

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Wednesday, June 22, 1988 2:30 p.m.**
Date: 88/06/22

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

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

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

Amen.

head: **NOTICES OF MOTIONS**

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 21 I wish to give notice that I intend to move in Committee of the Whole that

further consideration of any or all of the resolutions, clauses, sections, or titles of Bill 22 then before the committee shall be the first business of the committee and shall not be further postponed.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**head: **DÉPÔT DE PROJETS DE LOI**

Bill 60
Languages Act

Projet de loi 60
Loi linguistique

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, in the House.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 60, being the Languages Act. I would withhold comment until I make a ministerial statement, which will relate in part to this Bill, later in the proceedings.

MR. SPEAKER: On the motion of the Attorney General that Bill 60, Languages Act, be read a first time. Sur la motion de l'hon. procureur général que le projet de loi 60, Loi linguistique, reçoive une première lecture.

For the motion, say aye. En faveur de la motion, dites oui.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye. Oui.

MR. SPEAKER: Against the motion, say no. Contre la motion,

dites non.

The motion is carried. La motion est adoptée.

CLERK: Bill 60, Languages Act, introduced by the hon. Mr. Horsman, is now read a first time. Première lecture du projet de loi 60, Loi linguistique, déposé par l'hon. M. Horsman.

Bill 61
Legislative Assembly Statutes
Amendment Act, 1988

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce Bill 61, the Legislative Assembly Statutes Amendment Act, 1988. Bill 61 will provide certain additional powers and capacities to the Members' Services Committee of this Legislature and will also include service as a condition of eligibility for pensions.

[Leave granted; Bill 61 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to table four copies of the Liberal caucus' amendments to Bills 21 and 22, for information purposes.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vermilion-Viking, followed by the Minister of Labour, then Rocky Mountain House.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, some constituents from the constituency of Vermilion-Viking. They are 17 students from grade 6 of the Central high/Sedgewick public school in Sedgewick, Alberta. They are looking forward enthusiastically to graduating this year, and I hope they have a great summer. They are in the public gallery. They are accompanied by one teacher Mr. Richard Payne and a parent Mrs. Penny Read, and I would ask if they'd stand and receive the cordial welcome of this Assembly.

DR. REID: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege this afternoon to introduce a group of students from Roche Miette school in Hinton. There are 30 of them, and they're accompanied by their principal and one teacher, Mr. Dave Couves and Mr. Rick Armstrong, and by two parents, Mrs. Helen Colwell and Mrs. Marilyn Mantai. I would ask the group to rise in the members' gallery and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, Mayor Ted Iverson of Sylvan Lake. Mayor Iverson is up here telling us of the wonderful tourism possibilities of Sylvan Lake and meeting with several ministers. He is seated in the members' gallery, and I'd ask him to rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Attorney General
Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a state-

ment regarding language policy in Alberta. In doing so, I would like to emphasize at the outset that the government of Alberta is sensitive to the great importance that all Canadians attach to questions of language and culture. These are not abstract issues. Language and culture are deeply rooted in our everyday experiences as a people and a nation. They form the foundation for our sense of community, the bonds of family, and ultimately the expression of the aspirations of individual Canadians. It's my hope that we can address this matter with moderation, tolerance, and a sense of balance.

I want to point out that the ability of provinces to respond to the needs of its residents on language and other cultural matters is an essential element in Canada's federal system. The Fathers of Confederation recognized that different provinces need to respond to the linguistic and cultural diversity within each province in different ways. Indeed, this was an essential feature of the Confederation bargain.

My statement today, Mr. Speaker, arises in response to a Supreme Court judgment involving section 110 of the North-West Territories Act, which provided for the use of English and French in the Legislative Assembly, in legislation, and before the courts. Section 110 fell into disuse by the territorial government, and when Alberta and Saskatchewan became provinces in 1905, it was believed that section 110 no longer applied. Thus its provisions have not been exercised for almost a century. In February 1988 the Supreme Court ruled that section 110 did in fact remain in force in Saskatchewan. By implication, the provisions of section 110 also could be in force in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the government of Alberta is proposing a package of legislative and policy initiatives designed to respond in a comprehensive way to the language issues that have arisen as a result of the Supreme Court decision. There are five components to the reform package we are proposing. They were developed following consultations with the Alberta Francophone community and numerous representations from other groups and individuals.

The government of Alberta has introduced today the Languages Act to bring Alberta into conformity with the Supreme Court judgment. The application of the *Mercure* decision in Alberta would mean that all the laws and regulations in Alberta which were passed since the creation of the province in 1905 are invalid, since they were not passed in French as well as English. To clarify this situation, the Languages Act will repeal section 110 of the North-West Territories Act as it applies to Alberta. The Act will also declare valid all prior provincial legislation, the Standing Orders, and the records and *Journals* of the Assembly.

The legislation then goes on to enact provisions which cover the same subject areas as contained in section 110. The Languages Act will provide that English will be the language of Alberta legislation.

We will also be proposing a number of changes to the rules of the Assembly in relation to the use of language. The Assembly has rescinded Standing Order 17.1. Following the passage of the Languages Act a new standing order will be recommended which will provide that English and French may be used in the Assembly. The official publications of the Assembly will record matters in either English or French. *Hansard* will record in either English or French without translation. Members may use languages other than English and French in the Assembly subject to the approval of the Speaker. Prior written notice and an English translation of the remarks will be given to the Speaker, and the translation will be shown in the

records.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has introduced an amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada which makes it mandatory for all provinces, including Alberta, to conduct criminal trials in either English or French by 1990. Alberta must, therefore, undertake further measures to comply with the federal requirements. Individuals will have the right, if they so choose, to a judge, jury, and prosecutor who speak either English or French, depending on the language of the accused. In addition, the accused and legal counsel may use either English or French in any proceedings relating to the preliminary inquiry or trial of the accused. In view of the significant costs associated with such an initiative, Alberta will be seeking federal financial assistance to facilitate the implementation of the program.

With regard to civil courts every participant in court proceedings will be entitled to speak either English or French. If necessary, an interpreter will be provided. The court proceedings will be recorded in the language spoken.

In the area of provincial offences, individuals will also be entitled to speak either English or French. Similarly, the court proceedings will be recorded in the language spoken.

The development of a language policy for education is a high priority for the government of Alberta. The policy will encourage a wide variety of language of instruction opportunities in our education systems and will have four major components. One: we have fully recognized the unique rights of Francophones who qualify under section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the new School Act. The provision for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to establish regulations in this area reflects the importance that this government places on establishing appropriate policies and procedures for ensuring that the rights of Francophones are met. In the near future the government of Alberta intends to bring forward regulations under the School Act which are consistent with the rights of Francophone parents established in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The government of Alberta will also continue to provide opportunities for English-speaking students to learn French wherever the numbers of students are sufficient. This government encourages and provides additional funding for school boards to respond to the wishes of their communities by providing opportunities for students to learn French either through immersion programs or through French second-language courses.

Alberta is a province whose people possess a rich diversity of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This heritage remains as a profound feature of Alberta society. The programs and opportunities available to students reflect Alberta's strong multicultural heritage. The government of Alberta remains committed to providing opportunities for students to learn French and an unprecedented range of other languages, including aboriginal languages, Ukrainian, German, Italian, Hebrew, Chinese, and so on.

In addition, the government of Alberta will continue to provide opportunities for students who are new to Canada and Alberta to learn English in order that they may become equipped to live, study, and work productively in the province.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of our multicultural society and the importance of language in the communications between citizens and government, the government of Alberta already offers a variety of services and programs in a number of languages in order to better serve the people of Alberta. Where appropriate we will continue to enhance the language services available to

all Albertans.

Taken together, the initiatives announced today are a strong reflection of our multicultural heritage and the diversity on which this province has been built. This language policy takes into account the reality of Alberta and the distinct nature of Alberta society.

MR. SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Some of the words I could agree with, but I honestly have to say to you that I can't agree with the thrust because I don't think that it lives up to the words. Especially -- and I'll come back to this in question period -- I'm concerned by the way the debate has been taken, especially by the Premier of the province, in talking about full bilingualism, which nobody has been asking for, and I think it's put an ugly tinge to this particular debate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously there are some good aspects of this. I think the government recognized that they had to move in certain directions, and one of them is the idea that we finally in this Legislature are going to recognize that there are two official languages in our country. I might point out that if they'd taken the amendments that we proposed last fall, we could have saved a lot of trouble, and they wouldn't have had to be back in this position again.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other aspect. I certainly agree with the Attorney General as he talks about multiculturalism. I think it's a good step that members may use languages other than English and French. I think this recognizes the reality of this province. While we have the two official languages, now we have the right to speak in other tongues. I compliment the government on that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think there are a number of things that we must consider. The government has been forced to react by a court case in Saskatchewan that would have affected us. But make no mistake about it: the main purpose of this Bill is to extinguish French-language rights. That's the reality of what the Bill is doing. Now, I say to the minister: if you're going to take away people's rights, it should be done in a sensitive way to avoid confrontation. The whole concept -- as the minister talked about harmony and all the rest of it -- occurs when there's a consultation and a dialogue between the groups, especially the groups that are affected. I say to you that that hasn't been done, and the government really, if I may say so, has failed the test. As a result of this, we've had a confrontational approach, Mr. Speaker, and this invites lawsuit. We could be into some very expensive cases in the future. That's an advantage often to working these things out with the groups ahead of time.

Mr. Speaker, the only other point I would make is that the Francophone association has asked, I think quite legitimately, that some of the statutes -- certainly not all, but some -- that affect all Albertans . . . We should look at that in terms of promoting some of them, at least, that would be done in both official languages. That's not been done. That was one of the recommendations we made. We don't think it would be costly. In fact, I'm convinced that the federal government, in view of what's happening in Saskatchewan, would provide money to do this.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I say, there are some positive things to this, things that we asked for two years ago that the government is now forced to do. But this is not the end of this. This is not the final solution, and I expect that the government knows this.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

French Language Legislation

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier knows what my questions might be about. The Premier has over the last few weeks attracted considerable media attention by publicly rejecting official bilingualism or full bilingualism. I say that this is a cowardly means of creating a diversion, because the Premier's comments really rank up with shouting "fire" in a crowded theatre. The Premier knows full well his comments were outrageous and a total fraud. He knows that no one in Alberta, particularly the Francophone association, has called for full bilingualism or anything remotely connected with this concept. I don't know what his definition is. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier is clearly attempting to fan false fears and create unnecessary hatred, for his own political agenda. My question to the Premier. Will the Premier, now that we have this Bill, desist from his campaign to create a phony issue around full bilingualism?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the hon. member would treat those comments that way. They were made in the Legislature responding to a question, and they were subsequently also discussed in other places.

But surely here is the place, when there is a question raised, to present the government's position both in legislation and in policy, and I did that. Frankly, if standing up for the views of Albertans is somehow in the leader's mind seeking to create hatred, I think he's totally off base, without any foundation in fact, and just trying to somehow draw a red herring on this issue, where the government is presenting the views and the wishes of the people of Alberta.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, there are ways that Premiers can act to take the high road on issues, and most politicians know that. This Premier deliberately took the low road on this issue, and he's well aware of it.

Because he made these statements, Mr. Speaker, then could the Premier tell us who in the province has been asking for full bilingualism?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, obviously, there are many people who have raised the issues in a variety of ways with the government, with individual MLAs, with myself, also certain people representing other governments.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, let's be clear about what the government said, and nothing in this in any way brings on a feeling of hatred. It is this: neither by policy nor by legislation are we going to impose full bilingualism on the people of Alberta. That's our position, and we stand on it. [interjections] If the hon. members don't like it, well, that's fine; they can stand for something else. But that's what we stand for.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that Premier refused to answer the question, and the question is: which group in Alberta -- and I want to repeat it for him -- has been asking for full bilingualism, and why did he even talk about it, if it wasn't to score cheap political points?

MR. GETTY: Again, Mr. Speaker, I answered the question earlier. It's merely a repeat. If the hon. member doesn't like it that's too bad. We're standing up for Albertans.

MR. MARTIN: You're standing up. What a phony, Mr. Speaker. Standing up for Albertans.

If anybody was going to ask for it, it would be the French Canadian association. They wrote a letter to the Premier, and I quote:

As you are aware from our many letters to you, to Mr. Horsman and Mrs. Betkowski, the solution we have proposed does not ask for full bilingualism or anything even approaching full bilingualism.

