

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA**

Title: **Friday, August 18, 1989 10:00 a.m.**  
 Date: 89/08/18

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

**PRAYERS**

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

We, Thine unworthy servants here gathered together in Thy name, do humbly beseech Thee to send down Thy heavenly wisdom from above to direct and guide us in all our considerations.

Amen.

head: **TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file with the Assembly written answers to questions taken as notice by members of Executive Council during your estimates.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I want to file answers to written questions and motions for returns.

head: **INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS**

MR. SCHUMACHER: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this morning to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two distinguished residents of the Northwest Territories. They are David Hamilton and his wife, Kate. Mr. Hamilton is Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories. In particular, I'm also happy to welcome to our midst this morning Mr. Hamilton's parents, Malcolm and Kathleen Hamilton, who come from the same place in Scotland that my wife's grandfather comes from, and that's Blairgowrie, Scotland. I'd ask them all to rise and receive the traditional warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to introduce a constituent of Red Deer-North. Mr. Harlan Hulleman is with us this morning. Mr. Hulleman dedicates himself to the preservation of our historical heritage in the province and in Red Deer-North. He serves on the board of directors of ACCESS and in a number of historical projects in our city. I'd ask Mr. Hulleman to rise and receive the warm welcome of the House this morning.

head: **ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****Support for Gainers**

MR. MARTIN: [some applause] Well, that's nice, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Treasurer. One of the most striking things Albertans will remember about this First Session of the 22nd Legislature is this government's steadfast refusal to level with Albertans about its financial dealings with one Peter Pocklington, of course using Alberta taxpayers' dollars. Only by persistent questioning has the Official Opposition been able to

pry the door open on this government's tangled financial dealings. Now we have something new. The saga continues. On August 11 a new \$5 million demand debenture from Gainers Properties Inc. payable to Lloyds Bank Canada -- and listen to this interest rate -- at 25 percent interest, 11.5 points above prime, was signed by one Peter Pocklington. My question to the Treasurer. In view of the fact that Mr. Pocklington is into this government for some \$67 million, was the government aware of this latest loan and did they agree to it?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, we don't keep track of the day-to-day transactions between corporations. If I hear the member's question accurately, there is no reference to the government being involved in that transaction.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the government is in up to their eyeballs in this transaction because simply -- I'll ask the minister this then: is he aware that the securities pledged on this new debenture are substantially the same assets that were pledged to the government's numbered company? Is he not aware of this, and why would he allow this to happen if he is aware of it?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member has some view that the government is managing the corporation. Corporations do all kinds of arrangements with the bankers to maintain their positions. I notice, and I hate to say it, but in checking in the newspapers, I see that Gainers is rehiring. The information in the newspapers is that the hog demand is up. It seems to me these are the normal kinds of corporate reorganizations that corporations do, and unless the member wants to be specific about the government's role, we have no view as to what the corporation does in terms of its own organization, in terms of securing its position, or in terms of doing a deal with its banking authorities.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, is the minister not aware that when this company is using the same assets as they are giving to the government, there has to be implications for this government? When a private bank is charging a ridiculous 25 percent interest rate, something is awry. My question to the Treasurer. With this interest rate they are suggesting that this company is a bad credit risk. How can this Treasurer stand up day in and day out and say that Alberta taxpayers are adequately protected?

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, what I can say is what I've said consistently over the last three or four months that this question has been put to various members of the government. We have put in place our security against the fixed assets, we have a second pledge in some cases against the inventories and receivables, and we have a second position against other buildings across Canada, and particularly the one I've talked about, the bacon plant in Saskatchewan. We have taken full protection of the guarantee that we provided to a bank, a financial institution, and there have been no defaults in the payments. The next major payments take place in October of 1989, when the \$6 million loan advanced from the economic development portfolio, which has been fully revealed and discussed over the past two years -- the first payment on interest starts next fall.

So, Mr. Speaker, in that period all we do is monitor the financial statements of the entity and wait to see if we have any other problems with respect to that corporation, but it will be in the fall. That's the only point we can look at. What I should

note, though, Mr. Speaker, is that while the member is doing a lot of fishing -- in fact, both parties have been fishing over the past, I guess, two or three months -- what it has done is certainly caused anxiety in the minds of the employees of those plants. Every time a question is raised, there are phone calls to us, phone calls to the corporate head offices, suggesting that something is wrong with the entity. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. JOHNSTON: Now, if these people really want to protect the interests of the employees, they would get their facts right before they start these seditious rumours about what's happening in that plant, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, if this Treasurer would be forthcoming and tell the truth and not get into these things . . .

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

#### **Government Lawyer's Response to Code Report**

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have five copies to file of a memo dated August 9, 1989, from Mr. J.C. Major, who was the government's lawyer at the Code inquiry, and addressed to the Member for Three Hills. This memo attempts to discredit Mr. Code and to begin a campaign to rehabilitate the member's conduct as the former Minister for Consumer and Corporate Affairs. However, this shallow, superficial, and probably expensive legal opinion chooses to ignore the direction which was given to Mr. Code by the Court of Appeal of Alberta that said:

Nonetheless he [Mr. Code] must be able to report to the Court in a comprehensive fashion, facts found by him.

To the Premier. Why was Mr. Major paid at public expense to rehabilitate the career of a failed Tory cabinet minister whom the Premier himself had already fired by the time the memo was delivered?

MR. GETTY: He wasn't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, Mr. Major indicates that he was.

Mr. Speaker, given the mischievous nature of this memo to attack the very basis for the Premier's decision to fire the former minister, does he repudiate the conclusions of this government-commissioned memo and still stand by his decision that inasmuch as the member had failed in her ministerial responsibilities, she had to step down from cabinet?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there's nothing mischievous about the memo.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, given the Premier's promise to the people of Alberta and to this Assembly on July 28 that they'd follow every legal avenue to aggressively prosecute wrongdoing in the Principal fiasco, can he explain to this Assembly why his government is squandering time and public money on legal opinions to fight internal squabbles in the

Tory caucus and is doing nothing about getting on with the real job that matters to Albertans, that job being to prosecute wrongdoing in the Principal fiasco?

