

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

Title: **Monday, June 5, 1989 2:30 p.m.**
Date: 89/06/05

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRAYERS

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

O Lord, we give thanks for the bounty of our province: our land, our resources, and our people.

We pledge ourselves to act as good stewards on behalf of all Albertans.

Amen.

head: INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, today marks the beginning of National Access Awareness Week, the week which focuses on the integration of people with disabilities into the mainstream of community life. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you and all members of the House Mr. Gary McPherson, the chairman of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. Mr. McPherson is an outstanding Albertan, a good friend. He chaired the Alberta portion of the Rick Hansen Man in Motion tour and is one of the cofounders and president of the Challenge Cup Wheelchair Basketball Association.

To commemorate National Access Awareness Week, each Member of the Legislative Assembly will find on their desk a lapel pin, which we hope they will wear this week to remind people that every Albertan has the right to full and equal participation in the life of our province.

The government has great confidence in Gary McPherson and his council. I'd ask that all members join me in welcoming Gary.

MR. DINNING: Mr. Speaker, while National Access Awareness Week is a countrywide awareness campaign, it is at heart a grass-roots movement that draws its success from the hard work of a provincial planning committee, who devote a great deal of time, energy, and talent toward creating greater awareness of the very real contributions people with disabilities can and do make to our province.

Today we have three members of the Alberta committee with Mr. McPherson, and they are in the members' gallery: Nancie Krushelnicki, a representative of the Edmonton planning committee; Jan Iankow, representing the Calgary planning committee; and Brian Laird, representing the Alberta Committee of Disabled Citizens. I'd ask all members to give them the proper recognition and welcome to our Assembly.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with Environment Week 1989 I had the pleasure over the lunch hour of presenting the third annual Alberta Environment Awards and would now

like to introduce this year's award winners, seated in the public gallery. I would like to ask our honoured guests to stand as I call their names, but I ask my colleagues to hold their traditional welcome until all have been introduced.

Mr. Speaker, the yearly Environment Awards are given in four categories: individual citizen, volunteer organization, educational organization, and industry or business. The 1989 Alberta Environment Award recipient in the individual category is the late Mrs. Elizabeth Carol Hall, who received the award for her tireless work for the environment in the city of Lethbridge. Here today are her husband, Dr. Robert Hall, and her daughter, Mrs. Jackie Buckland.

For 22 years the Calgary Canoe Club has spearheaded the cleanup of the Bow River each spring. I had the opportunity over the weekend to participate with this fine organization, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately in picking up garbage along the riverbank. The hon. Member for Calgary-Bow, Bonnie Laing, was also with me, and she picked up her fair share of crud too.

MR. TAYLOR: Where'd you find all those Tories?

MR. KLEIN: Right. And we can sell a little bit to you.

Here today to receive the 1989 Alberta Environment Award in the volunteer category on behalf of the Calgary Canoe Club is the group's environment director, Mrs. Roberta Kerr.

The Haz-Chem group, from the University of Alberta, is the 1989 recipient in the educational category. The awards committee was impressed with the outreach program of this group of academics, who travel the province teaching others how to deal with hazardous materials. Dr. Lois Brown and Mr. Gordon Weir are here on behalf of Haz-Chem.

The industrial category this year was presented to Hewitt Oil, of Calgary, for their community work near the company's gas plant in the county of Parkland. The people behind Hewitt Oil's neighbour-first policy are the Hewitt family: Tom Hewitt Sr. and his sons Tom and Harold.

Mr. Speaker, these are the 1989 recipients of the Alberta Environment Awards.

head: PRESENTING PETITIONS

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition signed by over 2,000 Albertans, including many from the Alberta Council on Aging and the Multiple Sclerosis Society, to urge the government to increase support for home care services, especially for those under the age of 65.

head: NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta express its shock at the violent actions that were taken in Beijing, the People's Republic of China, and the extensive injury and loss of life that resulted from it and respectfully requests the governor and government of our sister province of Heilongjiang, with which we have had a special relationship for nearly a decade in the areas of trade, investment, culture, science and technology, medicine, sports, and others, to take all possible steps to prevent any similar actions in Heilongjiang and, through his good offices, in other parts of the People's Republic of China.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of the Official Opposition caucus I, too, would like to give oral notice under the provisions of Standing Order 40 to pursue, with unanimous consent, after question period a discussion on the following motion, which is similar but still different from the one just presented by the government, Mr. Speaker. It reads:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly deplores the excessive violence used to put down the popular uprising in China, urges the government of Alberta to review its bilateral agreements with the People's Republic of China in light of these events, urges the government of Canada to use all diplomatic means to pressure Chinese authorities to stop the violence and respect human rights, and expresses its sympathy to Chinese citizens studying and working in Alberta and to Albertans of Chinese descent who have relatives and friends in that country.

I'll send you a copy of that motion, Mr. Speaker.

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

Be it resolved that the government of Alberta immediately express to its counterpart in our sister province of Heilongjiang, China, our province's revulsion and anger over the recent massacre in Beijing.

MR. SPEAKER: Motions to the Chair from all three parties, please, so that the Chair can review. Thank you.

head: INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 201 **Code of Ethics and Conduct Act**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 201, the Code of Ethics and Conduct Act.

The Bill sets out a series of conflict-of-interest guidelines covering MLAs, heads of Crown corporations, executive staff members, and cabinet ministers. As well, it establishes post-employment guidelines for such persons. For example, a cabinet minister would not be eligible for employment in the public service for two years following his vacating his cabinet seat and thereafter only if the position for which he is applying was the subject of an open, public competition.

[Leave granted; Bill 201 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair would like to direct the House that perhaps we could go through the introduction of these Bills in numerical order. That would allow a faster flow of the business of the afternoon and would also keep other members from having to jump up and down a number of times for their exercise this week.

Bill 202 **Environmental Impact Assessment Act**

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill, the Environmental Impact Assessment Act.

The purpose of this Bill is to provide for environmental impact assessments which are comprehensive in scale. It contains guidelines for the types of studies to be done and provides for full public hearings by the Environment Council of Alberta, including intervenor funding. It leaves decision-making authority in the hands of the government but ensures that alternatives are considered and that people have voice. Where this Bill differs from others that are similar is that it follows a very formal consultation process with environmental groups and others in the province.

[Leave granted; Bill 202 read a first time]

Bill 203 **Freedom of Information and Protection** **of Personal Privacy Act**

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce for first reading Bill 203, titled the Freedom of Information and Protection of Personal Privacy Act.

The Bill is intended to open up for Albertans access to information at every level of government; that is, the provincial, the municipal, and all aspects of commissions or independent agencies governed by either the municipal or the provincial governments. Also, there would be a provision whereby independent review would take place on decisions to withhold information. Finally, with respect to personal information, there would be protection and privacy for that personal information.

MR. SPEAKER: Those in favour of first reading, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.
It seems to be carried by a fairly slim majority.

Bill 204 **An Act to Amend** **the Auditor General Act**

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway I request leave to introduce Bill 204, An Act to Amend the Auditor General Act.

If passed, this Act would ensure that the Auditor General had sufficient authority to properly review and monitor the ongoing financial interests of the Crown. It would give the Auditor General the mandate to review and monitor organizations and corporations controlled by the Alberta government.

[Leave granted; Bill 204 read a first time]

Bill 205 **An Act to Provide for** **Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value**

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 205, An Act to Provide for Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value.

This Act will remove systemic gender bias from wage practices in both the public and private sectors, and it would go some way to reducing the economic inequities experienced by

women, reducing the poverty women experience, and delivering some measure of justice to the women of this province.

[Leave granted; Bill 205 read a first time]

Bill 206
Environmental Assessment Act

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 206, the Environmental Assessment Act.

This Bill will provide for public hearings in the environmental assessment process, will place in legislation the terms of reference for the environmental impact assessment process, and will provide for the review of this process by an independent environmental assessment board.

[Leave granted; Bill 206 read a first time]

Bill 207
Alberta Primary Health Care
Trust Fund Act

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce for first reading Bill 207, the Alberta Primary Health Care Trust Fund Act.

This Act would improve the health status of Albertans by the designation of funding for special projects aimed at evaluating present health care services and researching alternative means of delivery.

[Leave granted; Bill 207 read a first time]

Bill 208
Alberta Farm Security Act

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill titled the Alberta Farm Security Act.

This Bill would stop any foreclosures on farmsteads or farm land until an independent board had assessed whether or not the foreclosure or debt was the fault of the farmer or of conditions beyond his or her control.

[Leave granted; Bill 208 read a first time]

Bill 209
An Act to Amend
the Auditor General Act (No. 2)

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being An Act to Amend the Auditor General Act.

This Act would strengthen the role of the Auditor General, it would give the Auditor General authority to make operational audits and to comment on the value and effectiveness of government programs, it would give the Auditor General the authority to audit all corporations in which the government holds over 50 percent of the shares, and it would increase the independence of the Auditor General by changing the Auditor General's term of office from eight to 10 years and by removing the power of reappointment.

[Leave granted; Bill 209 read a first time]

Bill 210
An Act to Amend
the Limitation of Actions Act

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 210, An Act to Amend the Limitation of Actions Act

This Bill will have particular significance to the very young children of this province.

[Leave granted; Bill 210 read a first time]

Bill 211
An Act to Amend
the Workers' Compensation Act

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

The Bill would create the office of independent workers' advocates to assist workers in preparing and presenting claims before the Workers' Compensation Board, to allow for the establishment of a truly independent appeals commission.

[Leave granted; Bill 211 read a first time]

Bill 212
An Act to Amend
the Surface Rights Act

MR. BRASSARD: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague the Member for Redwater-Andrew I beg leave to introduce Bill 212, An Act to Amend the Surface Rights Act.

[Leave granted; Bill 212 read a first time]

Bill 213
Quality Child Day Care Standards Act

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 213, the Quality Child Day Care Standards Act

This Bill will provide the necessary standards for personnel training, a process of parent monitoring in all centres, and a requirement for checking for any convictions against staff members or applicants for staff positions.

[Leave granted; Bill 213 read a first time]

Bill 214
An Act to Amend
the Labour Relations Code

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 214, An Act to Amend the Labour Relations Code.

When passed, this Act would move to reduce the incidence of violence on picket line occurrences, and the resulting injuries, by prohibiting the use of strikebreakers during an industrial dispute.

[Leave granted; Bill 214 read a first time]

Bill 215
Government Open Contract Act

MR. BRUSEKER: I request leave to introduce Bill 215, the Government Open Contract Act.

This Bill would require that the government make available to the public details about the various contracts into which the government enters.

[Leave granted; Bill 215 read a first time]

Bill 216
Public Service Pay Equity Act

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 216, the Public Service Pay Equity Act.

This Bill would require government to implement pay equity in the public service so that employees of government would be paid equitably for their services regardless of their gender.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 216 read a first time]

Bill 217
An Act to Amend
the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 217, An Act to Amend the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act.

The intention of this Bill is to introduce a very basic democratic principle into the establishment of producer marketing groups. It would require that a plebiscite be held, endorsed by producers of a particular commodity, making producer decisions instead of political ones.

[Leave granted; Bill 217 read a first time]

Bill 219
Motor Vehicle Sales Act

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to move Bill 219 standing in my name. The motion is to introduce a Bill, being the Motor Vehicle Sales Act.

This is consumer legislation that would require the sellers of automobiles to display the prices.

[Leave granted; Bill 219 read a first time]

Bill 220
Instructional Materials Production Act

MR. JONSON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 220, the Instructional Materials Production Act.