Those are the people who would be asking, and they weren't, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Premier: would the Premier now stand up and apologize to the people of Alberta for misrepresenting the facts in this issue?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I've heard a lot of foolishness in the Legislature coming from the hon. Leader of the Opposition, but this probably is one of his biggest foolish comments. The government is not apologizing to anybody for standing up for the people of Alberta.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, this is a supplementary to the Premier. How can the Premier, in view of the fact that up until today the right of the French speaker to have every law written in French -- a right up until this new Bill is admitted -- say that it's possibly fair when now not one old law, not one new law, will be written in French? How can he call that fair?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's all in anyone's judgment. We believe that all of these pieces of legislation have been passed in English and that the government and legislation -- laws, boards -- have all been conducted in English over the life of our province. We're frankly making it continue along that way. We do not want to have something else imposed on Albertans.

DR. BUCK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier assure the Assembly and the people of Alberta that in light of the fact that we are passing this legislation, it will be made very prominent that all the other languages will be acceptable in the Legislature and to the people of this province?

MR. GETTY: Well, yes, Mr. Speaker, that was covered in the ministerial statement to the House. It will also be a part of the changes in our Standing Orders, because I think it's only proper that we do have that opportunity.

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

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Energy Industry under the Free Trade Agreement

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier in the past has insulted Albertans who criticize the Mulroney trade deal. That all rebounded yesterday when the Premier himself revealed that

we were not able through our federal government's negotiations with the United States to bring FERC . . .

That's the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

. . . under the control of the free trade agreement.

He said that even though government documents said we did get access to the U.S. markets. The truth is that the trade deal has no authority over a U.S. regulatory body that imposed a \$300

million per year pipeline decision on our gas producers in 1986 and in 1982 permitted our U.S. gas customers to tear up take-or-pay contracts they signed in good faith with Alberta exporters. To the Premier. What explanation does he have for the difference between the secure access that his government document promised and the Premier's own admission that secure access was not achieved?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member is raising two different issues. As I said yesterday, FERC is not under the direct control of the free trade agreement. FERC rulings can be reviewed by the disputes tribunals; however, their recommendations are not binding. Nevertheless, they will carry some weight. Frankly, we do not see the operation of FERC now shutting off access to markets in the United States, and we think that as we establish a greater and greater trading relationship with our friends and neighbours to the south, we will be able to develop, as the agreement provides, an entirely new framework for trading with the United States, develop new rules which we believe will in fact then lead us to be able to have protection from rulings such as FERC.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, Mr. Speaker, this agency can impose all kinds of conditions against Alberta's interests. In fact, the Minister of Energy yesterday said that actions to frustrate Alberta will magically disappear as U.S. demand for our gas increases. But the unfair charges that we're paying right now are based on volumes of gas we export: the more we export, the greater the penalty. Will the Premier explain why he continues to support a deal which gives Alberta no protection from these actions and which, in fact, actually costs us more, the greater our exports to the U.S.?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wants to merely multiply volume times an amount of money, sure, he can play games with those kinds of figures. But they, frankly, are not the kind of thing that we're interested in. What we're interested in is making sure that we establish an historic trade arrangement with the largest market in the world. Already other nations are flocking to Canada and the United States to see whether they can't strike such an arrangement themselves.

Now, the hon. member says that some U.S. federal legislation or body can do certain things. That's true. The trade agreement does not try and strike down all of the legislation that the United States has; nor would the hon. members want the trade agreement to strike down legislation which Canada has. That's obviously not what we set out to do. We set out to come up with an historic comprehensive trade agreement which will allow the people of Canada and particularly Alberta -- because Albertans can compete with anybody. They are prepared to go out into the world and compete, and they wish to expand their markets on an assured basis. We've got that for them, and now it provides a whole new base for future economic growth in this province.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, under this deal the federal government will force provinces like ours to comply with this deal, but in the U.S. states and regulatory agencies can still do what they like under this deal. In fact, the Energy minister admitted as much yesterday. Why does the Alberta government accept this double standard where Alberta has to accept restraints under the trade deal but U.S. states and regulatory agencies don't?

MR. GETTY: Alberta does not have to, Mr. Speaker. I also just pointed out to the hon. member -- and he really is just asking the same question again -- that we did not want Canada to be fully caught up under this trade agreement. Why would we expect the United States to be? This is a trading arrangement. This is an historic trading arrangement between our two countries: our country that produces so much more than it uses and therefore must sell that product. We have an opportunity now to tie in that ability to produce and to compete with the largest market in the world. That's what the people of Alberta wanted. That's what we have been able to establish for them.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, on April 10 of last year the Premier told this Assembly that the deal would eliminate matters such as FERC or it wouldn't be effective and Alberta would probably say no. Was the Premier misleading the Assembly at that time, or has this government decided to eat whatever is dished out to us under this deal and thank the government of Ottawa and the United States for it?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, as I already said today, it does provide that FERC can be reviewed by the disputes settlement mechanism, and it also sets in place -- already they are working on a whole new set of rules which will in fact enable us to create a new trading mechanism on a long-term basis between ourselves and the United States. I believe that that will in fact remove us in the future, by these new trading arrangements, from the impact of rulings of FERC.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Attorney General. In the Attorney General's communicating with our neighbours to the south and with the people in Ottawa, is the feeling there that this is possibly the last opportunity we have, because of the protectionist attitude in parts of the United States, to really strike a free trade agreement with the United States?

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is quite right in his perception included in his question, because the fact of the matter is that we are now proceeding into a time in the United States' history when an election is imminent. The question as to whether or not a new administration would enter into such a deal is very much unanswerable at this stage. But certainly it's clear that there is a very serious protectionist sentiment in the United States, and in the course of an election campaign, anything can of course happen. Therefore, we feel the time is definitely right, and if the deal is not approved by the U.S. Congress prior to the general elections which will take place in November of this year, it could be many, many years again before such an opportunity would arise.

It is clear from my visits to the United States, my discussions with politicians, legislators, the people in the administration that if we don't get this deal, there are going to be enormous trade wars between Canada and the United States. One of the industries that will be hit first and foremost will be the red meat sector, and that will hit right at the heart of Alberta's strength in the agricultural economy. Those people who are afraid of this deal are overlooking the potential impact upon that vital element of our current agricultural economy, let alone the other major trade disputes which would come our way. So it is a good deal, Mr. Speaker; I've said it before. We'll continue to support it.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo, followed by Red Deer-South.

MR. CHUMIR: To the Premier. The oil and gas industry is at this stage on the eve of the worst depression that we've ever seen in the oil and gas industry. We're in a very weakened state. I'm wondering why the Premier doesn't see that the oil and gas assets we have are going to become increasingly valuable and that we could make a far better deal if we held on to them and made a deal in five years rather than giving them away now during this very weakened state of the industry.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member can hardly represent his constituents to be making those comments here in this Legislature. First of all, you only have to speak to knowledgeable people in the energy industry to know that they are on the rebound. They are stronger, making better profits. The industry is expanding again; rigs are moving; a record number of well licences, a record number of seismic crews, a record number of dollars spent on the sale of Crown leases: all-time records. Now, this is not an industry that is in an all-time depression. The hon. member ought to go back and visit with the facts of life and maybe not be floating around in his ethereal thoughts.

We've been working with the industry. The industry wants to see this agreement, just as other parts of the Alberta economy have been asking for this agreement. We produce so much more than we use. We must have markets. You'd think it would be simple for the hon. members even to understand. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, if there was a time when the industry was in a weakened condition, it was when the Liberals, backed by the NDP, devastated this province with their national energy program. That's when the industry was weak. But this government has helped it to grow strong again.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Red Deer-South.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary to the Premier. In recognizing that some of the western and south-western United States in particular feel somewhat threatened by this agreement as it relates to energy, does the Premier feel that security of access is probably a key factor in the tentative expansion of Suncor, Syncrude, and the OSLO project?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think it is something that I've had an opportunity to discuss in Alberta before. I'm not sure whether I've had a chance to answer that question here in the Legislature, but I think the hon. member has touched on an extremely important point. We have the United States currently with aircraft carriers going through the Persian sea protecting supplies of oil for their country. Now, here is a chance, under this historic trade agreement, for us to be able to develop our heavy oils, our oil sands, our conventional oil, and conventional gas in a long-term trading arrangement with the United States that will bring tremendous development to this province in those areas. Frankly, you would think the hon. members would be looking forward to trying to help this province. They were for the NEP, which hurt, and they're against the trade agreement which helps. Who are they representing?

Bingo Licence for Day Care Facility

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier today. Two weeks ago the Premier made a number of statements about his position on day care. I quote from *Hansard*:

Our initiative is to strengthen the family, to provide reasons . . .

why mothers will stay in the house, in the family while not having care outside of the house. We will have care in the home: parent care, not institutional care.

These comments have been taken to heart by government representatives, and as a consequence the implications of these outdated or antique views are being felt by Albertans requiring day care. To the Premier. Is the Premier aware of the recent decision by the Alberta Gaming Commission to refuse to give a bingo licence to a day care on the grounds that day care is more of a convenience than a necessary service to parents?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there's absolutely no relation to that ruling by the Gaming Commission and my comments. It's hard, I know, for the hon. member to appreciate this, but the fact of the matter is that this government's positive initiatives to help the family are not in any way an attack on necessary programs in this province. If he'd just go a little further with his selected reading of *Hansard*, he would know that I said that we are going to help those shelters that need funding from the province, that we are going to provide day care for those parents who require day care for their children, but we're also going to work in a positive way to support the family. That's a commitment by this government.

MR. TAYLOR: Very convenient, but the fact of the matter is that his minions interpreted it the way everybody else did. In other words, does the Premier agree with his minions' interpretation that day care is more of a convenience than a necessary service to parents? Does he agree with it?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member now is trying to, I guess, deal with a Gaming Commission decision. The Attorney General is the minister responsible for the Gaming Commission in this province. I'd ask him to respond to that question.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Gaming Commission, of course, reviews the eligibility of certain organizations, and they must meet certain criteria. They must be either religious or charitable or have some connection with an agricultural society in order to qualify, pursuant to the Criminal Code of Canada. I don't know the specific instance the hon. member refers to, but it would have to be reviewed in light of those requirements. Only those organizations which qualify pursuant to the Criminal Code of Canada are entitled to receive licences for any gaming event in this province. Now, if in fact there's some technicality relating to a particular society, those matters can certainly be brought to my attention for review, and they will be referred to the Gaming Commission. That's part of the process. But certainly no direction has been given by me or anyone else in this government to deny applications to day care societies.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, back to the Premier. This is a nonprofit community society, and the Gaming Commission is infected by a disease that the Premier has started over there. Would the Premier communicate to the minions and the deputy ministers all through his government that that original statement he made was a crock of baloney and that he is really in favour of day cares and that it's a necessity for families?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has now merely repeated his question, which was just answered by the hon. minister responsible. I'm going to say this to him. If he believes that the government's support for the family is a disease, then

the hon. member is really out of touch with the people of Alberta, because we intend to support families in all the complex forms that families now show in modern society.

MR. TAYLOR: Put your money where your mouth is.

MR. GETTY: But if the hon. member thinks that by attacking our assistance for families he is doing a service to Albertans, he's so out of touch I really worry for him.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap. This fellow can sure come out with all the things he's going to do.

Mr. Speaker, then, may I ask the Premier if he'll do just this simple little thing: direct the Alberta Gaming Commission to consider nonprofit community day care centres as legitimate contenders for bingo licences. That's all.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I've already indicated to the hon. leader of the Liberal Party that only those organizations . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. You've had your full complement of questions. Please stop the interruptions so we can get the answer, because we have a considerable number of other members who would like to get into question period.

MR. HORSMAN: Only religious and charitable organizations are entitled. There are many nonprofit organizations in the province of Alberta that do not qualify for either of those categories that are permitted under the Criminal Code of Canada for licensing for gaming events. Now, the federal government has, through its legislation, delegated certain responsibilities to the provinces, but we cannot go beyond the definitions set out in the Criminal Code of Canada with regard to that matter. If the hon. leader of the Liberal Party wants to get a legal opinion on that matter, he might very well consult his Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Government Equity in Energy Industry

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon has a large family. He thought a virus caused them.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the hon. Premier. In light of the fact that the Alberta Energy Company, which we have a certain equity in, has taken over Chieftain Development Co., one of the few remaining oil companies that has their headquarters in Edmonton, is the Premier in a position to indicate to this Assembly if the government is still interested in being part of the action, or are they considering getting out of the Alberta Energy Company?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, obviously these positions change from time to time, but I can express to the hon. member right now that the government is very interested now in maintaining its current equity interest in the Alberta Energy Company.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that the Alberta Energy Company has taken over Chieftain and the headquarters are here, is the Premier in a position to indicate if the corporate headquarters of Chieftain will remain in Edmonton or will be moved elsewhere?