MR. GETTY: We aren't, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member, I know, is frustrated because the people of Alberta have so strongly accepted the government's position on the Principal matter. [interjections] Now, I know the opposition doesn't like that, but we have been able to deal with a difficult matter, yes. As I said in my response, it was a difficult matter, created in many ways from times past, when many people in this Legislature were not present. Regardless of that, when there are tough decisions to be made on tough matters, we're prepared to take them and to do the right and fair and reasonable thing. That's what we've done, and that's what the people of Alberta support. It's too bad the hon. member just doesn't like it. That's tough.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, time and time again the Premier and the Treasurer have not given this House further information with respect to questions that have been put to them that relate to the Principal Group fiasco. Both have responded by saying that the comprehensive Code report speaks for itself. My first question is to the Premier. Given that the Premier and others have received the memo that's been referred to, does the Premier accept one of the conclusions in that memo, that Mr. Code was "irresponsible" and "unfair" in his treatment of the former Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, the memo speaks for itself.

I should say to the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, that if he has trouble getting answers, it's not our fault if he prepares sloppy questions. I mean, after all, maybe one of these days the stars will be aligned in some way that we can expect a good question. It's getting short, though. Let's hope there's some magic in the stars.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, this isn't a joke. Albertans want answers from you, Mr. Premier.

Mr. Speaker, given that the Premier has previously acknowledged Mr. Code's legal ability, presumably to determine facts and make legal conclusions, will the Premier declare here today that another conclusion of Mr. Major in that memo, namely that Mr. Code has no training, no experience, and lacked an ability to determine the public good, is incorrect and wrong?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I've said that Mr. Code is a fine lawyer. I understand he's a member of the Liberal Party even. Now, that leaves some basis for questioning his judgment, but other than that, though, I think he has conducted himself well.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the Premier has completely done a flip-flop and trivialized this whole Code matter, a matter that has cost Albertans a hundred million dollars.

Mr. Premier, I want to ask you this: are you prepared to disassociate yourself from that memo that Mr. Major has circulated to you and every other member of your government?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, we listened with great anticipation for the final opportunity, perhaps, that the member might have been able to get a question out that could have been effective with the stars in the right alignment. He hasn't, and it's a shame.

### Employment Statistics and Initiatives

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Acting Minister of Career Development and Employment. Recent statistics provided by Stats Canada show that there have been more young people employed in Alberta than were ever on record. Now, this was good news to the youth of Alberta. But my question to the minister is: was this a general rule in all of Alberta, or were there just certain selected parts that had this positive news?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, a few days ago Statistics Canada released the monthly employment/unemployment figures for the various jurisdictions across the country of Canada and at that time indicated that in the province of Alberta we were now experiencing the largest employment level for our youth ever in the history of this province, with some 127,000 young people in our province employed in the month of July. I would anticipate that when the figures come out in September for the month of August, the same will hold true. Very specifically, that sustained aspect of employment is being experienced by our young people throughout the province of Alberta and all corners of the province of Alberta. Of course, we all know the reason why, and it has to do with the economic diversification initiatives of this government.

But there is a concern, though, in those statistics, Mr. Speaker, and this is probably the most opportune time of the year in which to raise them. Statistics Canada keeps its figures on the basis of ages 15 to 24 and then breaks them down further to two groupings: young people from 15 to 19 and young people from 20 to 24. The unemployment rate in the 15 to 19 category is substantially higher than the unemployment rate in the 20 to 24 age grouping. So if our young people now in all parts of Alberta are asking themselves the question, "Is it worthy of me continuing my education; should I go back to high school and finish my grade 12, or should I go to one of the technical schools or universities?" the answer very clearly is that our young people should be in school and should take advantage of the finest educational system in the world in this province and should continue their education.

MR. MUSGROVE: Mr. Speaker, fairly soon a lot of the students will be returning to school, and presumably these jobs will be left open. Now, does the minister feel that this will provide employment to the ones in our society who are now unemployed?

MR. KOWALSKI: I don't think there's any doubt at all about that, Mr. Speaker. If we have 127,000 young people, of course not all of them will be going back to school to continue their education, but there will be a fair number of these jobs which will now become open. Those individuals perhaps in an older age grouping who may be looking for employment I think will find that their employment opportunities will increase pretty substantially in the next couple of months as a result of that. The best projections we have through the fall and through the winter of this year, Mr. Speaker, are that we have a strong, strong basis now for continued strength and employment in this province, and the figures of employment should remain fairly constant through to the spring of 1990. Of course, then when we get back to nice warm weather, they'll in fact improve even that much more dramatically as a result of the kick-in of a lot of

these major job creation programs that are currently under way in our province.

MR. MUSGROVE: The last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. About this time of the year the minister generally announces the priority employment program, and there's some concern that with the job opportunities that there are nowadays, the minister will scrap the PEP. I'm wondering if the PEP will carry on this year, or will it be scrapped?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, in the estimates put forward by the Minister of Career Development and Employment, there were dollars carried in the budget for 1989-90 for the priority employment program. While we do have tremendous strength in employment in our province, of course we also recognize that there are some individuals in our province who still must continue to seek employment opportunities. It will not be the intent of the government to scrap the priority employment program for 1989. I think realistically, however, we have to recognize that the priority employment program was set up to assist the unemployed in our province. That's part of the caring and responsibility mandate of this government. We would within the next month be in a position to announce the continuance of the priority employment program for the fall of 1989 and the spring of 1990. But I think everyone should have to recognize that the demands and the need for as large a program that we've had in previous years will simply not be there. It goes hand in hand with the other objective that we have: instead of simply being in the business of creating part-time jobs, we want to refocus substantial amounts of those dollars into creative training programs for long-term positions that will be of benefit to the individuals affected.

MR. SPEAKER:                     Edmonton-Avonmore,     Edmonton-Meadowlark.

