

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Tuesday, June 14, 1988 2:30 p.m.**

Date: 88/06/14

(The House met at 2:30 p.m.)

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our Father, keep us mindful of the special and unique opportunity we have to work for our constituents and our province, and in that work give us both strength and wisdom.

Amen.

head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 21, I wish to give notice that I intend to move, when Bill 21 is called for resumption of debate at second reading, that debate on the Bill shall not be further adjourned.

Mr. Speaker, also pursuant to Standing Order 21, I wish to give notice that I intend to move, when Bill 22 is called for resumption of debate at second reading, that debate on the Bill shall not be further adjourned.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to give oral notice of my intention to move, following the completion of routine orders and before the calling of the Orders of the Day and pursuant to Standing Order 40, the following motion:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly recognize the outstanding achievement of Ms Angela Cheng, an Edmonton pianist, on winning the grand prize in the 1988 Montreal International Music Competition and for also winning the special prize for best interpretation of the imposed piece, a piece of music especially written for this competition.

Mr. Speaker, I have copies for all members.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

Bill 54**Small Power Research and Development Act**

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 54, the Small POWER Research and Development Act.

This Bill follows up the report of the small power inquiry conducted at this government's direction by the Energy Resources Conservation Board and the Public Utilities Board, and when passed, it will fulfill our commitment to the small power producers of Abbot to facilitate the development of small electric generating projects in the province. In addition, Mr.

Speaker, the Bill sets the allocation of up to 125 megawatts of power with a built-in incentive price for potential small power producers. The Bill defines eligible projects as those relating to renewable resources; for example, hydro, wind, and biomass.

[Leave granted; Bill 54 read a first time]

Bill 57**Alberta Agricultural Research Institute Amendment Act, 1988**

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 57, the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple amendment which will allow us to use the expertise of additional Members of the Legislative Assembly on this commission if we wish.

[Leave granted; Bill 57 read a first time]

Bill 58**Water Resources Commission Amendment Act, 1988**

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 58, the Water Resources Commission Amendment Act, 1988.

Mr. Speaker, this will simply allow us also to exercise greater usage of the expertise of Members of the Legislative Assembly, plus to correct a minor error as it relates to the title of our assistant deputy minister within the Department of Agriculture.

[Leave granted; Bill 58 read a first time]

Bill 55**Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1988**

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce for first reading Bill 55, the Child Welfare Amendment Act, 1988.

This Bill responds to the recommendations of the Provincial Advisory Committee on the Family concerning private adoption in Alberta. In addition, it reframes the legal terms to spell out more clearly the original intent of the respective roles of the Children's Guardian, the directors of child welfare, and the appeal panel under the Act, and also addresses policy and administrative issues which have been identified since the Act was proclaimed three years ago.

[Leave granted; Bill 55 read a first time]

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure on behalf of the hon. Member for Redwater-Andrew, the hon. Steve Zarusky, to introduce a group of grade 6 students from the Bruderheim school. We have 21 individuals within this group, and they are joined by their teacher Mr. Boris Radio and parents Mrs. Magistaad and Mrs. Normand. They are in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they would rise so that they could receive the traditional warm welcome of the Legislative Assembly.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to introduce as well a group of students from the Laurier Heights school in the heart of the Edmonton-Glenora constituency. Twenty-three grade 6 students are accompanied by their teacher

Mrs. Ester Woodrow. I would ask that the students rise and receive a warm welcome to the Alberta Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry, followed by the Minister of Social Services.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm delighted today to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, a group of 29 grade 6 students from the Glengarry elementary school. I was privileged to visit them some time back in their classroom, where I was greeted by students in ethnic costumes, students who presented me with an hour of incisive questions and then treated me to ethnic foods. I was especially pleased with a bonny Scottish lass who treated me to real Scottish shortbread. They're here today with their delightfully enthusiastic teacher Ms. Mona Nashman, and Barb Yakimowich, the driver. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and to members of the Assembly, a number of women visiting us from various constituencies today. These ladies, mothers themselves, wanted to convey through their presence here their support for the Premier's and this government's views on the importance of the family in society and to affirm their commitment to the maintenance of strong family life in our province. I would ask them to stand as I introduce them and remain standing to receive the warm welcome of the Assembly. First is Mary Ann Felicitas from Edmonton-Highlands; Cecilia Germaine from Edmonton-Belmont; Wendy Bourque from Edmonton-Gold Bar; Raina Albers from Edmonton-Avonmore; Linda Hearn from Edmonton-Gold Bar; Judith Cousins, Edmonton-Avonmore; Michelle Green, Edmonton-Whitemud; and Barb Cossitt, St. Albert. I would ask that the members of the Assembly give a very warm welcome to our visitors.

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the other members of the Assembly, three gentlemen representing the town of Sundre who have driven up to join us today: Mr. Harvey Doering, Mr. John Whitesell, Mr. Paul Webb. I wonder if they'd stand and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have the all too rare pleasure to introduce to you and members of the Assembly, 32 enthusiastic grade 10 students, some with some very difficult questions, from Ernest Manning school in beautiful Calgary-Buffalo. They're in the public gallery, accompanied by their teachers Linda Dimond-Cerciello, Jim Cottrell, and Barry Yee, and I would ask them to rise and accept the warm welcome of the members of this Assembly.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Proposed Privatization of AGT

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Technology, Research, and Telecommunications. We expect that a decision is expected soon on a proposal to sell all or part of Alberta telephones to private investors. I would remind members that

Dominion Securities has been doing a study since January 1987, and this followed a resolution from the Neanderthals at the 1987 PC convention, who passed a resolution promoting this. I remind this minister that AGT has given over 80 years of faithful service to the people of Alberta. Knowing how this government feels about legislative democracy -- we've just seen that in action, Mr. Speaker -- is it the intention of this government to wait until we're out of the Legislature before they make the announcement about privatizing some or all of AGT?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I am sure that every Albertan appreciates the contribution of Alberta Government Telephones to the high quality of services to every corner of this province. Any decision made by the government will be to maintain that quality of service, and I cannot determine when or whether a decision would be made to sell Alberta Government Telephones. The hon. Leader of the Opposition is correct in raising the fact that the government has indeed been studying the financial restructuring of Alberta Government Telephones, but again no decision has been made with respect to that matter.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's clear to almost everybody -- we can deny it here -- where the government is going, and we'll get into the quality of service. But I want to ask the minister: what assessment has the government made of the fact that selling off AGT may very well place the telephone system under federal jurisdiction, as it is with most of the Bell system in Canada now?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, the question is obviously a speculative one. It may do. But much more imminent considerations are legal actions currently under way and that have been under way for some time, concerning whether Alberta Government Telephones or some elements of the services of Alberta Government Telephones, in terms of interconnect, will be under federal or provincial jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I would indicate to all hon. members that both the federal and the provincial governments have worked very hard at trying to arrive at an understanding for a Canadian regulatory system that would be sensitive to and respect both federal and provincial jurisdictions irrespective of court determinations or any other eventualities.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister's well aware that most of the Canadian system is now under federal jurisdiction, and if you have complaints about rates or service, you have to go to Ottawa. He talked about the quality of service. My question is to the minister. What guarantee can this government give that service standards, especially for rural people, and low rates will be maintained, if I might put it this way, once private owners move into the system?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the government would be very concerned to assure that the regulatory system continues to provide for quality of service. Secondly, the same would be true with respect to costs. It is our commitment to maintain the most economic system that it's possible to develop. Those principles stand behind Alberta Government Telephones and the government's ownership thereof or relationship thereto, irrespective of what other decisions are made.

MR. SPEAKER: Final.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, yes, last supplementary to the minister. I think of the old saying: if it's not broke, don't try to fix it.

But a former Conservative MLA who sat in this House, Mr. Keith Alexander, is employed by Dominion Securities. Does anybody in their right mind think that Mr. Right-wing was seriously going to recommend maintaining this Crown corporation? My question, then, to the minister, because he says there isn't a decision made: will the minister advise whether Dominion Securities has made any recommendations to this government to sell shares in AGT, and if so, will he table his report?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, as all hon. members know, there has been a continuing public discussion about the future of Alberta Government Telephones and about how it should be organized. I want to emphasize that there are those on the one side -- and I believe there are many of them -- who recognize that the technology is changing very rapidly and in some cases radically and creating a movement so that the preponderance of Alberta Government Telephones' or any telecommunications companies' activities is shifting from the public sector, the monopoly area which is regulated, to the unregulated, competitive area. That's happening with Alberta Government Telephones. That does lend force to the importance of the considerations that Alberta Government Telephones might be in private hands a much more powerful tool for the diversification of the economy, along with the supplying of services at economic rates that it now does. Mr. Speaker, those are debates that are going forward. As I indicated earlier, no decisions are made on those, and neither is there any decision made on the financial structuring of AGT.

MR. MITCHELL: To the minister. Will Keith Alexander's brokerage firm, which has had the responsibility of recommending, obviously, to privatize AGT, now receive a commission for the sale of the shares that will be involved in that privatization?

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, obviously, if there's been no decision made to sell a part of or all of Alberta Government Telephones, there can't possibly have been any decision made on commissions or who would be the brokerage firm or firms involved.

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-Avonmore.

Reports of Advisory Council on Women's Issues

MS LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Premier. Yesterday the Advisory Council on Women's Issues released a report which included a number of recommendations in regard to native education, immigrant women, funds for shelter, and discrimination on the basis of marital status. An organization called Single and Divorced Speak Out has been challenging the government on this last issue for several years. Will the Premier direct the Minister of Social Services, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care to review all existing regulations in regard to pensions, grants, and benefits based on marital status and direct them to remove such discriminatory clauses?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it is true that the report has been received from the advisory council, and it's also true that over a course of ministers' fulfilling their responsibilities, they are consistently reviewing various policy matters, problems, recommendations within the public service and within the government's policies for all Albertans. These matters are reviewed on an ongoing basis. The report from the advisory committee will be reviewed and dealt with in due course. The minister responsible for women's issues and for the advisory council may wish to supplement my comments.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, it is true we have received another series of recommendations from the advisory council, and it is our intention, as we did last time, to have a speedy and co-ordinated response from the government. Appreciating that we are at this time very busy in the session, we will do that just as quickly as we can.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier. Could the Premier advise this Assembly how he can in any way defend the discrimination that is seen in many of the regulations of his government on the basis of marital status?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't try to.

MS LAING: Well, let's try another one. To the Minister of Career Development and Employment. In view of the fact that the advisory council's report brought to light many of the difficulties immigrant women face, will the minister begin to address these problems by ensuring that half, not just a token one or two, of the members on the Immigration and Settlement Services Advisory Committee be women?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, during my review of the membership of that organization I solicited nominations from all Albertans, a wide variety of Albertans, from my colleagues, and I might say that we did not get a high calibre of nominations from the women in terms of numbers. We had some 40 or 50 nominations, of which four were women. I would like to get a larger number of women involved in the process, but I must receive nominations. We're going through that process at this particular time.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Would he be more proactive and seek out suitable women for this advisory committee to address the very serious difficulties that immigrant women suffer from and experience? I would ask for his commitment to such proactive action.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have done that. I have sought out nominations, and I have talked to a number of women who are interested in serving on that committee, and we will be reviewing it. I'm satisfied with the numbers now that have come forward; we have now a wide range to consider. I have restricted the committee basically at this stage to members of the visible minorities. Of the 60 nominations I've got, one of the women was from a visible minority, so it made it very difficult for me to make a selection on that basis. But now we have been proactive in the area of soliciting women from the visible minorities, and I believe the hon. member will be satisfied with the recommendations that come forward and the decisions we make in the near future.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. This is our second report from the commission, and it's nine months since we had the earlier report. To the Premier. Will the Premier tell the House why we've seen no action at all on the 10 recommendations regarding day care and three remaining recommendations on women's health care from a nine-month-old report? What is the holdup? Does this commission mean anything at all to the government?