MR. GETTY: It's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Energy is not here today, because he is responsible for Alberta Energy. However, he assured me of this, and I would ask him on his return to respond in a supplementary way to the member. He did assure me on this basis, as an MLA from an Edmonton constituency, that there will be at least as many and probably more jobs still provided by the company, Chieftain, here in Edmonton as before the acquisition.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary back to the first question and the answer that the Premier gave. In light of the fact that this is a supposedly free-enterprise government, is this a way that the government can have indirect control and be involved in the oil patch, by having equity in the Alberta Energy Company?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, that position was passed a long time ago by the government of Alberta and by this Legislature in their approval of the Alberta Energy Company Act, which is an Act of this Legislature which establishes a company and its terms of reference and how it operates within the province.

DR. BUCK: Mr. Speaker, back to the second one, where the government said they are willing to stay in the action. The Premier is now saying: "Yes, we're in the oil business indirectly through Alberta Energy Company, and we are not going to get out of that position. We're still going to be involved in the oil industry directly or indirectly through Alberta Energy Company."

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, yes. I make it very clear. That's the policy position of the government at this time: to maintain our equity interest in the Alberta Energy Company.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We own 36 percent of Alberta Energy. We recently invested another \$30 million in a new share issue. The company is investing in Chieftain Development, which is going to be spending a great deal of its drilling money offshore. Why is it, in that event, Mr. Speaker, that Alberta Energy Company shows absolutely no interest in joining in the Husky upgrader when it has huge heavy oil holdings in that very area and the government is very ready to undo the bankroll in order to fund what is basically an uneconomic project?

MR. GETTY: It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, how the hon. member, in his desire to almost race to be opposing things in such a negative way, today is now anti the trade agreement, anti Alberta Energy Company, and anti the Husky upgrader. The hon. member should not be in such a rush to oppose. Now and then think of some positive things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Grande Prairie.

Beverage Container Legislation

DR. ELLIOTT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of the Environment. About a month ago I asked the minister to review the recommendations made to him by the beverage container council regarding changes in the deposit and

return rates for beverage containers. I was wondering if the minister has had an opportunity to review those recommendations and if he's developed new policies on them.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of months questions have come to the Minister of the Environment from both the Member for Little Bow and the Member for Grande Prairie with respect to the consultation that's been ongoing with a number of individuals pending proposed changes to the Beverage Container Act. I've taken the advice of those members, Mr. Speaker, and the government will be delaying implementation of the new recommendations until at least December 31, 1988.

DR. ELLIOTT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. There's some concern about the consensus of the various parties involved in the container business, and I was wondering if the minister feels that he's on safe ground proceeding without having stronger consensus.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, we've had in our province now a system that's worked quite well for the people of Alberta. It tends to be a bit complex because of the variety of tariffs that are used for the variety of types of containers that we have, which basically ranges from 2 cents to 30 cents. One of the thoughts that I had in bringing the various groups together was to see whether or not we could in fact provide a simpler system.

Such was not the case, at least not the case to this point in time. I've had no complaints at all from citizens in the province of Alberta, save for some complaints with respect to the quality of service that is provided by some bottle depots. So I think that what we should really do is try and get all the players back together again around the table, in a roundtable discussion, and see if in fact we can simplify the system and make it just a bit more manageable. That's our intent, and we'll work towards the deadline of December 31, 1988.

DR. ELLIOTT: My final supplementary. Mr. Speaker. The minister referred earlier to a workable consensus. I was wondering if he feels, then, comfortable with the lack of consensus in some of those areas, in proceeding without having the total consensus that must be necessary.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, there were five, six, seven areas basically that we looked at for improvement. Those areas I've already talked about in the Assembly. But very essentially one was to eliminate the wide variety of tariffs we have, to bring a few more types of containers into the system, to in fact write in a guaranteed return for the bottle depot systems, and to talk about three or four other items. Good progress is being made, but we are not in a position at this point in time to basically say that there is a consensus that would allow a new system or an improved system to come in place on July 1.

So I think we're going to continue the process. It's always been the philosophy and policy of this government that we would want to consult with all the people in the province of Alberta involved in this and work towards a very amicable situation. That's our intent, and that's the time frame we will now adopt towards that solution.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, just a supplementary. Like the minister, I'm sure, I've had lots of requests and calls on the new

pricing schedule for bottles, and I can't quite understand -- I'm using the theory that if it's not broke, don't fix it -- why we changed from the old system. We had set up many independent entrepreneurs around Alberta doing reasonably well. I don't see where it was that big a cost to the government, so why did the minister change?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly the point. The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon has quoted a phrase that I used in *Hansard* here five, six weeks ago. I said: if it ain't broke, why fix it? The recommendation provided to me to change the tariff structure was provided to me by all of the vested interest groups involved in the bottle depot system in the province of Alberta. The bottlers, the grocers, and all the others basically came to me and said: "The system is too complex with a range of tariffs from 2 cents to 30 cents. Would you implement a new system that would basically talk about 2 cents per container to 5 cents per container?"

It is not my suggestion. It is not the suggestion of the government of Alberta. It is a suggestion provided to us by the vested interest groups in our province. I don't believe there is a consensus with respect to that; nor do I believe fundamentally that it would be in the best interests of the citizens at large. That's one of the reasons why I'm inviting everybody back to the table and saying: hey, take a second look at this before we do anything.

MR. YOUNIE: Will the minister ensure that his research also helps him find out that there is a direct relationship between the amount of the return and the percentage return on any particular type of bottle? Because that is the case.

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, once again that's a follow-through of the previous question just raised by the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. The advice provided to me by, I repeat once again, some of the vested interests involved in the bottle depot system, the beverage container system in the province, that basically made the point to me was that in fact a reduced tariff on containers would not affect the amount of returns. I'm quite suspect of that. I believe quite frankly that the 2.35 million people in our province have become very used to the current rate of tariffs that we have in our province. Returns are upwards to the 90 to 95 percent level, and there's not anything we would want to do that would jeopardize that.

MR. SPEAKER: Main question, Edmonton-Avonmore, followed by Edmonton-Gold Bar and, if there's time, Vermilion-Viking.

Economic Equity for Women

MS LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier. At a First Ministers' Conference held in November, 1987, the ministers committed themselves to work towards the goal of economic equality for women. They recognized that there is a need for the creation of an environment which supports and encourages the successful integration of work and family responsibilities. In view of the fact that the communiqué of the first ministers, which I will file with the Assembly, recognized that changes in attitudes were required to promote the sharing of family responsibilities between men and women, does the Premier regard his recent statements about the superiority of mother's love as being consistent with the need for

attitudinal change?

MR. GETTY: The hon. member may disagree with my feelings about the importance of a mother, Mr. Speaker, but it has absolutely no impact on the statement the government made at the first ministers' meeting. It may well be that our minister responsible for the status of women may wish to supplement my answer, but there is absolutely no connection but what the hon. member, though, wishes to draw.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, they called for a change in attitude in government leadership, and that is what we would be looking for.

My question to the Premier. As the first ministers also recognized that male and female workers with and without dependants should have equality of opportunity and equality of treatment, how can the Premier justify his intention to promote mothers staying at home?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, certainly we are strongly supporting the matter of equality of opportunity for women, but my position, which I feel very strongly and I'm going to express every chance I get, is that I think there is something special about mothers. I'm going to support that position any chance I get.

Now, additional initiatives to assist the equal opportunities for women are being conducted by the minister, and she may well want to supplement my answer.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker. I welcome this line of questions, because it gives me another opportunity to point to the Alberta Dialogue on Economic Equity for Women, which we are launching. It is quite simply a recognition that the diverse opportunities and diverse choices that men and women in Alberta are making is indeed a very wide range. What we are doing is reaching out to the people of Alberta and saying to them: "What are your needs; what are your aspirations; what can we do to help?" And in particular in the many forms that our families are taking today, "What can we do to strengthen that family feeling so that the children of our province get the warmth and love that the Premier is speaking of in the home?"

Those are our initiatives, and I know that the hon. member opposite is very supportive of some of the things we are doing, and I also know that she is a wonderful advocate for women. But I would ask her, through you, Mr. Speaker, to recognize that we are taking a very wide and very comprehensive approach, and we are doing it in partnership with the people of Alberta to find out what it is that we can do help them.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. Am I interpreting his statements correctly when he says that he believes a mother's love is the best there is? Is he saying that mothers who are in the paid work force, in the paid labour force, are not fully loving of their children, that the only way you can be a fully loving mother is if you are at home? Is that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's enough. Thank you, hon. member. This supplementary is getting exceedingly long.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, obviously I wasn't saying that. The hon. member gets so riled up because of the fact that I believe there is a special love that a mother brings to a family and to a home. I believe that deeply, and I'm going to keep saying it.

The members want an attitude change on my part. They want me to change my views that there's something special about a mother's love for her children? No way. Let them believe in the state. I'm going to place my faith in individuals.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker. I would remind the Premier that he was a part of. . . [interjections] [Inaudible] the ministers recognize that successful implementation of any strategy to encourage the integration of work and family responsibility depends on the willingness of governments to lead the way in social change . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please, hon. member. The supplementaries are getting longer and longer, and some of the answers are getting longer and longer. There are five others that want into question period, and it's supposed to expire in four minutes. Could we have the question, please?

MS LAING: I would ask the Premier: does not this Premier's outdated attitude indicate to Albertans that economic equality will be very difficult for Alberta women to achieve?

MR. GETTY: It certainly doesn't, Mr. Speaker. I find that as I have been discussing this matter throughout Alberta, Albertans from all parts of the province have been phoning, contacting me, and saying they too wish to be part of support for the family. The hon. member, I know, espouses a point of view, the socialist view, that the state is greater than the individual. I reject that completely.

MRS. HEWES: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister responsible for women's affairs. I'm glad we're getting into this decade finally. Can the minister give us some clues regarding the government's time line related to the current study? Are we waiting forever on this one, or when can we hope to see some action?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I believe the hon. member is referring to the Alberta Dialogue on Economic Equity for Women. As I said when I made the public announcement of that initiative, we are targeting November for a public release of a summary of the findings. So we are on a fast track. We will go out this summer and talk to the men and women, mostly women, of Alberta, and we will be back in as short an order as we possibly can, given the large number of people we wish to speak to and the large geographical range over which the conversations will occur.

MR. SPEAKER: Main question, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

Violence Against Women and Children

MRS. HEWES: Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this week we welcomed an additional \$176,000 that the province made available to women's shelters in an effort to keep these homes out of a crisis and bed closures. The government more than occasionally accuses the opposition of simply throwing money or wanting more money to throw at problems. Hopefully, the government in this case is not doing just that, because what we need is a comprehensive action plan in collaboration with the service givers. We need new initiatives, new directives from the government with the community to combat domestic violence.

I have some positive ideas, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to ask a first question to the Minister of Education. Will the minister

implement a program in the elementary and secondary education system that will help our province's young people understand the facts about domestic violence, including causes and effects on the family and individuals . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. This is getting far too long.

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, we have in fact implemented some changes within our curriculum with respect to issues of violence within the home. I would be pleased to provide some of that curriculum outline for the hon. member if that would be of assistance.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister.

My first supplementary is to the Minister of Hospitals and Medical Care. Will the minister implement a uniform protocol to be used by all hospitals throughout the province when handling cases of suspected domestic violence, both spouse abuse and child abuse?

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the hon. member means by a uniform protocol. Perhaps she could describe it.

MR. SPEAKER: Will you take the next supplementary?

MRS. HEWES: Well, perhaps the minister can answer me . . .

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Thank you.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I don't appreciate losing my supplementary, but the question to the minister is: at present individual hospitals have their own methodology of dealing with and reporting on these kinds of incidents. What I'm asking for is a uniform protocol that would be used or placed in use by all hospitals throughout the province.

MR. M. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, that's certainly something we could consider. I'm not at all sure that the hon. member's suggestion that there is not some standard method of reporting now is accurate. It's my belief there is, but I'll check into the matter.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, my next supplementary is to the Solicitor General. Would the minister again emphasize the need for the province's police forces to lay charges in all suspected cases of wife abuse, since the few charges that have been laid since his last directive seem to signify it was largely ignored?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, throughout Alberta there's a domestic relations course taken by police officers to utilize during family disputes. According to the circumstances of each particular dispute, charges will be laid where the circumstances so prevail.

MR. SPEAKER: Additional supplementaries? No others?

MRS. HEWES: Do I get another one?

MR. SPEAKER: No. that was the final. Sorry. hon. member. Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS LAING: Mr. Speaker. I'm not just sure who to address this question to -- possibly the Minister of Social Services. In view of the recent report and recommendations of the Advisory Council on Women's Issues about immigrant women and violence in their families, will the minister commit moneys to linguistic services for shelters and the development of multilingual training programs?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Well. Mr. Speaker, I suspect that in terms of the problems that may be facing immigrant women, this is a much broader topic than just dealing with the area of violence. But certainly with the unit we have working in the Department of Social Services, I can undertake a look at that particular problem. I think it's important to note that we have emphasized the need to deal with this problem right across the province. We've had a very excellent program that is involving more and more municipalities taking part, and I believe we will see the fruits of that labour.