### Attitudes Towards Family Violence

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Attorney General. The report of the Crimes Compensation Board, released yesterday, indicates a decision in which a woman was held 25 percent responsible for the injuries suffered at the hands of her ex-boyfriend. The message being sent to women is that they must be wary of men and that if they are beaten up, it is somehow their fault. In view of this ruling which holds women responsible for the violence against them, will the minister now review the composition of the board?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, in no way does this government or this minister condone violence, whether it's in the family or outside of the family. The Crimes Compensation Board is a board that's set up to administer the Act, which adjudicates on compensation to victims that occur from a crime. It's not adjudication of the crime itself. That happens in another forum, which is usually in one of the courts of the province. But it is a time when a person can come forward and put their case for compensation. In this instance, that did happen. The Act does say that all facts are to be taken into consideration, and in this situation that is what occurred.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, is the minister then saying that persons known to have bad tempers can be excused from taking

full responsibility for their behaviour and actions and the injuries they cause?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not to debate a judgment that has been handed down by another board that had the facts of the particular case before them. I will repeat that the government does not condone violence. In fact, my hon. colleague the Solicitor General just the other day advised the House that he would ask the police to participate more in helping victims of family violence. Another colleague, the Minister of Family and Social Services, was indicating other initiatives in terms of violence. We don't condone it. For this particular instance it's a compensation matter for the crime; there was an adjudication based on the facts. I can't comment on those facts.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the decision was based more on bad attitudes.

To the minister responsible for women's issues. In light of her statement yesterday that, "We are dealing with individual attitudes, and there is only so much we can do," would this minister take action to ensure that people holding inappropriate attitudes are not appointed to serve on tribunals like the Crimes Compensation Board?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, my role as minister responsible for women's issues is as an advocate and as a catalyst. I myself am not responsible for the appointments to these boards. However, I think the member has raised an excellent point. It's one we have to continue fighting against, and as we find examples of attitudes that are not acceptable towards women, we must continue to raise the issue and ensure that women are treated fairly and with all the dignity and respect that they are due.

Now, on the specific matter that the member has raised, I too would prefer to see the full context of the case to understand fully the decision that the Crimes Compensation Board came to, but I'm sure the hon. Attorney General will be taking steps of that nature. I'd be more than pleased to consult with him as he does.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Meadowlark, followed by Clover Bar.

### Recycling Industry Initiatives

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An independent study commissioned by the government of Ontario has demonstrated that the environmental protection industry in that province, including recycling, protection technology, cleanup, is now a \$2 billion a year industry. This study indicates that the industry in fact employs 28,000 people and has grown since 1983 at rates of between 17 and 32 percent per year. The study concluded that protecting the environment makes more than just good sense; it makes money. To the minister of economic development. What are the minister's estimates for the size of this industry in Alberta and his projections for the size of this industry in the future?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, maybe I can indicate to the hon. member that both the Minister of the Environment and myself plus our departmental officials are working together to put together a proposal recognizing the economic benefits, as the hon. member has indicated, as it relates to the recycling industry. We

are looking closely as to how we can offer direct or indirect support to this industry, recognizing there are significant spin-off benefits, plus it does play such a substantial role in the protection of the environment within the province.

MR. MITCHELL: I wonder whether the minister could give us a more specific indication of when we will see initiatives from this minister and from the Minister of the Environment to establish a recycled paper industry in this province by using government procurement policies to establish a market and, in fact, by issuing a proposal call for a recycled paper plant in this province.

MR. ELZINGA: We are working with a couple of specific companies right now, Mr. Speaker. Because of the confidential nature of those workings I hesitate to mention the companies involved, but I'm happy to leave the hon. member with the assurance that within a matter of weeks to months we should have something specific not only as it relates to the industry, but as it relates to some specific companies.

MR. MITCHELL: I wonder whether the minister could give us some assurances as to whether or not he is considering the recycling of plastic industry as well and what specific initiatives he will be announcing in that regard?

MR. ELZINGA: It's as I indicated to the hon. member. If he would be a wee bit patient with us, we are looking at both paper recycling, plastics recycling, and a general overview as to how we can be more protective of our environment, recognizing though, Mr. Speaker, that within this province we have the highest environmental standards of just about anybody in the world.

MR. SPEAKER: Clover Bar, followed by Edmonton-Belmont.

### Fringe Theatre Event

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my question to the hon. Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism. Fringe is an excellent cultural/tourism event that has grown and has somewhat taken on a life of its own. It's a celebration within the Strathcona community of Edmonton, and I'm somewhat surprised that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona has not addressed this issue in the House. Perhaps this matter is too positive for the community to warrant the attention of the socialist party. Can the minister deal with the impact of Fringe? I'm speaking about an evaluation of the participation by the people in the performing arts as well as the reception of this cultural panorama by the community. [interjections]

MR. MAIN: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure the bad actors in the New Democrats will want to pay close attention here. This Fringe festival is a great example of creativity: a gentleman, Brian Paisley, with an idea; some hard work; work of hundreds of volunteers; the involvement of the business community, the local neighbourhood, and the hon. member's constituency of Edmonton-Strathcona -- the business community, generally speaking -- and a little help from the government to keep things percolating along. We've now got to the eighth year of this festival. It has grown from just an idea to the second largest alternate theatre festival in the world, that will this year perhaps attract upwards of 250,000 people with performers

from Alberta, Canada, across North America, from Ireland, from Australia, from the Soviet Union, and in actual fact with government support coming from the Alberta Foundation for the Performing Arts in the order of \$40,000 -- a prudent example of government involvement. Forty thousand dollars creates and helps spur an economic benefit that reaches well into seven or eight figures, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to deal with some of the quantitative impact. To the hon. Minister of Tourism. What is the economic impact of this Fringe festival? I'm asking about the financial benefit of Fringe and other festivals promoted through the Canada/Alberta Tourism Agreement.

MR. SPARROW: I haven't got those figures right at my fingertips, Mr. Speaker, but undoubtedly it is a very strong impact, as the minister has said. It is one of the best and biggest in North America. We're fortunate through the Canada/Alberta Tourism Agreement to fund the first-ever study along with Fringe and the six other festivals in Edmonton. That study is well under way, and they'll end up with a marketing plan so that they can effectively use all of the festivals in conjunction with each other to make sure that Edmonton is the festival city that it claims to be.