MR. SPEAKER: The last question will be good enough.

MR. GETTY: There was more than one question there. The matter has been dealt with already by the minister responsible for the advisory council, and I ask her to respond again.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, on the many recommendations that the women's council brought back to us last fall, one very important portion of their recommendations dealt with child care. As everyone in this Assembly knows, the entire nation is now debating what will be appropriate policies region by region across our country. Our Minister of Social Services is reviewing in depth and at length our child care policies in Alberta to ensure that we have a made-in-Alberta policy that will suit the needs and aspirations of the families in Alberta.

On other recommendations in the health care field one of them that the women's council made was to reinsure sterilization and IUD insertions, and we responded with a certain promptitude to that request and recommendation. To another we have several answers. Other recommendations that they made were equally quickly responded to; for example, the minimum wage, which was raised as they recommended. I could go on at length, Mr. Speaker, but I . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. That will suffice for today.

Leader of the Liberal Party.

Interbasin Transfer of Water

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, my question today is to the Premier, and it's on the Mulroney trade agreement. On May 27 I raised a question with the House that water may be one of the resources affected by the free trade agreement, but the Premier assured us that there's no intent to export water to the United States. But despite statements made by this and the federal government, it would appear that interbasin transfers of water could be legal under the free trade agreement. Now, could the Premier tell the House: just why were interbasin transfers of water not excluded, left out of the free trade agreement?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the government has no intentions of being involved in any interbasin transfer of waters or of exporting any water to the United States.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, it's not enough to say that. In the agreement it's quite possible.

Is the Premier aware, then, of any provincial studies that have been done which examine whether or not the free trade agreement provisions will infringe on the federal and provincial policies, the federal and provincial rights to control interbasin transfer of waters?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I gather the hon. member is reviewing some stories that pop up from time to time in the *Toronto Star*, which newspaper is so vehemently opposed to the free trade agreement, wanting to do as it normally does: protect the interests of Ontario. Frankly, pay no attention to the *Toronto Star's* comments on free trade. However, as far as studies, in terms of studies regarding water management our Minister of the Environment may wish to supplement my answers.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, last year in 1987 the Canadian ministers of the environment along with the federal Minister of the Environment issued a very major policy statement with respect to water management of the country of Canada. That statement has been tabled in this House and covers a policy with respect to that matter.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, it seems that the leader of the Liberal Party continues to ignore the existence of a very important document called Water Resource Management Principles for Alberta, that we've talked about ad nauseam already this spring in this Legislative Assembly with respect to the estimates of the Minister of the Environment. I would like to point out quite emphatically that point 18 in the policy says:

Water Not for Export

Alberta will not be party to any undertaking for the possible export of water beyond Canadian borders.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can provide more clarification if it's necessary to the leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. SPEAKER: Second supplementary.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, did you say second supplementary?

Mr. Speaker, the question is this. They're signing a free trade agreement so that provinces and the federal government can't unilaterally go ahead. The point of the matter is that quite clearly interbasin transfers of water are permissible under this agreement. Could the Premier then inform us whether or not he knows of any federal studies that have dealt with whether or not the free trade agreement has power over interbasin studies?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any, and I don't care. Frankly, our policy is clear. The minister has just stated it. We understand the Liberal Party is so strongly against free trade for Canada. Nevertheless, we are pursuing it. We believe it's a remarkable opportunity for Albertans.

As far as the export of water from this province, our policy is clear. We will not be party to any such export, nor will we allow it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, is the Premier aware that the word "goods" in the free trade agreement is defined as how the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, GATT, defines "goods"? That's how they define "goods". GATT defines water as a "good". So how can he, after reading this, in particular article 201(1), argue that the provincial government hasn't given up the right to control interbasin transfers?

MR. GETTY: He not only argues it, Mr. Speaker, but he says it. We have not, we will not, and we won't be party to it.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you. To the Premier. Is the Premier

aware of negotiations between the province of Alberta and the state of Montana to allow Montana farmers to purchase storage of water behind the proposed Milk River dam?

MR. GETTY: There are from time to time, Mr. Speaker, approaches made to Alberta because we have such abundant water resources and they are so well managed in this province under the responsibilities of our Minister of the Environment. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, again our policy is clear.

MR. SPEAKER: Cypress-Redcliff, supplementary.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary question to the Premier. I wonder if the Premier can confirm to the Assembly that the water that's stored or possibly would be stored behind the Milk River dam is that water that's been inter-basin transferred in the United States into the Milk River system.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, that is a fact. The hon. Minister of the Environment may want to give the House additional facts, because I don't want to deal with something like that in such a narrow way.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I rise at the invitation of the Premier. It's really quite incredulous. The Milk River flows from the province of Alberta into the state of Montana. It's a river. Water comes from Alberta into Montana. The question raised by the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry is just absolutely nonsensical. What he's suggesting is that we should somehow stop the flow of water that just naturally flows through a particular system into another jurisdiction. The Member for Cypress-Redcliff is just right on the mark, as verified by the Premier.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Little Bow, main question, followed by Bow Valley, then Edmonton-Highlands.

French Language Legislation

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney General, who's responsible for language rights in the province. Could the Attorney General indicate the status of the contemplated legislation in regards to this topic and when the proposed legislation may be introduced into the Assembly?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the subject of languages has been under discussion now with various groups and individuals within the province of Alberta since the decision in the *Mercure* case and the Saskatchewan government legislation which was introduced and passed in the course of their legislative sitting. As yet no firm decision has been made as to the date of introduction of any legislation to deal with the issue in Alberta since, as yet, there is no legal requirement from the Supreme Court of Canada that we move in that area. It is certainly under active consideration and, in due course, will be dealt with in the Assembly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker. The language legislation proposed or forthcoming will affect a cross section of language groups in the province of Alberta. Could the minister indicate whether he or officials in the department have spoken to representatives other than just the representatives of the French language with regards to the impli-

cations of such an Act?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, our primary discussions have taken place as recently as yesterday with the French-Canadian association of Alberta, although I've had representations, as I'm sure all hon. members have had from individuals and organizations from within their own constituencies on this subject. I have had discussions with representatives of other groups having different ethnic origins in Alberta on the subject as well. I've received their representations; I've received quite a number of them, as a matter of fact.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, supplementary to the minister. Upon the possible introduction of the legislation in this spring session, would there be any consideration given to the introduction of the legislation, allowing it to sit in Committee of the Whole for finalization in the fall session?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the time that any legislation might take, of course, is within the hands of the Assembly to decide. In view of the fact that we're going to be sitting here during the months of July and August, I'm told, perhaps we will have ample time during the current sitting.

MR. R. SPEAKER: A final question, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. The federal government has added to their budget some \$195 million for this current year to promote the concept of bilingualism. Could the minister indicate what amount of that money will be available to Alberta for purposes such as bilingualism or even multilingualism in the province of Alberta?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, there's a number of federal programs and funds made available relative to different aspects of this issue, one of which relates to education in terms of providing opportunities for immersion courses at the primary and secondary levels. Some funds are made available as well for postsecondary educational opportunities.

Then, of course, there is the issue that impacts on the portfolio I hold as Attorney General relative to the issue of providing court services, and that is a matter which is still under discussion with the federal government, although I'll be very frank in admitting to members of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that the federal government has not been very forthcoming in terms of funds that they are proposing to make available to assist in providing bilingual training and upgrading opportunities for members of the Attorney General's department. But those matters are going to be discussed, and we will await the federal government's initiative in some respects to discuss those matters with us, although the ministers of Education and Advanced Education have already had discussions on the subject, I'm aware of, with the Secretary of State.

MR. TAYLOR: Supplementary to the minister, if I may, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister be able to assure the House that any moves to multilingual or multilanguage study will still protect the place of French as a special language in the Canadian Confederation and in Alberta in particular?

MR. HORSMAN: Well, that's a very broad question that I really have trouble relating to the original questions asked by the Member for Little Bow, because it obviously involves the subject of multiculturalism within the province and the initiatives that have been taken by our government with respect to the es-

tablishment of the Department of Culture and Multiculturalism and the Multicultural Commission. So it is clear that those matters will be considered there and of course will be considered in discussions with the federal government relative to any funding initiatives which they may wish to discuss with us.

MR. SPEAKER: Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

MR. PIQUETTE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Both the Ukrainian and French associations have come out in favour of a language commission to study the whole issue of French language rights and minority language rights in the province of Alberta. Will the minister commit himself to naming such a language commission before legislation is enacted here, to make sure we are making the proper decisions in terms of the realities of the situation here in Alberta?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche is not quite accurate in what he says relative to support for the notion of a commission. We have had a suggestion presented to the government by a member of the Ukrainian community, but it's been very preliminary in its nature. It has been discussed, I understand, with some members of the Ukrainian community and the French-Canadian association and was discussed yesterday in a very preliminary way between the hon. Minister of Education and myself and representatives of the French-Canadian association. But at this stage it is far too early to pass judgment on the proposal and the many implications that are associated with that. Furthermore, I indicated to the president of the French-Canadian association yesterday that it would certainly be necessary to discuss the matter very carefully with my colleague the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism and with the chairman of the Multicultural Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Bow Valley, followed by Edmonton-Highlands and Calgary-Buffalo.

Trucking Industry Regulations

MR. MUSGROVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Utilities. Recently I've been contacted by several people from the oil patch who are concerned over the new hours of work regulations that were announced recently. Could the minister clarify for the House just what is happening in this regard?

MR. ADAIR: Well, Mr. Speaker, the recent discussions about hours of work are not new; they've been in place since 1973. This past year they were transferred from one federal government department to another federal government department with the input in the regulations then coming to each of us in the provinces. That is occurring. We met as recently as two weeks ago with some of the officials in the oil patch relative to concerns that they had. The president of the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors, Mr. Doyle, I believe his name is, and a group of his directors were in to discuss issues and to find out from us possibly whether exemptions that were there in the past might be included in the new regulations.

MR. MUSGROVE: Are there any exemptions or exceptions in the new regulations?

MR. ADAIR: Mr. Speaker, there have been exemptions and exceptions in the past, and I think that was the concern raised by a number of people both in the oil patch and the agricultural industry, whether they would continue. It was our assurance to them that we would do everything we could to make sure that in fact did occur so that there was nothing that would change in a major way the workings of the oil patch or the agricultural industry.

MR. MUSGROVE: Has the minister met with some of the oil patch officials to discuss these changes?

MR. ADAIR: Yes, we have, Mr. Speaker. We've met, as I said a little while ago, with the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors and other officials. I met with them personally as recently as the first part of April, and then our officials have been working with them to set out changes that they would like to see in place, one of which was a consideration for what they considered to be averaging the 28-hour a week averaging clause that we are working on with them now. They would be presented at some time between now and September 1, 1988, to the Motor Transport Association.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Final supplementary, Bow Valley.

MR. MUSGROVE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the minister. Do these changes affect any other trucking industry such as gravel truckers or dock contractors, et cetera?

MR. ADAIR: Well, not really, Mr. Speaker, although I think the hours of work affect all of the trucking industry. But we've been working with the industry, and I think it's important to point out that Alberta has been the leader and is the least regulated of any province in Canada in the area of trucking regulation. The only major concern we have is safety, and we are working and continue to work with the industry to ensure that safety is prime and that the balance of those other concerns are raised and worked out with them. We've been doing that on an ongoing basis, and we thank the industry for that co-operation.

Defence Research Establishment Suffield

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, the federal defence minister for Canada has admitted that certain lethal nerve gases and their equally deadly antidotes were tested on at least three separate occasions in southern Alberta last year. Now, I contend that that stuff is dirty business. The United Nations says it is, and I think that Albertans say it is. My question is to the minister of inter-governmental affairs on behalf of all Albertans, I think, who want to know: was the minister advised prior to the conducting of those tests that they were scheduled to be conducted?