This Bill provides for establishing a fund which would be utilized in financing the development, production, and marketing of learning materials in the province.

[Leave granted; Bill 220 read a first time]

Bill 221
Children's Access Rights Enforcement Act

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 221, the Children's Access Rights Enforcement Act.

The intent of this Bill is to provide a remedy through the courts, in the event of marriage breakdown, in favour of a non-custodial parent who is denied access by a custodial parent where an access order is in force.

[Leave granted; Bill 221 read a first time]

Bill 222
An Act to Amend
the Individual's Rights Protection Act

MR. CHUMIR: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being An Act to Amend the Individual's Rights Protection Act.

This Bill will introduce procedures to reduce patronage in the appointment of the chairman of the Alberta Human Rights Commission by providing for appointment upon the recommendation of the Legislative Assembly. It will, further, make the commission responsible directly to the Assembly rather than to the Minister of Labour.

[Leave granted; Bill 222 read a first time]

Bill 223
An Act to Amend
the Emblems of Alberta Act

MR. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 223, An Act to Amend the Emblems of Alberta Act.

If this Bill is passed, it will make the bighorn sheep the official mammal of Alberta.

[Leave granted; Bill 223 read a first time]

Bill 224
An Act to Amend
the Alberta Bill of Rights

MRS. GAGNON: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce a Bill, being An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights.

The Bill would amend chapter A-16 of the *Revised Statutes of Alberta 1980*, giving every person the right to a healthy environment and to its protection and to the protection of the living species inhabiting it.

Thank you.

[Leave granted; Bill 224 read a first time]

Bill 225
An Act to Amend
the Individual's Rights Protection Act (No. 2)

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 225, An Act to Amend the Individual's Rights Protection Act.

This Act would make discrimination based on sexual orientation or mental disability unlawful.

[Leave granted; Bill 225 read a first time]

Bill 226
Quality Child Day Care
Training and Standards Act

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 226, Quality Child Day Care Training and Standards Act.

This is an Act to ensure the safety and development of children in child care centres by setting high-quality training standards for child care workers.

[Leave granted; Bill 226 read a first time]

Bill 227
An Act to Amend
the Local Authorities Election Act

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce to the Assembly for first reading Bill 227, An Act to Amend the Local Authorities Election Act.

If passed, it would permit nonmanagement-level civic employees to exercise the democratic rights evidently available to most other citizens by allowing them to run for public office.

[Leave granted; Bill 227 read a first time]

Bill 228
An Act to Amend
the Students Finance Act

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 228, An Act to Amend the Students Finance Act.

If passed, this Bill would double the number of student representatives on the Students Finance Board, from two to four. More importantly, it would ensure that those representatives are chosen by student organizations in this province themselves, rather than the current practice of being patronage appointees.

[Leave granted; Bill 228 read a first time]

Bill 229
Community Health Clinic Act

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 229, the Community Health Clinic Act.

This Act would establish nonprofit community health clinics, with providers on a salary, to improve Albertans' access to health care at lower cost than institutional care and promote preventive health care practices.

[Leave granted; Bill 229 read a first time]

Bill 230
Recycling Act

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 230, being the Recycling Act.

This Bill will provide for an ongoing and broadly based toxic

waste roundup program and for a curbside recycling program for all communities in this province with populations over 200.

[Leave granted; Bill 230 read a first time]

Bill 231
Space Agencies Act

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 231, which is the Alberta Space Agencies Act.

This Bill would initiate the founding of a specific agency which would have the mandate of identifying and co-ordinating opportunities for Albertans in the research and development of pharmaceuticals, special alloys, and a host of other high-tech products that can only be developed at zero gravity.

[Leave granted; Bill 231 read a first time]

Bill 232
An Act to Amend
the Local Authorities Election Act (No. 2)

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce a Bill, An Act to Amend the Local Authorities Election Act.

This Bill would enable municipalities to approve bylaws to allow for a tax credit system for candidates in municipal and school board elections, similar to the provincial scheme.

[Leave granted; Bill 232 read a first time]

Bill 234
Consumer Advocate Act

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to present Bill 234, called the Consumer Advocate Act

If passed, this Bill would supply an advocate at government expense, where it was decided by a board to do so, for disputes between consumers and suppliers. Also, it would represent consumers before any regulatory interests and commence legal proceedings, including against the Crown if necessary, on behalf of a consumer or consumers' group.

[Leave granted; Bill 234 read a first time]

Bill 235
Freedom of Information
and Personal Privacy Act

MR. PASHAK: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 235, the Freedom of Information and Personal Privacy Act.

This Act would provide Albertans with greater access to government information, and it would also give Albertans more protection against the disclosure of personal information in government records.

[Leave granted; Bill 235 read a first time]

Bill 236
An Act to Amend
the Labour Relations Code (No. 2)

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 236,

An Act to Amend the Labour Relations Code.

This Act would serve to repeal that section of the Labour Relations Code that prohibits health care workers from taking strike action.

[Leave granted; Bill 236 read a first time]

Bill 237
An Act to Amend
the Employment Standards Code

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 237, An Act to Amend the Employment Standards Code.

This Act would tie an annual review of the minimum wage to the consumer price index.

[Leave granted; Bill 237 read a first time]

Bill 238
An Act to Amend
the Limitation of Actions Act (No. 2)

MR. WRIGHT: I beg leave to introduce Bill 238, An Act to Amend the Limitation of Actions Act

Mr. Speaker, this Bill would remove the exceptionally short limitation period before the commencement of actions against doctors.

[Leave granted; Bill 238 read a first time]

Bill 239
Unfair Contract Terms Act

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 239, a Bill called the Unfair Contract Terms Act

The purpose of this Bill, which is consumer legislation, is to make the fine print in consumer contracts answer to a test of reasonableness.

[Leave granted; Bill 239 read a first time]

Bill 240
An Act to Amend the Election Act

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to introduce Bill 240, An Act to Amend the Election Act.

The purpose and intent of this amendment would have the elections officer make it mandatory for party leaders to engage in a televised debate during provincial elections.

Thank you. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order in the galleries as well as on the floor.

[Leave granted; Bill 240 read a first time]

Bill 241
An Act to Amend
the Law of Property Act

MR. WRIGHT: I beg leave to introduce Bill 241, Mr. Speaker, being An Act to Amend the Law of Property Act.

The purpose of this amending Act would be to extend the definition of a time sales agreement in the Law of Property Act to remedy an injustice exposed recently in the courts.

[Leave granted; Bill 241 read a first time]

Bill 242
An Act to Amend
the Vencap Equities Alberta Act

MR. BRUSEKER: Mr. Speaker, saving the best for last, I request leave to introduce Bill 242, An Act to Amend the Vencap Equities Alberta Act.

This Bill would establish a seed capital fund to assist Alberta entrepreneurs in establishing new businesses.

[Leave granted; Bill 242 read a first time]

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to file with the Assembly the communiques of the 29th annual Premiers' Conference, held in Saskatoon last year.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to table four copies of two annual reports as required by statute, these being the 13th annual report of Alberta Recreation and Parks for the year ended March 31, 1988, and the 11th annual report of the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation for the year ended March 31, 1988.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the 1987-88 annual reports for the Department of Advanced Education, University of Lethbridge, University of Calgary, and Banff Centre for Continuing Education. Copies of these reports have already been provided to all members of the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

MR. STEWART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to table the 1987-88 annual report for the Department of Technology, Research and Telecommunications.

MR. SPEAKER: I am pleased to table the report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the general election held March 20, 1989.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I would take pleasure in tabling the 1986-87 annual report of the Attorney General, and I would like at the same time to file the Legal Aid Society 1988 annual report.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. SPEAKER: The Associate Minister of Family and Social Services.

MR. WEISS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a group of students from St. Gabriel school in the northern city of Fort McMurray. They're a class of 81 grade 8 students. They're accompanied by their teachers Marlene Cooper, J.P. Desaulniers, and Art Zasadny and parents Monica Longland,

Sandra Villeneuve, Cecelia Ryan, Irene Stadnyk, Jim Rogers, and Ivan Powell. They are seated in both galleries, or were. I'm not sure, due to the time constraints, whether they had to leave or not, but I would ask them to rise and receive the cordial welcome of the Assembly if they are still here.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, through you to Members of the Legislative Assembly I would like to introduce Terry Spencer, spokesman for injured workers. I would ask that he rise and you give him the customary greetings.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly a special group of Albertans. This is the start of Seniors Week. To kick off this special week, many proud seniors, along with members of the secretariat and advisory council, are seated in the galleries. Accompanying them is the former chairman of the advisory council and a past member of the House, Mr. Harry Alger. I would ask them all to rise and be recognized by the Assembly for the significant contribution to our society by the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair apologizes to the House with respect to the matter of introductions today because of the lengthy Introduction of Bills. I know that members will have some difficulty conveying their own apologies back to various school groups, but perforce it's the function of the Assembly that must take precedence.

Later on we will invite the Associate Minister of Family and Social Services to give recognition to the seniors in the galleries, because at the moment we're in this transition of having removed the school groups. Now more of the seniors are coming in, so if the House will bear with us, we will make that one variation in procedure a bit later.

Thank you.

head: **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

Department of Family and Social Services

MR. WEISS: Mr. Speaker, as many government departments are responsible for co-ordinating seniors' programs, I'm honoured to be speaking on their behalf.

I'm pleased to inform the Assembly that I'm officially proclaiming the week of June 4 to 10, 1989, as the fourth annual Senior Citizens Week. It is a time when all of us, young and old, will and should pay tribute to our pioneers and senior citizens. The theme of Senior Citizens Week, Mr. Speaker, is Seniors in Tune with the Times, and the purpose is to increase appreciation of senior persons and the contributions which they make to their communities, their families, and each other.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans value the solid foundation our senior citizens have built for us. The government has demonstrated appreciation for the contribution of seniors through a number of significant programs over the last 18 years. Today I would encourage all hon. members to recognize the valuable role that seniors continue to play in our society. Our senior citizens must be integrated into all our community activities. It is to the credit of senior citizens that they recognize they must take the lead role in making this happen. That is what Senior Citizens Week is all about. Active seniors in the community deserve our support and our thanks.

Mr. Speaker, I now notice that many of the seniors have had the opportunity to assemble within the galleries. I would ask that they all rise and receive the cordial welcome and response of this Assembly for the contribution they've made to our province.

MR. SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In rising to reply to the ministerial statement, I certainly agree with the thrust that the minister has taken.

I would say, though, to follow up on some of the statements that the minister has made, that the government still has some way to go in terms of concrete actions. I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that in our province we institutionalize more people than we do in the rest of Canada, and also Canada's rate compared to other western democracies is very high. It's not only expensive, but it's unfair. I think the minister would hopefully agree that we have to move towards freedom of choice, and that's why we'll be watching the budget very carefully to see what we're doing, for instance, in home care. I would point out that there should also be a social entry into home care. Many people could perhaps stay at home where they want to be, close to their families, if there's some help even for such things as mowing the lawn or snow removal: these sorts of things. I think that would make a lot of sense, and we'll look forward to directions from this government.

I would also, Mr. Speaker, look forward to funding for Meals on Wheels, if we believe in the sorts of things that increase funding there. I know that will be coming in the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more when the minister says:

Our senior citizens must be integrated into all our community activities. It is to the credit of senior citizens that they recognize they must take the lead role in making this happen.