MR. SPEAKER: Final.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Tourism again. What specific assistance of historical significance in line with the historical impact of Strathcona is Alberta providing to ensure that Fringe has that cultural/tourism benefit?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, this year . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order. No, hon. minister. Just sit down for a while.

Minister of Tourism.

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, along with the central railroad company, the Canadian National, the Canadian Pacific, and the Fringe, Alberta Tourism has been able to bring our Engine 6060, which is leased to central railroad, as a new addition to the Fringe. If you'll notice, there's a new railroad being built there, a temporary railroad, so that Albertans can enjoy this new steam train that is a new tourist product headquartered in Camrose. I hope that Edmontonians will take the opportunity to go down to Camrose and ride on it. They'll be able to get a ride right here in Edmonton on the short six blocks of that track.

This is just one or two of the projects that we're doing. There are over 300 projects that have been funded in Canada. In our community tourism action program I'd like to tell you that 99 percent of all the communities, of the 375 in this province, are well under way in their planning process or completed. They've already received funding of projects worth \$10 million through that program. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Belmont.

### **Impact of Unemployment Insurance Act Changes**

MR. SIGURDSON: Well, that was a three-star performance, and it's a good thing they were all aligned.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Minister of Career

Development and Employment. Of the \$1.5 billion that the federal Conservatives are slashing from the unemployment insurance benefits, less than half of that amount of money will go into training programs. And while 60,000 unemployed workers in Alberta stand to lose over \$100 million, \$38 million alone in Edmonton, this government has no guarantee that the proposed training funds will find their way to Alberta workers. The feds have cut \$0.5 billion from training programs over the last four years, and this government has cut \$20 million from its training programs over the last three years. In light of this clarification, will the minister now admit that there is no increase in the training funds; thus, there will not be any offsetting effect for unemployed Albertans?

MR. KOWALSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's simply not factually correct. This matter has been raised in the House before, and it has been reported that with the ongoing discussions between the provinces of Canada with the federal minister responsible, the province of Alberta will have continuing discussions with the federal government with respect to this matter.

What is extremely important, Mr. Speaker, is that as Canada moves out of this century into the next century, we have to put in place a system that will allow people in this country to be adequately trained to meet the possibilities of the future. All too often in the past there has been an ad hoc approach to unemployment programs when unemployment numbers may go up at a certain point in a certain part of the country, and not enough emphasis has been on the need to train people for the magnificent opportunities that will occur into the future. This province recognizes that, and one of the major initiatives of this government in recent years, of course, has been with respect to the area of economic diversification, balanced growth throughout this whole province of Alberta, lasting, permanent, high-quality jobs. People have to be trained, and the initiatives that we will be taking as a government in concert with the federal government will be to ensure that those dollars are present to provide training opportunities for the citizens of this province.

MR. SIGURDSON: They do it on the backs of workers, Mr. Speaker, by cutting the training programs that were there before. The minister doesn't like, quite frankly, the fact that we use the same statistics data base that Stats Canada uses for the unemployment statistics.

But just to the minister. Will the minister do all that he can to try and get the federal Minister of Employment and Immigration to release the results of the federal government's impact study and make that study public so that when this traveling road show put on by the federal government comes to town, Albertans will be able to address the concerns and the impact that it's going to have in Alberta?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago the hon. member stood in the House and basically talked about a federal government Canadian House of Commons all-party committee, as I understand it, that will be touring the country. Members of the House of Commons will be seeking views of citizens across this country. I don't believe that I would refer to such a group of esteemed elected leaders in our country as a traveling road show. These individuals are searching for views of the citizens of Canada. They will search for views of the people of Alberta. They will, I'm sure, take those inputs in the honourable way of an elected person, whether he or she be in the Canadian House

of Commons or the elected Assembly of the province of Alberta, and we'll work hand in hand with that.

Documents that pertain to the government of Canada are the property of the government of Canada. Documents that pertain to the Canadian House of Commons are the property of the Canadian House of Commons. Documents that pertain to any of the particular caucuses in Ottawa are the documents of those particular caucuses. If there is published information that the New Democratic Party has difficulty sending a letter to ask for a copy of, I would be very, very pleased to pen such a letter and do it on their behalf. But I would have to wonder why the New Democratic Party has nearly \$1 million a year given to it to undertake such necessary research, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIGURDSON: Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that the New Democrat Official Opposition was the only group that made an application to appear before the committee, and the government didn't even care enough to make an application to appear. And we were turned down by . . . [interjections]

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct the last question to perhaps somebody who can give us an answer, and that's the Minister of Family and Social Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

MR. SIGURDSON: I said maybe.

Mr. Speaker, given that the federal government has stipulated that the distribution of the worker training program is going to be directed to social . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Forgive me, hon. member, for a moment.

Pages, please stop the distribution of that during question period.

Please continue, Edmonton-Belmont.

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given that the federal government has stipulated that the distribution of worker-financed training money directed to those on social assistance is entirely contingent on the provincial government and provincial contributions, will this minister now commit that he will provide all of the funds necessary to ensure that Albertans have access to the maximum amount available?

MR. OLDRING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be able to respond to that question. I was worried that on perhaps the last day of the session I might not have the opportunity of sharing some more good news with Albertans. I would want to, first of all, say that yes, this government has put a high priority on helping our social allowance recipients to regain independence, and we see job retraining as being a very key part of that.

But I would also want to say that the solution isn't just job retraining, Mr. Speaker; it's having the jobs available once people are retrained. I would want to reiterate what the acting minister of career development has said as it relates to the initiatives that this government has taken during the last three years as it relates to diversification. Thanks to those initiatives, we're seeing some tremendous indicators and tremendous good news for this province as it relates to a record number of jobs in this province: unemployment the lowest it's been in three years, a drastic reduction in our own caseload. I was encouraged, and I mentioned earlier this week 1,300 fewer caseloads in the city of Calgary alone, again a clear result of the initiatives of this gov-

ernment as it relates to diversification. Mr. Speaker, we're doing the things in this province -- we're taking the necessary steps to work with those people on social allowance and give them the job opportunities that they want.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by Highwood, then Vegreville.