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, testing which takes place in the Defence Research Establishment at Suffield, which is quite close to my constituency and in a very large military base, occurs for defensive purposes, and I am kept informed in a general way as to the activities that are taking place there as part of the Department of the National Defence. With regard to the specific tests in question, I have not had that matter brought to my

personal attention. However, I will discuss this matter with my department.

I understand that the Minister of National Defence today answered questions on this matter in the House of Commons. I will be reviewing those answers very carefully and discussing the matter with him.

MS BARRETT: My God, I'd be on the phone to the minister, Mr. Speaker.

Is the minister aware if disaster services of Alberta were ever notified through the Environment minister's department, or if anybody in the front bench was notified, in case a disaster did occur?

MR. HORSMAN: Well, the hon. member should contain her excitement [interjections]

You know, this country has a very extensive and well-regulated, carefully controlled Defence Research Establishment at Suffield. It's been in existence there for well over 40 years. Military defensive testing has taken place there, and I think it merits careful review with the Department of National Defence. That I will undertake to do.

MS BARRETT: Well, a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister prepared to carry a message from Albertans, hundreds of thousands who have signed petitions calling for peace initiatives instead of biochemical war initiatives? Has he taken that message to the federal defence minister and told him: stop testing this chemical stuff in Alberta?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has misconstrued the actions of the Department of National Defence and the research that they carry on. It is purely defensive; it is not and has never been designed for warlike purposes, as the hon. member has stated in the preamble to her question. This government supports the government of Canada in its efforts in national defence of this country, and we certainly support the activities of the Department of National Defence and the very major programs that are carried out in that regard in southeastern Alberta at the Suffield Defence Research Establishment, where many hundreds of Albertans have been employed over the years.

MS BARRETT: Jobs at any cost he says, Mr. Speaker.

Final supplementary to the minister then. He seems not to care about the conduct of the activity. I ask the minister to do the honourable thing. Will he obtain a schedule of all such biochemical warfare testing that has been conducted in Alberta in the last several decades and table it in this Assembly, tell Albertans what's really been going on here?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Department of National Defence and the Defence Research Establishment at Suffield has open houses on a regular basis where . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair is not concerned if laughing gas has been introduced into the House, but perhaps hon. members could be quiet so we could hear the answer. Thank you.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have indeed visited the Department of National Defence research establishment at Suffield on several occasions, have met with the scientists who are employed there, and have discussed the matter of the operation of

the Defence Research Establishment at Suffield with the current Minister of National Defence and at least three of his predecessors.

Mr. Speaker, I will look into this particular incident, but I can assure hon. members . . . [some applause] Well, the hon. member can pound her desk and get terribly excited, but the fact of the matter is that it is necessary for this country to have a defence research capability. Our government supports the federal government and its initiatives in this regard, and we will continue to do so.

MR. TAYLOR: He's making a speech.

MR. HORSMAN: The hon. leader of the Liberal Party may not want to hear my answer, but we do support national defence and having . . .

MS BARRETT: And chemical warfare.

AN HON. MEMBER: And germ warfare.

MR. HORSMAN: Just, hon. . . .

MR. MARTIN: Don't get rattled.

MR. HORSMAN: I'm not. . . Mr. Speaker . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon, supplementary.

MR. HORSMAN: I conclude my answer by saying this. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands suggested that I supported chemical warfare. That is not the case. I have never said that. What we do support is the defence research which is carried out to prevent Canadians from ever being subjected to chemical and germ warfare. That's the defence research that takes place at Suffield. It is well known, and our government has supported the federal government in its initiative in that respect.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, supplementary. In order to carry out these thoughts, could the minister tell the House whether or not the Canadian Department of National Defence informs him ahead of the conducting of any of these experiments and gives him a chance of any input? Do they inform him ahead of when they do the experiment?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I answered the question earlier in the answer to the question from Edmonton-Highlands. The answer is: no, I do not get a notice of every experiment that is being carried out in the Defence Research Establishment at Suffield; nor do I expect that to be the case.

MR. YOUNIE: The answer is as redundant as the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, that is not a parliamentary comment to be made.

AN HON. MEMBER: Which one?

MR. SPEAKER: The one that was made by Edmonton-

Glengarry, I believe.

Calgary-Buffalo, next main question.

Canadian Heritage Rivers System

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of the Environment. Our rivers represent a valuable heritage which provides many economic, recreational, and other benefits to this province. Unfortunately, the development of dams and pollution pose a threat to Alberta's river system, yet we have no overall program in place to protect our rivers. The Canadian Heritage Rivers System is a co-operative program of the federal government. To date six provinces give national recognition to and protect important rivers of this country, yet Alberta refuses to participate. I'm wondering whether the minister can shed any light on why it is that Alberta has refused to join this Canadian heritage rivers program, which is designed to protect our rivers yet to provide flexibility for the provinces to manage their water resources?

MR. SPEAKER: Well, with due respect, hon. member, we're right smack dam, if you'll forgive the expression, in the middle of an anticipation problem here. This is very much along the lines of the motion which you have on the Order Paper, 219, which is scheduled to be perhaps debated later this afternoon. Therefore, it makes it clearly out of order in terms of anticipation. So I'm sorry; your question is out of order.

The Chair now recognizes the next member on the speaking list, Edmonton-Calder. I'm sorry, hon. member.

Edmonton-Calder is not here; therefore, Vegreville.

Duvernay Water Supply

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 12 I learned from the hon. Minister of the Environment that some problems had been identified with the water supply in the hamlet of Duvernay. Now, a number of measures have been undertaken to determine just how extensive the problem is there and what the source of contamination might be. I'd be interested in hearing what the minister's position on this whole matter is right now, especially in terms of his department and the Department of Transportation and Utilities providing the financial assistance to make sure the people of Duvernay have access to a safe and reliable water supply.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, there was an interim arrangement made with the folks in the area. There are, I think, eight or nine or 10 or 11 wells that had an involvement with respect to the review that we had some time ago. Discussions are under way now, including discussions with the local municipal representatives from the county of St. Paul, with respect to that matter. I had an opportunity last evening to fly over the site and to fly over the area. The matter is currently under review to find out what the most efficient and effective solution is. We're dealing with a handful of homes, and we have to look to see what the best solution is to provide that water.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, there is an independent consultant who is also looking at the whole Duvernay site to take a look to see what type of surface and subsurface contamination may have occurred over the last several decades.

MR. FOX: Well, supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It's my infor-

mation that the test drilling that the department has done out in the Duvernay area to identify alternate supplies of water has identified a particular well about a mile south of the hamlet that has sufficient quantity and quality of water. Will the minister's department commit the required amount of funding to get the water from that well to the hamlet of Duvernay so the people there have something safe to drink?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, on a previous occasion I'd indicated that if there was a requirement to provide an interim water supply to the individuals who live in Duvernay, then that would be provided for under one of the programs of Alberta Environment. If a more permanent structure in terms of a system that's built into the ground and the like would be required, that would come under the responsibility of my colleague the Minister of Transportation and Utilities. But either way, we've indicated that we have a commitment to the people in Duvernay to correct the situation and help them in that regard.

MR. FOX: Well, if I might, then, supplementary to the Minister of Transportation and Utilities. Has his department had an opportunity to review this situation, especially in terms of making a decision about providing funding under one of their existing programs, so that water can be supplied to the hamlet of Duvernay?

MR. ADAIR: Well, I think, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of the Environment answered the question, in the sense that we are working with them to find out what will be the best long-term solution. In the interim there is water being supplied.

MR. FOX: Well, final supplementary, then, to the Minister of the Environment. Existing programs under the Minister of Transportation and Utilities' department are able to fund approximately 50 percent of the costs of providing water for a municipality. Will the Minister of the Environment's department agree to pick up the balance of the cost involved, in light of the fact that this is to some degree an environmental emergency? The people there need water, and they can't afford to pay for something like that themselves.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for question period has expired. Might we continue this line of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.
Minister.

MR. KOWALSKI: I've already indicated, Mr. Speaker, that the suggestion put forward today by the Member for Vegreville is an alternative that I'd raised several weeks ago and before. I'd also like to point out that there is a municipal government, the county of St. Paul, which has also expressed an interest in this matter as well.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. In view of the contamination of the Duvernay subsurface waters by a surface deposit and the contamination of the subsurface waters under the waste disposal plant in the Swan Hills, wouldn't the minister now say he has enough evidence to ban or to suspend Edmonton's continued thought of going ahead with a landfill site?

MR. KOWALSKI: This is called fantasyland connection here, Mr. Speaker, when you jump from one to the other.

There is no contamination in Swan Hills, just to set the record straight.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I've already pointed out and outlined the process in dealing with a waste disposal system in the city of Edmonton. It is my understanding that the city council in the city of Edmonton has made a decision, a recommendation that will now have to go to the Edmonton board of health. The Edmonton board of health will determine whether or not the site is appropriate. The Edmonton board of health can refer the matter to Alberta Environment for a technical review, and should it be referred, we'd be very pleased to do it. [interjection] If the leader of the Liberal Party needs additional information, he might phone his buddy the mayor, and I'm sure the two can have a ...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister and Westlock-Sturgeon; it's not a dialogue.

The time for question period has expired.

Standing Order 40 request, Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request unanimous consent under Standing Order 40 for the following motion, which has been delivered to all members: "Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly recognize the outstanding ..."

MR. SPEAKER: With due respect, the Minister read the motion before. The motion has been circulated to the House. Please speak to urgency.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, the reason that I seek unanimous consent is that this is a unique and outstanding achievement by a young Edmontonian, and I would hope that all members would support this motion, following which you would be able to send a letter of congratulations on behalf of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: No, hon. member. Under Standing Order 40 it is only the proposer of the motion that can speak to the urgency. If there's unanimous consent to agree with the topic, then other members will be recognized, indeed.

Do we have unanimous consent?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Minister, followed by Edmonton-Highlands.

MR. STEVENS: Mr. Speaker, I thank all hon. members. The Montreal International Music Competition started 25 years ago, and Angela Cheng is the first Canadian to win first prize. Edmonton is indeed the city of champions. The competition lasted one month and consisted of three rounds. Only 48 pianists were selected from all over the world to compete in Montreal. Nineteen semifinalists made it to the second round, and nine finalists to the last round. This last round took place Saturday and completed last evening; in fact, I should say this morning. Angela was the only competitor from North America, together with competitors from the Soviet Union, Hungary, West Germany, Japan, and China.

Angela was the last pianist to perform in the final round and

didn't start playing until 10:30 p.m. last evening. She performed two pieces of music which lasted for almost one and one-half complete hours. The prize for her consists of a grand prize of \$15,000 and a special prize of \$500 for the best interpretation of the imposed piece. As well, arrangements are now being made for her to attend and perform a gala concert in Montreal, a solo recital in Montreal, a CBC broadcast, and a concert. All Albertans and, indeed, all Canadians can be proud of her achievement.

She was born in Hong Kong, immigrating to Edmonton in 1971, when she was only 12 years of age. She is now working on her doctorate at Indiana university.

She inspired the formation of the Angela Cheng Foundation for Young Musicians. A group of dedicated citizens, including my colleague the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, has raised funds helping Angela and other talented Albertans to have a real chance for a career in music. Alberta Culture is proud to have assisted Angela, and I would ask that all members support this motion.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the motion as sponsored by the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism. As you know, Mr. Speaker, it's rare indeed that Alberta artists get such international exposure, and Angela Cheng certainly leads the pack in the field of music from the Alberta perspective. The reason I rise to commit the support of the New Democrat caucus in this motion is really to reiterate something the minister himself actually said at the end of his comments. That is the vital importance for artists in Alberta to receive the support, financial and otherwise, from all members of this Assembly and also from the department and its funding ability. Many artists are unique and reflect an indigenous experience of having lived in Alberta. I think the more that we can get those artists throughout the world traveling and displaying their endeavours or creations, the more people will come to realize that Alberta has a vital heartland of artistic activity right here which should be nourished and supported every step of the way.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to rise briefly to participate in this debate, having followed the career of this brilliant young pianist for some years now. In addition, I think it would be appropriate for me to mention the name of an outstanding Albertan who caught the talent of this young musician at an early age and was instrumental in supporting the foundation which has been mentioned. Anne Burrows is an outstanding Albertan and, through her role working in the *Edmonton Journal* in the field of entertainment and arts, has been a great supporter. I think it would be important -- while it's difficult to sometimes single out an individual, there were many people who contributed to the success of Angela and her family in the process.