Precisely, they're talking about some of the things that I'm talking about. We'd better come to grips with it, because I think we all recognize that we are in an aging society.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I certainly agree with the sentiment of the statement and will be looking for concrete action come Thursday in the budget.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

Value-added Tax

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Over the last five years provincial and federal governments have hit average Alberta families with almost \$3,000 in new taxes. The recent federal budget is disastrous for Alberta, and it's disastrous for Alberta families. It is clear that the federal Conservatives are going to continue with their national sales tax. Now, during the election the Premier was walking around holding hands with Brian Mulroney, saying he was a great friend of Alberta. Then after the election he was going to fight the valued-added sales tax.

My question to the Premier is an obvious one. Why didn't the Premier make this a very, very important issue during the campaign, when he might have had some impact on stopping it?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, certainly not just during the election campaign but for some time the province of Alberta has led the other provinces in resisting a national sales tax. You'd re-

call -- think all members would -- that once it was just Alberta that was in the battle against the national sales tax. But due to the efforts of the government of Alberta, and certainly the Provincial Treasurer, we've been able to rally all provinces behind Alberta, resisting a national sales tax, so much so that the federal government had to impose the tax rather than do it in conjunction with provincial governments.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the point is that they are doing it, and I haven't heard much from this Premier recently about it. They are imposing it. My question to the Premier was: where were you during the federal election, when you could have had some impact if you felt strongly about it? Where were you?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said, the provincial government has been leading the battle against the national sales tax for many, many months.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's just not the case. Again, this government can't be trusted to stand up for Albertans when their federal party is in trouble.

Okay, just recently you had the federal budget. I want to ask the Premier why in April -- I knew he was a little busy in the Stettler by-election, but in something as important as this why didn't he speak out loudly and clearly against the sales tax at that particular time? Why was he silent on this issue?

MR. GETTY: I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member isn't listening to the answers. I've already answered that question. The government of Alberta was first to go on record against the national sales tax and has been able to pull all the provinces behind them.

Environmental Impact Assessment Process

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, back to the Premier. As mentioned earlier on, this is Environment Week, and on page 9 of the Speech from the Throne another one of the government promises says, "Alberta will continue to exercise its jurisdiction over the environment." Surely this Premier is aware that the federal government recently intervened in a Saskatchewan development because of deficiencies in that province's environmental impact assessment process.

My question to the Premier: does the Premier not know that Alberta's present environmental impact assessment is deficient, and it leaves Alberta wide open -- wide open -- to federal intervention?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it might be if the hon. member's party had anything to say about it, but the government of Alberta will make sure that we maintain our jurisdiction in environmental matters.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, just like all the other hollow promises that we've heard from the government.

Let me give the Premier a hand here, because he certainly needs it on this issue, Mr. Speaker. He should understand that there's a difference between public relations, handing out packages like that with answers to tell the department what to say, and an actual process. Will the Premier commit today, then, to an independent environmental impact assessment conducted by the Environment Council of Alberta, which includes, number

one, public hearings for each project; number two, funding for intervenors; and three, which is very important, a study of the combined effect on river systems and air quality of seven major pulp and paper projects? Will he commit himself to this?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARTIN: With an answer like that, Mr. Speaker, the question I want to ask this Premier: how can this Premier guarantee, as he has just done, that Alberta will continue to exercise its jurisdiction in the environment with this deficient EIA process? Is this another promise that they're going to cave in on?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the deficiency is in the hon. member's mind, not mine.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. leader of the Liberal Party.

Pension Liability

MR. DECORE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday I believe the Provincial Treasurer misled the people of Alberta by insisting that the province's assets outweigh the liabilities of our province, just as the Premier is attempting to mislead Albertans with respect to his promise, during the last election, on taxes. Whether unfunded pension liabilities are footnoted or not, they are still liabilities, and if you add those liabilities to the huge deficit, there are greater liabilities than there are assets. Now, I ask the Provincial Treasurer: why does he continue to try to hide from Albertans this fact, the fact that our liabilities are greater than our assets?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, it strikes me that this question...

MR. SPEAKER: Before responding, hon. member, the Chair is concerned that it's heard from various quarters . . . I would caution the throwing about of the term "misleading" because it's unparliamentary, and I'll call others to order if it arises in the future.

Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, as well, I believe I did deal with this question on Friday. The question really hasn't changed much from the response that I gave on Friday, nor has the information I have, nor has the position of the Member for Edmonton-Norwood.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. JOHNSTON: Sorry; it's Edmonton-Glengarry. But their socialist policies are all the same.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Provincial Treasurer, who is an accountant, isn't able to look at liabilities and assets like most people can. I'm wondering, in view of the financial statements of our province, whether he has had any representations made to him with respect to this matter or whether he has made any representations to rating agencies, as the province must go out and borrow money and must get rated, and whether the response from these rating agencies is in a

negative way.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, let me make it particularly clear that there is no attempt by the government to misstate or to understate the liabilities of the government. As I said on Friday, we have presented the information on the basis of accounting disclosure principles. That basis calls for consistent disclosure of the unfunded liability on a footnote basis. Now, those people who are familiar with financial statement disclosures understand that that's the process, and Alberta, along with all other governments -- in fact, even the private sector in many cases -- discloses this contingent liability in a footnote manner.

Certainly the rating agencies understand the size of the liability, as does the province of Alberta, but we can still maintain our position that certainly Alberta, because of the heritage fund and because of the good fiscal management of this government since 1971 in particular, has more assets than liabilities and, in fact, is in the best financial position of any government in Canada right now.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, will the hon. minister accept my challenge and provide this House with figures which take into account the nearly \$9 billion in unfunded pension liabilities carried by the citizens of this province and which show Alberta enjoying a net asset position?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the numbers are coming from. I think the member is inventing the outstanding liability. In fact, the information I have is that the unfunded liability this year has reduced somewhat on a year-over-year basis.

Let me not mislead anyone, Mr. Speaker, by saying that the province doesn't understand the size of its problem and is not in the process of reviewing how it can correct this problem. To suggest otherwise would be not factual. We have, in fact, put in place a review process. We are working along with other departments who have the fundamental responsibility for pensions to look at ways of dealing with this unfunded liability.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Wainwright, followed by Edmonton-Centre, followed by Edmonton-Whitemud.

Crow Benefit Payments

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. It's concerning the Crow benefit. The change of the method of payment has been a long and painfully slow process, but the present policy still strongly discriminates against our economic diversification here in Alberta. Could the minister bring us up to date on the progress that has happened in the past few months and tell us what Alberta is doing about this problem?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would agree with the hon. Member for Wainwright that it's been a long, painful process, but currently discussions are going on at two levels. We're still in discussions with the federal government re changing the total method of payment across the prairies, and I fully expect that when the federal Minister of Agriculture releases his agricultural policy paper, probably in July, that issue will be addressed. I'm not sure in what way.

At the same time, we are carrying on discussions with the province of B.C. and the Alberta Wheat Pool to develop the B.C./Alberta pilot option which would have the pay-the-producer concept introduced into the two western provinces. So we're still moving in both those directions.

MR. FISCHER: Thank you. Will the present GATT negotiations affect Alberta's position?

MR. ISLEY: No, our position hasn't changed as a result of the recent round of GATT discussions.

MR. SPEAKER: Another supplementary, Wainwright?

MR. FISCHER: Will this have an effect, then, on our Crow offset benefit program that the province has?

MR. ISLEY: I would hope that if we can achieve "pay the producer," the Crow benefit offset program -- which, remember, we put in place to counter that, if you wish, unfair subsidy that was working against value added -- should be able to disappear, if we can change the method of payment.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Centre, followed by Edmonton-Whitemud.

Meals on Wheels

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Meals on Wheels is a proven health promotion program for seniors that relies upon hundreds of volunteers and very limited funds to get nutritious meals -- and, I might add, even some emotional support -- to growing numbers of seniors and shut-ins. In fact, the Edmonton board, staff, and volunteers have recently opened a new kitchen facility in my constituency and are struggling faithfully to get the necessary funds to keep up with the growing demand and the quality of their service.

Given these essential health services that the Meals on Wheels provides, Mr. Speaker, how can the Minister of Health possibly make such a dreadful allegation that she will not advance them funds because seniors are abusing the service or use it only as a convenience?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: I didn't make any such statement, Mr. Speaker.

REV. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it's been widely reported. If the minister wants to refute such allegations, now's the time to do it. Will she produce publicly any documented evidence she has to support such claims that have been widely reported that abuse of Meals on Wheels is going on, and will she do the more honourable thing and advance them the kinds of necessary funds they need to improve their quality of service?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I welcome an opportunity to clarify my comments with respect to Meals on Wheels, but as for making any comment with respect to abuse by seniors, that is certainly not the case.

REV. ROBERTS: Will the minister at least do a more positive act in this regard, which is to do as I did and go with one of the volunteer drivers one lunch hour, see the kinds of effective

health care delivery that they're making to many seniors and shut-ins, see that it is indeed providing a very necessary preventative health care service which demands her further consideration and increased funding support?

MRS. BETKOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I welcome an opportunity to clarify my statements. I have absolutely no difficulty with the seniors who are being served by the very important Meals on Wheels program in our city and across our province. In fact, I think whether we're meeting the convalescent -- or, in other words, the medical needs -- or the nutritional needs of seniors, those are important health priorities for this government. My concern is that there are overhead costs associated with the Edmonton operation which are taking away from the need to add more seniors onto the program. That is the question I ask with respect to the freestanding facility in the hon. member's constituency and in terms of funding that facility and the administration that that costs. That is a concern that I have, and operating in a budget is something I think is important for all the Meals on Wheels programs in this province, especially the other 109 that operate within their budget.

Removal of Protesters from Legislature Grounds

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, June 3 a citizen of this province, who just minutes ago we gracefully welcomed in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Terry Spencer, who is still up in the public gallery, was peacefully protesting difficulties he had with an agency of this government. He was forcibly removed from the steps of the Legislature, taken into an alley nearby -- not his home -- and with belongings, was dumped out next to a garbage bin. My question to the minister of public works is: was this questionable action carried out with the minister's knowledge or under his direction?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, on March 20 all the men and women in this Assembly were elected to represent various constituencies. Shortly thereafter all of us had an opportunity to swear an oath to uphold the laws of the province of Alberta, and it was with great regret that on late Saturday afternoon, as the minister responsible for the enforcement of the Public Works Act, it was my duty and responsibility to enforce Alberta Regulation 76/84, which was gazetted on March 31, 1984. According to the section of that particular Act and regulation, 6(1)(c), it indicates that

No individual can take up habitation, temporary or otherwise, on Crown property.

In keeping with my responsibility as a member of this Legislative Assembly to uphold the laws of the province of Alberta, that action was taken. It was not, however, Mr. Speaker, taken in the manner outlined by the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud. It was done with dignity, and it was done with decency.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, would the minister please explain to this Assembly and to the citizens of this province why there exists a difference in policy regarding who can and who cannot peacefully protest on the Legislature grounds, as demonstrated Saturday with Mr. Spencer's removal and last year with no action having been taken in regard to Mr. John Hawrelak, who demonstrated in the same fashion from April 29, 1988, to May 12, 1988?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that the hon. member should listen to the responses put forward to questions, and in question number one, I outlined that section of the Act and the regulation that was used. It makes it very clear that

No individual can take up habitation, temporary or otherwise, on Crown property in the province of Alberta

And I might point out, Mr. Speaker, that I have been the minister responsible for this particular Act for some period of time, the last six or so weeks, and that now comes into my jurisdiction. I think it's important that the oaths that all of us take as elected people to uphold the laws of the province of Alberta must be dealt with equally by all members of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, would the minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board undertake to meet privately with Mr. Spencer to resolve this issue as soon as possible rather than allow this ridiculous situation that's occurring outside to continue, where a person is forcibly removed and threatened that he may be removed again this evening, despite the fact that he has submitted a letter stating he is n o t . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. It's a supplementary question.
Minister.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've met twice with Mr. Spencer, and my door is open to him again. The last time I met with Mr. Spencer, I asked him to compile a number of questions that I had concerning his claim. He has done that. The Workers' Compensation Board has responded as late as May 24, and I haven't heard from Mr. Spencer or anybody else in regards to his case.