### Psychiatric Nursing Profession

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Psychiatric nurses in this province are experiencing a lack of both understanding and appreciation from the provincial government in regard to the vital service their profession provides. They provide it in a variety of settings: extended care, home care, and large institutions. The undermining of this profession is inexcusable. The Psychiatric Nurses Association has received some written assurances from past ministers of the Department of Advanced Education that the future of this profession is safe, that it's not in jeopardy, but the drop in enrollment simply begs that question. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Advanced Education. Will the minister now give the House a clear statement of his government's position regarding the future of the psychiatric nursing profession in the health care system in Alberta?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, my responsibilities as Minister of Advanced Education lie with the training of these professionals. We've had requests from the Alberta Hospital Edmonton board, in view of the fact that graduates have decreased from 40 to 30 to just 13 in this past year, that consideration be given to perhaps terminating that program. Before any decision is reached on that matter, discussions would certainly take place with the psychiatric association of Alberta.

MRS. HEWES: Well, on that very point, Mr. Speaker, has the minister undertaken to initiate or conduct a study to find out why that enrollment has dropped so dramatically while the one at Ponoka has risen? Have we had any study of the utilization of the profession?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I would think that perhaps that question should be directed to the user of the system, namely under the Minister of Health. This department has not conducted a study. The role of this department is to respond to the needs and desires put forward by the very people who do the training, namely Alberta Hospital Edmonton.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, the department is in fact responsible for Advanced Education. It falls under it.

Mr. Speaker, I think the minister can answer this one. What progress is being made regarding the bachelor of psychiatric nursing degree program, which the association has been requesting from the department for years?

MR. GOGO: Well, Mr. Speaker, as minister I simply can't respond to that today, because I do not know. But I will make a commitment to . . .

MRS. HEWES: It's your department.

MR. GOGO: I understand that hon. member. I'm simply saying as minister that this morning I do not know the answer to

that question, but I do take a commitment to determine the answer and inform the hon. member and members of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Member for Highwood, followed by Vegreville.

### Community Facility Enhancement Program

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you know, this government has made it possible for communities all across Alberta, whether in Fort Chipewyan in the north, Fort Macleod in the south, from Lloydminster in the east to Crowsnest Pass in the west, to have access to financial support for community facilities such as community halls, swimming pools, museums, and the like. This community facility enhancement program does not use tax dollars but lottery dollars to help create, renovate, and sustain vital community facilities that are so important to the quality of life in Alberta today. My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services. How has the money been expended in government constituencies and in nongovernment constituencies?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled in the Assembly for the benefit of all members of the Assembly a motion for a return dated to August 8, 1988, with respect to all of the projects that have been approved under the community facility enhancement program. All members will recall that in the fall of 1988, when the Premier of the province of Alberta had the vision and the determination to create a new program that would protect the family and enhance community life, I think a lot of us were unsure exactly what the success ratio would be with this program. But I'm very, very pleased to say today that of all the programs that I've ever had the good fortune of being responsible for or part of, this visionary program enunciated by Premier Getty a year ago certainly tops the list on that one.

In terms of the information provided yesterday, Mr. Speaker, anybody who wanted to take a few minutes with a calculator would clearly indicate and know as a result of the documentation there -- as I recall, there are 83 Members of the Legislative Assembly; 59 are part of the government; the remainder fit two different opposition parties. If they were to take a look at the total dollars allocated, Mr. Speaker, they would see that it's almost perfect in alignment in terms of the distribution of dollars to the government constituencies and nongovernment constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, they continue to come. Just a few minutes ago I received such an application from a member in the House, and not a government member, saying, "Hey, can you take a look at this and see what we can do with respect to it?" I think the people of Alberta understand and appreciate. Of course, with the plaques, the press releases, the news releases, the pictures in the paper, the big signs that are up, citizens of this province know full well what we're doing with respect to helping the family.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.  
Supplementary.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My first supplementary then, is to the minister who is responsible for lotteries, major exhibitions, and fairs: a truly fair-minded minister. Would the minister outline for us what is the role of the MLA in securing community facility enhancement funds for each mem-

ber's constituency.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, this is really, really coincidental, because there's no doubt at all about the fact that we do have a pamphlet called the Community Facility Enhancement Program. It talks of the message from the Premier of the province of Alberta on the front cover.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. That's good. Thank you. Now we'll have the next supplementary.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is to the same minister. Would the minister please give this Assembly a breakdown on the typical types of projects supported by the community facility enhancement program.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, I can certainly do that. There are 686 in a document yesterday.

But I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, the role of an MLA. The question was raised by a colleague of mine on the government side. I said that just recently I received such a request from a member of the opposition. I think all members should take the pamphlet talking about the community and making the family and the community life better, with the message from the Premier talking about this government's commitment, and give it to their constituents. Better yet, there's even a place for their card inside. Be as astute as the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place was. He took the document, a government program, put his card in it, putting it out to his constituents. Let's do it so that we can hear positive comments like the ones we've received from the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, who is almost becoming a hero by piggybacking on a government program, Mr. Speaker.

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

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MR. SPEAKER: Time for question period has expired. Point of order, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I repeat the point of order that has arisen previously, based on Standing Orders. The very idea of question period is a genuine attempt to elicit information, and it is a complete misuse of the Standing Orders to instead attempt to elicit from ministers by their own backbenchers mere announcements, touting, and general flimflammy.

MR. SPEAKER: The comments are duly noted. The Chair would point out, though, that sometimes that seems to apply not only to questions coming from one quarter of the House. The difficulty, of course, in terms of question period is that the House itself slowed itself down so much today that we didn't get to our normal allotment of questions. Hopefully that will change when we next meet again.

MS BARRETT: Monday.

MR. SPEAKER: Monday's quite fine by the Chair, quite fine.

First off, there's a request under Standing Order 40. Edmonton-Whitemud.