MR. SPEAKER: Additional? Final? Time for question period has expired.

MR. SPEAKER: We have two issues to be dealt with. One involves an incident of last week. The Minister of Agriculture, with a response by the Member for Vegreville.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the record of my responses to the questions put by the hon. Member for Vegreville Friday last, I can understand the interpretation as recorded on the bottom of the first column and the top of the second column on page 1825 of the June 17 *Hansard*. I clarified my response in responding to the hon. Member for Vegreville on his point of order on page 1831, and that's the statement I stand by. But notwithstanding that fact, I acknowledge that the clarity of my answers has left a desire to be further clarified, and I acknowledge that those answers could be termed an error and, for that, I apologize to the hon. member and all Members of this Legislative Assembly.

MR. FOX: I appreciate the minister's remarks, Mr. Speaker, and look forward to working with him on this and other important issues.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair wishes to thank both hon. members for their spirit of co-operation in the parliamentary process with regard to this whole issue.

Earlier today in question period there was an exchange between the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier, at which time there were some comments made by the Leader of the Opposition which the Chair regards as being unparliamentary. The particular sentence was this:

The Premier knows full well his comments were outrageous and a total fraud.

The Chair takes issue with the phrase "a total fraud" and has sent notification to the Member for Vegreville in his capacity of responsibility with that particular party in the House. Hopefully that caucus will have due conversation with the Leader of the Opposition. We might have some further movement on this

matter tomorrow when the House reconvenes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

[Mr. Gogo in the Chair]

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

Bill 21 Employment Standards Code

MR. CHAIRMAN: As members may recall, last sitting day on Bill 21 the committee adopted the process whereby a series of amendments proposed by the hon. Member for St. Albert would be dealt with as a package; however, individual amendments would be voted on. I believe, hon. Member for St. Albert, we were on amendment 4. Perhaps you could clarify that.

MR. STRONG: The amendment we're on, Mr. Chairman, seeks to amend section 25.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Amendment 10. Thank you. The question on amendment 10?

Hon. Member for St. Albert.

MR. STRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Amendment 10, as numbered, seeks to amend section 25 of Bill 21, the Employment Standards Code, by amending subsections (1), (2), and (3)(b) by striking out "44" and replacing it with "40" hours. This amendment deals with making the 40-hour workweek a reality in the province of Alberta.

I believe what I'll do is make comment again on some of the issues that are contained in the final report of the Labour Legislation Review Committee. In part B, the General Policies Supported by the Participants, it said:

Albertans support continued maintenance of comprehensive employment standards which ensure fairness and protection for all ... Albertans.

Well, Mr. Chairman, when we examine the legislation, did the minister really consider moving Albertans into the 21st century or certainly being responsive to the needs of Albertans? I believe that quite simply is not the case, because while the words contained in the final report are quite flowery and nice, what we in the Official Opposition and, I'm certain, the opposition parties were looking for was some positive change. Certainly change we could view and would view as being positive is the institution of the 40-hour workweek in the province of Alberta. Certainly we would view that as positive legislation responsive to the needs of all working Albertans. Instead, Mr. Chairman, what do we find contained in the legislation? The same old 44-hour workweek, that six-day workweek that's been here in this province for numerous years.

If we go on further in the government's final report, the final report issued by the Labour Legislation Review Committee that consisted of the minister and his cohorts who traveled the world to bring us back expertise and some fairness and equity, we can

go on further to another one of their recommendations. That's a recommendation that concerns our new Employment Standards Code, recommendation 19. Recommendation 19 states

That hours of work, overtime, breaks, time-off, paid vacations and the general holiday pay provisions be regularly reviewed to determine if the existing regulations are suitable.

Well, obviously the existing regulations must have been suitable, because when the minister brought us back Bill 21, we didn't see any change from the 44-hour workweek that has existed for many years in this province to progressive legislation that we could view and support, and that is a 40-hour workweek for all Albertans. That certainly didn't happen. I guess the minister just totally forgot about who this legislation was going to be for. It was for working Albertans, Mr. Minister. That's who it was for. Now, not amending the old employment standards code as it existed to the 40-hour workweek from 44 certainly in my view is not positive or progressive legislation representative of the fairness, the equity, the level playing field, and the 21st century you and this government promised Albertans -- certainly absent.

I might go to the minister's opening comments on Bill 21, because certainly some of those comments are germane to the amendment that's before this committee. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to refer the minister to his statement:

In the process of the writing of Bill 21, what was in the minds of the government caucus and those who actually drafted the legislation throughout was the need for emphasizing that employment is a two-way street and that the relationship between the employee and the employer is crucial to the success of the employing entity but is also crucial to the general attainment of the wishes of the employee.

I would ask this minister which employees asked for a continuance of the 44-hour workweek in the province of Alberta, because I certainly didn't hear any at the public hearings. I don't believe any of my colleagues who attended those public hearings and listened to the discussion heard any employees -- not one employee -- suggesting that the 44-hour workweek continue to be in effect in the province of Alberta. Certainly in my view, exactly who was this caucus and who was this government listening to by not amending the condition of the 44-hour workweek in the province of Alberta? Again, Mr. Chairman, a six-day workweek, Monday to Friday and four hours on Saturday at straight time: ridiculous.

We can look at the 40-hour workweek. I believe the 40-hour workweek has been an accepted standard for the last 50 years in Canada, certainly in some of the jurisdictions of Canada. Yet when this government does a review, a two-year process, they couldn't determine that 40-hour workweeks would certainly be a step in the right direction and what we could view with some, I guess, respect as dignified legislation worthy of all working Albertans. This government again should be ashamed of themselves for not making this amendment. It's certainly not unreasonable to think as a member of the Official Opposition that this government and this minister would reconsider section 25 and make the amendments that were proposed, to get back to the 40-hour workweek, which is a reasonable workweek and a fair workweek for all Albertans.

Mr. Chairman, I'll go on to some of the government's and some of this minister's initial statements, where he says:

The intention of Bill 21, the Employment Standards Code, is, therefore, to provide a legislative framework that is both fair and reasonable for all Albertans, employees and employers, and to serve the long-term needs of the province and the people who are fortunate enough to live in it.

Certainly I commend the minister for making a statement like

that. It's a positive statement, a positive statement to the needs of working Albertans who unfortunately have nothing else to protect them except this minimum form of labour legislation to protect their rights. And one of those rights should be a 40-hour workweek, not 44. But certainly the minister's statement is a very solid one, exemplary -- a great statement, a flowery statement, fine words, and certainly supported, I think, by every Albertan.

But when we talk about action, Mr. Chairman, what do we find? Do we find a legislative framework both fair and reasonable for Albertans? Again, this government should be ashamed, for what they've tabled in this Legislature is something that is offensive to say the least, offensive to working Albertans, certainly offensive to the New Democrat opposition. Now, it's fine to say all these things, Mr. Minister, but let's get down to the brass tacks, and let's get down to representing, indeed, the needs and wishes of Albertans. Let's demonstrate a commitment to those Albertans. Let's demonstrate to them that they got their money's worth out of your tour around the world to bring expertise you gained in those countries you visited back right here to the province of Alberta.

I'd like to ask the minister how many of those countries he visited still have 44-hour straight time workweeks? Perhaps all of them did and that's why we got it back here. If that's the case, what the minister should have done is stayed at home and made a telephone call perhaps to the province of Manitoba, that has a 40-hour workweek and time and a half after 40 hours. If we examine all the jurisdictions in western Canada, Mr. Chairman, what we find is that British Columbia has a 40-hour workweek.

Why doesn't Alberta have a 40-hour workweek? Just who is this government being responsive to? To their friends? Did Al Olson perhaps go and talk to the minister and say, "Well, gee, we need that 44-hour workweek"? Is that what happened. Mr. Chairman? Or did this minister go and talk to PCL or PCL-Maxam or Maxam fidelity, and did they tell him we need a 44-hour workweek in the province of Alberta so we can get a little more for a little less? Is that who this minister listened to? Because certainly he didn't listen to working Albertans.

Further to that Mr. Chairman, what I might add is that existing employment standards legislation calls for a 44-hour straight time workweek that includes four hours straight time on Saturdays. Well, even this minister's employment standards branch has started writing agreements and recognizing employers can work their employees four nine-hour days, work eight hours on Friday, a five-day workweek, and pay it all at straight time rates -- certainly in my view in violation of even existing legislation we have in the province of Alberta. You know why they did that Mr. Chairman? They thought they were doing those employees a favour by allowing them to work 44 hours a week Monday to Friday and not bother having to come in Saturday. That's what this minister and this government are allowing. Why don't this minister and this government and the government caucus get a little progressive and establish the 40-hour workweek in the province of Alberta?

Mr. Chairman, the province I left out is our province to the east, Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan has a 40-hour workweek. Why doesn't Alberta have a 40-hour workweek? Rather than this minister and his committee members touring around the world bringing their expertise or lack of it back to the province of Alberta when drafting labour legislation, why didn't this minister spend 37 cents on a postage stamp, put a letter in an envelope and send it off to the Minister of Labour in the province of

Saskatchewan? Why didn't he send a letter, another 37 cents, to the Minister of Labour for the province of British Columbia? Why didn't he send a letter to the Minister of Labour in Manitoba and ask them for a copy of their regulations? But you know, this minister didn't even have to spend the 37 cents. He could have gone down to the library here and found all that information for nothing. Yet this minister had the audacity to try and convince Albertans that the half a million dollars he spent on his world tour was needed. Well, it was needed. I guess he got a suntan.

Do we have progressive labour legislation in the province of Alberta when we view in front of us, as members of this Legislative Assembly, the continuance of 44-hour workweeks in Bill 21, the Employment Standards Code, that we have in front of us? Not in my books, Mr. Chairman, because certainly the change that was required was a very simple, very minimal change, certainly a change that's reflected in labour legislation in every other provincial jurisdiction in western Canada with the exception of Alberta. Is that the fairness and equity this minister and this government promised Albertans? Is that fairness? I think not.

Again I'll make reference to this minister's opening comments and we'll talk about the throne speech. What this minister said was this. In the Speech from the Throne in the second week of June 1986, there was specific comment to a thorough review of labour legislation in the province. In 1986 when I sat in this Assembly and listened to those fine words and read those fine words contained in that throne speech, I thought that finally this government was going to wake up, smell the coffee, and start doing things in a positive manner. Two years and boy, was I wrong, because what we have before us in this particular section certainly doesn't indicate that this government listened at all. Two years of tours around the world, two years of public hearings, private meetings, and it's obvious that those people that met with this minister in those private meetings counted for more than all Albertans, because again the legislation, particularly in reference to section 25 that contains still a 44-hour workweek, is certainly not progressive legislation. Again, this government should be ashamed of themselves. It's a sad day for Albertans, a sad day. Perhaps the minister can invoke closure on Bill 21, too, and he won't even have to listen to me. He'll just get the job done. A sad day for working Albertans, Mr. Chairman.

Let's look at and examine some of the other jurisdictions in Canada that have a 40-hour workweek. The Yukon's got the 40-hour workweek. Did the minister have any contact with the Yukon to say let's bring our labour standards in line with other jurisdictions in Canada, Mr. Chairman? Nope. Obviously not. The federal government -- they've got the 40-hour workweek. You'd think the least the minister could have done is contact the federal government and found out from them that yes, they do indeed support the 40-hour workweek in this country.

Where's Alberta? Alberta certainly isn't a leader in progressive legislation when it comes to what the normal, regular hours a week are going to be. And this government and this minister certainly like to brag it up about being first, Mr. Chairman. Are they first in labour legislation? Certainly not first. Why can't we be first in labour legislation? Why can't this minister deliver the promise he made to Albertans that he'd bring them into the 21st century in labour legislation in the province of Alberta? Where is this minister? At the tail end of things. I might remind the minister that he did make a promise to Albertans to do a thorough review and certainly create labour legislation that

was going to put Alberta and working Albertans at the forefront in Canada. Now, that just hasn't happened in more ways than one, not just this particular section, Mr. Chairman. So where is this minister and all his promises? Certainly he didn't deliver. He failed to measure up totally.

This is a quote from the minister in his initial remarks on Bill 21:

There was, as I say, an extremely large public input into the process.