Let me just say this, Mr. Speaker. If the Workers' Compensation Board erred, then that error will be corrected. If Mr. Spencer can bring forward new information, then his case will be reopened. I might say today that his case is being reopened, and I welcome him to meet with me at any time he wishes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Belmont, followed by the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche.

Unemployment Insurance Changes

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Career Development and Employment. The federal Conservative government has recently announced changes that will cut tens of thousands of Albertans off unemployment insurance. Now, Mr. Speaker, this draconian change is going to have a devastating effect, not only on those who are currently receiving unemployment insurance but on employers and on the Alberta economy as well. I would ask the minister: in light of the information, what action has the minister taken toward standing up for Albertans who are on unemployment insurance to oppose these changes?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that from the province of Alberta's perspective we believe that people should be employed, and our programs are so geared.

MR. SIGURDSON: Well, that being the case then, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a supplementary to the minister. The

federal government has completed studies that outline the regional impact that such changes are going to have, and I would ask the minister: has she or any member of her department attempted to secure this document from the federal government?

MRS. OSTERMAN: Mr. Speaker, we have received some information from the federal government and also a guarantee for further consultation, particularly with respect to some of the new innovations that will work with the private sector, in terms of training and other opportunities. Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to note that the funds that will come forward as a result of the changes in the unemployment insurance are going to be reallocated to training programs. Surely that's what we all want, and those people, to be equipped to go back to work.

MR. SIGURDSON: We want, most certainly, to have retraining programs, Mr. Speaker, but not on the backs of workers. That's the point that has to be made.

To the Provincial Treasurer. Given that the provincial government is a large employer, it's going to have to substantially increase its contributions of the unemployment insurance premium. There are also other attendant costs, as well, that are going to be associated with these cuts and changes. Can the Provincial Treasurer advise the Assembly what actions his department has taken to intervene in this matter and, also, what the costs of these changes are going to be to the Alberta Treasury?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's true that the additional costs of unemployment insurance will be unloaded onto the province. I have expressed that concern with Mr. Wilson, the Finance minister, not just in this area of unemployment insurance but in other areas where the transfer of deficits to the provinces has taken place. I can't give you the number right now -- we are in the process of calculating the costs -- but perhaps sometime during the budget debates I would be glad to give some broad number of that amount.

Environmental Impact Assessment Process (continued)

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of the Environment. As the hon. minister is well aware, Alberta-Pacific industries is proposing to develop a \$1.3 billion pulp mill near the town of Athabasca in my constituency. Although we realize that this will create badly needed jobs for the constituency, because we do run the highest rate per capita on welfare in my constituency, my constituents do have environmental concerns. We also realize that there is the initial environmental impact assessment study; public meetings have just been completed recently. My question to the hon. minister is: what is the next step in the process?

MR. KLEIN: I'll try.

Mr. Speaker, the process is a very straightforward one, and it's a process that is currently under review. This government is dedicated to refining and to doing what we possibly can to make sure that the process is absolutely right. With respect to what has happened thus far relative to the Al-Pac proposal, there has been an environmental impact assessment document prepared by the company. That document has been submitted for public consultation, a series of open houses and so on, not public hearings at this particular stage. The documents, along with the pub-

lic input, will then be submitted to the Department of the Environment for a deficiency review. Following that deficiency review, there will be a citizens' review panel established, a review panel that will be selected from amongst the residents in the affected area, and that review panel will have the opportunity to conduct public hearings or to complete the process in any way, shape, or form it sees fit.

MR. CARDINAL: I would like to ask: what is the time line of the next process?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the time line for the next process will be anywhere from six to eight weeks.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, Athabasca-Lac La Biche?

MR. CARDINAL: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Edmonton-Mill Woods.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 15 the Minister of the Environment stated that changes to environmental impact assessment legislation in this province were needed but that he wasn't prepared to introduce such changes to this session of the Legislature. That same day he called upon Alberta-Pacific to delay its public hearings, and believe it or not, Alberta-Pacific said it wouldn't do that. To the Minister of the Environment: could the minister tell us why he wants to wait for such legislation, proper environmental impact assessment legislation, until long after the currently proposed pulp mills are under way and have escaped the scrutiny of a proper environmental impact assessment process?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the pulp mills are going to escape the scrutiny of any process. As a matter of fact, if the environmental requirements are not met, then it's simple, very simple, so simple that even the member of the opposition can understand: they won't get a permit. It's that simple; they won't get a permit to operate.

To determine if the process is correct, Mr. Speaker, one has to assess what has taken place, what is taking place now, and to refine the process as need be. I've given an undertaking to examine the process relative to the Al-Pac project to determine if indeed the added step of the citizens' review board is the right process. I've given an undertaking also to discuss with my federal counterparts the environmental process that is carried on federally, to see how perhaps we can create some kind of a joint process. This all involves, I think, careful study and a reasonable and responsible review. Just because the opposition says what they think is the right thing to do, that's not what I'm about to do at this particular time without having all the facts.

MR. MITCHELL: The minister is prepared to say no to this project, but he's not prepared to tell that company, and make it stick, to delay its public meetings. Who's supposed to believe that, Mr. Minister?

Will the minister explain why . . .

MR. SPEAKER: With due respect, hon. member. You did indeed ask a question. The Chair won't regard it as that, but

please, a succinct supplementary now.

MR. MITCHELL: Will the minister explain why, despite the fact that the company denied his request to delay their public hearings, he is now still unwilling to change legislation so that he could require such a delay rather than have some company headquartered halfway around the world establish environmental policy for this province?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sort of confused. Maybe it's my first day or something, but I'm really quite confused because I have never said that I'm not . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order.

MR. KLEIN: I have never . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, hon. minister, as well.

With regard to the House, especially with new members on both sides of the House, one usually does grant a little more courtesy than what's occurring at the moment.

Hon. minister.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I have never said that I wouldn't be unwilling to change legislation; I have simply said that I want to review the process. I want to look at the process. I want to make sure that the process we have in place is inadequate before we make changes. It's the old adage: if it's not broke, you don't fix it. And if there are some legislative changes required, Mr. Speaker, we will be introducing those changes in due course.

MR. MITCHELL: It is broke, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the minister's admitted confusion over his statements, his actions, his inactions, why will this minister simply not place a moratorium on those new pulp mill projects right now? Assess that legislation, get that legislation in place in this Legislature, approved by this Legislature, and give himself some control over this process so that we can have a proper environmental impact assessment process in . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you for the succinct supplementary, hon. member. Thank you for the supplementary.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, in fact, the licence to operate -- and I'll repeat it: the licence to operate -- will not be issued until all environmental concerns have been met, have been met to the satisfaction of the highest standards that have been established anywhere in the world relative to pulp mill development.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Mill Woods, and if there's time, Clover Bar, West Yellowhead, Calgary-Buffalo, Cypress-Redcliff, and more and sundry other spots throughout the province.

Workers' Compensation Board Appointments

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, after months of demonstrations by injured workers on the steps of the Legislature over the past year and the whole process of the Millard inquiry report that came out after that, Albertans were expecting this new minister responsible for the WCB to show a little bit of leadership in

terms of the appointment of new members to the board of directors. And what did we get last Thursday? We've got a board that was a whole lot more concerned about patronage appointments to their friends Ken Paproski and Ken Albrecht . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question, question.

MR. SPEAKER: Older please. Order, please, in the government benches.

May we have the question. It's the main question and the member gets a chance to get a couple of sentences in before the question. In the meantime, hon. member, the Chair is still standing. I'm sorry. Now we can do it the other way around.

Thank you.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, can this minister tell this House why it is that he took the opportunity to appoint members to this board and passed it up? Why didn't he have any representatives from the largest organization of labour in this province, the Federation of Labour, nor a single representative from injured workers, the people who are supposed to be served by this agency? Why not at least one on the board, Mr. Minister?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, the legislation calls for three workers from industry, three from labour, and three from the general public. Last Thursday we appointed six such people: two from labour, two from industry, and two from the general public. We left open three positions, Mr. Speaker, to make sure we get the right type of people to the board before the end of 1989.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the appointment of the members on the board, you look at the industries that have the highest rate of accidents. In this case it's forestry, construction, petroleum, mining, and so we move with people whose general knowledge in those areas is very, very high.

Now, to say to me that we didn't appoint somebody from this organization or that organization -- I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that we had 200 names submitted. I took what I thought were the best people to fill the positions, that would do the job.

Now, the member . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Perhaps there's some ammunition left for supplementaries.

A supplementary.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, now that he's put in a lot of his friends there, with those first six positions, can he give a commitment today that the other three positions will include representatives of the AFL and of injured workers if he's really serious about helping the injured workers of this province?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I would hope that every member that's appointed is my friend, because I'm a friend of the injured. We intend to work. The worker of this province has a caring minister, a fair minister, a minister that's going to use a lot of common sense and is a friend of the injured. So, yes, if we're going to appoint three more, they will be friends of the minister, because they all must be friends of the minister to make this system work.

MR. GIBEAULT: So they've all got to be orange and blue card

carriers, I guess.

But let me just ask this now. Since he hasn't got a single injured worker on the board, is he now saying to the injured workers of this province -- and there are thousands of them now -- that the only voice they have is to have demonstrations on the Legislature, to camp out, because you won't appoint them to a decision-making role on the board that affects them? Is that what you're saying?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I've never looked at the cards of any member appointed to this board. And I guess what the member is suggesting -- is the member suggesting that if there are appointed members on the board that carry a card different than orange and blue, they should be replaced? Is that what he's suggesting? Mr. Speaker, certainly I look forward to nominations from the injured workers, and if the hon. member has names to submit to me, he has until the end of the year. Let's have those nominations.

MR. GIBEAULT: I submitted them, and you ignored them.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, that's not the appropriate way of carrying out your information in your submission of rdsumEs.

MR. GIBEAULT: A point of order...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you; at the end of question period.

The Member for Clover Bar, followed by West Yellowhead, then Calgary-Buffalo.

MTBE Plant

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that there have been some ongoing discussions to establish a Canadian/Finnish business relationship, an initiative by our government for economic diversification. Would the Minister of Economic Development and Trade indicate to this Assembly the results of such discussion, or if there's an announcement that has been made.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to confirm with the hon. member, recognizing the keen interest the hon. member does have in it because it is going to be located in the county of Strathcona and he was such an outstanding member of that council, and to share with him that this morning Petro-Canada and the Finnish Neste Oy announced that they are going to be proceeding with an MTBE plant in the county of Strathcona amounting to some \$300 million, which will employ in excess of 100 people. I offer my warmest congratulations to the group that is going ahead with it, plus the hon. member and the county of Strathcona.

MR. GESELL: Mr. Speaker, since this plant and this announcement will impact somewhat directly on my constituency, I would like to know some information about the intended completion, the start-up date for this plant, and some of the multiplier effect. It was mentioned that there may be some hundred employees, but those employees will also have a multiplier effect on my constituency.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is so correct,

because the numbers of employees I mentioned will be the permanent employees when the plant is in production, which will be the latter part of 1991. There will be significant spin-off benefits through the construction of this plant, so the benefits are enormous. We're delighted that again we see such significant economic stimulus within the province of Alberta, again reinforcing the strength and vibrance of the economy within the province of Alberta.