**head: MOTIONS UNDERSTANDING ORDER 40**

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. Under that particular section I wish to introduce a motion that would see this House go on record as congratulating and wishing well the Edmonton team of the Canadian Little League series, that team being Confederation Park. Just to speak to it very briefly, this particular team from the constituency of Edmonton-Whitemud is representing Alberta in this series. They've gone through the entire series undefeated, and in doing so, they've captured the hearts of all Edmontonians. They call it "the drive for five" because they've gone through five games without losing. If they win the championship game tomorrow, which I'm confident they will, then they go on to Pennsylvania to represent all of Canada in the world series. I would ask that this House go on record to commend and congratulate the Confederation team and to wish them well in the game tomorrow and the future games that they'll be holding in Pennsylvania.

MR. SPEAKER: There is a request for unanimous consent on this particular urgent matter with regard to a congratulatory message. Those in favour of the urgency, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Motion carries.  
Make the motion, please, hon. member.

MR. WICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will move the motion as I previously read it out. I don't feel it's necessary to add any additional comment.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Is there a call for the question?

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Let it be shown on the record that it carried unanimously. Thank you.

Order please. I don't know if this is a mass walkout or what. May we revert briefly to the Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.  
Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

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

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure this morning to introduce a former colleague of mine in this Legislature, the hon. Andy Aalborg. In his responsibilities for the government, Mr. Aalborg was a member of the Legislature from 1948 to 1971, for some 23 years. During that time he achieved some very great successes of recognition. First of all, he was the first Provincial Treasurer to bring in a billion-dollar budget

in the province of Alberta, just prior to 1971. In his tenure as Minister of Education he enhanced and was a great supporter and builder of the Alberta Teachers' Association and the teaching profession in the province of Alberta, which is to be noted. I would have to say that after being elected six times and having retired very well, I think there is a bit of advice to myself and maybe others in this Legislature that there is a good life after politics. I'd ask Mr. Aalborg to stand and be recognized by the Legislature.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that perhaps the Assembly may adjourn in the coming days or weeks, could I seek unanimous consent of the members to return to Tabling Returns and Reports?

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will ask the question. Those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

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

**head: TABLING RETURNS AND REPORTS**  
*(reversion)*

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file written answers to questions raised in estimates from the hon. members for Edmonton-Jasper Place and Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Additional? No additional. Thank you.

**head: GOVERNMENT BILLS AND ORDERS**  
**(Third Reading)****Bill 10**  
**Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1989**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of the Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1989.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, Mr. Speaker, we went through committee with this particular Bill, and I guess I shouldn't have been too surprised that the Provincial Treasurer and the provincial government didn't have any last-minute wishes to keep from going on record as bringing this government \$9.5 billion in debt. I appreciated the comment made just moments ago by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs that it wasn't too many years ago -- in fact, even I can remember the year -- that the Provincial Treasurer brought in a billion-dollar budget in this province. It wasn't long ago, but it seems like it must have been a lifetime or a generation or two or three ago, given that part of the amendments being brought forward by the Provincial Treasurer in Bill 10 request that this Legislature give approval to this government not to go a billion dollars in debt but to go nine and a half times that amount, \$9.5 billion in debt.

I don't know how this Provincial Treasurer believes that this is going to be part of his fiscal plan and his fiscal strategy. I haven't seen a fiscal strategy anywhere in Canada that allows an increase of the provincial debt of a magnitude and the size and



the speed and velocity as this Provincial Treasurer has allowed. While this government can try and put all sorts of happy constructions on the economy out there, Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that even given the growth that the economy has experienced in Alberta in the last year -- even then, this Provincial Treasurer estimates in his budget that the deficit this year is only going to drop somewhere around \$200 million less than it was in the last fiscal year. Now, when you look at the fact that \$7.5 billion in debt increases by \$2 billion in this Bill to \$9.5 billion and one simply assumes that the Provincial Treasurer can borrow that money at a 10 percent rate of interest, it means that as a minimum the increase in next year's budget due to the interest costs of this kind of increased borrowing is going to rise by \$200 million and some each and every year until that debt is paid off, which could be, for all I know, anywhere from 10 to 20 or 25 years, depending on how that's borrowed or the conditions under which the Provincial Treasurer can borrow that money.

It baffles me, Mr. Speaker, given that increase in deficit and given the Provincial Treasurer's own figures, how the economy can sustain the sort of revenue to the Provincial Treasurer to support that increased borrowing over the length of time it will take to repay that money. If, as the Provincial Treasurer has said, the Alberta economy grew faster last year than any other provincial economy, even then it doesn't have within it the capacity to absorb this kind of increase in spending along with all the other increases in spending and reductions in taxes and so on that might be part of some fiscal plan.

So this, while we've dwelt on it at some length perhaps in second reading, bears further comment here at third reading, Mr. Speaker. Because what it does is tie future governments and future Provincial Treasurers to a significant debt and significant repayment problem in the years to come. Mr. Speaker, if the Provincial Treasurer could have tabled in this Legislature as part of his Budget Address a long-term fiscal plan that would have been able to deal with the problem facing us in Bill 10, then it would not have been so incumbent on me, throughout the course of this session and throughout the course of the process of this Bill going through various stages, to get up and comment on it.

But the problem with this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is that the Provincial Treasurer has not given us any indication whatsoever of any fiscal plan that goes beyond this fiscal year. All we got in his Budget Address a few months ago was an update of this particular fiscal year, and then all the graphs and all the projections stopped. That's a change from what he's given us in the past. Even though the information he gave us in previous Budget Addresses wasn't reliable, at least it gave us some indication of what the government's thinking was in terms of future fiscal years. He showed us, for example, at one time a fiscal plan that showed the budget being balanced by this year or the next. Yet that kind of graph wasn't provided in this year's Budget Address. However, that didn't stop the Provincial Treasurer from getting up and saying: "Oh, trust me. We expect to balance the budget two fiscal years from now."

Well, Mr. Speaker, if we're increasing the deficit this year in the province by close to \$2 billion and we're authorizing increased indebtedness of the province to the tune of \$9.5 billion, as Bill 10 requires us to do, we should at least have some indication from the Provincial Treasurer of what their fiscal strategy is to deal with those increased debt charges. But no, that's not what the Provincial Treasurer has given us. He's given us happy rhetoric, and given his track record, even the happy rhetoric can't be relied upon to come to fruition or to reality in

the future.