I had the pleasure of attending a concert Angela gave in Lincolnton Center in New York City when she had won another prize. I am delighted to add my congratulations to those of other members of the Assembly for this remarkable achievement. This young lady will bring honour and pride to Albertans and to Canadians, and I for one and all members of the Assembly should wish her well in her future career.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre, then the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and then perhaps if there are others, you could send me a list. Thank you.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to

also add my voice of congratulations, having heard Angela Cheng and other musicians in the Jubilee Auditorium from time to time, and realized that despite the amount of talent and musical ability of so many Edmontonians, much of this does not come through as it's heard so poorly in the acoustics of the Jubilee Auditorium in northern Alberta here. So maybe when Angela Cheng returns home to Edmonton, she might be able to display her talents in a new downtown concert hall that we could have in the city of Edmonton. Thank you.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I too rise to add my words of praise for Angela Cheng. I was a founding trustee of the Angela Cheng musical foundation, which was led by Anne Burrows and contained other dedicated members on the board both as they started and over the years when they continued their support. I want to congratulate Angie very much. She has not only performed exceedingly well here and around the world, but she is an example and a role model for many others who follow. The foundation is today indeed supporting others who are following in her footsteps. I would give my personal congratulations to Angela Cheng but also to the hardworking trustees on that foundation.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Let the record show that the motion carried unanimously, and the Chair would be very pleased to send the appropriate correspondence to Angela Cheng.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I would move that written questions 199 and 201 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

head: MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I move that motions for returns 190, 197, and 200 stand and retain their places on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

head: MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

218. Moved by Mrs. Hewes:
Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta urge the government to reinstate contraceptive counseling, sterilization, optometric services, physiotherapy, and chiropractic services under the Alberta health care insurance plan and to ensure that all public health units in Alberta offer family planning counseling services.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, may I just preface my brief remarks with a couple of quotes from the government paper on social policy called Caring & Responsibility. Under the Role of Government, we find one item that I think is germane to this particular discussion. It is:

To provide equitable opportunities for all Albertans, on the basis of their needs, to access government programs, the operative words being "on the basis of their needs, to access government programs." On the following page, under the Responsibility of Government, one of the items listed there in Principles is:

Government policies and programs must focus on the development of strategies that address the causes of social and health problems and the ways of preventing their occurrence. I believe both of those fly in the face of what has happened here in respect to deinsurance of certain programs.

If we look at what happened regarding the deinsurance plan that came forward, one has to ask: what is the objective? The objective of such a move would have to have been twofold, I would think. It would be to save money and to eliminate the need for further premium increases, and it would also be to make citizens more aware of costs and therefore citizens would voluntarily cut down on their use of such services.

Now, I'm feeling particularly charitable today, so I would not want to suggest that there was any possible thought in the government's mind that this might punish some users or that it might, in fact, punish taxpayers as a whole over the long term. Further, Mr. Speaker, I believe that in making these announcements and discontinuing health care insurance to certain age groups and groups within these particular services, there was an assumption that there would be no negative effects on people who needed these kinds of health care supports. I have asked the minister in weeks past whether or not we are doing any research regarding this deinsurance plan. Does it work? Do we know if (a) it saves money or (b) it discourages people from what he seems to describe as overuse? We have asked the minister whatever happened to the noble ideas of prevention, about which this government speaks at some length and writes at some length in their social policy document. What does this do to the whole concept of prevention? I have wondered if perhaps in making the change, the minister believes Albertans are hypochondriacs and we overuse services because we believe ourselves to be ill at all times. I don't happen to share that opinion.

Well, what is really happening as a result of these moves? Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that treatment which could be secondary or tertiary or primary prevention may be postponed because people can't afford it. The treatment may be necessary but ignored because people can't afford it. The treatment procedures may, in fact, be stretched out beyond the point where they should be because people can't afford it. What on earth ever happened to the whole notion of prevention, and what are the consequences of this action? Well, the consequences of the action of citizens who simply can't afford or believe they cannot afford these procedures would be further deterioration in a physical condition and a greater need, therefore, of more intrusive procedures as time goes on; less capacity to continue to function in the community, in the work force, than before; certainly a reduced capacity to achieve income and, therefore, pay income tax.

Mr. Speaker, if we go to the specifics I have mentioned, I have to acknowledge first of all that the government, as the minister responsible for women's issues commented today, did see

fit to reinstate sterilization procedures in April of this year. I believe that was done in response to a great deal of support from community groups and people who saw this as being a very necessary move. I'm pleased they were determined to do this. I believe that shows that the government can respond to public outcry when they believe they've been deprived.

Mr. Speaker, if I can go on to optometric services, these services now are not available to people in their middle years free of charge, but for which they pay. These services, as we understand, are not free to anyone. We all pay for all of them all the time and do so gladly. And they are not available to the people under Alberta health care insurance who, I submit, perhaps most desperately need them. These are working people in our communities whose jobs, in fact, may entail fine-tuning, may require the capacity to be able to do detailed work which may, in fact, put a strain on their eyes. I think it's very important that persons in those kinds of occupations have access to eye examinations -- again, back to the concept of prevention. The young working person whose occupation may or may not require a great deal of fine work should avail themselves and should be able to avail themselves of necessary eye testing if any interruption in their capacity to read or to see occurs. Mr. Speaker, optometric services have not been reinstated, and I believe this has caused considerable hardship for people from 19 to 64 who are not on welfare, who do require tests and perhaps glasses. Many of them, I expect, go to their GP and then are perhaps referred to an ophthalmologist. So the system could be double billed; it could be billed more than once.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, we've seen comments on this in the public, and since this step was taken, the cost of eye exams has risen substantially. The Consumers' Association of Canada says that ophthalmologists in Edmonton and Calgary have raised their fees by 25 to 60 percent. Many people are facing a \$50 basic charge before glasses are even ordered, and those people are the very ones who are going to decide they can't afford their tests and may in fact delay them.

Mr. Speaker, I was astonished at a response given to me by the minister in the House on May 9 where he indicated, when I asked him about research and what is happening in eye care, and I quote from *Hansard*, May 9:

the best advice I can give the hon. member is that the ophthalmologists society of Alberta, which is the professional group in the Alberta Medical Association that provide eye care in our province as far as the medical profession is concerned, have indicated to me that they in fact are able now to see people in urgent need of eye care at a much faster pace than they did previously when the province was paying for the eye care for everyone. In that regard they actually regard the decisions we made as an improvement in the medical eye care of the average Albertan, simply because the 60 ophthalmologists are able to concentrate on urgent eye care. . . .

Mr. Speaker, what I'm talking about is preventive eye care, the people who should be in a position to have their eyes tested as a preventive measure. Certainly the ophthalmologists are able to see people, as they have been right along, and it appears that they have quite successfully increased their fees to do so. So one asks oneself: does this fill the first objective of saving money, or does it fill the second objective of reducing the incidence of use, and is that a proper objective for this government?

Mr. Speaker, if I can go on to physiotherapy, podiatry, chiropractic services, these are in my view absolutely essential

for rehabilitation and preventive care. Physiotherapy is an indigenous part of the treatment procedures for rehabilitation of people who have been subjected to accident or injury. They can be treated and can continue to be treated while they are working and while they are back on the job. They are not under Alberta health care insurance plan. It seems to me very obvious that long-term health care costs will increase as a result of these being removed, because once again people will ignore the need for treatment and will allow their condition to deteriorate or continue to exist in a deteriorated fashion when, in fact they could be mobile, functioning in our communities, and back on the job.

With chiropractors, it is my opinion that many people in Alberta are dependent on chiropractors to keep them mobile. This applies particularly to the older middle-age group, not the seniors necessarily but the people who are anxious to be able to maintain themselves in our communities and continue to serve in the labour force.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has talked about \$1 million extra that is now going to go into public health units to provide for family planning. I am grateful that the government has seen fit to take this step. We have talked at some length in months past about the need for family planning to be available to people in their own local communities -- freely available, freely and easily accessible to them. I believe that in our discussions last week with the Premier on the family unit, this is one of those absolutely essential services, and it is perhaps most difficult for families, women, in rural areas to access it. So I was pleased to hear the minister comment on it.

Now, as yet we haven't had very much in the way of precise information about how that is to be distributed. The minister on April 7, 1988, says he wants to talk about "the prevention of communicable disease" and that he has announced a plan earlier today. Then he goes on to say:

an almost doubling of our commitment to reproductive health services in Alberta. Through the health units we are providing funding for sexuality education and counseling in the community, providing in the community services and education counseling to students, to teachers, to parents, and to all members of Alberta's numerous communities. Up till today . . . 11 health units in the province . . .

This is April 7, Mr. Speaker.

. . . delivered sexuality education and counseling . . . our announcement today expanded that to all 27 health units, and we announced funding for new programs in 16 health units and new dollars to augment existing programs in seven health units.

Now, I'm pleased to see that the minister has responded to these expressed needs from the communities of Alberta for family planning, but as yet, Mr. Speaker, we have no confidence that this, in fact, is available and is operational in those communities as it should be and should have been right along. I would hope that the minister might return to the House and perhaps speak to this and tell us about what standards he is putting into the regulations, what monitoring, what capacity is being built in to ensure that all those public health units will have a quality service available to citizens in their area, what access is going to be provided to citizens, what fees may or may not be charged and whether or not that will have the effect of reducing access for certain citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to suggest that a forward-thinking ministry would have talked by now about the need for people in isolated communities and the need for traveling teams to be prepared and ready to go out to hold clinics and provide services for people who have less chance of access. These family planning counseling services have now been extended to Red

Deer, Lethbridge, and Fort McMurray, as well as Edmonton and Calgary, but we do believe that all public health units should be in a position to provide contraceptive counseling as required.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, I believe the measures of deinsurance taken by this government have been countereffective and counterproductive in regard to both the stated objectives. In human terms, they have caused pain and anguish and stress. I have no doubt about that. In economic terms, I do not believe they have saved the government money; in fact, they probably have cost the government money as we look not only at this year but down the road. So neither goal of the government has been achieved.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it's my view that Albertans want quality health care service. They were prepared to support an increase in health care premiums last year -- Albertans expressed that to me throughout the province -- but they are not prepared to pay more and get less. These are the kinds of preventive services that will save people, will save health, and in my view the government's move was contrary to their expressed objectives.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to say a few words about Motion 218 before us today. Although I want to support the intent of the motion, and for many reasons, the motion quite rightly sets out what was the problem of both faulty thinking and faulty public policy. I think the harm is coming home to rest not only in terms of, no doubt, polls the government has been doing in terms of how unpopular these moves were but also in terms of the establishment of the Hyland commission and any way they could find to try to save the face of the current Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care and get on to try to at least have some public relations job with Albertans around health care insurance services.

But these moves, Mr. Speaker, were done last year without consultation. I don't think the hon. Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar pointed out the fact that many of us are still mystified as to why these particular services were the ones that got the axe. Who really did they consult with before the services were cut back, and where was the consultation process that one would assume had taken place, rather than just some mindless bureaucrat in the department who said, "Well, let's cut out these services willy-nilly"? I had argued for some time that there does need to be a cutback in some services, but let's do that after a utilization review. I know the former Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care had the Young committee which did a utilization review and looked at a number of areas where there was misutilization in the system. Yet we saw very little evidence that the areas of recommendation the Young committee suggested were followed up on. Now we have the Watanabe utilization committee, and we're going to hope that maybe they can point out some areas where the utilization is out of control and recommendations as to how to bring it back under control. But it seemed that you do a kind of consultation process or utilization study before you just arbitrarily cut back, as was the case last year.