VIA Rail

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, as a direct result of the subsidy cuts announced in the recent federal budget, VIA Rail's revised five-year business plan now calls for passenger rail services to be eliminated to approximately two-thirds. Services to such Alberta communities as Medicine Hat and Edmonton itself are on the verge of disappearing.

My question to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, Mr. Speaker, is: what, if anything, has the government of Alberta done in the way of concrete measures to oppose these cuts and let the federal government know that Albertans care about passenger rail service and want to see it maintained?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, we've made strong representation to the federal government with the hopes of maintaining what we consider such an essential service, especially as it relates to the tourism industry. Both the Minister of Tourism and myself have had numerous discussions. I just recently sent an in-depth letter to the minister of transportation at the federal level expressing our strongest concern and also asking for data as it relates to a cost analysis so that we can look at this in a very objective way with the hopes of saving what we consider a very crucial transportation system within this province.

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Tourism. Given that the reports prepared by this government's own departments of tourism and economic development in 1984 and 1987 indicated that lack of modernization in the passenger rail service in Alberta cost this province approximately \$120 million in lost tourism revenue each year, can the minister tell us what he has done to pursue the matter in modernizing VIA Rail services?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad this concern has been brought in front of us, but it is not our responsibility, as we do not own the railroad, to spend money modernizing the equipment. It has been suggested many times that modern equipment has to be looked at and the 1954 vintage equipment that is being repaired and remodeled may not be the way to go. But very definitely we're waiting for the recommendations that are coming from VIA management, and we look forward to them with anticipation because we know that the Vancouver-Edmonton and Vancouver-Calgary runs are two of the most viable operations they have within the system.

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, given the subservient nature of VIA Rail's relationship to the CNR and CP Rail, can the minister give us any indication that he believes this discriminatory situation has existed long enough, and join the New Democrats in the opinion that movement of people is just as important as the movement of freight? To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to reinforce what I indicated to the hon. member in his initial question, whereby we are going to very actively involve ourselves in doing everything possible to maintain what we consider a very essential transportation system within this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo, followed by Cypress-Redcliff, and then Edmonton-Avonmore.

Sikh Workers' Rights

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Alberta regards itself as a leader in multiculturalism and standing up for the rights of minorities. Sikh Canadians who wear turbans as part of their religion should be able to serve in our police forces without being required to give up this part of the religion, and it's now time for the government to show leadership on this issue and to speak out forcefully in support of Sikh Canadians. I'm wondering whether the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism, who is responsible for supporting minority rights, is prepared to provide such leadership and speak out clearly in support of allowing Sikh Canadians to wear turbans and serve in our police forces at the same time.

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, I'd be more than glad to speak out on behalf of the government of Canada were I a minister of that government. But I am not, obviously, and if the hon. member is referring to the RCMP, then that obviously is a federal, Crown responsibility. We do have some interest in maintaining fairness and equality, of course, and we'd be glad as a government to address our continued, ongoing commitment to the policies of multiculturalism and of course of human rights.

MR. CHUMIR: VIA Rail is a federal responsibility too, but we make representations.

I'm wondering whether the Solicitor General, who is responsible for policing in Alberta, is prepared to support the right of Sikh Canadians to wear turbans and serve in police forces in Canada whether they be national police forces or whether they be police forces right here in this province.

MR. FOWLER: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding, and possibly incorrect understanding, that the federal government had already made the decision that the Sikh religion -- those belonging to it serving in the force -- could in fact wear the turban. In responding to the media last week, I indicated that I understood the position of certain Albertans. I did not indicate that I sympathized with it, because that is not the case. I will be meeting with the Solicitor General of Canada Friday of this week to discuss it and ascertain precisely what the position is in respect to the Sikhs' wear in regard to their religion, and report back to the House accordingly.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have two questions and no answers. I'm wondering whether the Premier, who is the leader of this province and should set the tone for this province, is himself prepared to provide leadership on this issue and speak out clearly on behalf of the rights of Sikh Canadians in this situation.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Solicitor General just provided the member with the answer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Cypress-Redcliff, followed by Edmonton-Avonmore.

The time for question period has expired. The Chair has recognized the member. Do we have unanimous consent to complete his series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.
Cypress-Redcliff.

Funding for Municipalities

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Provincial Treasurer and is related to the timing of the budget and the effect it's had on municipalities in this province. I wonder if the Treasurer can assure the Assembly that municipalities in this province -- have they been shorted, or is it a longer stretch of time than they'd normally have received their grants because of the budget delay?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, members of the House I'm sure will recall that in that period between the election and the time we could convene the Legislative Assembly we passed a special warrant as interim supply. That special warrant, close to \$4 billion, was used essentially to provide the transfers to universities, colleges, health centres, and municipalities. I would remind the House, Mr. Speaker, that along with our practices, historically we tend to transfer those grants early on in the process.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Treasurer can assure the Assembly, then, that any municipality that feels that their funds have been delayed, if they approach him, he will see with haste that their funds are then transferred to them.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly commit to do my very best to do that, but I think now the process is in the hands of the Legislature. Once we get the budget in place, I'll be bringing forward an interim supply Bill which will replace the warrant along the traditional lines that we have done, certainly in 1986. But I think it's fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that the commitments by this government as outlined in the fall of 1988 -- 5 percent to municipalities, 5 percent to health, 5.5 percent to education in particular -- are far above the contributions by the provinces to these local governments. We continue to ensure that they have the highest level of funding to ensure that Albertans get the best level of services. Despite the timing of the transfers, that commitment remains throughout the whole year.

MR. SPEAKER: In requesting the unanimous consent of the House for the extension of question period, the Chair neglected to add the information that subsequent from Friday's question period the Minister of Health has information to give in reply to the Member for Calgary-McKnight, but since that member has now left the House this will have to carry on until tomorrow. Thank you.

We have one point of order which arose during question period. Edmonton-Mill Woods.

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to cite Section 494 of

Beauchesne, which reads in part that there should be "no imputation of intentional falsehood." I would suggest that's exactly what the minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board did in asking for us to submit names of people to the board, inferring that we had not done so when in fact we had done exactly that a year ago when they were advertised.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair's recollection of what the reply said was along the line that it wouldn't necessarily be construed that the minister had said he had not received, but I understand he was saying that he was still open to receive nominations to whatever board was being mentioned at the time. It was the Chair that intervened and was calling the member to order, basically for shouting back and forth across the House when we were in the midst of having a reply.

So in that regard, perhaps the hon. minister has a comment to make in that regard about the matter of resumé for submission.

MR. TRYNCHY: Very quickly, Mr. Speaker. I asked the member to submit a name if he wished. I did not say I didn't receive any names. The 200 names that I've received, I don't know which one would come from him, but if he's got somebody he thinks that would be a candidate for the board, let him submit it and take his chances along with the other 200 names.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that acceptable? Thank you.

head: MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 40

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we have some other interesting procedural concerns this afternoon with respect to Standing Order 40 and the very unusual circumstance of three requests under Standing Order 40 and the further unusual aspect of all three motions dealing with substantially the same issue. Under Standing Order 40, if all three were to be considered, we would have the interesting situation of one hon. member then having three motions on the Order Paper, which is contrary to another section of our Standing Orders. So, with regard to the third motion, in the normal course of circumstances it would have to have been sponsored by another member of that political party who does not have two motions on the Order Paper. Therefore, since that particular motion was sponsored by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, and he already has two motions on the Order Paper, the third one cannot be considered at this time.

Under Standing Order 40, we would need to carry on, as it says, to the matter of unanimous consent, having heard the sponsor make the case with regard to it being a matter of "urgent and pressing necessity." Therefore, the Chair recognizes the Deputy Premier at this moment.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm asking the unanimous consent of the Assembly to discuss a motion which was placed before the Assembly verbally earlier. I would suggest, in view of the fact that all parties have submitted a motion of a similar nature, that in the course of the debate on the first motion all relevant points could very well be made. I would also suggest in terms of the matter under consideration that the terms of the motion that I presented to the Assembly are certainly broad enough to cover the issue we consider to be of concern, not only to people involved but also to people in our own province. Therefore, I would suggest that it is in order, and I would ask for the unanimous consent of the Assembly to proceed with a debate on this

issue and a resolution of that during the course of this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, under Standing Order 40 it does indeed read that the mover is the only one that makes the case and the Chair must then put the case for unanimous consent as to whether the motion proceeds or not. If that is granted by the Assembly, then of course all members of the House have the opportunity to speak to the motion, with the normal time constraints as supplied by Standing Orders.

Are you prepared to give unanimous consent to this motion to proceed? Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried. Thank you.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I think copies should be available to members shortly, but I will read it into the record once again.

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Alberta express its shock at the violent actions that were taken in Beijing, the People's Republic of China, and the extensive injury and loss of life that resulted from it and respectfully requests the governor and government of our sister province of Heilongjiang, with which we have had a special relationship for nearly a decade in areas of trade, investment, culture, science and technology, medicine, sports, and others, to take all possible steps to prevent any similar actions in Heilongjiang, and, through his good offices, in other parts of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Speaker, in moving this motion, I am sure that all hon. members of the Assembly will agree that this is not a matter of political partisanship that would impel any member to bring forward a motion of this kind. It is indeed with a great deal of personal sadness and shock that I have observed via television and through the print media, through reading, what has taken place in the People's Republic of China.

As is inherent in this motion, there has been a special relationship develop over the past several years between the province of Alberta and the province of Heilongjiang within the People's Republic of China. The city of Edmonton is twinned with the city of Harbin; the city of Calgary is twinned with the city of Daqing, both within Heilongjiang. As a result of that special relationship and as a result of a number of visits that have taken place between members of the government of that sister province and people from all walks of life, both Canadians and Albertans are going to the People's Republic of China and vice versa. We have developed a greater understanding amongst our two nations.

It's a fact that on May 16 I had the occasion to host a luncheon at Government House to which I, as the minister responsible for federal and intergovernmental relations in our province, invited scholars who are attending universities and technical institutes within our province, and of course we discussed the events then taking place in Beijing. The young students who are amongst us -- and mere are, I think, 400 students from the People's Republic of China now studying in our postsecondary institutions in Alberta this year, and I can say that there have been many hundreds preceding them in the last decade since we formed a special relationship with respect to educational exchanges. There are some 20-odd students from Alberta now just recently gone to Heilongjiang to study Chinese, and these are just a few of the many Albertans who have done that. I mention that particular area because it was of great interest to me, having

been Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower.

Mr. Speaker, when events of world significance take place, they form a lasting impression on the minds of people no matter where they may be. One such event that has always lived in my memory was in 1956, when I was 21 years of age and a university student. The horrible events that took place in Hungary formed a lasting impression in my mind of what happens when governments take action against their own people. Whatever the reasons behind the events of recent days and whatever the eventual outcome may be, I wanted to use this vehicle, and the legitimate vehicle in that we have a special relationship with a province in the People's Republic of China, to express our concern to that government.

I have been in touch with the Secretary of State for External Affairs on two occasions today, and hon. members of this Assembly are no doubt aware that there will be an emergency debate in the House of Commons later today at which time the government of Canada and the representatives of all Canadians in the House of Commons will have an opportunity of discussing this issue and expressing the concerns of all Canadians. But it is appropriate, given the special relationship that we have with one of the provinces of the People's Republic of China, for us today to call upon that government to take all possible steps to prevent similar occurrences in that province, and hopefully, as I express in the motion before the Assembly today, through his good offices in other parts of the People's Republic of China, including Beijing.