Mr. Speaker, it was my first session as a rookie member of this Assembly when the Provincial Treasurer brought in a similar financial administration amendment Act some three years ago, I believe, which set out an increase of the indebtedness of the province. I can't remember whether that was the year we went from \$2.2 billion to \$4.5 billion or from \$4.5 billion to \$5.5 billion or from \$5.5 billion to \$6.5 billion. But somewhere the Provincial Treasurer has made a habit of bringing forward each and every year these amendments to the Financial Administration Act.

I remember the 1987 budget tabled in March of that year by the Provincial Treasurer. He said: "You know, all those things we told the people of Alberta during that election are just not to be counted on. We're forgetting those commitments, those promises made, about a buoyant economy being just around the corner. We're going to have to make cuts to health care, education, municipal governments, slashes in social services and Workers' Compensation." It just went from top to bottom. No; across the gamut. It didn't hit the top. It hit the bottom. It went across all government departments that dealt with people services and decreased grants, decreased spending, decreased essential services to ordinary Alberta families. At the same time, the Provincial Treasurer raised taxes by close to a billion dollars, most of which was taken out of the pockets of ordinary working people.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Now, when I see again a Bill like this in front of us asking for the same increase of another \$2 billion, I see no end in sight. I see no commitment from this government to bring in a fair taxation system to come to grips with this growing problem. It begs a question for me: where is this so-called fiscal policy of the government going to take us in the year to come? After all, the Premier has made promises to the people of Alberta that because of this fiscal policy the only direction taxes are going to take is down, not up. I can't reconcile that kind of commitment and promise, made in writing in ads taken out in newspapers across the province during the provincial election, to the Bill in front of us, because everybody knows that once you're indebted, you're indebted. You're indebted until you get your obligations paid off. By increasing our indebtedness another \$2 billion, I cannot for the life of me see how the Provincial Treasurer can expect the economy to absorb that kind of demand on the taxes and the revenues of this province next year, the year after, and the year after that and on into the next decade. This is a serious problem, unrecognized, it seems, by the Provincial Treasurer, and yet this government seems incapable of coming to grips with it in a realistic way. They make promises to the people during an election campaign which bear no relation or reality to the true fiscal state of the province.

Quite frankly, this Provincial Treasurer is the man most responsible for having allowed that sort of misinformation to be conveyed to the people of Alberta. After all, it was this Provincial Treasurer who gave us an update last December when the provincial government was making steps to take this province into an election. He was the one, knowing that was their strategy, who put out a document telling the people of Alberta in his budget update that everything was on track. In fact, not only was it on track; it was better than being on track. It was better than what he had told us in this Legislature only last spring, and

yet he was the one who propagated this misinformation to the people of Alberta last December. He must have known that it was false, that that information was not entirely correct, because it was only a few months later, when we were back in this Assembly, that in his Budget Address he had to admit his interim report last December was way, way, way off base and in fact the fiscal condition of the province had deteriorated considerably. Well, here's the proof of that. It wasn't just his budget speech. It's Bill 10 in front of us. The Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1989, increases the indebtedness of the province by \$2 billion.

Now, the real tragedy is that none of this is necessary. This is not necessary. It has everything to do with the fact that this government has got itself committed to wasteful spending, spending on frivolous and unnecessary projects, at the risk or at the expense of necessary social services and people services to ordinary folks in this province. They have a taxation system that is patently unfair, that is out of balance and has been out of balance since the early 1980s and is deteriorating in its balance even more at a growing rate, and this provincial government and this Provincial Treasurer refuse to deal with that key issue. He's forgoing important decisions this year in the hope, I guess, of getting back to their true agenda next year, which is and will be an attempt to continue to undermine those social services and will be an attempt to continue to make the taxation system even more unfair for ordinary working Albertans. That's the strategy of this government. It's not something they're prepared to level with and be honest to the people of Alberta about during a provincial election. In fact, they try to convey exactly the opposite as being their true intentions.

But we'll see, Mr. Speaker, what this deficit is used for, what this debt is used for by the Provincial Treasurer in his next year's Budget Address. He's going to use this as an excuse to dismantle the social services and the social programs Albertans value and treasure so very much. They're going to use this deficit and this debt to tell Albertans we can no longer afford those expensive social services and those expensive and necessary people services. So they're going to attempt to dismantle them even more than they've been able to in the 1980s, when all of this could have been avoided.

It's not necessary for this government to go nine and a half billion dollars in debt. It doesn't have to be nine and a half billion dollars in debt. If they properly manage their financial affairs, this could be and should be a debt-free province. It's a wealthy province, one of the wealthiest in Canada. There's no need for this government to bring in a nine and a half billion dollar debt. It could provide essential and necessary social services for the people of this province, and it could do so on a balanced budget basis. New Democratic governments in other provinces that don't have the resources Alberta has have been able to do it. There's no reason why this government couldn't do it as well, unless, of course, it's part of their intentional strategy. It may be part of their intentional strategy to run up the debt so that then they can use that as an excuse to get on with dismantling the programs they have no commitment to.

If that's going to be their intent, if this Bill today is going to turn out to be the excuse they use next year to make the taxation system even more unfair than it already is, and to cut programs for people even more than they've cut them so far, they are going to find that not only will they get a fight in this Legislature unlike one they've had before, but they'll also find the people of Alberta are going to make that final severing of commitment

and loyalty to the Conservative government. We've seen it erode significantly in the last two elections, because people remembered the budget of 1987 despite the happy rhetoric of the Provincial Treasurer just weeks before the provincial election. We reminded them of the budget of 1987. We reminded them that there was a hidden agenda, and they remembered that, yes, the promises in 1986 were not kept in 1987, and they did not believe the provincial Premier when he said in 1989 that he was going to do certain things. They did believe that there was a secret and hidden agenda he wanted to implement. So support for this government deteriorated and deteriorated considerably in this most recent provincial election.