Certainly there was. There were large public dollars put into that process too. But was this minister listening? Was this minister listening, Mr. Chairman? Obviously not. He'd rather listen to the Stuart Olsons and the Maxam fidelities, perhaps the Bob Stollerys of PCL, rather than listen to the concerns of thousands -- tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands -- of Albertans when it comes to labour legislation that is fair and equitable to the people of the province of Alberta. Forget about these vested few interests and your vested few friends; let's start doing business for Albertans. That's who we do business for in this province, Mr. Chairman, not for the selected few or the favoured few in the province of Alberta. So it's fine to say these nice things, but let's start delivering some of the promises that we make.

Mr. Chairman, again in the minister's initial comments on Bill 21, and certainly germane to this amendment that we have before us:

... Mr. Speaker, that in general the responses have been remarkably favourable to the concepts that are in Bill 21, the [new] Employment Standards Code.

Let me assure you, Mr. Minister, Albertans are not happy. The majority of them who have any view of what fairness and equity are in labour legislation, even employment standards legislation, certainly do not view the 44-hour workweek as being progressive or positive, and certainly they're not in favour of it; not any of the ones I know, anyway. But certainly, Mr. Minister, we do move in different circles. There's no question about that.

We can go on. Here's a nice comment by the Minister of Labour. The Minister of Labour said this in his initial comments on Bill 21:

The intention of Bill 21, the Employment Standards Code, is, therefore, to provide a legislative framework that is both fair and reasonable for all Albertans ...

What do we see? Is continuing the 44-hour workweek in the province of Alberta fair and equitable to Albertans? Again, certainly not, Mr. Chairman, certainly not. Very unprogressive, and certainly not responsive to the needs of working Albertans in 1988 in the province of Alberta.

Two years this minister and his cronies took developing this new labour legislation and all of the subparts and parts to it. But when we examine it in detail we find that in some areas it is even worse than it was before. In this area it stayed the same, only there were a few more changes here, there, and all over the place.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, let me assure every member of this Assembly, in order to convince them of what is fair and decent: if this government and this minister were being fair and truly representing the interests of working Albertans, what we would see before us in the Legislative Assembly in section 25 of the minister's new Employment Standards Code would be a 40-hour workweek. If this minister had any jam at all, he would get up and support the amendment that I put forth.

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

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be able to stand in my place today and support the amendment that's been moved by the hon. Member for St. Albert, because I happen to believe that we had an opportunity before us with Bill 21 to do something progressive, and that was to have Alberta join with a number of other progressive jurisdictions in Canada and reduce the number of hours of work in a workweek from 44 to 40. Now, I know there are members of this Assembly that would suggest that the 44-hour workweek is a step in the right direction. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that it probably is a step in the right direction if we used the capital R of "Right." It is stepping in the far right direction when it takes away rights of workers to try and have a productive workweek that could be inside a 40-hour framework. But it's not a correct direction, and that's the difference. One is moving politically to the right, and the other one is moving correct. I would suggest that the amendment that's been proposed by the Member for St. Albert is an amendment that more properly and more accurately addresses the correctness of a workweek.

But what can we expect? What can we expect? Here we are in wonderful Alberta, the province that takes away the rights of workers to assemble and to organize and, in fact, the province that is going to make sure that cabinet has sufficient power to strike away all of the gains that have been made over the bargaining table over the course of time with a single stroke of the pen. A single stroke of that pen is going to take away all of the privileges that workers have bargained for.

But in this Act are we going to give a little bit? Are we going to give a little more to the workers of Alberta that are unorganized? I would have hoped that we would have. I would have hoped that we would have gone that extra step, that we would have tried to reduce that work hour. And I can't tell you of my disappointment when I flipped through the Act and I got to that section, section 25, and I see it's the same old stuff. Nothing's changed, and it begs the question: why did we spend a half million dollars traveling around the world to study labour legislation in other jurisdictions when we've got this same old junk before us?

We look around at standards in other jurisdictions in Canada, and what do we find? My colleague the Member for St. Albert referred to some of the other provinces, some of those other jurisdictions that have adopted the 40-hour workweek. Well, British Columbia adopted the 40-hour workweek. Saskatchewan adopted the 40-hour workweek, as did Manitoba, and so did the Yukon territories. Now, what's the thread that weaves through all of those? What's the common interest in all of that, Mr. Chairman?

I go back, and I remember that in 1972 the people of British Columbia elected a New Democratic government, and then we got it changed to a 40-hour workweek. Back in the '40s the people of Saskatchewan elected a CCF government, and in the '70s returned to an NDP government after a short duration of a Liberal administration, and Saskatchewan had a 40-hour workweek. In Manitoba in 1969, the government of Ed Schreyer, a New Democratic government -- and what did the people of Manitoba get? They got a 40-hour workweek. The Yukon territories: they've elected a territorial government that happens to be made up mainly of New Democratic members. In fact, the government leader is a New Democrat, Tony Penikett. And they've got a 40-hour workweek. All of the other provinces, all of the other jurisdictions that have a 44-hour workweek have not yet had a New Democratic government.

But you know what's amazing, Mr. Chairman? In British Columbia in 1975 the New Democrats were defeated; in 1960 in Saskatchewan, or '62 I think it was, the CCF government was defeated, the New Democratic government came back later on in that decade and was subsequently defeated in 1982, and there's a Conservative government there; in Manitoba, as I'd noted, the New Democratic government was first elected in 1969, had a short period where it had two terms as a government, was defeated, a Conservative administration under Sterling Lyon, then the New Democratic administration under Pawley, and now again a Conservative administration. But what's common in all of that is that of the opportunities available to Liberal and Conservative and Social Credit administrations, not one of those right-wing -- and I say it from my political perspective -- governments that replaced a New Democratic administration has had the nerve to meet the public outcry that would occur if they were to amend their Employment Standards Codes to go back to a 44-hour workweek. Those provinces, those jurisdictions that have had that 40-hour workweek brought in through a New Democratic administration continue to enjoy that, even under the administration of other right-wing administrations.

So obviously -- I would suggest it's obvious -- even the right-wing administrations would agree that a 40-hour workweek, once implemented, is tough to change back to a 44-hour workweek.

Here we had the opportunity. The progressive element of the Progressive Conservative Party had the opportunity to go out and do something similar: to take the 44-hour workweek that we currently have, that we currently suffer with, and amend it down. Think of all those extra hours that would be created and all of the other employment that would be created, not to mention the popularity that might be accredited or given or due to the government with such a progressive move. And we were hopeful of that. But it would appear that once the minister got back, after the report was tabled in the Legislature and after members of the government caucus, the Paleolithic gang, got in touch with it, what happened? When we had the opportunity to go with the recommendation that was in the report, that said 40-hour workweek, the dinosaur said no. The dinosaurs kind of said: "Oh, we like the status quo. Keep them working a little longer -- no overtime. Keep them going a little more. That's what we need in Alberta. That's what we want in Alberta. Keep the workers working, making sure that they can't access overtime." What an opportunity to blow. What an opportunity to blow away right in front of us.

I should also mention, Mr. Chairman, that the federal government has a 40-hour workweek, and I would hazard the guess that it was probably introduced during the minority administration of '72 to '74 when the New Democratic Party had some considerable influence on the federal Liberals. That's probably why we have the 40-hour workweek at the federal level. It's really too bad, it's really unfortunate that our Liberal colleagues aren't here to listen to this, because I think they would love to take back the instruction to their colleagues in Ontario and Quebec and New Brunswick. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, hon. member. Please do not refer to the presence or nonpresence of members in the Assembly.

MR. SIGURDSON: No, I wouldn't want to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate being called to order on that. I

wouldn't want to have that in the record.

Perhaps they'll read *Hansard*. I would hope they would undertake to call their colleagues in Ontario and Quebec and New Brunswick and suggest to those Liberal administrations in those provinces that they ought to adopt a 40-hour workweek too. I'm sure that once they read that in *Hansard*, they'll undertake to do that, because I know how the current leader of the Liberal Party likes to go out and try and have influence right across Canada.

Why is the 40-hour workweek important? The Premier has recently, in the past couple of weeks, talked about family commitments and how important the family unit is. In fact, he's even at times said that New Democrats are more interested in state control of the family than we are of many other things. There could be nothing further from the truth. And here's a prime example. Here's an opportunity for the government to reduce the number of hours in the standard workweek from 44 to 40, thus allowing the employee the opportunity to increase the time spent with family. I would think that's consistent with the Premier's wishes. I would have hoped that argument would have been made in the caucus. I fear that it wasn't.

Now, that doesn't necessarily preclude the fact that overtime can't be worked once we have a 40-hour workweek, but what it says is that after 40 hours in a week, overtime will be paid.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who pays?

MR. SIGURDSON: The employer, because the employer's getting productivity too. You should understand that I would have hoped you would have understood that.

But if we have an overtime payment, an overtime method -- time and a half or double time -- what does that mean? It means that the employee that is putting in that extra time above and beyond the 40-hour workweek is going to be paid at a rate time and a half or perhaps even double time for those hours beyond 40, because his quantity time, his extra time, discretionary time, is being reduced. He doesn't have the opportunity to spend that extra time with his family, and therefore he or she ought to be compensated to ensure that when that time is made available after the workweek -- however many hours it is, but time and a half or double time after 40 hours -- that time that's spent with family, that qualitative time, has to be increased.

Now, in our society, qualitative time is measured in some respects by the discretionary income we have. If we're working a 44-hour workweek at straight time, and we have our commitments, that income can be consumed by basic necessities. Anything beyond 40 hours, I would argue, should be paid at time and a half, so that time outside of work, spent with family, ought to have been sufficient to reward the employee with extra income to spend on the family: extra income that could be spent putting back into the economy, keeping the circle going, keeping the wheels greased; extra income to spend on things that may include the family, such as movie outings. The cost of going out to the theatre these days is so extraordinarily high that we go out and quite often we don't see children accompanying parents to theatre. If we had double time, if we had more discretionary income to spend, we might perhaps see the family unit going out to an entertainment venue. I truly believe it's important that when one's discretionary time is reduced, one's discretionary income ought to rise proportionally. That could have happened had we reduced the number of hours in the workweek from 44 to 40.

Another concern I have with the 44-hour week is something that I see quite frequently in my constituency office. I would

hazard the guess that the majority of cases that I handle on behalf of my constituents are related to the Workers' Compensation Board.

AN HON. MEMBER: Talk about your work experience.

MR. SIGURDSON: No. I'll just talk about the Workers' Compensation Board for a minute.

The Workers' Compensation Board has before it on any given day thousands of applications from workers who have been injured on the job. Now, injury occurs for a number of reasons: unsafe working conditions -- one that can happen any time of the day; unexpected interruptions that cause an injury. But a major contributor to injuries at the worksite is fatigue. Fatigue is a major contributing factor to injuries at the workplace: the worker was tired, the worker slipped -- not slept, slipped because of fatigue -- was not as alert as the worker may have been had there been fewer hours of work or had that worker not worked so many hours in a row.

Here's an opportunity for us to perhaps reduce the number of claims before the Workers' Compensation Board. If we reduced the number of work hours in a week only by four -- only by four -- then perhaps that extra time away from work would cause the work force to be somewhat more rested so that when it returned to work it acknowledged a much safer working environment; it became aware of some of the difficulties around the worksite and could have addressed those and cleaned them up.

There are a number of reasons to have a reduced workweek. I've heard across the way, during the time I've spent on my feet thus far, some of the members opposite saying, "But if you reduce the number of work hours, you're going to have higher unemployment." Well, as you know, in some of the northern European countries -- and I don't want too many people to fall off their chairs, but Sweden and Norway have a workweek that's even less than the 40-hour workweek, and they have an unemployment rate that's far, far less than what we have.

AN HON. MEMBER: And they're 80 percent taxed.

MR. SIGURDSON: That's what you say.

AN HON. MEMBER: And have some of the lowest productivity in Europe.

MR. SIGURDSON: Not in Sweden. Not in Sweden, hon. member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, hon. members.

MR. SIGURDSON: So what we have is the reduced workweek, more time off, in fact, for maternity and paternity leaves, educational leave, and we have a lower rate of unemployment. We aren't asking -- well, perhaps we are, in further amendments along the way -- for all of those things such as paternity leave and educational leave in this Bill, but maybe we ought to look at that as well. All we're asking for at this particular time is a reduction in the number of hours of work, because that's the direction we ought to be going in. We've got to get away from having workers going at the 44-hour rate. Other provinces are doing this. This is not foreign territory; other provinces are doing it.

Our unemployment rate is not all that different from Saskatchewan or Manitoba or British Columbia, where they have

that 40-hour week. Our unemployment rate is certainly an awful lot different than Ontario, where you have the 44-hour workweek. And if your argument holds true, then the 44-hour workweek that they have in Ontario and their unemployment rate ought to be consistent with every other jurisdiction that has a 44-hour workweek. Currently in Toronto the unemployment rate is so low that people are moving out from Alberta to go and take work, if they can find apartments.