Mr. Speaker, there are few words that one can express when such tragedies occur, no matter where they occur in the world or for whatever reason. But when it is by reason of the action of a government against its own people, it strikes at the hearts of all of us. As I say, Mr. Speaker, I note that all parties in the Assembly today brought forward similar resolutions so that we can express through this Assembly the deep hurt and concerns of the people of our province, no matter what their backgrounds, no matter what their ethnic origin, whether they are related to or know much about the people of China and the struggle that is now under way in the cause of democracy and freedom within that country.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to prolong my discussion in this debate except to say that I hope my words today express the concerns of all members of the Assembly and of all parties for this tragedy, and our earnest and fervent prayer on behalf of the people of Alberta that it will stop, that a peaceful solution can be found, and that no further lives will be lost and no further injuries inflicted upon innocent people in the course of what should be a dialogue between the people and their governments.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness in my heart and with a very heavy feeling of regret, having been to Heilongjiang and having been to the People's Republic of China and knowing that they are people, individuals, just like us -- it is with that heavy heart that I move this motion and ask for the approval of this message, whatever it can convey and however much its impact may be upon the leadership. Let us call for them to cease and desist, and talk and discuss, and through peaceful means resolve their difficulties, and that democracy and freedom will find its place with our friends and brothers and sisters in the People's Republic of China.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak on behalf of the New Democrat caucus in this Assembly to indicate our complete support for the motion that's been presented to us by the Government House Leader. I note that the House leader has referred to a motion that specifically relates to our sister province in China, and I would also ask that all members of the House agree to proceed to the motion that the New Democrat caucus is prepared to sponsor, which refers to the country as a whole, beyond the one province of Heilongjiang.

Speaking to the substance of the motion, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that this was a subject of discussion in our caucus today, in which there was unanimous agreement that no civilized person could ever condone and, indeed, should speak out against the violent repression of those who demonstrate peacefully against their governments, whether those governments be in China or elsewhere.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I was personally reminded today and yesterday of a politically arousing event in my life that shocked me and, in fact, continues to shock me. That was the incident of four students in Kent State University, Ohio, being shot for peacefully demonstrating against the actions of their government. So while the minister has his recollections from 1956, I have my recollections from 1968. They are no more pleasant, they are no more acceptable now than they were in those years, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that I'm speaking now on behalf of all of my colleagues in the Official Opposition.

So, Mr. Speaker, having said that we agree wholeheartedly with the intention of this message, that we at no time condone the striking down violently of peaceful demonstrators regardless of the country in which they live, I will assure that we will be supporting this motion and look forward to support of all members of the Assembly in our request for unanimous approval to deal with the motion we ourselves have drafted.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Deputy Premier for his initiative, the initiative in contacting the federal government and the initiative he took in bringing forward this notice of motion today.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

I have had some involvement, as the Deputy Premier quite appropriately put it, with the city of Harbin. I know the importance that politicians in Heilongjiang province and the city of Harbin place on individual relationships. Mr. Speaker, I'm not prone to lauding Conservatives, but on many occasions in China and in Canada I have lauded the fact that I considered there were two wise men who brought about the special relationship between Heilongjiang province and Alberta: Mr. Loughheed, of course, and Governor Chen Lei. Now, that special relationship, I underline and underscore, was brought about by two individuals, at least promoted and pushed and made possible, I think, because of those two individuals. It's therefore necessary for us to take the kind of initiative the Deputy Premier has suggested and have this Assembly speak to Heilongjiang province. I would like to request, Mr. Deputy Premier, that the feelings of this House, the unanimous feeling of this House, go to the governor of Heilongjiang province, and I'm sure it will be accepted

and received in the same spirit that they dealt with us when we talked about this special relationship between provinces.

Mr. Speaker, we now have information that some 2,000 people have been killed and many hundreds of people injured by tanks roaring over people and people being shot. We have to be very careful about the time and energy we put into special relationships. I believe if we follow the suggestion, the notice of motion, the action that I'm suggesting be taken directly with the governor of Heilongjiang province, some good effect can come about by pressure being exercised from Heilongjiang to Beijing. We on behalf of the Liberal Party support the motion brought forward by the Deputy Premier.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: May the minister sum up?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HORSMAN: I want to be very brief in my response and thank the hon. members who have just spoken, Edmonton-Highlands and Edmonton-Glengarry, for their support for the motion. I can assure hon. members that upon its passage today I will immediately transmit the same to our colleagues at the federal level, who of course have the broader responsibility in terms of dealing with the People's Republic of China through our diplomatic relations there, and I shall transmit the same to the governor of Heilongjiang.

I just want to point out that it had been proposed, although it had not been concluded, that the governor of Heilongjiang would pay an official visit to Alberta during the course of this year. I would hope events are not such that it would prevent that, but that may very well be a result of the disturbances within the country. I did think that information should have been relayed, and I did intend to relay that during the course of my opening remarks. But I shall indeed do that. I think the Speaker as well has a particular role, which he will of course fulfill, in order to transmit that message as well.

I do thank the hon. members for their support and thoughtful comments. Our prayers, I'm sure, are for families of those whose lives have been lost, who have sustained injuries, and for the future let us pray for peace.

[Motion carried]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Member for Edmonton-Highlands, followed by Calgary-Buffalo.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Then the point of order takes precedence.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This relates to the Speaker's ruling that the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry's motion was out of order on the basis of two motions being on the Order Paper. I've quickly had a look at the Standing Orders and *Beauchesne*, Mr. Speaker, and therefore would take this opportunity to play lawyer and question that ruling on the basis of the words, the purpose, and the precedent of this House. The words of the rules in issue -- and the rules

are 39 and 40 of the Standing Orders. Rule 39 states:

A member may have two notices of Motions other than Government Motions in his name on the Order Paper at the same time.

Well, quite clearly this refers to motions that are on the Order Paper and not motions that are brought before this House on an emergent basis. Of course, there are only two motions in the member's name on the Order Paper.

Secondly, if we look at the purpose of rule 40, it relates to emergency situations. It's an outlet for such emergencies dealing with matters that are beyond the ordinary case, and in that instance it provides for the House to decide whether or not there is urgency. If you consider the circumstances in which all members of the House, assuming we had a House sufficiently diligent -- if all members of the House had provided two motions, we would be in a situation where the House would not be able to deal with emergency motions. That, of course, would be particularly difficult in the event that there were a small opposition in the House, in which event it would be virtually impossible for the opposition to be active in presenting motions and to deal with emergencies at the same time.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would point out the precedent of this House. During the previous three years I cannot recall once this issue having been raised in respect of emergent motions raised under rule 40 under circumstances in which members have had two motions on Orders of the Day, and that has been almost the invariable practice of our previously tiny, now somewhat more gigantic, caucus over the previous three years.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Others to the point of order.

The Chair again would point out the highly unusual circumstance whereby the parties as represented in the House have brought forward essentially the same, in the general context, motions dealing with the same issue, obviously without consultation with each other. Therefore we have the unusual circumstance of not having three separate issues for emergency debate but three motions about essentially the same issue. That in itself causes an interesting first-time occurrence for this Legislature.

The Chair also has been listening carefully to the Member for Calgary-Buffalo and gives that member full credit for his ability to deal with the subtle nuances of the law in terms. Nevertheless the Chair could suggest a certain amount of surprise that the member could argue that indeed the Order Paper should have been looked at more, because this motion is not on the Order Paper. It hasn't been printed; it was given as verbal notice. So the Chair could regard that as a good direction to the Chair in terms of future examination of these issues. It wasn't on the Order Paper; it's verbal notice. Is it indeed on the Order Paper? So those subtleties the Chair will examine in consultation with the Table officers in the next number of days.

We are now going to move forward, I believe, to another interesting situation, that if indeed it transpires that the Member for Edmonton-Highlands wishes to propose a motion as presented earlier, then perhaps the Chair is going to have to get involved in another decision with regard to that motion let alone the motion for Edmonton-Glengarry.

Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can assure you that if unanimous consent is granted to deal with the motion I read

out earlier, I'm sure it can be dealt with in short order. The reason I request the unanimous consent to deal with the motion from the Official Opposition caucus is because while it is substantively the same as that sponsored by the Government House Leader and subsequently approved by the Assembly, the Official Opposition motion does differ somewhat and we believe is a more embracing or larger motion, although admittedly it has a less specific instruction.

With your permission, I'll read it to the Assembly prior to the decision for consent being made. It says:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly deplores the excessive violence used to put down the popular uprising in China, urges the government of Alberta to review its bilateral agreements with the People's Republic of China in light of these events, urges the government of Canada to use all diplomatic means to pressure Chinese authorities to stop the violence and respect human rights, and expresses its sympathy to Chinese citizens studying and working in Alberta and to Albertans of Chinese descent who have relatives and friends in that country.

Thank you for your consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: With due respect to hon. members, the House at any time can indeed vary its procedures by unanimous consent. But with regard to our own Standing Orders and *Beauchesne* and *Erskine May*, the Chair feels obliged to read the following references. Under *Beauchesne* 563:

A debate on a motion effectively blocks debate on another notice of motion when both deal with essentially the same subject matter.

Then from *Erskine May*, page 379:

Matters already decided during the same session. A motion or an amendment which is the same, in substance, as a question which has been decided in the affirmative or negative during the current session may not be brought forward again during that session.

The Chair awaits some input from the various House leaders.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, if I could for one moment. I believe the government motion deals more specifically with the province of Heilongjiang and the protocol connections related thereto, and the motion I'm sponsoring deals with, I believe, a larger government body and also spells out a few different notions to be pursued, including the reviewing of the bilateral relations government to government. That would be the substantive distinction between the two.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, the last thing in the world I would want to see happen is that the matter of dealing with this very tragic situation misconstrue that we could not agree amongst us as to the wording of resolutions. While I would normally want to question one or two aspects of the motion that the hon. member has put before the Assembly today, since we in fact have no bilateral relations with the People's Republic of China but rather with the . . . That's why we dealt with it as the province of Heilongjiang. So I wouldn't want to quibble, however, in view of the fact that the motion is in fact of the same general intent. I would not want to withhold consent to dealing with it very briefly, because the intent is there. I'm sure it reflects the views of all hon. members despite the fact that it may not have exactly the same wording, and the last thing in the world we would want to do is send a mixed message.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry speak-

ing to the procedural difficulty.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate much of the intent of the motion that my hon. friend has brought forward, but I don't agree with all of it. I think it's a threat that we are not yet ready to impose on the Heilongjiang province. I'm not prepared to give consent to debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair agrees with all hon. members that the basic consideration we have in the Assembly at the moment is that we are all very concerned about the issue, the events taking place in China. So we need to make it perfectly clear that our difficulty at the moment is the procedural aspect of it only. The Chair would give notice that if on future occasions we end up having three requests for essentially the same issue of a day which may or may not have such international sensitivity as this, the Chair would be very loath to allow more than the first motion to proceed. But in terms of the sensitivity of this day, having dealt with one motion, the Chair now will recognize that the motion as moved by the Member for Edmonton-Highlands is indeed in order and will put the request to the member to now put the request in turn to the House as to the urgency of the matter. Following that the Chair will see if the House is indeed willing to give unanimous consent. Then we will go from there.

Member for Edmonton-Highlands.

Pages may now distribute this particular motion.

