comes to funding for the arts in Alberta -- and this will be reflected in a Bill I will soon introduce in the Assembly -- my best advice from artists in Alberta is that those decisions are best made by artists themselves through a body that is primarily elected, although somewhat appointed by the government so that a balance can be achieved.

But in this instance the AMPDC has got a reasonable track record, as you probably know. Mr. Chairman, and I wonder if the minister at this point could indicate what projects are on stream for this new infusion of money. As I say, it's welcomed by every artist. I'll tell you that every writer, every performing artist, every literary artist wishes their foundation could get the same sort of money that the minister is willing to inject; that is, an increase from \$3 million to \$10 million under provision of this Bill. They'd all like to have really strong financial support from this government, which has hitherto been initially withdrawn -- that is, by last year's budget, in substantial amounts, I might add -- and now more recently scattered by way of a ministerial decision; that is, through the lottery fund allocations. One doesn't ever object to the money being allocated. One objects to the process by which it is allocated. Nonetheless, artists themselves would like to have the sort of commitment that the hon. Minister for Economic Development and Trade has shown in his Bill 11.

So I may have further questions after the minister replies, but I believe he's sufficiently in touch with the AMPDC to give us some indications as to projects which are now coming on stream or being contemplated for the expenditure of these funds, and I'd like to hear at least some of those, Mr. Minister.

MR. SHABEN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the interest of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands in this important piece of legislation and in the industry itself.

The first comment the member made was how the minister intends to appropriate the money, and I'm sure that was just unintended in terms of the way the question was put. The board will appropriate the money, the board of the Motion Picture Development Corporation, not the minister.

The member also expressed a view, which I share, that those individuals who are involved in this industry are important sources of advice to both the board and the government. and as a result the board has established an advisory committee made up

of filmmakers and artists who are well known across this province who provide advice to the board on a regular basis on policies and directions that the Motion Picture Development Corporation board should go.

I'm aware of a number of projects that the board has been involved in assisting in preproduction costs over the years, and these are enumerated in the annual reports of the Motion Picture Development Corporation. But of particular interest are some producers who have been very successful in the past. For example, Anne Wheeler is putting together a new film and is looking to complete the financing. As well as Wendy Wacko, who is well known to many Albertans for her excellent work, there are a number of other producers who also are planning major productions.

The intent of the legislation is for the Motion Picture Development Corporation to not take the lead in providing the financing but to serve as a top-up agency. As a matter of fact, the restriction in the legislation restricts that input to a maximum of 25 percent of the capital of the film. There are a number of films that are under consideration, and as they are developed I'm sure I can make that information available to the hon. member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for his response. I would like to clarify that when I referred to the minister at the outset of my comments. I was not referring to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. I should have made that clear. I was referring to the minister responsible for the disbursement of lottery funds, who is, ultimately, the Minister of Career Development and Employment and, consequently, the Minister for Culture and Multiculturalism.

I understand and am glad to hear that producers like Wendy Wacko and Anne Wheeler are two who are being considered at this point or who have some commitment from AMPDC for financial support for their endeavours, both of which are really good. I wonder, though, if the minister is aware that . . . Is most of the money that is now being allocated to the AMPDC through this particular Bill, the expansion of those funds -- is a lot of that already determined, or should applicants consider themselves still free to come to the AMPDC with their projects, whether they're to be launched or under way? I ask specifically because I'm aware of some filmmakers who are really anxious to finish off some of the films they've done, and they've been everywhere and simply can't get that last little bit of money. I wonder if the minister knows if they are able to come at this point, what advice I should give them, and how much, basically, has been earmarked so far, or if the process in fact is just now starting with the passage of this Bill, which I expect will happen very soon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd

like to add my support to that of the Member for Edmonton-Highlands. I see that one of the major changes in this Bill now is to move from simply making development loans to being allowed to make equity investments in the development of films and motion pictures. Well, that's good, and it's long overdue. I think it's something that's been needed in this province for a long time.

So I couldn't help but remember, Mr. Chairman, Tri-Media Studios. I don't know whether all members of the Assembly will remember Tri-Media Studios, but it wasn't too many years ago when a group of businesspeople in Calgary had an idea for establishing a major motion picture studio in this province. They did it partly as a result of encouragement they received at the time from the provincial government and came eventually to this government back in 1982 with a request for both guarantees and, I believe, equity investments in order to get that major film studio program off the ground. If I recall the figures that they were speaking about, it was many millions of dollars. They made an investment in the city of Calgary in order to develop that kind of an industry here when it was needed.

They came to the provincial government. What did the provincial government tell them? They said, "We can't help you." Well, they may have had good reasons for doing that; I don't know. All I know, Mr. Chairman, is that five or six years ago now, when a group of people in the city of Calgary had an idea, put their money on the table -- they wanted to get this industry off the ground -- they came to the provincial government, to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade at the time, to ask for help -- investments, loan guarantees -- to get that business off the ground . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. member. The Chair is constrained by Standing Order 4(2).

Hon. Government House Leader.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Chairman, I would move that the committee rise and report progress.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration the following Bills and reports the following: Bill 13 and Bill 32, and reports progress on Bill 11.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the report, does the Assembly agree?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? So ordered.

[At 5:28 p.m. the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]