MR. TAYLOR: A Liberal government.

MR. SIGURDSON: A Liberal government. I want you, hon. member, to phone the Premier of Ontario and encourage him to adopt. . .

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

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon. I would hope the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon would undertake to phone his colleague in the Liberal Party, who happens to be the Premier of Ontario, and encourage the Liberal Premier of Ontario to introduce legislation that would ensure that workers in Ontario have to only work the 40-hour workweek as opposed to the 44-hour workweek they have to work right now, much along the lines we have in Conservative Alberta.

MR. TAYLOR: Consider it done.

MR. SIGURDSON: Consider it done. See, I told you that would happen. I am pleased, and I thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER: You're sure easy to please.

MR. SIGURDSON: Sometimes.

Mr. Chairman, I believe the opportunity that was available to the minister is still available to the minister. The recommendation that appeared in the report -- it's not too late to change the section of the Act to make it consistent with that that was in the report. It's not too late. The opportunity is here; it's here before us right now. All the minister has to do is look up and give an indication just by a simple nod of the head and guarantee us that he would support -- even if just the minister would support a 40-hour workweek, I might be satisfied. Some of my colleagues may not be, because they would suspect that other members of the Conservative administration may not support the minister, but I might even be satisfied if the Minister of Labour alone would indicate to me now that he would support a 40-hour workweek. I would sit down and take my place. But there's no indication of that, no indication that the Minister of Labour wants to try and be a little more progressive, try and help out the workers of Alberta to get the quality time they deserve. And that's unfortunate.

Mr. Chairman, I find it shameful that we don't have in this administration that which reflects what was in the minister's report. So I guess my hopes will continue to be just that -- just hopes. And when the opportunity comes to vote on this amendment, I know where I and my colleagues will be. We'll be standing in favour of a reduced workweek for workers. I regret, I truly regret, that members of the Conservative caucus will not be able to join us in supporting something that's as progressive for the workers of Alberta as this amendment.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Chairman, if I might just take a moment to bless the NDP. If the noble NDP opposition feels too alone, I want to tell them that I support their amendment to move from 44 to 40 hours. It's a very reasonable one. I don't believe there's a union contract in Alberta -- I've operated in construction and other areas for many years -- that has 44 hours anymore. Forty is much more realistic. And I'm a little surprised that a government that's trying to increase employment didn't use this very method to try to increase employment a bit, because in fact I wouldn't have been surprised if they'd have come up with 37.5 hours or something like that, because that would have increased employment. So, Mr. Chairman, I would want to just let the House know that the Liberal caucus supports the amendment.

Also, before I sit down, Mr. Chairman, if I may take a moment, I would like to distribute to the House the amendments that the Liberal Party will be putting forward in time so that the House will have time to study it, look at it, if and when this comes up for consideration. Is it all right, Mr. Chairman?

Thank you very much.

MR. GIBEAULT: It doesn't take long to get the Liberal perspective on the record, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I have a number of comments I want to make about Bill 21 and this particular amendment that we have proposed here regarding the 40-hour workweek. I'm surprised, Mr. Chairman, with this government and this minister and this Premier, who's so keen about the family and talks about it so much, that they can't bring themselves to endorse the concept of the 40-hour workweek.

MR. TAYLOR: You take the kids to work, and child labour will be coming up next.

MR. GIBEAULT: The member suggests we might be looking at child labour. Who knows?

But, Mr. Chairman, a 40-hour workweek is hardly in the realm of being progressive anymore. I mean, it's the mainstream in many jurisdictions in this country already. Some of my colleagues have indicated that in the provinces that have had progressive governments so far -- and those have been B.C. and Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the Yukon territory, and the federal government -- they're already at a 40-hour workweek. So we're just playing catch-up if we approve an amendment to go with a 40-hour workweek; we're hardly asking for anything progressive here. You want to talk progressive? The minister, as I understood, had a visit in West Germany, and the issue there is more the question of a 35-hour workweek, and some even looking at a 32-hour workweek. And here we are in Alberta; we're talking 40 hours, and we can't seem to get this minister and his backbenchers from the Dark Ages to get on board here. Now, what is the problem with this? You know, for a government's that's so keen on the family, you'd think they'd be keen to make sure that people have a little more time to spend with their children, enhance that quality of family life that is talked about so often on the other side.

So it's really to me, Mr. Chairman, a question of a double standard. You know, on the one hand, the government likes to bask in the rhetoric of the family, yet they won't lift their finger

to take any measures that would help the family. So it's really disturbing for myself and my colleagues to look at this sad situation where in 1988 in the province of Alberta we cannot seem to bring ourselves to put in the Employment Standards Code a reference to a 40-hour workweek instead of 44. I'm going to come back in a moment to some of the other jurisdictions that have 35-hour workweeks and 37.5-hour workweeks and collective agreements that provide for those.

So when we talk about a 40-hour workweek, Mr. Chairman, let's be clear. This is hardly innovative and ground-breaking. It's not even going to make Alberta number one. I mean, that's another thing this government likes to refer to numerous times, how we're number one all the time. But the facts are clear that we are behind several of the other provinces now, and if we went to the 40-hour workweek, we'd only be up to the average. We still wouldn't even be number one. So surely to goodness, the Minister of Labour and his government in caucus should give this some very serious consideration.

This doesn't go nearly as far as I'd like to see, frankly. But I don't know; maybe visits to the people in British Columbia and Saskatchewan -- I mean, they're our next-door neighbours here, and we are competing in the same market as them, surely, in western Canada. If they can institute a 40-hour workweek, why can't we? If we want to be competitive in western Canada, let's get on board with our neighbours here. And is it only because B.C. and Saskatchewan are not as glitzy as Paris and Bonn? Or what was the problem why he couldn't seem to consult with some of our neighbours here about some reasonable employment standards like the 40-hour workweek? Instead, we had to waste hundreds of thousands of taxpayers' dollars tooting all over the globe.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things that this government likes to refer to frequently, particularly the Minister of Community and Occupational Health, is his concern for worker safety. My colleague the Member for Edmonton-Belmont referred to this briefly in his comments, but there are numerous studies that indicate that when workers work extended hours, when they are fatigued, they are much more accident prone. The minister of occupational health and safety has said repeatedly how he wants to see claims for workers' compensation reduced, the number of injuries reduced, the number of deaths reduced. And yet he hasn't been able to convince his colleagues the Premier and the Minister of Labour and the rest of the backbenchers that moving to the 40-hour workweek would be a step in that direction, a step to have a greater degree of worker safety in the workplace, because the more alert the workers are, the less likely they are to have accidents on the job. So I plead with the Minister of Labour to consider that angle as well, the whole very important issue of health and safety, and to stop paying lip service to that concept and to support this amendment which is going to be a step in the direction of having a much safer workplace for all the workers of this province.

We would have that additional advantage, Mr. Chairman, of reducing the costs of the workers' compensation plan. The minister of occupational health and safety has said that, and so we're suggesting a proposal to him and to his government here. By adopting the 40-hour workweek, he will accomplish a healthier worksite and reduced claims through the workers' compensation system.

Mr. Chairman, one of the other things that we hear from this government so often is their interest and concern about job creation. In their minds that generally means minimum wage temporary jobs with no benefits. But let's assume that they are hav-

ing some serious or significant interest in the issue of job creation, and if that's the case, then that's another argument for supporting this amendment for the 40-hour workweek. Because once you put in a reduction from 44 hours to 40 hours for the average workweek, most employers would prefer not to pay overtime if they could avoid it. And actually -- it might be hard for some of the backbenchers on the government side to understand this -- a lot of workers don't particularly like working overtime either. It takes them away from their families and other things that they would like to do. So if we had the 40-hour workweek in place, there'd be a reduction in the amount of overtime that's worked, and as I mentioned before, it would have the benefit of increasing the safety factor on worksites. But it would also, I would suggest, have the effect of creating more positions in most of the workplaces in the province, because it would be a situation where the employers would then have to say, "Well, we don't want to pay all this additional overtime that we're now going to have to pay . . ."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order in the committee, please.

MR. GIBEAULT: "... and in order to avoid that extra overtime, we're now going to engage another one or two or three employees," depending on the size of the enterprise. So it's a question of sharing the work. Mr. Chairman, surely we've got to be concerned about that, because we continue to have unacceptably high unemployment in this province and throughout the country as a whole.

The trends are indicating that there will be increased automation, increased reliance on things like robotics and so on which are going to reduce the total amount of work, of productive energy, that is required to supply us with all the services and products that we need. In that case surely we have to look at the way work is distributed to make sure that everyone in society -- and in this case we're talking about the province here -- that all the workers of the province have an opportunity to access the labour market so that they can feel productive, make a contribution to our province, feel good about themselves, and make sure that all of us have a fair opportunity to participate and to provide for ourselves and our families through work. That is becoming increasingly difficult, and because of that I would suggest that one of the things we should consider is this proposal for the 40-hour workweek.

In fact, if the government was really progressive, they'd be proposing in the Employment Standards Code a 37.5-hour week or a 40-hour week, and then we'd be number one. And I'd be proud of that. I'd be glad to go to Manitoba and to Saskatchewan and say, "Look, you've got to come over to Alberta, to see how it's done here." But I can't say that now. We've got this proposal for 44 hours. It's about the longest proposal that we have in terms of a workweek in the country, except for Prince Edward Island; they have 48 hours. Shame. So out of 10, we're number nine. That doesn't do much for my sense of pride in being an Albertan, Mr. Chairman.

But you know, there are countries in western Europe, West Germany and Sweden and others, that are looking at the 35-hour week, the 32.5-hour week. Many of those innovations are simply because, as I mentioned before, people in Europe, workers and employers and governments, are realizing that there has to be some effort to have an equitable distribution of the reduced amount of work due to technological advances and innovations. There have been all kinds of efforts that European workers have made to secure 35-hour working weeks, and yet here we are in

Alberta and we're still talking 44 hours.

I'd like to be able to go to Europe at some point in time, Mr. Chairman -- and I'll be paying my own expenses, not like the minister, who imposes on the taxpayer. But one of these days I hope to go there and talk to friends in Europe about legislation in Alberta here and how it compares to what they have in Europe. I'd like to go there, and I'd like to brag about Alberta being number one. I'd like to be able to say to our European friends how much more progressive we are here in Alberta than they are. But unfortunately, with this legislation that's before us, Bill 21, I can't do that. I'd be ashamed. I'd be ashamed to tell people that I was from the province of Alberta if I had to tell them where Bill 21 came from. It's that bad.

So, Mr. Chairman, again I implore the Minister of Labour and some of his backbenchers there and members of his government to really consider the merits of the 40-hour workweek. It's a very, very modest proposal, I would submit, and one that the government could get some brownie points for backing. I wouldn't even mind in one of my future MLA reports saying to my constituents and giving credit to this government for backing a proposal like this. So I'm offering the government an opportunity here to get some credit. I'm going to help them out, because I know they need help in some constituencies. And if they were to make a commitment to going for the 40-hour workweek, I would make them that commitment.

But, Mr. Chairman, we don't have to go to West Germany or Sweden to talk about more progressive labour legislation, and particularly the provision of the 40-hour workweek, or even less, because there are many collective agreements here in Alberta that provide for a 37.5-hour workweek or a 35-hour workweek. Before I was elected to this Assembly, and this goes back now to 1986 and before then, the Sherwood Park Catholic school board support staff collective agreement provided for a 35-hour workweek. Here we are in 1988, and this government is proposing a 44-hour workweek. Now, why is that? Why is this government determined to put into legislation standards that everybody else has already adopted? Is that what the minister is waiting for, for every other collective agreement in the province to specify a 37.5-hour workweek or a 35-hour workweek before the government will then bring in a piece of legislation that instead of showing leadership and providing inspiration will simply confirm the status quo? Is that what this government has to propose? That's not leadership. It's not inspiration. It's not something that I can go to my constituents and feel proud about.

So I suggest to the minister that he look at those various collective agreements that exist with his own government employees, with school board staffs, with university staff, with many people in the private sector. Many of them have already gone much further than what this government proposes in its 44-hour workweek provision. So even though many collective agreements provide for a 35- or a 37.5-hour workweek, all this amendment is suggesting -- it's so eminently reasonable; it's only proposing a 40-hour workweek before overtime provisions take effect.

So I put that to the minister, and I implore him to give this amendment his support and encourage the support of his colleagues so that we can have not particularly progressive legislation, even, but reasonable legislation that at least puts us on the average footing with other jurisdictions in Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, wanted to add a few remarks, perhaps from a different sort of angle, with respect to the amendment before us amending section 25 of the Employment Standards Code, Bill 21, and substituting a 40-hour workweek for what is provided for in terms of a 44-hour workweek.