As well, as the member has said, it was quite appalling to think that despite the rhetoric and the so-called intent of government to enter the field of the world of preventative health care and preventative services, so many of these services hit directly

at those services which can be seen to be in a very preventative light. Whether it's at primary or secondary or tertiary level prevention, they were areas where risk was able to be reduced and therefore health care dollars could have been saved. They were the ones that were so arbitrarily and unfairly cut.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we've argued to no avail, but again it's going to come back to haunt, I'm sure, many MLAs in the government caucus whose constituents will not vote for them because they have been dinged for these services out of pocket and then services have been reinsured and no reimbursement -- the number of people who have been calling our office who have had a tubal ligation or an IUD insertion or whatever and have still paid out of pocket over the last year. The minister seems to have a million dollars to throw at cardiovascular surgeons and other funding of new items, but the damage control of past sins has not been redeemed. These people are still out of pocket for a service which has been reinsured, and they need to be reimbursed, it seems to me, in all fairness.

So there are a number of reasons for supporting this motion, Mr. Speaker. I would rather that members look at Motion 224 on the Order Paper, which is upcoming and I think states the case much better. It puts the whole issue in, I think, a much better, wider context, and hopefully we'll be debating it in a couple of weeks. Because frankly, I don't know when the member put together this motion, but in some ways it has some real problems with some of the wording. It seems a bit redundant at this point to be talking about the government reinstating sterilization when, in fact, the government has seen fit to reinstate sterilization. So that word should, in fact, be struck from this motion, being redundant. As well, it talks about some services to be reinstated under the Alberta health care insurance plan. In fact they still are insured, or at least partial benefits have been deinsured. The member spoke of optometric services or physiotherapy and chiropractic and others. These are still instated under Alberta health care, only the amount of benefits paid out has been reduced. So to use the word "reinstate" I think is a faulty use of terms in this motion and should be amended.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure why the member, in trying to raise what seems like a comprehensive motion in terms of the cutbacks last year, failed to put on other items which were deinsured which she makes reference to in this motion. I think my favourite one at this point is the service of circumcision. In fact, as I said to the minister, having a newborn son, it seemed to me a bit odd that I was now having to pay out of pocket to have him circumcised, except we decided against that anyway. They say the only reason is so the young boy can end up looking like his father. Maybe that isn't sufficient cause for having it covered under Alberta health care; I'm not sure. Nonetheless, I'll have some explaining to do to him later.

Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, the member makes no reference to the temporal mandibular joint coverage that was cut back, the services for TMJ, which afflicts many, many Albertans with excruciating migraines and headaches. It's one of those delicate areas of health care where it's sort of somehow dental but also somehow medical insofar as it's the joint and the jaw all working out of sync. In fact, a lot of people need the splint which goes to relieve that kind of condition. As we know, last year the government cut back 50 percent coverage for TMJ and the splint that goes with it. Now, I know it might have been as a result of some utilization which showed that the number of people availing themselves of that service was shooting up quite dramatically, but still I would have liked to see a more considered view

or more consultation go on with respect to funding for TMJ. I don't know why the member didn't include that in her motion.

Similarly, the number of calls I've gotten from elderly people -- you know, those people who used to vote for the Conservative Party in this province but who now are calling me and saying, "Why are we having to pay this extra amount for private and semiprivate accommodation in active treatment hospitals?" In fact, the minister in the last year dinging these frail elderly for the costs of government's planning errors in terms of causing these waiting lists for seniors who are waiting for long-term care ending up being the bed blockers, as they're called, in active treatment hospitals -- it's not their fault that they're having to be inappropriately placed and waiting for placement in a long-term care setting. It's not their fault, but at the same time we're going to charge them extra for a private or semiprivate room in active treatment hospitals. The number of elderly I've received phone calls from, even as recently as last week -- a woman who I think lives in the constituency of Edmonton-Whitemud was most upset and said she'd never vote for the Conservative member in Whitemud again if this was going to continue to be the case.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to add these concerns to this motion because I think the member in raising it probably was a bit forgetful in some of these other areas of great concern. Perhaps if she were to look at Motion 224 on the Order Paper, she'd see it put in a much more comprehensive light.

But with respect to a number of services which she does make reference to -- and I think the issue in the debate is still a live one with respect to funding physicians for contraceptive counseling. Now, we've been around and around it, and we know the minister's fixed views that doctors can bill for it under the annual medical checkup or they can just sort of do it on the side and not bill the plan for it or can bill it under an annual medical checkup. The number of physicians I speak to in increasing numbers, who I have become very good friends with, still want to do this contraceptive counseling and be paid for it under a separate fee code. And I don't think it's just to line their own pockets, Mr. Speaker.

A number of physicians, particularly in clinic areas -- I know the family clinic at the Royal Alexandra hospital, and I'm not talking about the reproductive care clinic which is coming but a family clinic there, where a physician time after time after time is seeing a woman primarily for contraceptive counseling. He then has to go on to provide other medical services. But it's the time and the counseling and talking about one's life-style and sexual pattern and sexual practice and so on and how their sexuality and sexual practice relates to the rest of their physical or mental health and the number of complications which might arise in the prescribing of a birth control pill or an IUD insertion or whatever else -- there is a lot that goes on with respect to determining the most appropriate form of birth control, and that can only be done after a setting wherein a physician takes some good time to deal with a woman, and her partner for that matter, in terms of the kinds of contraceptive procedures that are best for her.

I know it's a laudable move to have the health units do more and more of it, and we appreciate the funding the Minister of Community and Occupational Health has been able to direct now to health units. It's still not enough, but it's going to go a long way, I hope and pray, for reducing the high rate of teenage pregnancy which afflicts this province, and perhaps the health units can do more on their part.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, physicians for their part need

also to be able to be covered to provide this kind of counseling. In fact, physicians more and more -- and it's going to be a difficult issue to face in the future -- are wanting not to become mere clinicians or technicians in terms of just providing particular services in a technical or clinical sort of way but would like to enter more and more into areas of counseling and discussing with particular patients their emotional or mental well-being, talking about some of their fears around certain procedures, and having to take the time as well in nutrition and other health promotion activities. But it's the whole area of physician counseling which is going to be a real conundrum for us to face in the future with respect to how they're paid for that service and whether, in fact, they should be doing it, or to what degree they should be doing it. But clearly, in the area of contraceptive counseling, the view of the New Democrat caucus is that it should be fully reinstated.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, in rural Alberta just last week I was speaking with a physician who is just a first-class person doing excellent work in a rural town in this province, who has been in practice for about four years, I believe. And the greatest thing she's alarmed at is the high rate of teenage pregnancy she sees. I guess it's perhaps because she's a woman, but it's also other ways in which she, time and time again, has to deal with 14-, 15-year-old Alberta women coming to her, being pregnant. So she's trying as much as she can to speak out more loudly in the community, speak out more loudly in the school system, and in fact is doing much of the work in the school system herself. I said, "Well, how are you getting paid for that?" She said: "I'm not getting paid for it. I spend two afternoons a week going to the local school to talk in their classes about contraception." It's because of her own volunteer time and her own volunteer effort and her own commitment to providing better health care for the young women of this province -- I think a classic example, Mr. Speaker, of someone in rural Alberta particularly, doing this kind of service at great personal sacrifice, and I feel very strongly that a physician really should be able to bill the Alberta health care insurance plan for that time she takes to do those kinds of things. It's a small price to pay for reducing the rates of teenage pregnancy.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, though we might again want to debate it in this Assembly, it was rather telling in that AIDS survey that Community and Occupational Health did, that a report came back and hit every one of us between the eyes: that if people want information about a health care matter, they still want to go to their doctor. It's the family physician, the GP, who really is the gatekeeper and the primary contact person that most people have with health care matters and information. So clearly, if they want to have good information about contraception, many are going to want to access their family physician and GP, even though the minister claims they would rather go to their health unit. It might be the case, but the recent AIDS study shows that the physician is still a key contact person.

Another example. Just this morning, Mr. Speaker, I got a call from someone in Calgary with a back ailment, who again says he'll never vote for a Conservative again as long as the situation continues. And it's very serious. This former Conservative has had a back ailment and throughout just the first five months of this year has exhausted his benefits for physiotherapy visits. I think it's the \$200 limit which he hit up against. Then just two days ago he was in a motor vehicle accident and got whiplash, and now has been prescribed by his doctor to go and see a physiotherapist to help in his whiplash, to reduce the pain and discomfort of that. Yet, Mr. Speaker, his entire

physiotherapy benefits have been exhausted for this year. Through no cause of his own, he now has to pay out of pocket for a number of visits to the physiotherapist, and he really could not afford to pay any more, he said.

I said, "Well, what you could do is go as a charity case to the minister, go on bended knee. Perhaps the minister in some charitable way will look at your case and say, 'Well, yes, this might be one of those cases where your income situation is such, and this is not of your own choosing that this situation has come upon you.' Perhaps as a charity case you could go to the minister and get some sort of compensation." Alternatively he could perhaps speak to his physician and get admitted to the hospital, because once you're a patient in the hospital, you can get unlimited physiotherapy coverage as part of your hospital stay. I mean, what that does to the hospital budget is another matter, of course, but at least he'd have access to care. He was unsatisfied with both those cases. I said, "Well, the only other thing to do is to vote for a new government next time and we'll reinsure the service and you'll make sure to get it back where it belongs."

Similarly with chiropractic service, Mr. Speaker -- that's a real error, and I'm glad the members brought it up. Because chiropractic care, no matter what we think of it as being a kind of nonmedical service, really there needs to be much greater rapprochement or discussion between the medical providers of care and the nonmedical providers of care. I was very, very pleased at a recent Official Opposition sponsored health care reform conference in Red Deer just a couple of weeks ago, where we had over 130 health care providers come and discuss with me and other invited guests their views of the health care system, that there seems to be a new awareness that there needs to be alliances and this kind of discussion between the medical providers and the nonmedical providers of health care.

In fact, it was very encouraging to me to see Dr. Murray, the president-elect of the Alberta Medical Association, and the representative from the Chiropractic Association talking to each other about areas of concern. To see them discussing matters and even saying that they want to pursue the matters and have some ongoing discussion, I think is a good sign. It's the kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, that I kind of wish this government, this minister, would foster and encourage: better bringing of groups together and bringing of providers together, bringing them all into one room and saying: "Okay, now. We all want the health care of Albertans to be our primary concern, but how can we, despite our differences, come to some consensus with respect to funding and other issues?" Instead of this divide and conquer kind of approach we get, it would be, I think, much better for the health care of Albertans to have that kind of team approach and group approach and develop some consensus with respect to all those who want to be able to deliver health care to Albertans.

The other comment I always like to make about the chiropractic coverage is not mine; I borrow it from the dean of our Legislature, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Little Bow, who in a discussion once on hospital estimates said they tried to cut back chiropractic care when he was minister of hospitals and medical care back in the early '60s or whatever. For the .1 per cent of budget reduction that was going to result in the thousands and thousands of letters and phone calls it engendered, it just wasn't worth it politically, and he would recommend the minister try to drop this kind of campaign. Anyway, I think it's wise advice from a sage parliamentarian here in our Legislature, the Member for Little Bow.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what else to say about this

motion. As I said, I'm really surprised that it's glaring in its omission of some kinds of things which I feel to be very important. It only partially talks about other services and yet, in the final analysis, it's got all the right intentions of going in the right direction. We'll see, of course, how it's more fully explained in Motion 224, which is on the Order Paper. But we'll leave that for another day.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Calgary-North West.