MS BARRETT: Thank you very much for the opportunity, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate it and I'd like to say on record that I also appreciate the support of the Government House Leader.

It is true, Mr. Speaker, that there are differences between the motion we previously deliberated and this one. It is true that as a technical matter, of course, we do not in Alberta have a direct bilateral relationship with the government of China but specifically with the province of Heilongjiang. The addition I'm sponsoring, aside from our review of any agreement with the People's Republic of China whether it relate to immigration or foreign investment is also to use the diplomatic means to pressure Chinese authorities to stop violence and start respecting human rights, Mr. Speaker. I realize that the intent of the government motion is essentially the same without spelling this out. But as the hon. minister said, you know, we have a responsibility to our brothers and sisters around the world. We do have the protocol means to transmit not just our sadness, not just our anger, but our determination to use the resources we have available as human beings and as legislators to tell people that they don't have the right to abuse each other in such a savage fashion as that which happened in China on the weekend with the slaughter of at least several hundred and possibly several thousand peaceful demonstrators, who even had the wherewithal to bring their own tents for heaven's sake, and not only that but had the presence of mind and the joie de vivre in their peaceful protest to construct a monument to their desire for democracy.

It doesn't happen very often, Mr. Speaker, that people who are being oppressed by governments have the courage to do that have the presence of mind to think out how it is that they're going to go about doing that, and to do it day after day peacefully, imploring their government to open the doors to democracy. I think that's what we're recognizing when we say we've got an ability to tell the government of China that its means of oppression are unacceptable, particularly when those means of oppression were used in response to very peaceful demonstration.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this motion differs, and I know reflects the will of all members of this Assembly, insofar as it recognizes specifically our sadness for all the people who make their home in Alberta and Canada who have relatives and friends in China who may or may not have been put down -- and I do mean killed -- by the actions of the Chinese government on the weekend; also, to let these people know that whether this is their language or mine, we stand in solidarity with them, we remember that they are our brothers and sisters, and we will work with them to convey our desire for democratic peace to prevail around the world and specifically in light of the weekend's horrible actions in China.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: Under Standing Order 40, we now put the question as to whether there'll be unanimous consent to debate the motion as proposed by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Highlands. All those in favour of giving unanimous consent, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion fails.

Having cited the difficulties of the Chair with regard to members of one complete political party having two motions on the Order Paper and having cited that the Chair is willing to look at the subtle nuances of being on the Order Paper or having given notice of being, again, because of the sensitivity of the issue, does the Member for Edmonton-Glengarry wish to propose the motion or speak under Standing Order 40?

MR. DECORE: I'm not proceeding with the motion, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.

Before we get to call Orders of the Day, we're now going to deal with a matter of privilege. The Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

head: Question of Privilege

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated last Friday in the Legislature, I raised a concern about a breach of privilege. Just to review that very, very briefly, my claim revolves around the right and ability of people to freely approach their MLA and meet with their elected representative with the true exercise of his or her office and being able to do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation for coming to see their member. I think all members of the Assembly would be very concerned if in any way people were prevented from coming forward and speaking to them, and we need to assure ourselves as well as assuring people in the public that they can come and speak to us and people are not going to retaliate against them for bringing concerns to our attention. I guess, Mr. Speaker, that would be my lay language of putting forward what I consider to be my position on this breach of privilege.

In order to cite some more specific examples through precedent and legislation, I would like to draw your attention to a number of them here this afternoon. Firstly, I would refer to the

Legislative Assembly Act, chapter L-10, and section 10(2) reads:

Without restricting the generality of subsection (1), which, Mr. Speaker, relates to the privileges of the Assembly, the following acts constitute breaches of privilege or contempts to which that subsection applies . . . and the one that to my mind is the most significant for this particular case,

. . . obstructing . . . a member in any matter relating to his office.

As well, Mr. Speaker, in reviewing legislation of this Assembly, laws of the province of Alberta, it might also be helpful to look to the Interpretation Act, chapter I-7 of the *Revised Statutes of Alberta 1980*, in section 10. That section reads:

An enactment shall be construed as being remedial, and shall be given the fair, large and liberal construction and interpretation that best ensures the attainment of its objects.

So, Mr. Speaker, in looking at the Legislative Assembly Act, that relates to the matter of privilege, and looking at the matter of the Interpretation Act together, my submission to you would be this: how can a member be anything but obstructed in communication with his constituents pertaining to a matter relating to his office if that constituent is punished for putting such a matter before that member? In my view, a landlord/tenant complaint in a publicly financed housing development certainly constitutes such a matter. If we agree on this point, the Interpretation Act compels us. It uses the words "shall be construed" to interpreting section 10 to be under the Legislative Assembly Act of embracing the conduct of which I complain.

Mr. Speaker, in addition, it's probably a minor point, but in looking to the standing order itself, defining privilege, Standing Order 15(1), it makes note that

a breach of the rights . . . of any member constitutes a question of privilege,

the point here being that there's a distinction made between the rights of the Assembly collectively as well as the rights of an individual member, that we can also look at what happens to an individual member in determining whether a breach of privilege has occurred.

Those are what I would see to be the Alberta-made statutes and rules that would apply in this case, but I think, Mr. Speaker, there are also some wider authorities which appear to say the same thing. If we look to *Beauchesne*, sixth edition, citation 24, it defines parliamentary privilege. Without quoting the entire citation, within that definition is the following:

The privileges of Parliament are rights which are "absolutely necessary for the due execution of its powers". They are enjoyed by individual Members, because the House cannot perform its functions without unimpeded use of the services of its Members.

Mr. Speaker, I should also draw your attention to citation 34, again from *Beauchesne*. I believe it's also relevant to the circumstances I referred to on Friday last.

The power of the House to enforce its rules extends not only to Members and others admitted within the precincts of Parliament, but also to members of the general public who may interfere with the orderly conduct of parliamentary business.

In reviewing this section within *Beauchesne* referring to privilege, I also came to citation 92, and I think in case some objections might be raised, I need to deal with that citation.

A valid claim of privilege in respect to interference with a Member must relate to the Member's parliamentary duties and not to the work the Member does in relation to that Member's constituency.

Given that the citation was relatively recent, I went to the excerpts from *Hansard* of the House of Commons to review the actual ruling made by Madam Speaker at that time. The matter that was raised by the member was his ability to carry out outreach work in his constituency based on citizenship lists that were provided to him by the Secretary of State. That member's claim was that because these lists were incomplete, they prevented him from sending messages of congratulations, I presume, to constituents receiving citizenship. The reason I believe citation 92 is not relevant to my particular case is that my concern is not whether I can contact my constituents and whether the government department facilitates that or not. My primary concern is that constituents not be impeded from contacting me if they so wish or that they should in any way feel intimidated about bringing a problem to my attention or to the attention of any member in the Legislature.

I would also, Mr. Speaker, refer you to a number of citations from *Erskine May*, 20th edition. The first one I would ask you to look to is on page 116. It's entitled "Privilege Extended from Members to Other Persons," and I would quote:

As yet the personal privilege of Members, and the ancient privilege of their servants, have alone been noticed. These were founded upon the necessity of enabling Members freely to attend to their duties in Parliament. Upon the same ground, a similar privilege of freedom from arrest and molestation is attached to all [those] . . . in personal attendance upon the business of Parliament, in coming, staying, and returning; and to officers of either House, in immediate attendance upon the service of Parliament.

When a constituent takes a problem to his elected member, he's taking it to his member as a representative of the House and therefore is attending "upon the business of Parliament."

Mr. Speaker, *Erskine May* further speaks about this privilege on page 166, entitled "Misconduct Affecting Petitioners And Others Soliciting Business before Either House." I would quote:

Petitioners and other persons soliciting business before either House or its committees, e.g. counsel, agents and solicitors, are considered as under the protection of the High Court of Parliament, and obstruction of, or interference with such persons in the exercise of their rights or the discharge of their duties, or conduct calculated to deter them or other persons from preferring or prosecuting petitions or bills or from discharging their duties may be treated as a breach of privilege.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would refer to *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, written by Joseph Maingot, QC. Two excerpts, I think, are relevant to the case under consideration. First of all, on page 191 the privilege is clearly identified as being a matter of concern of a member as a member of the Assembly,

not in their capacity as ministers or party leaders, whips, or parliamentary secretaries . . .

That is to say, the House would assure its members that they are protected in their capacity as members in their parliamentary work because it is the service to the House as members that is concerned with and protected by parliamentary privilege.

I would also refer, Mr. Speaker, to page 196: "Contempt is whatever House finds as contempt," and I quote:

The third category relates to matters of contempt which are not a breach of any enumerated right. Because the House of Commons has the penal right of the old High Court of Parliament, it has the right to find a person in contempt for "disrespect to that which is entitled to legal regard." And, like contempt of court, "it is so manifold in its aspects that it is difficult to lay down any exact definition of the offence."

Therefore, while it is not possible to give any definition

of contempt unrelated to any enumerated privilege or right generally,

any act or omission which obstructs or impedes either House of Parliament in the performance of its functions, or which obstructs or impedes any Member or officer of such House in the discharge of his "parliamentary" duty, or which has a tendency, directly or indirectly to produce such results may be treated as a contempt even though there is no precedent for the offence.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the seriousness of attempting to prevent someone from petitioning their MLA or the Legislature should not be underestimated. I think that if it is allowed or someone succeeds in doing that, they effectively impair the power of this Legislature and its members from carrying out the functions that we were elected to carry out. We must at all times assure people that when they come to us, bring problems to our attention in the hope of seeking resolutions to those problems, we may not always be able to solve them, we may not always be able to give them a remedy or redress, but nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, people should not be punished for having brought such concerns to their member. I believe the citations I have provided to you this afternoon give ample weight and foundation to my claim of Friday last.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Having listened to the member and appreciating the fact that the member has supplied various references and correspondence to the Chair beforehand, the new material as given in the course of the member's comments bears consideration as well. So it is that the Chair will hold a decision at this time and take it under further consideration and report back to the House in the near future. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

head: CONSIDERATION OF HER HONOUR THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Moved by Mr. Clegg:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable W. Helen Hunley, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Alberta:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

[Adjourned debate June 2: Mr. Martin]

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know that this is deliberate, but I'm probably going to have to move quickly or come back tonight, by the looks of the time.

AN HON. MEMBER: Just move quickly.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, just move quickly. But I wouldn't want to take away all the desirability of you listening through the whole thing, hon. member over there.

Mr. Speaker, let me first of all, though, say again to you, congratulations. I'm not sure, knowing the job that you have to do, especially trying to figure out what the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View has gone through, whether it should be

congratulations or commiserations on the job, but I do congratulate you. I also congratulate the Member for Drumheller and the Member for Ponoka-Rimbey on their new positions, which I am sure they will find onerous from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, ours is a province rich in potential and opportunity, I do believe. Our 2.5 million people come from virtually every possible ethnic background. We are skilled and experienced. We are hardworking, whether we work behind the wheel of a tractor or in a day care centre, whether we work in a refinery, for the public service, or in hospitals and nursing homes. Our land is plentiful, able to provide food not only for ourselves but for other Canadians and people across the world. Our energy is plentiful. We have many decades left of resources from the tar sands and heavy oil, resources that must be developed rationally. We have an abundance of natural gas that will serve Alberta and Canada well if we don't get caught in the free trade fools' game of selling ourselves short for temporary gains. We have renewable power from the sun and wind, which offers opportunities, we believe, both for increased rural income and for manufacturing. We have what the Economic Council calls Canada's last frontier for the forestry industry. It's a resource that will serve us well if it is developed -- and this is the key -- at a rational pace and in harmony with the environment.