Really, it's disappointing, Mr. Chairman, as my colleagues have already said, to see how the status quo has been so obviously maintained, after the expectations and after the study and after the hope that some action for some change of the status quo might have been forthcoming. Yet we have before us not only a preservation of the status quo of some generations past but also, as we've heard, falling behind, languishing behind the more enlightened 40-hour workweek which many other jurisdictions in Canada enjoy. So I certainly want to add my voice to the debate and feel it's regrettable that all members opposite really are so lazy themselves that they can't find the time to enter into this debate and have their own arguments in terms of productivity or whatever cause they'd like to advance as to why a 44-hour workweek is to be retained and why the status quo is to be retained. But, Mr. Chairman, we know that the fall is great of those who grow old and fat in terms of the status quo.

Recommendation 19 also states that the hours of work be regularly reviewed, and certainly they will be. But I would submit, more importantly, Mr. Chairman, that it will be the minister in his own riding who will be regularly reviewed, and we know how he barely hung onto his seat by a few slender votes last time there in west Yellowhead. A number of people I'm aware of in his own constituency are most upset with his action on both of these Bills. And this is another election issue, Mr. Chairman, which I'm sure the minister is going to be losing votes over, and he doesn't have many to lose before he loses his own seat. So if the hours of work per week aren't to be regularly reviewed, certainly the minister's own status in his own seat is going to be reviewed pretty soon.

But it's the work ethic, I think, that bears some reflection on, because certainly the work ethic is very strong in many Protestant societies, particularly in western civilization, and particularly, it can be argued, here in the province of Alberta. You know, that work ethic which says that really work and working all of the time is the way to attain one's salvation, almost, that the well-being of one's identity, of one's sense of purpose in life, is all hinged upon not only the nature of the work one does but how often one does it.

So the work ethic is a very strong ethic which I think has worked against the better health of us as Albertans and has been the [cause] of the ruination of a lot of families, a lot of marriages. And as we've heard already, in terms of a lot of workplace situations the burnout rates can get to be awfully high, the accident rates can get to be awfully high. Where the work ethic is seen to be this profound, deep sense of having to work, work, work and mount up those hours and the more hours you can work a week, the better off you'll be, that kind of ethic, as we've heard, has resulted, for many of us throughout the province, in people who are in a sense workaholics. Maybe this has been brought in not by people who are actually out there and whom this Bill will affect but by people who have a professional background, whether they be doctors or lawyers or even some clergy that I know of who are so addicted to work, work, work and have such a work ethic, it's hard to even get them to take a day off from time to time. That work ethic is profoundly affecting not only their own life and identity but the kind of legislation they would draw up, the kind of recommendations they

would make. I would think that well, it's such a compulsion for them to be so involved in this work ethic, that they themselves have such a tendency towards becoming a workaholic, that they want to impose it and enforce it to so many others.

I think it is so entirely regrettable. I've seen it, as I say, with other fellow clergy who hardly ever take a day off. They feel that despite whatever else salvation might say to them, it's their need of having to be out there doing the work all of the time which is the benefit. So they, you know, want 40, 50, 60 hours' work a week, and that somehow gives them some false sense of importance and some false sense of security. In fact, Mr. Chairman, what I'd like to argue is that we need to find a better balance and a better ethic, one that isn't solely reliant upon this profound work ethic which we've inherited, but one that will find a better balance between the nature of work that needs to be done in a productive and economic society.

The work ethic should be balanced by what I might call a community ethic, Mr. Chairman. A community ethic is that which would call people forth into spending some of those hours per day, some of those hours per week, not in trying to demonstrate their own worth or develop their sense of workaholicism but rather in spending those hours in the community. It would seem to me that this community ethic, if it were the basis of some of the reports of this Labour Legislation Review Committee, if it were at the base of some of the recommendations, and if a community ethic were at the base of Bill 21 as it is before us, then I would think that it would be very easy to see how that community ethic would say, "Yeah, let's reduce the number of hours per week and look at what is commonly to be seen now to be a 40-hour workweek." And that's four hours per week for how many thousands of individual Albertans throughout the province, Mr. Chairman, who would then be able to devote that time and that effort and those hours to work within the community.

It would just boggle the imagination as to the amount of health and well-being, the amount of volunteer time that can be worked up, the amount of effort toward a whole host of interests and efforts that one might want to develop and have time for in the community, not just in the workplace. How much better off and how much healthier our communities would be if we were to have at least those four hours per week from these thousands of individuals who could transfer that time, which they'd spend anyway per week, from the workplace to the community.

I know the government is bent on volunteerism, and I fail to see the consistency between wanting to get more volunteer hours and more volunteer time and more volunteer people and yet seeing them still upholding this 44-hour workweek. I mean, what better way to develop volunteer time than to reduce the compulsory hours of work to 40 and free up those four hours per week for all these thousands of Albertans for school associations or for people within their churches or people within their service clubs or people within their volunteer agencies or wherever they would want to spend this extra time. That could so benefit these extra groups which are out there and benefiting and contributing to our society in so many ways and yet always looking for people who can spend just another hour or two a week -- "Couldn't you, please?" -- on this committee or this effort or this fund-raising project or this building project that would help to benefit the community at large. Yet people are more and more saying, "Well, yeah, but you know, the work is so important and the family's so important, and I just don't have that extra time that I'd like to, to be able to help out here." Yet a 44-hour workweek exacerbates that kind of problem.

Similarly, Mr. Chairman, we see that Albertans could be a whole lot better fit if they were to take those four hours a week and spend them going for long walks or, as the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona does, going out for three- and four- and five-kilometre runs -- or much longer than that -- and taking much better care of their cardiovascular systems in one way or other, whether it's through aerobics classes or whatever. If individual Albertans were to take those four hours a week and devote them to better self health care, think how much money we'd save the Department of Hospitals and Medical Care in the illness palaces that they've built. Those four hours could be spent to better develop one's heart and respiratory system and take better care, through exercise, of their body.

They could also take some time and travel around the beautiful province and see that there are a lot of things around the province. In fact, I'm intrigued by this notion of many others whom I see in big corporations who can actually work an hour or two more a day and save up the hours and take one Friday a month off because they've built the hours up and they've got that extra swing time which they could swing into making more of a long weekend; I think a very creative way to go. It would reduce the number of hours of work per month and enable more families to have more long weekends to be able to go away and visit Lethbridge or Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump or go up to northern Alberta and see some of the oil sands developments and get to know the province a lot better. I think that could only result in better health and better well-being for us as Albertans and as we want to contribute to the health of others within the province.

Then we see, Mr. Chairman, how we have the highest divorce rate of any province in Canada. Certainly in the number of couples that I've married in my time in this province, I'm beginning to hear of how many of them are now separating and divorcing. It gives me some cause for concern, particularly when I see that the rates are so high. But just think again. I would think that four hours more per week -- if a married couple were to spend that time together, Mr. Chairman, I think a whole lot more could be done to develop better communication.

MR. TAYLOR: More divorces. More playing around.

REV. ROBERTS: You'd wonder.

I don't have any empirical data on this, but I think the cause of a lot of marital breakdown is that couples are having a difficult time spending that special, quality, sacred time together and that this would kind of help toward that.

But I know, as my other colleagues have said, that Alberta continues to want to languish behind other jurisdictions in a whole host of ways. We were the last ones to do away with extra billing, despite all the efforts of all of us to try to make Alberta have a better record on that. We were the last ones to bring in compulsory seat belt legislation, and yet we see how much that has benefited us in terms of the health of the province. No doubt we're going to be the last ones, under this minister, to bring in amendments under the Individual's Rights Protection Act to protect those who are mentally disabled or have a sexual orientation other than the norm. So it is that I'm sure we'll be the last province to bring in the 40-hour workweek, and I'm disappointed by that. You'd think for all the grand and glorious talk of this government and wanting to be number one and so progressive and not so conservative ... I'm sure it is that we will continue to show the conservative side of this government and be the last one, the last province, to have a

40-hour workweek.

So as I say, Mr. Chairman, despite the other arguments which my colleagues have advanced in terms of the other sides of the issue, I think a lot of this hinges on this fundamental debate between the established roots of the conservative work ethic versus the forceful emergence of a fresher community ethic, where time and effort can be put toward health and work and well-being in the community. To me and to our caucus and to us as New Democrats, both here in the Legislature and out on the electoral hustings, I can tell you that we are promoting the community ethic. We are those who will say that yes, part of the community ethic is having a balanced system where there is a 40-hour workweek. Mr. Chairman, I tell you that they might bring in closure and close it down now in terms of debating this or amending this further, but you know, the tired old Tories will soon be laid to rest and there will be a healthier and a newer generation, and a lot of them will be New Democrats. We will help foster and engender in them and in us all more of a responsibility around a community ethic with a 40-hour workweek and amend this outrageous Bill 21 that's before us now.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier in debate -- you know, I often suffer the slings and arrows of colleagues on the opposite side of the House . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order.

MR. SIGURDSON: . . . but I wanted to point out a couple of things and correct a couple of points that I think ought to be on record in *Hansard*. Because you know, I had the good services of this building at the library go down and photocopy out of the world labour report something out of the international labour office out of Geneva, from the International Labour Organisation, because the members opposite were kind of concerned about us looking at a 40-hour week or something less than that, as I'd pointed out, in some of the northern European countries.

Well, I went out and we got the comparisons, because there are indeed countries in Europe -- thank goodness, the minister didn't travel to those -- that have hours that are far greater than what we have in Alberta, even with this proposal.

MR. McEACHERN: You mean far less.

MR. SIGURDSON: No. More.

Now, which countries are those? And here's how the comparison between the Conservative Party and some of the Communist, totalitarian regimes of Europe really comes home to roost. We see it in how they want to force workers to work at extended points and extended times throughout the day. Now, what do we find? Let me quote from this document, that in the planned economies of eastern Europe the 40-hour week has been widely adopted as objective but has not yet been applied to workers in general. Normal hours have been reduced in several stages since the late 1950s. The general standard now ranges from 41 hours to 44. Same as what we have in Alberta. It's 41 in Byelorussia of the Soviet Socialist Republics; in the Ukraine in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics it's 42; Hungary and Poland, 42.5 hours a week; in the German democratic republic it's 46; Romania, 46; in Yugoslavia it's 42.

I never thought I would live to see the day when some of

these Conservatives would line up with some of the Communist parties of the world, but here we have it. We're always being accused of being the Communists on this side of the House, but clearly they're taking their direction from something other than what might normally be considered Conservative philosophy, Mr. Chairman. And I just want to know who in the government caucus happens to be the chairman of the party or the president of this presidium.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS LAING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I rise to support this amendment. We have heard much in this Assembly about commitment to families and commitment to have women participate in society in an equal way in terms of the social, economic, and political life of this province. We have heard it suggested, indeed, in this Assembly that all legislation that is proposed should be evaluated in the context of a commitment to strengthening the family. Today I filed with this Assembly a copy of a communiqué from the First Ministers' Conference from the fall of 1987 entitled Work and Family Responsibilities. I would refer to two of the principles enunciated in this document, and I would read them into the record.

The family as an institution, the workplace and society as a whole will benefit economically and socially from an improved integration of work and family responsibilities.

Secondly, and I think this is very important

Governments can demonstrate leadership in this area to assist workers to fulfil their employment and home duties harmoniously.

I think this came out of the First Ministers' Conference, and our Premier was party to that.

I would think, Mr. Chairman, that our commitment to the workplace responsibility must be seen in the context of our lives as members of families and members of the community, as the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre has said. This Bill as it exists defies such commitment and, therefore, must be amended. We hear much about strengthening families, but what we hear about in here, in this Assembly, I believe is too much of an emphasis placed on "The way to strengthen families is keeping mothers in the home," rather than committing ourselves to healthier families in which fathers can share in the joy and the responsibilities of parenting and have an opportunity to participate in the community.

I would quote again from the communiqué of the first ministers. This is a commitment of the first ministers made last fall to attitudinal issues. One of the attitudes would be to create

an environment which promotes the sharing of family responsibilities between men and women; and, a work environment which supports workers with family responsibilities.

I would suggest that this Bill is at variance with both those statements.