DR. CASSIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to speak to Motion 218. I as well would agree with the Member for Edmonton-Centre that we have to question the relevance of the motion at this point in time and the redundancy at this point in time. I appreciate that the member perhaps submitted this motion some time in the past and that things have in fact changed. But there's certainly some difficulty, and perhaps we could just spend a few minutes and deal with some of the difficulties just in the statement itself.

The first one we'll deal with is the reinstatement of contraceptive counseling. Now, I know that's been raised again by the Member for Edmonton-Centre, and I've raised it before. Contraceptive counseling -- in other words, that counseling that an ethical physician will provide to his patient on any number of issues including matters pertaining to their sexuality, hypertension, or diabetes -- has always been there. Alberta and Ontario were the only two provinces that had set up a special fee schedule to provide for these services over and above that which would be provided at the time of an annual examination or a first examination, which every Albertan is entitled to at least once a year.

So the contraceptive counseling has always been available. I think it was a great disservice by members opposite and the media -- and perhaps even my own association -- that indicated otherwise, that made people feel guilty or made them feel they would not be covered and it would be their responsibility to contact their physician and ask for contraceptive counseling or for help, as they would with any other problem. So in fact the reinstatement of contraceptive counseling is incorrect.

The deinsuring of sterilization -- certainly that did take place, and I can deal with that in a few minutes. But the other services such as optometric services, physiotherapy, and chiropractic services again, as the Member for Edmonton-Centre has stated, really were not deinsured. There was a reduction in the payment, but these individuals again were not constrained by the Canada Health Act, so they had the option to balance bill or to bill beyond the fee, which is something that was not available to their physician counterparts, plus, I might add, many of those individuals are able to supplement their income by selling glasses and other materials. Again, that is not available to their physician counterparts.

The question about the health care insurance plan to ensure that public health units -- to encourage them to provide family planning and counseling, again is a good suggestion, but our Minister of Community and Occupational Health has already addressed that by setting aside \$1.12 million to expand the services into rural Alberta.

But I think what is more important, Mr. Speaker, is why. Why did this happen? This was not something that government, certainly government members, relish doing. Let's take ourselves back to 1986-1987 when this government was faced with a deficit of some \$3.5 billion. Each minister and each depart-

ment had to make some tough decisions: we had to cut back; we could not continue to spend at the rate we were spending without leaving a tremendous legacy of debt to the people of this province. The minister was confronted with cutting \$40 million, and I know that the Member for Edmonton-Centre said: "Well, why these services? Why these people?" What were the alternatives? There were already cutbacks in hospital funding. There was some increase in charges for nursing homes. They weren't very happy with that. We could have perhaps put all the charges onto nursing homes and hospitals. I don't think that would be fair.

We had to look at individuals, care providers who had some options, that were not locked in, tied in, by the Canada Health Act. That left us with physiotherapy, chiropractic, podiatry, and optometry. These individuals were able to continue to look after their patients, but they had a buffer. They could, in fact, bill over and beyond that if they found that their operating expenses were increasing, as they have over the last few years, as is the case in most businesses. That, I think, was part of the rationale in cutting back some: that we would try and protect those people. But they also had an option that was not available to their physician counterpart.

The other area -- you know, one could look at reducing the costs by saying, "What are those things that are not essential?" And there are things like cosmetic surgery. I don't think there's been concern about that. There are those questions of people who change their mind for whatever reasons and wanted to have a sterilization procedure reversed after this government picked up the cost of the original procedure. Those were deinsured and have not been reinstated. The question of sterilization -- again, a difficult question. But individuals who are considering a sterilization procedure are usually looking at replacing a temporary type of contraception with a permanent type of contraception, and in many cases, if they're doing that, they're having to buy supplies and, in fact, would end up covering those costs within a one- to two-year period. Now, we all realize there are some members of society who have trouble putting away those initial dollars. It did provide a hardship on those individuals, and government responded.

I think it's important to know that in 1987 that deficit was reduced substantially, the business confidence of Albertans was restored, the investment in this province increased, and we were once again in a position where we had more dollars than we thought we might have had in 1986. Who knew what was going to happen to the price of oil? Who knew what was going to happen to our grain, our wheat, the price of pork and beef? Who knew what would happen if we were to continue to spend as we had in 1985 and '86?

But this government made the tough decisions, made the correct moves, and reversed the deficit. Once again we're in a position to try and help out those Albertans by replacing or restoring some of those services that had been cut. One must remember that the province of Alberta provides many more services to its people than so many other provinces, and we take it for granted.

I know the member opposite suggested we should reinstate the contraceptive counseling. A researcher checked with the president of the AMA, and he certainly agrees with that. He thinks perhaps we should be allowed to do it every six months. Now, I have to ask myself: how often do you have to have counseling on contraception? I appreciate there may be some people that are slow learners and take a little more time, but to have that kind of counseling twice a year really boggles my

mind and I have some troubles with that thought process.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the province of Alberta has dealt with a very difficult problem, and we recognize there are hardships that were placed on the people of this province. But I think most of those people recognized, as you would in your own home, if all of a sudden you got some debts, the best thing to do is to pay those debts off and deal with the problems, and then look ahead and look for a better future. And I would like to think that as we move along -- it's early in 1988, but our prospects, you know, are good -- this province will continue to think in terms of the Albertans who are in need. But I also compliment the minister and his department and the people of this province for pulling in the belt and bearing with us.

I understand the Member for Edmonton-Centre gets many calls indicating that certain individuals will not vote for this party again. I might also say that I have members, not necessarily constituents but constituents from other constituencies within Calgary, who phone and have the same kind of complaint, perhaps on a different issue, and would prefer not to speak to their elected member who is not represented on this side of the House.

I think we could perhaps deal with some of the other areas that have been dealt with. I certainly support the initiatives taken by our Minister of Community and Occupational Health in trying to expand the counseling services into our health units. That's a progressive movement. I think that particularly in the area of the new mothers who take their babies in for the six-week checkup or a three-week checkup, this is an ideal opportunity for the nurses and the support staff to deal with contraceptive counseling and the other counseling that goes with that first visit. I do feel, however, that our teenagers, particularly in small-town Alberta, may be somewhat intimidated in going into a health unit and asking for this type of support, and I certainly support the initiatives taken by our Minister of Education to try and deal with this whole area in the school setting and with our life skills program.

I would also like to comment on a group in Edmonton who refer to themselves as Teen-Aid; again, physicians who volunteered their time and their services to deal with the problem and to recognize some of the downfalls of some of the information that is being put out to our young people, the whole question of safe sex. There's no such thing as safe sex. Whether we use a condom, we know that even from the standpoint of preventing pregnancy there's going to be a 5 to 15 percent failure. It does not prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. There are many myths pertaining to that whole concept. But I should also say that it's common for professional people to volunteer their time as the good doctor in rural Alberta. Certainly I as a practising physician did this quite often with our high schools, with our people in hospital. That is part and parcel of the responsibility that we take as professionals: to volunteer and provide those services, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I could perhaps deal with other issues, but I think we've had good discussion and good debate on this issue. I appreciate that the presenting Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar had good intentions in putting forth the motion. I realize that with time and with certain improvement in the economy of Calgary and Edmonton and Alberta and with the additional resources we have, perhaps at this point in time it is redundant, and I would move that we adjourn debate.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-North West has moved adjournment of debate on Motion 218.

All those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Carried.

219. Moved by Mr. Chumir

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government of Alberta to develop a long-term conservation strategy in order to conserve the natural, historical, recreational, and sport value of Alberta's rivers and that, as part thereof, Alberta join the Canadian Heritage Rivers System and embrace the objectives of that organization.

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, no other place in the world has more inherent wealth or natural beauty and diversity than Alberta, and amongst our greatest treasures are our rivers. We're not blessed with an abundance of rivers, but each of them is uniquely beautiful and uniquely valuable. They sustain a wealth of wildlife, fisheries, and vegetation. They link us to our heritage; they draw anglers, hunters, nature lovers, and recreational boaters, both from Alberta and from abroad, and they comprise the basis of a growing and diverse recreation and tourism economy. Best of all, they're free: they came with the place. With wise stewardship and sensitive management they can continue to nourish and to sustain our province's economy, its sense of self-identity, and its need for recreation and escape.

My concern, about which I wish to speak today, is that we have not yet assured the kind of stewardship and management our rivers need. We're managing our rivers, to a great degree, with a blinkered 1930s philosophy in a complex 1980 world.

Now, I will speak later on the less tangible values of our rivers, but it's worth while to first establish the fact that rivers have real economic worth in their free-flowing, unpolluted, undiluted state. Indeed, the Bow River between Calgary and Carseland irrigation weir is already renowned around the world. The president of the famous Orvis Tackle Company, Mr. Leigh Perkins, says that fishing this reach of river was -- and I quote:

... the finest day of fly fishing we've ever had in our lives, and adds that:

... that's quite a statement when our business is fly fishing, our major interest is fly fishing, and we have had the opportunity to pursue the sport all over the world for the past 35 years.

That about the Bow River.

Alberta has world-class river fisheries. We have endemic and rare species that sophisticated anglers will fly around the world simply to catch and even release. The Bow River below Calgary has now been written up in feature articles in every major outdoor magazine in North America, and indeed *Field & Stream* and *Fly Fisherman* call it the finest dry fly river in the world. The lower Crowsnest River is comparable. The north fork of the Raven River has earned a faithful following amongst hundreds of American anglers as well. So we have an international resource of incredible value in our wild trout rivers, and we've barely begun to sample its potential for supporting economic growth and diversification in tourism. The world renowned Bow is only one of many Alberta rivers whose wild

fisheries have and can increasingly contribute to the economic well-being of the province.

Economically, fishing licence sales alone are going to pump an estimated \$2.5 million into Alberta's government revenues this year. Studies conducted in 1985 to provide background for the national recreational fisheries policy indicated that anglers spent \$132 million-plus in 1985. When purchases of related recreational equipment and services were added and the economic spin-off totaled up, the direct economic benefit of sport fishing in Alberta was in excess of \$440 million.

At the same time, unhappily, angler success on average is declining, and this is no doubt to do in large part with habitat loss. I'm advised, for example, that the Dickson dam on the Red Deer River has totally disrupted the natural fishery of the area, and even expensive stocking programs do not appear to be compensating for the loss. And of course, we have another dam under construction now on the Oldman River. Again, wild river fisheries are going to be lost, and although expensive mitigation programs are planned, there is some significant doubt that they will compensate. So it appears that we are realizing the quality and economic potential of Alberta's remaining river fisheries even as we are in the process of threatening and, indeed, perhaps totally ruining some of the best of them.

[Mr. Musgreave in the Chair]

Now, the lower Bow offers a hint of what the Crowsnest and other such rivers could do if they were properly managed. In 1987 commercial guides took 2,000 clients down the Bow River by boat. Each of these clients paid, on average, \$250 U.S. per day merely for guiding services. The total value of this industry, including guiding fees, accommodation, meals, licences, and tips, is almost \$1 million annually. And this doesn't include any of the money spent by visiting anglers on fishing supplies, on entertainment, visiting the marvelous hot spots of Calgary -- it could be Pincher Creek, if we do the right things -- car rentals, or any of the countless other services and supplies they purchased.

Now, so far I've talked only of fishing, but another growing sport that supports commercial operators is white-water rafting. I just had a nice discussion about white-water rafting in the antechamber to the Legislature. It's enjoyed by many Albertans, and the Red Deer River, for example, downstream from Highway 40 sees an average of 100 to 150 passengers on inflated rafts and 50 canoes and kayaks each weekend. There are eight commercial rafting companies operating on this river, and others operate on other rivers.