But frankly, Mr. Speaker, after 16 years of Conservative government, many of these opportunities have been squandered or mismanaged. The economy has been made to function in the interests of the government's wealthy and powerful friends but not necessarily in the interests of average Albertans. An Albertan in the labour force today faces officially -- and this is not counting the hidden unemployed, and Lord knows, we don't know the figures on that -- a 1 in 11 chance of unemployment. If you're between the ages of 15 and 24, the chances are even greater that your potential is being wasted: 1 in 7. If you're an average woman in the workplace, you're likely bringing home only 65 percent of the wages of your male counterparts. Since October 1985, when the Premier first took office, the industrial aggregate of weekly earnings has fallen 6 percent behind the rate of inflation. That's what's happening to average people and average workers.

As well, recent studies have shown that in our province, which we consider to be so rich, poverty remains a tragic social problem. The Edmonton Social Planning Council found that more than 90,000 Alberta children live in poverty. That's one and a half times the population of Lethbridge. Mr. Speaker, Operation Friendship estimates that three-quarters of elderly people living in Edmonton's inner city live in poverty. The National Council on Welfare reports that Edmonton's working poor have seen their taxes go up 44 percent since 1984, and they will see their taxes increase at least another 16 percent in the next two years, if you take all levels of government going after them.

The prospects for many of Alberta's farm families are equally disturbing. Too many families are being forced to leave their farms every month. At least one-quarter of all farmers face serious debt problems, the worst hit being the young farmers, who, frankly, are the future of rural Alberta. The government, because of its commitment to a so-called free market, has accepted this rural depopulation as inevitable. Mr. Speaker, its own social policy document lays out a dismal future for rural Alberta. This is *Caring & Responsibility: A Statement of Social Policy for Alberta*, that was handed out last year. It's rather interesting when you look at some of the trend highlights that they go into; 3 and 4, I think, say it all about the rural policies of this

government. It certainly goes on in 3 to talk about the urban population increasing dramatically, and it talks about the metropolitan areas of Edmonton and Calgary which experienced growth rates of 33.7 per cent and 33.2 per cent during the 1976-81 period.

Then it goes on to some of the others.

But the key point, Mr. Speaker, from the government's own document here, is number 4. It says, and I quote:

Conversely, the rural population of Alberta is projected to decline as people move from rural areas to urban areas. Alberta's rural population is projected to decline from 23 per cent in 1981 to less than 14 per cent in [the year] 2001, a net decrease of 92,246.

So what I'm saying is that the government, through its own document, is basically saying this is inevitable. Well, Mr. Speaker, we in the Official Opposition do not believe it is inevitable. If we believe in the family farm, there should be some policies flowing that will stop this trend. Other countries have been able to do it, and there's no reason why we can't in this province.

Mr. Speaker, all Albertans, whether they have the protection of a union contract or not, work under what are probably the most regressive labour laws in all of North America. After a half million dollar world tour and the use of closure six times in this Legislature, the government still tips the balance of power dramatically in favour of employers in this province.

As taxpayers Albertans are now worse off than ever. They have suffered through tax hikes from both levels of Conservative government, increases that will cost them roughly \$3,900 per year by 1991 over the last five years when we get the goods and services tax we talked about earlier on, almost \$4,000 taken out of Alberta families' pockets. That is very, very significant. It is clear to me and it's clear by what they're saying now that, especially in this budget and the next budget, this government has even more tax increases in store for us, Mr. Speaker, despite what was promised during the election.

Mr. Speaker, the other day we had a session in question period. The Premier said that it was obvious he was only talking about income taxes. It was not obvious to the people of Alberta that he was talking about income taxes because very clearly we have 11 quotes where he talks about taxes, period. That's the point I want to make: I'm tired of governments that say one thing before an election, another thing during the election, and then have their real and true and hidden agenda after. We've seen it with this government in '86, and then we saw the budget in '87. We more recently saw it with the federal Conservatives. Now we're going to see it again in the next two budgets.

Let's just look at a couple of quotes, Mr. Speaker. The Premier told a Cochrane audience on February 23 -- he couldn't be any clearer than this -- that "there will be no tax increases in the future." On March 13 in Edmonton he said, and I quote, "I have no intention of seeing any taxes go up for four years." How could he be more explicit than that? He goes on, "Right now, with the economic strength we're building here" -- mat's something that we'd like to talk about -- "I'm looking forward to lowering taxes." It couldn't be any more explicit. On March 10 in Fairview these famous words: "The only way taxes are going to go in Alberta is d o w n . . . That's an absolute pledge, promise, whatever you want to call it."

Now, Mr. Speaker, they're trying to say: "Well, you know, we didn't really mean that." On May 24 we have the Provincial Treasurer saying: "Taxes may go up, taxes may go down. Take

your choice." Now you have the Premier saying in Edmonton on May 27, "We've always been talking about income taxes." Mr. Speaker, that is not the case. What they're doing is getting us ready, primed up, for Thursday night. Sure, I think it's clear now that we're not going to have income taxes, but they're priming us up for some more taxes. If it doesn't come this budget, hang on till the next one, because we'll be seeing cabinet ministers right across this province, just as we did last time, getting us ready.

Oh, times have changed. That's what they're now saying in the Speech from the Throne: "The remaining months of the fiscal year 1989-90 will be more difficult than . . . anticipated." This is only 10 weeks, Mr. Speaker, after they brought in the other Speech from the Throne. That's why I talked during the provincial election about a hidden agenda. I predicted exactly what would happen, just as it happened in '86-87: old times, things we didn't understand. The deficit is higher. We're going to have deficit hysteria. We're all going to be blamed for the problem, and then there'll be tax hikes on Alberta families and cutbacks in the people services. So what these words mean -- "the remaining months of the fiscal year 1989-90 will be more difficult than . . . anticipated" -- as I said the other day, is code words for more taxes and cuts to services.

Mr. Speaker, Albertans, frankly, have been abandoned by a Premier who promised to fight the federal government's sales tax and high interest rate policy. How many of us remember that fight? The arm up, we're going down to Ottawa: a major fight with Brian Mulroney over the high interest rate policies. Well, there was a TKO in the first 30 seconds of the first round. The Premier came back and brought in a mortgage relief program because he couldn't get anywhere with his federal counterparts. Some fight, Mr. Speaker.

The point we're trying to make today is that the Premier didn't fight these measures during last year's federal election when he could have had an impact. Do you recall, Mr. Speaker? I happen to have it in front of me here. What was he saying then about the federal Conservatives? This was at a rally. Now, I know Conservatives get excited when they get to rallies. But this is what he said, Mr. Speaker. Brian Mulroney

got a boost from Premier Don Getty, who praised the Mulroney government for doing more for Alberta than any government in history.

He called him "a good friend of Alberta" -- a good friend of Alberta who's proceeding with the high interest rate policy, proceeding with the national sales tax that we wanted to fight after, Mr. Speaker?

The point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is this: that's when you could have stood up and fought hard for average Alberta families, made those election issues that the Conservatives would have had to react to. But they didn't. We're waltzing around holding hands, calling him the best friend we've ever had. Well, now we know. Now we've got the high interest rate policy. Now we've got a national sales tax. What are we going to do about it? Nothing, Mr. Speaker. We're going to cave in, and again average families are going to see tax hikes, probably cutbacks. We'll have more to say about that.

While average Albertans have seen many of their opportunities cut off by high taxes, service cuts, and the absence of any commitment to a full employment economy, at the same time large corporations, the government's powerful friends, have benefited, Mr. Speaker, from what you could call a guaranteed prosperity plan. It doesn't take much to be a free

enterpriser in this province because the government will certainly bail you out. Just to put it in perspective, when the Conservatives came to power here provincially, their share of the government's income tax revenue was a little less than 40 percent of the total taxes paid. That has now dropped down to less than 5 percent. In other words, of the taxes collected at the start of the Conservative regime -- the idea was always to try to move towards the 50-50 level. They were paying 40 percent at that time; now they're paying less than 5 percent. Some justice, Mr. Speaker. And these are some of the most profitable corporations around not paying a penny in tax.

The other interesting thing we've had is that corporations certainly do have plentiful low interest rate loans and grants. We find out -- we've raised this before -- that the public has guaranteed close to \$2 billion of corporate debt, which means that average Albertans are taking the risks with no share in the profits. Now, Mr. Speaker, you give me billions of dollars, millions of dollars in loan guarantees, I can tell you that it doesn't matter how incompetent a businessman you are, you're going to do all right. And if you don't, you walk away. Guess who pays the price. Talking about the financial statements of the province, those should be put in too, Mr. Speaker that there's over \$2 billion dollars, if this economy goes sour, that taxpayers could be picking up.

At the same time, corporations are operating under loose environmental legislation made by a government that today we heard has the best environmental standards in the world. Now, I know the minister hasn't been around long, but for him to make a statement like that shows a totally appalling ignorance of what's going on in the world with sustainable development. It doesn't matter, Mr. Speaker, if you have the best rules and the best laws in the world; if you don't prosecute people, what's the point? That's what's happened here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if people are well-connected friends of the Conservative Party, though, there's a special mechanism to provide corporations with venture capital. Money that was taken away from the original purpose has not been directed toward its original aim of diversifying Alberta's economy. On a general economic level -- and this is why we're going to start to see this orchestrated again. The deficit is higher than we expected. The province now faces a consolidated debt of over \$7 billion. We'll see exactly how much on Thursday night, but it will be well over \$7 billion. And let's face it; this is a debt that the government itself has had a large hand in creating.

Mr. Speaker, firstly, what caused the debt? Well, the government listened to its big business friends. All the oil companies and the Conservative politicians -- and I was here at the time in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker -- were saying: we want the world price for oil. Well, they got it, Mr. Speaker. I remember the Western Accord trumpeted people coming back. This was going to make Alberta prosperous again beyond our wildest dreams, but what they meant is that they thought the world price was always going to go up. You remember some of those agreements back at the time. You saw the Premier of the province here counting his money, you saw Mr. Trudeau counting his money, and you saw the oil companies counting their money. Well, they were predicting \$45, \$50 a barrel, Mr. Speaker. But the reality was that every economist we talked to said that it was likely the price was going to go down. That's why I opposed the Western Accord at the time, and I remember taking a fair amount of flak over it from people here.

Now, even if you're a fervent Conservative and you get ex-

cited every time you say deregulation or privatization, even if you believe in it, surely you don't make a deal to go into deregulation just when the price of oil is going to go down, when everybody is telling you that. But that's what we did, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have problems with our revenues. In 1980-81 over 51 percent of our revenues came from oil and gas. Deregulation, price going down: there is the reason we have a debt and a deficit.

Then to compound it, the government, again responding to it's natural constituency, has in this decade given over \$12 billion to the oil industry, over \$12 billion, Mr. Speaker. Now, this money was generally given out without any specific job-creation criteria. So you take the two things: deregulation, and we panic and throw out more money, \$12 billion. It would be nice to have that now for job creation in this province. That's why again we have this deficit. When they come back and start blaming average families for it, we'll be sure to tell them the truth.

The other reason we have this deficit, Mr. Speaker, is be-

cause this government has failed to address basic injustices in the taxation system. As pointed out, overall taxes on corporations have failed to keep pace with profit increases, and many profitable corporations pay no tax at all.

Mr. Speaker, I have much more that I know the government wants to hear, but in view of the time I'll beg leave to adjourn debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is proposed that the throne speech debate continue this evening.

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