A 44-hour workweek cannot allow a person to meet such commitments, to participate as fully in a family as a 40-hour workweek. Indeed, this Bill shows no leadership, as this document seems to have committed the government to, and it shows no leadership in creating healthier families or healthier communities. In fact it works against it. We know it works against the father who would want to accompany his daughter Saturday morning to her soccer practice or her dancing lessons. It works against the working mother who wants to accompany her son on a Saturday morning to swimming lessons. Or it works against a working father caring for children on Saturday morning while

the mother, who is in the home full time, goes to the library; or, otherwise, the father being able to spell off the mother who is in the workplace, in the home; or the working mother who would spell off a house husband who is at home full time while she is in the workplace full time. It also means that they cannot do things together as a whole family, going to the museum or going to the playground. This legislation denies families the time to strengthen and become bonded with each other. This legislation, then, I would say, will mean that family structures will continue to be eroded in a time when we are deeply concerned about the erosion of families.

But more importantly, the 44-hour workweek works a special hardship on the single working parent. It means that there would be problems finding day care for young children and finding child care or supervision for older children, and we often hear of complaints of older children running wild - unsupervised, unattended. Certainly expecting a single parent to work on Saturday morning, which this very much may require, would add to this kind of problem. It may mean that a single working parent cannot take a job requiring a 44-hour workweek, or it may mean that the major portion of the money earned on that Saturday morning would be spent on child care.

Mr. Chairman, this Bill applies to non-unionized workers, who have little enough protection in this province. Indeed, we must recognize that most unionized workers are protected through contracts from 44-hour workweeks. Indeed, many have a 37 and a half hour workweek, certainly a more humane time period. Surely this Employment Standards Code should extend such protection to non-unionized workers.

We also note that we face high unemployment rates. A reduction in the work hours could mean more jobs for more people. Ten people working a 44-hour workweek could mean 11 people working a 40-hour workweek, and we can think of the implications in large corporations.

I think we also must be concerned about the quality of life in the home, in the community, and in the workplace. Tired workers mean tired parents, tired spouses, tired care givers, and little or no time to work to build the community. Again, we've heard a great deal about the importance of volunteer and community involvement in a whole series of issues.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order in the committee, please.
Edmonton-Avonmore.

MS LAING: Thank you.

We also know that another very important aspect of leisure time is to develop hobbies and interests that can carry one into the retirement years, and it is indeed the kind of interests that are developed during the working years that make retirement a happy experience for people. People who have spent all their lives working and have had no time to develop outside interests face a very difficult time after retirement, and indeed many of them die very soon after retiring. So I think we have to look at this aspect of it also. We recognize that these people in developing interests contribute to the community in terms of skill and time and their commitment to the community during their working years, and they continue to enrich the community after they have retired.

I think that for all of these reasons we must support this amendment, and I would ask for support from the members of this Assembly.

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

MR. YOUNIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was glad to see so many of the hon. members, who have had their leader profess the profound love and interest of the family, listening so intently to previous comments about the value of the family and how this amendment would help enhance it.

The Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods asked a question, and I think it's an important question for the minister to consider. What is the problem here in getting the backbenchers of his party to support this particular amendment? Well, I think that perhaps, unfortunately, the answer is pretty simple. Between the two parties represented by the amendment and the so far totally unvocalized support for it, if it exists, is the problem of who those two parties represent. That is the problem. The party that brought in the Bill that's so badly in need of amendment represents the employers who want to be able to get more work out of workers before they have to pay overtime. The party that brought in the amendment supports average working people and realizes that a shorter workweek would have benefits for them. If they're going to be forced to work longer hours than that 40-hour workweek, then the overtime pay would have benefits for them on the other end of it in terms of more money on their paycheck.

I think there are some very, very good reasons that obviously were not considered by the governing party in Alberta for having a 40-hour workweek as opposed to a 44-hour workweek for those people unfortunate enough to lack the protection of union membership or some other effective workers' association and being left to the mercy of the government that brought in this particular piece of legislation. One is, as was so ably demonstrated by the previous speaker, a better quality of life for families, the fact that there will be more time for all members of the family -- whether that be mother and children, father and children, or mother and father and children -- to be together, to share time, and to build a strong family unit. That is an important factor that a government whose leader constantly and repeatedly professes his belief in the family should not have left out of their considerations when they developed this Bill. I think it's manifestly obvious that they did leave that consideration out when they brought in this Bill.

The other is increased productivity. The fact is that as workers become more and more tired, productivity becomes less and less. I think that may have been demonstrated last night by the total absence of Conservative speakers late into the hours of the evening. Productivity from them in terms of discussion of the legislation before them had dropped to zero.

I think we have to look at the value of a safer workplace. Tired people have accidents that are unnecessary, accidents that are not caused by negligent carelessness but that are caused by tired carelessness that could have been preventable had they not been working longer hours than was best for them.

Now, the attempts of the Minister of Community and Occupational Health, by whatever means necessary, to lower the cost of workers' compensation -- and we argued that the means he tried to use were not legitimate, but he certainly was trying every means at his disposal to reduce that cost -- prove to me that the government understands the cost of worker injuries. They must, therefore, not understand that one of the causes of workers' injuries is overwork, is tiredness and the kinds of accidents that that brings on.

Now, for a government that has professed so often their desire to do something about unemployment, I can use some mathematics that is so simple that all members will be able to follow it which would indicate what the 40-hour workweek

would do for unemployment. For a factory that has 100 employees working the 44-hour workweek, which is the maximum the employer can get out of them without paying any overtime, if you lowered that to a 40-hour workweek, you would have 400 hours not being worked. That, by very simple math, works out to 10 more workers who would have to be employed in that workplace to put in the same number of hours of work.

MR. STEVENS: If they worked a 2-hour workweek, we could have 10,000 more workers.

MR. YOUNIE: That's true. Obviously, the Member for Banff-Cochrane would like to take all things to the absurd, and he has demonstrated his ability to be absurd on a number of occasions in here. I was trying to present a reasonable course of action for reasonable people to consider, so I will understand if the Member for Banff-Cochrane doesn't consider it, but I would ask other members of his party to try to be more reasonable and understand that in fact there would be value to the government in creating those extra jobs by this simple amendment. They could even take credit for it. The Minister of Career Development and Employment I'm sure would demonstrate his typical willingness to take credit for any positive change in the unemployment figures. So they could perhaps boost him as well at the same time.

Now, if my argument is correct, that you would have an increase in productivity, the owner of that place of business would not be losing by having to hire 10 more people, because he would be experiencing a boost in per-hour creativity for those workers. That would cover the majority of it.

As I said, the problem in getting support for this is the problem of the attitude of the government and who it is they represent. They represent those with big bucks, those who want more big bucks, and those who are willing to make sure they get it by donating big bucks to the governing party -- generally speaking, before the election, although it seems any time it's required, to the point where the governing party sometimes even makes a profit on election campaigns.

It also demonstrates the sort of absurd extent of the government's argument that we have to try to get more with less. In government services they've said, "There's less money, but we're going to get more service out of workers anyway." In education they've said, "We'll have fewer teachers and more students, but we'll demand more accountability of teachers and try to improve the standard of education." For employers they've said, "We want more labour for less pay and less benefits." And for workers they've said, "Although you have more expenses, as demonstrated by the cost of living index, we're going to give you less money." Now we have a government that says, "And we're not going to improve that by making sure you get more overtime if you're forced to work those hours after 40 hours a week." They've said, in fact, "We're satisfied to be second last in the country." This is a government that brags that they're first in almost every other form of expenditure. They want to be second last when it comes to looking after the interests of working people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order in the committee, please.
Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. YOUNIE: Now, it will be interesting to hear the Minister of Labour explain how it is that he's quite satisfied to have his legislation demonstrate that Alberta wants to be second last in

the field. I would argue that in most other areas he could argue that it's an improvement, because in almost every other area of our labour legislation we're not only last in Canada, we're last in the free world, and you have to go to some place like Chile to find something worse. So perhaps he can argue that it's an improvement to that extent.

I can certainly give an example from personal experience, and I'm sure every person here who's been in the work force getting where they are today could give one. Before I got married, and that's a few years ago, I voluntarily -- and for that reason didn't report the offending employer to the Labour Relations Board -- worked 80- to 84-hour weeks at straight time, no overtime, to try to save enough money to get married. That was about four consecutive weeks. Just for the personal interest of the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore, I was working over a hot stove for those 16 to 17 hours a day in a highway restaurant. It's a fun job until the end of the 8-hour shift, when you start the second one.

I think it's important for members opposite to note that at some point they are going to be held politically accountable for their obviously political decision to do nothing to support this amendment to improve conditions for working Albertans. I will be only too happy to tell all of the working people in my constituency that the government chose not to reduce the mandatory workweek from 44 to 40 hours, to not help them either have more time with their family or get more overtime, whichever the case might be.

MRS. CRIPPS: You don't know; we haven't voted on it yet.

MR. YOUNIE: I'll tell you what. If the member who just made that quip promises to get up and speak in favour of the amendment, I will promise to sit down and quit talking. You're going to get up and speak in favour of it? Everyone will note that she nodded yes. Thank you. [interjections]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.
Hon. Minister of Labour.

DR. REID: Mr. Chairman, I've been listening to this what is obviously a filibuster of some form going on this afternoon in relation to the amendments put forward by the Member for St. Albert. To say that the debate has been repetitious is probably the greatest understatement that has been made in this country in the last 10 years.

We've listened to a lot of spurious arguments and statements about fatigue and accidents and all the rest of it. I would remind the hon. members of the New Democratic Party that in many unionized environments in this province, first of all, the members of the unions negotiate to work a 42-hour average week out of preference, to do with continuous operations, because there are 168 hours in the week, not 160, and they cover the extra shift. So obviously, there's not a problem with a 42-hour workweek, and probably there isn't with a 44-hour workweek.

In addition, there are many indications of members of unions in the unionized sector . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, minister. Order in the committee, please.
Minister of Labour.

DR. REID: . . . who choose to work 10- or 12-hour days in relation to the compressed workweek. So again we see evidence of

the acceptability under certain circumstances of 10- and 12-hour workdays. So on that basis a lot of the arguments that have been put forward this afternoon have indeed been completely fallacious.

The points that I have just made indicate the kind of responses that we have had not just from employers but also from working people who work the extended shifts or who cover the 42-hour average workweek that is involved in continuous operations in refineries, pulp mills, petrochemical plants, electrical generating plants, gas companies, and all kinds of other operations in this province. It is perhaps more common in Alberta because of the nature of our economy, but there are a lot of 24 hour a day operations in this province where the average workweek is 42 hours, and nobody seems to complain about it.

So in other words, what the arguments have come down to is strictly an argument about the dollars to be paid. Now, in the non-union sector, it may well be that one could indicate that overtime should be paid after 40 hours, and if there was going to be a 44-hour workweek, then all that would be required would be a relatively small percentage drop in the hourly wage paid to average it out over the same 44 hours to the same weekly income. In other words, we can all play mathematical games with this kind of circumstance.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, I would indicate to the members of the New Democratic Party that perhaps their protracted discussions this afternoon on this particular amendment have to some extent been counterproductive, as looking through the total amendments put forward by the Member for St. Albert, indeed there appeared to be one or two that were acceptable to the government. But with the present calibre and quality of debate, it may be a long, long time before we get to them, since we've spent the whole afternoon debating this one simple amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to be able to rise this afternoon and make some comments on the amendment before us. It was two years ago almost to the day that I rose in this Assembly to make my maiden speech as a brand-new Member of the Alberta Legislature. For those who were here at the time, they may well recall that I had done a bit of research in preparation for that speech on a former CCF member from Calgary, Flight Lieutenant Aylmer Liesemer, who served as a CCF member of this Assembly from 1944 to 1952. It was interesting to me in doing that research, and I made note of it at the time, that as a member in this Assembly he did a

number of things and promoted and advocated a number of measures, one of which -- and I think this will be insightful for members of the Assembly. He pushed to increase the minimum wage in this province from 60 cents per hour to 65 cents per hour. He also advocated the 40-hour workweek.

I was quite astounded, actually, to learn -- I've been learning a lot through this process in recent weeks about labour legislation in this province. I assumed that when a member 40 years ago was working for a certain aspect of legislation, that being the 40-hour workweek, that sometime within that 40 years he would have succeeded or those who followed after him would have succeeded. But here I'm quite interested and intrigued to think that 40 years later we're having the same debate about the 40-hour workweek. It is, Mr. Chairman, only further evidence of how far behind labour legislation in this province really is. It was within that context that . . .

Well, I have some more comments that I'd like to make, but given the hour of our deliberations this afternoon, I wish to move adjournment of the debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The member has put a question, and the Chair must put the question. All those in favour of adjourning debate on the number 10 amendment to Bill 21, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Opposed, please say no. It's carried.

MRS. CRIPPS: Mr. Chairman, I move that the committee rise and report.

[Motion carried]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has had under consideration Bill 21 and reports progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you all agree with the report?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.

[At 5:29 p.m. the House adjourned to Thursday at 2:30 p.m.]