Beyond the direct economic returns to which I have been alluding, returns generated from this form of recreational activity such as fishing and rafting, our rivers indeed have other values. Just as they are today, prehistoric and historic human travel and settlement were concentrated along these Alberta rivers. The rivers provided much-needed water and fish for food. Their valleys provided shelters from weather and protection from enemies. The diverse vegetation mosaics that typify riparian ecosystems and their adjacent valley slopes sustained an abundance of wildlife. Today some of the most significant heritage resources are located along some of our most spectacular river valley sites. Dinosaur river park, a world heritage site, consists of spectacularly eroded badlands along the Red Deer River. Rocky Mountain House on the North Saskatchewan River is a national historic park. On the Milk River we have Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park. From between Maycroft and

Brocket on the Oldman River is not only a unique assemblage of prehistoric and historic sites but one of the most spectacular and unspoiled heritage landscapes surviving in the whole of this province.

Now, our rivers also sustain much of what is ecologically valuable in Alberta. In the southern plains and foothills especially, river valleys provide essential shelter for wildlife from weather and hunters. These are complex, dynamic ecosystems. They are formed by and dependent on the rivers that sustain them. A sound and sensible river management and conservation strategy has to recognize and accommodate the numerous elements that compromise the river ecosystems and river economy. However, rivers are unfortunately managed in Alberta primarily under the Water Resources Act, and this piece of legislation recognizes water, water in isolation, as the predominant single value of a river and offers only the most fleeting recognition of other values.

Our Department of the Environment not only administers the Water Resources Act, but it expends a great deal of money, time, and effort on damming, diverting, channeling, and otherwise modifying rivers in order to more efficiently manage their water. Alberta Environment is indeed the only department of the environment in the whole world responsible for promoting and building dams, and it thereby has a spectacular conflict of interest. Because of this narrow definition of river in our legislation and in our policy and because of Alberta Environment's built-in conflict of interest, river management has been the source of controversial and divisive public debates in the last two decades. A change in structure is clearly required.

Many Albertans love and value their rivers, and they're not happy with how these rivers are being treated in Alberta. In 1978 growing government and public concern across Canada over the rapid disappearance of rivers in their natural state due to their overcommitment to consumptive uses led to a federal/provincial park ministers' conference recommendation that a co-operative program to identify and protect outstanding examples of Canada's river heritage be established. As a result, a Canadian heritage river task force composed of provincial, territorial, and federal government representatives completed the framework and guidelines for the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, which is now well established across most of this country.

Now, this co-operative designation program leaves the ownership and management of the designated river reach under its present jurisdiction. It's not an exclusive designation. Heritage rivers continue to be managed for multiple use, but management plans ensure that their heritage values are not compromised by water management decisions. Nominations of rivers to the system require the approval of the government holding jurisdiction over the river. In Alberta today only reaches of the Athabasca and North Saskatchewan rivers within Jasper and Banff national parks have been nominated, and that at the initiative of the federal government and not of this province, because we're not a member of that system. Although the province participated in the development of the program, the Alberta government has, unhappily, since refused to participate beyond observer status.

In December 1983 the Alberta government explained its reluctance in a letter to the federal government, and I quote from that letter

While the concept of a Canadian system of natural, historical, and recreational rivers is supportable in principle, the designation of an Alberta river or reach of river as a Heritage River would raise expectations that other current and future use would not be considered. Given the importance of water resources to Alberta for domestic, municipal, agricultural,

hydro-power and industrial supplies in addition to recreation use, it is in the best interest of Alberta to plan and manage its water resources for multi-purpose use.

Well, with all due respect, this sounds more of an excuse than a reason.

Six other provinces with the same needs and uses for water have recognized the importance and the need of co-operation and leadership. Four rivers have already been designated and seven more have been nominated for protection under this Heritage Rivers System. I would note that recently the province of Alberta was a signatory to a report of, I believe, September 1987, titled Report of the National Task Force on the Environment and the Economy, which promoted co-operation and a national approach to the environment, which is certainly not being followed by the government's decision not to participate in this very valuable heritage rivers program. So I believe that we should reconsider and, indeed, reverse the decision not to participate in this Canadian Heritage Rivers System. The fact is, we're not managing Alberta's rivers for multipurpose use so long as we refuse to acknowledge that some rivers or reaches of rivers may have natural, historical, and recreational values that render them worthy of careful, conservative management. And that should be appealing to this government.

Now, we need to establish a long-term conservation plan. Again, I appeal to this government to live up to its name. We need to establish a long-term conservation plan for Alberta's rivers that will encourage the development of river-based recreation and tourism offering economic diversification while preserving the values that make Alberta's rivers truly world-class.

In 1982 the Alberta Wilderness Association produced a publication in which they nominated eight specific rivers for designation as heritage rivers. In keeping with the tradition of other endeavours by this 2,500-member nonprofit organization, which is doing so much to promote wilderness and wildlife in this province, the report was the outcome of an extensive, well-documented study of 32 southern Alberta rivers. Based on exceptional recreational and environmental values, the report nominated the following rivers or river reaches. There was, first of all, the Milk River from secondary road 880 to the United States border. There was, secondly, the Red Deer River from Douglas Creek to the Saskatchewan boundary. There was, thirdly, the Red Deer River from Banff National Park to Sundre; fourth, the Ram River, fifth, the south and north forks of the Ram River, sixth, the Bow River from the Bears paw dam to the Blackfoot Indian Reserve; and finally, the North Saskatchewan River from the Forestry Trunk Road to Rocky Mountain House.

Now, I personally plan to attempt to try and see parts of those rivers, whether rafting or perhaps fishing or otherwise, partly this summer and as soon as possible thereafter. And I commend that to other members of this House, because I think we have to become more sensitive to the concerns that I'm expressing here, certainly not in first instance but in echo of environmentalists and conservationists such as the membership of the Alberta Wilderness Association.

Now, in subsequent years other potential nominees through this system have been identified. There's the Clearwater River from the Saskatchewan border to its confluence with the Athabasca River, which is both scenically spectacular and historically significant, I'm told; I look forward to getting on it and seeing it as soon as possible. This same river is already a designated national heritage river on the Saskatchewan side. The Slave River is also ecologically unique. The North Raven

River, the Crowsnest River from Lundbreck Falls to its confluence with the Oldman, and the Little Smoky River are recognized as having world-class wild fisheries. The Oldman River, as we all know, has only recently been recognized by no less an authority than Dr. Brian Reeves of the University of Calgary as having international value as a heritage landscape and archaeological complex.

But none of these rivers -- and I emphasize, none of them -- is at present recognized officially in this province as anything more than water resources. Their management is entrusted by and large to a single government ministry. Environment, a conflict-of-interest ministry, and consists largely of allocating their water to consumptive uses while regulating the level of pollution discharged into them. It's very obvious that Albertans -- polls consistently show this -- are demanding more and more loudly with each passing year a more and more holistic approach to our environment and, as part of that concern, of our rivers on the part of Alberta Environment and the government of Alberta.

Unhappily, we're running out of wild rivers. There are dams on the St Mary, the Waterton, the Little Bow, the Kananaskis, the Bow, the Ghost, the Red, the North Saskatchewan, the Brazeau, the Paddle, the Peace.

AN HON. MEMBER: That's how you can turn on your lights. That's so you can turn on your lights.

MR. CHUMIR: There are pollution problems on the Wapiti, the Athabasca, the North Saskatchewan, the Red Deer, the Bow. It's sobering to realize how many of our province's beautiful rivers have been dammed and damaged in a few short decades. I believe that the time is now long past when the Alberta government should show responsiveness to the clearly demonstrated wishes of Albertans. Many of our finest rivers are already tamed, polluted, or in other ways sadly abused. A few wild and spectacular rivers and river reaches survive, and these few survivors may be amongst our most valuable natural assets in the not too distant future, sustaining wild river fisheries, adventure tours, river rafting, heritage sites, and other valuable tourism enterprises.

We must demonstrate that we are capable of an enlightened and responsible vision of Alberta, and her future rises above the purely utilitarian. We have to ensure that some of the rivers and the valleys that define the Alberta of our parents and grandparents remain intact and untamed to remind future generations of young Albertans of their heritage.

It was suggested that our dams are there because we have to turn on our lights. Well, I hope that the concerns of the many wilderness associations in this province and perhaps, hopefully, in some small way these comments that I have made here in this House today will help turn on the lights of the members of this government so we'll get some action.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The basic purpose of the motion, as I understand it -- or there's an implication in the motion that Alberta does not have a long-term conservation strategy for the preservation of the natural, historical, and recreational value of the province's rivers. In fact, the studies are so voluminous, Mr. Speaker, and the documentation which shows

that this province and this government has very clear long-term conservation strategies -- in fact, nothing is undertaken without thorough investigation, study, corroboration with environmental scientists. Recreation, culture, heritage, economic and social well-being of Albertans are all things that are taken into account when we look at our river system and the protection and promotion of it.

It is so extensive, it almost defies being able to sum it up in the amount of time we have. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move we adjourn debate on this motion.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: It's been moved by the hon. Member for Red Deer-North that we adjourn debate on this motion. All agreed, say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Carried.

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

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Adair	Drobot	Osterman
Ady	Elliott	Payne
Alger	Fischer	Pengelly
Anderson	Fjordbotten	Reid
Betkowski	Getty	Rostad
Bradley	Heron	Russell
Brassard	Horsman	Schumacher
Campbell	Hyland	Shrake
Cassin	Johnston	Stevens
Cherry	Kowalski	Stewart
Clegg	McClellan	Trynchy
Cripps	Musgrove	Webber
Day	Nelson	Weiss
Dinning	Orman	West
Downey		

Against the motion:

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

Totals:	Ayes -- 43	Noes -- 18
---------	------------	------------

[Motion carried]

MS BARRETT: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I find that what has just happened in this Assembly is a violation of both the letter and the spirit of section 8 of the Standing Orders of Alberta. I remind all members of the Assembly, including the people who are attempting to depart right now, that nongovernment motions and Bills are designated for consideration on Tuesdays

and Thursdays. It is not simply Tories who are elected to this Assembly. Believe it or not, they do not have a monopoly on good knowledge or good information or good ideas. That is why we have the Standing Orders, and I believe that the Member for Red Deer-North should be named, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. House leader, of course, couldn't quote a citation, a section.

MS BARRETT: I did so. Section 8.

MR. RUSSELL: She talks about the spirit of things. The moves that have been made in this Assembly today are giving more members an opportunity to speak on more motions. How can she possibly object to that? [interjections] Now, we have sat here for the last two weeks while they delayed business, and they can't stand to see the opposite reaction happen.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, on the point of order, Mr. Speaker, and adding to the citation the rule of anticipation with respect to motions -- the rule 316 and rule 342 on which I was called to order today during question period -- I would remind members of this House that my question was called out of order on anticipation of this matter. I asked a question of the Minister of the Environment, and presumably the rule of anticipation is based on the Minister of the Environment responding to these particular issues that I raised. Well, far from responding, we didn't even have presence of body at that particular point of time. So I think this is an insult to the democratic and the legislative process. Private members' motions are intended to provide an opportunity to bring forward issues of . . .

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon. member. The issue you're raising is a point of order that was decided earlier today. We do have approximately 25 minutes left in which we can debate motions other than government motions. If the House wishes to continue on in the debate on the next motion, so be it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

MS BARRETT: The point of order needs to be dealt with.

AN HON. MEMBER: The point of order's been decided.

MS BARRETT: No, it hasn't.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. members, the Chair has to do what the House maintains. The House moved adjournment of the particular motion, and we are now on the next order of business. [interjections] If you want to spend the rest of the time . . . Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: I'm obliged, Mr. Speaker. I've just had a lecture from the Parliamentary Counsel that tells me that the sources of our authority in this Chamber are threefold -- this was in another connection altogether -- first, the custom of the Constitution in this Chamber; secondly, Standing Orders; thirdly, the rulings of the Speaker, whether this one or others in other parliamentary institutions. So it is not enough simply to look in Standing Orders and see that at any time under Standing Orders,

with some exceptions, we can adjourn without debate any motion. It is not enough to do that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Exactly; that's the rule.

MR. WRIGHT: That's the rule, yes, but it is not enough. If you want to be a fascist, if you want to forget about parliamentary procedure, if you want to be sanctimonious, that's what you do.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. member to please address the Chair.

MR. DAY: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: Oh, sit down. Go back to Red Deer; save the family.

MR. WRIGHT: I find it so hard to shout at you, Mr. Speaker.

But it wouldn't work. But, Mr. Speaker, it's not a laughing matter. The rules are sensible, and they say that on Tuesdays we have time for motions and other nongovernment business. It obviously subverts the rule, which is itself essential to the transaction of business, if that particular Standing Order that permits, on the face of it, adjournment at any time is taken into account. Therefore, the point of order is that the Speaker should lift his eyes above the Standing Order and consider the whole point of the exercise here and pay attention to that other source of authority, a higher authority, namely the custom of the Constitution and the House as set out in the routine, and we're not doing this. [interjections]

And these behemoths can yap all they like, but they're not doing the parliamentary system, of which they profess to be proud, any honour at all; they're doing it shame. The trouble is that when we get into the government -- one or other of the parties on this side; I believe, my party -- when when we get there, Mr. Speaker, the baser part of me would like to visit the same indignity and obtuseness on them, but I won't do it because I realize there's a higher rule and we should be listening to it.

MR. DAY: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: We're on a point of order.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. members, I'd like to point out that the House decided to adjourn, not the Speaker. [interjections] Well, the Chair has no alternative. If an hon. member stops debating and moves an adjournment motion, the motion is there on the floor and it has to be dealt with.

MR. McEACHERN: You didn't have to agree with it.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would point out to hon. members that according to *Beauchesne* 319(3), members are not allowed to criticize decisions of the House. I would point that out to members. It was not made by the Chair; it was made by this Assembly.

Next order of business.

220. Moved by Mr. Mitchell:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to establish an independent public inquiry into the policies and procedures of the Workers' Compensation Board in order to assess its effectiveness in

providing the maximum degree of fairness to injured workers and to employers and to recommend changes needed to enhance that effectiveness.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to move my motion on the Order Paper, Motion 220. Before I begin its discussion, I would like to point out to all members of this House that our concern had nothing to do with lack of preparation by the Liberal caucus for discussion on this motion. The fact is that the Liberal caucus can present three or 12 or 15 motions in a given day, all night if need be, that we are not only prepared to discuss motions on the Order Paper but we are prepared at any time to govern this province and to govern this province properly.

On the other hand, the fact that I find myself having to speak at 5:12 of this afternoon's session and finding myself with the worry that the members opposite will never be able to carry these ideas from one Tuesday to the next Thursday -- I am concerned with the consistency of debate that we will generate in this Legislature over this particular motion, which can only be deemed to be one of the most important motions on the Order Paper today. It is interesting to note that the minister responsible for occupational health and for the subject area of this motion seems to be particularly pleased that we are able to get to this motion today and undoubtedly welcomes the opportunity to consider my comments over the next 48 hours and to be prepared -- as he leaves -- to respond to them in a comprehensive and positive fashion on Thursday afternoon.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

I trust that the members opposite in this Legislature will demonstrate the dignity and the grace . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: That's hypothetical.

MR. MITCHELL: Sorry; I'm being hypothetical. We haven't seen it; that's for certain.

. . . to continue this debate Thursday afternoon for the full hour that is allotted at that time for the discussion of private members' motions. An hour and 20 minutes is hardly enough for this particular issue, but it is better than what might have happened if the move by the Member for Red Deer-North . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. member, please come to the motion before the House.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DINNING: He's not ready.

MR. MITCHELL: Pages ready; pages ready. [interjections]
Please; don't make me laugh.

My motion calls for the Legislative Assembly to urge the government to establish an independent public inquiry into the policies and procedures of the Workers' Compensation Board in order to assess its effectiveness in providing the maximum degree of fairness to injured workers and to employers and to recommend changes needed to enhance that effectiveness.

Now, I know what the minister of occupational health and safety services is saying. He is saying, "Well, we have already had a study." He is probably congratulating himself for having done that. And we have also had public input -- public input -- into

that process. Therefore, somehow he has taken these two disparate ideas, study and public input, and he is saying to himself that he has met the intention of this motion. In fact, it is interesting to note that he is undoubtedly saying that opposition and government members actually agree for once in a long time. It is very, very important to draw the distinction, however, between a study which is not public and input which is public but not based upon a public study.

In my riding we handle many, many problems that seem to be the fallout of inadequate government services to the people of Edmonton-Meadowlark, and I am certain that my experience reflects similar experience of members all around this province. Of all the problems that we deal with in my constituency office on behalf of constituents, Workers' Compensation Board problems rank in number above all others. They also rank in intensity and in severity of consequence above most other problems that we deal with, because Workers' Compensation Board problems lie at the root of many other social, economic, personal, psychological difficulties, not to mention difficulties that stem from continuing chronic pain due to injuries suffered by workers in the workplace.

It is not enough to say that we have done a management consultant study on the one hand and that we have allowed public input in response to that study and to say that we have adequately reviewed the circumstances and the condition under which the Workers' Compensation Board is today operating. Instead, what we have to do are two things: one, we have to ensure that there is a full public inquiry to look into the problems of the Workers' Compensation Board, and two -- and I think this emphasizes the fairness of our presentation today -- we have to consider in that public inquiry some of the recommendations, some of the proposals made by the consultants who prepared a report for the minister.

I am not arguing that that report is without merit. I believe that some of its recommendations probably have merit. However, as we launch ourselves on the restructuring of the Workers' Compensation Board itself and the Workers' Compensation Board process more broadly, it is absolutely imperative that we are certain, convinced that we know what the problems are, that none of those problems have been glossed over by political convenience and political expediency but that we are certain what those problems are before this government acts to solve the problems.

I would like to discuss briefly some of the specifics of the consultants' report, considering them to be hypotheses which require further study under the public eye. I would begin by mentioning the management consultants' report recommendation that "the focus of the Workers' Compensation Board's activities should be on rehabilitation rather than compensation." It is a recommendation that I welcome, not without some reservation, but I certainly believe that it is a step in the right direction. At the same time, I would be concerned that any attempt to cut back on compensation may not be matched by increased efforts at rehabilitation.

One possible example of this occurring is the instance last year when the minister ordered the board to get its costs under control. It is, of course, a Conservative obsession to cut costs at any cost, not understanding the difference between cutting costs and investing in the future, cutting costs and spending money that in the long run will save money in a much more positive fashion. The Board may indeed have been able to cut some of the costs by following the minister's directive, but the cost cutting was done entirely at the expense of claimants. There was

no accompanying boost in rehabilitation services. As has been pointed out before, the end result was that a number of claimants ended up on social allowance rolls, having nowhere else to turn after being cut from the WCB rolls. In the end the province was still paying for the upkeep of individual injured workers, and nothing was being done to promote the individual's return to the work force at some future point. In fact, workers went from a system where there was some hope to a welfare system from which it is increasingly difficult to escape once one has become mired in it. So it is important that when the Board decides to move away from its compensation culture -- a term used in the report to describe the Board's approach -- it have a corresponding rehabilitation operation which will shift into gear at the same time.

Secondly, "It is recommended that the [Workers' Compensation Board] use a 'wage-loss' method to compensate injured workers." Again, I welcome this recommendation. As the report so rightly points out, "It is not the injury which [should be] evaluated, but the effect of the injury on the worker." It is very important that we know, that the report point that out specifically and correctly; we don't know until we have studied publicly the kinds of problems that are being encountered throughout the processing of Workers' Compensation Board injury claims.

Compensating workers for the difference between the amount they were able to earn after the accident and the amount which was being earned before the accident is an approach which is both logical and fair to all concerned. It is fair that a worker be compensated for any wages lost which were a result of an injury, in convalescence. It is fair that a worker be terminated from compensation if he is able to return to the same job he had before at the same rate of pay. Any other compensation the worker may desire for loss of some physical ability -- for example, a loss of a finger or a toe . . .

MR. DAY: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

Point of order, Member for Red Deer-North.

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Not wanting to impinge on the member opposite's delivery, but *Beauchesne* 309 is very clear about reading speeches. I realize the member has been caught somewhat unawares and has not had time to review what his researchers have handed him, but in fact he barely looks up at all, very carefully flipping it over page by page, reading it line by line, pausing when he can't read the researcher's handwriting. I would ask that the Speaker make a ruling on that for us.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: It is true that I am glancing from time to time at my notes, and that is a custom in this House. It may be that the member opposite -- and I certainly do not question his intentions -- has been somewhat misled because it is so seldom that he sees such a clearly articulate delivery from his side of the House. It may seem as though we are actually reading, but instead I'm being very, very careful to be clear so that members such as the Member for Red Deer-North, who seems reluctant to listen to other members' views of issues, will listen and will listen carefully and will be able to understand.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry, on the point

of order.

MR. YOUNIE: Yeah, on the point of order. I just think it should be noted, the level of audacity it takes for the person who violated the tradition of the House and moved adjournment is now casting aspersions on the member who he tried to catch off guard. It raises the disgust of any human member of this House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, all hon. members. Perhaps, Edmonton-Meadowlark, you'll come back to Motion 220.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Compensating workers for the difference between the amount they were able to earn after the accident and the amount which was being earned before the accident is an approach which is both logical and fair to all concerned. It is fair that a worker be compensated for any lost wages which were a result of injury and convalescence. It is also fair that compensation for such an injury should be terminated once rehabilitation is full, complete, and once that particular worker can return to working at the same job or one similar and at the same rate of pay.

The wage-loss system of compensation, however, is fair only if the Board has first put into place the machinery necessary to offer rehabilitative services for those workers who cannot return to their former jobs and pay levels as a result of injuries. It is imperative that the Workers' Compensation Board emphasize rehabilitative services not in rhetoric but in fact is provided by this government sufficient funds to ensure that rehabilitative services are provided adequately and fully and that there is a monitoring process which is fair and equitable and that takes into consideration the interests of the worker, to ensure that that worker is as completely rehabilitated as possible before discontinuation of wage-loss supplement or before a final determination of what that wage-loss supplement should be is decided upon by the Workers' Compensation Board.

There are, Mr. Speaker, a number of other recommendations in the management consultants' report which bear review under a public inquiry: recommendations that the concept of universal industry coverage be endorsed, apparently positive; recommendations that the Workers' Compensation Board become more service driven, again apparently positive; and a suggestion that an aggressive and proactive case management system be put in place which emphasizes rehabilitation. All apparently positive -- we simply cannot be certain, given the cloak of secrecy under which this particular consulting report was undertaken.

One area that has particularly been left, I believe, even by this management report and requires particular consideration is the area of administrative processes under the Workers' Compensation Board. My experience is that many of the difficulties encountered by workers in presenting their case to the Workers' Compensation Board are difficulties that arise from administrative muddle. I am not being critical of the employees of the Workers' Compensation Board. I believe they are dedicated, that they work hard, that they try their best. I do believe, however, that they have been caught in a viselike grip: on the one hand, cost cutting at any expense and, on the other hand, the desire and requirement to do as good a job as possible and to treat workers as fairly as possible.

Fairness has to be emphasized in the manner in which the Workers' Compensation Board conducts its procedures, fairness because workers have no other recourse. They do not have a recourse to sue employers if their settlement is inadequate, and

most do not have the resources to undertake that suit even if they had the legal right to do that. It is, therefore, perhaps all that much more frustrating that the problems which are so desperate for many workers stem from something as manageable and as easily fixed as administrative overload, as too much work for too few resources. This is a question that requires clear observation by the public, open access by people concerned to investigate what it is that lies at the root of these kinds of administrative difficulties and how it is that we can take steps to

correct those and to streamline the process of the Workers' Compensation Board and thereby to enhance the fairness with which it is able to deal with workers' compensation problems.

Mr. Speaker, it's 5:30, and I will move . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Under Standing Order 4, the House stands adjourned until 8 p.m.

[The House recessed at 5:30 p.m.]