Now, I'm going to say to the Provincial Treasurer today that if this deficit is used as an excuse to break promises that were made in March of this year, if this deficit is used as the excuse to break those promises made in March in the last provincial election, I can assure him, as sure as I'm standing here, that the people of Alberta didn't accept it last time and they're not going to accept it this time. You can break a promise only so many times before people finally say, "I no longer have loyalty to you, and I no longer have a commitment to you." It's like a marriage, Mr. Speaker. There has to be loyalty there. There has to be a commitment there. For a long time a lot of people in this province felt the same sort of loyalty and commitment to the Conservative government that you might find in a marriage. But that commitment is deteriorating because this government has not kept its promises. It's the same as infidelity. People are not going to accept it a second time.

So I'm going to give fair warning to the Provincial Treasurer. If he wants to increase this debt by \$2 billion, he has the votes in this Legislature to do that and the commitment of this government to do that. But if this serves as an excuse by this government to break the promises they made last March, then I'm going to tell the Provincial Treasurer this: they will never recover from having broken promises after two successive provincial elections. The people of Alberta will not put up with it. Once betrayed, they are willing to perhaps go back one more time to see if that marriage can be patched together. That's what happened this last election, Mr. Speaker. But if this government breaks its promises again, that's not going to happen. It won't happen after the next election, regardless of what steps this government might take to try and patch up the damage. It just ain't gonna happen.

So I'm going to tell the Provincial Treasurer and the government today that we know this fiscal policy of the government has been put in place for this fiscal year, whatever that policy might be. We don't know what the long-term strategy is. The Provincial Treasurer and the Premier have been studiously quiet about what the long-term strategy might be. But I'm just going to say to the Provincial Treasurer today that if promises are broken again, if this fiscal strategy proves to be a hidden agenda that finally comes out in the open again after promises were made and are broken in the next fiscal year, this government will never recover from that. I'm just giving fair warning that this party -- the Official Opposition, the New Democrats -- is going to ensure that the promises made are the promises that are kept as far as this government is concerned. If there is any hint that they are betraying the people of Alberta with their fiscal strategy, I'm just saying watch out.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 10 is one of the more important Bills to pass the Legislature this session, and I wouldn't want to let it go by without making a few more comments on it. One of the things I'd like to say is that at Committee of the Whole I asked a number of questions of the Treasurer, and as he often does, he just sort of passed them off and said if there were any questions there he would answer them later kind of thing. It's one of his favourite tricks. Of course, we've not heard back. In fact, I remember it a little more clearly now. I actually asked the questions at second reading, under some protest from the Speaker, so they would be on the record and the minister would have time to look at them and answer them in Committee of the Whole, and he just didn't bother.

I asked him about section 4 on page 1, where it suggests that section 18 of the Financial Administration Act be amended by striking out "including those agencies listed in section 2(5)." I still don't know the answer to this fairly important question, so I'm going to put it to the Treasurer one more time. In the explanation side of this Bill, it says:

The Provincial Treasurer may make payments from the revolving fund to acquire equipment, supplies and services required to provide financial and general management services to the Treasury Department and to provincial agencies, including those agencies listed in section 2(5) [of the Financial Administration Act], and may charge to the Treasury Department and the Provincial agencies the cost of the services provided.

My question to the minister was: by striking out those words . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. I think on third reading debate you can make reference to questions not being answered, but it is not appropriate for you to ask the same questions again. You can refer to the pages of *Hansard* where you asked certain questions and you'd like to have the answers, but the Chair is not prepared to hear a repetition of the same questions over again. You can make reference to them.

MR. McEACHERN: You've made your point.

Okay, I would just ask the Treasurer, then, to look up that question and perhaps give us an answer, hopefully before the debate is done on Bill 10 or this House dissolves. This is not the first time the Treasurer has ignored our questions.

There's another question I asked him to address briefly, and that had to do with the setting up of these pooled funds. Actually it was the Member for Calgary-Mountain View who asked the question, so I didn't bother to ask it, as I recall. But I was concerned and interested, and the Treasurer did not give us any answer to that question. So I would just request that the Treasurer do that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the main point of Bill 10 is to ask that the borrowing power of the province be raised from \$7.5 billion to \$9.5 billion. It's a very serious request to the people of Alberta, and before this House approves it, we have to give it due consideration. It seems to me, in looking back at the public accounts over the last number of years, that this government got into a whole new phase in 1986-87. Now, I suppose some people would argue that it was due to events beyond their control. But nonetheless their reaction to it is the reason that we have as big a debt as we have today and the Treasurer is asking for this money. So we should look at that event, or at least at that watershed moment, a little bit.

In looking back at the four years prior to the '86 year, you

find that the government had a couple of surplus budgets and a couple of deficit budgets. One of them, though, seemed to be quite large; it was \$1.2 billion. But the money that went into the heritage trust fund increased the amount of money in the fund enough to more than compensate for it. So it's really fair to say that we did not have any significant deficit year until the year 1986-87. In that year the expenditures over revenues, according to the consolidated statements of the province, were \$4 billion. Now, the Treasurer, as I recall in the original budget that was proposed on the night the election was called that year, had \$2.3 billion as the planned deficit. Although we saw the downturn -- the Western Accord was signed, oil was deregulated, prices started to plummet. Talk about wonderful timing for a province basing its revenues on resource revenues, or oil revenues, to be more specific. In any case, even when the election was over and the next budget was brought in in June of that year, the government still only owned up to thinking that the deficit might be something in the neighbourhood of \$2.45 billion. By the fall they were admitting that it would be over \$3 billion, and it turned out to be \$3.45 billion on what the Treasurer liked to call the combined deficit, the heritage trust fund and the budget together. The Auditor General, when he did the consolidated statement for that year, of course added in some of the other things that weren't counted in those two figures, and the total deficit for that year was \$4 billion.

The next year the Treasurer nailed the people of Alberta with an incredibly big tax increase. He scared everybody into saying that the price of oil was going to be low and they weren't going to get much money and estimated that his budget debt would be \$1.9 billion that year. That was just on the general revenue and heritage trust fund side, what he liked to call his financial plan estimates. It didn't include some of the other things, some of the Crown corporations and provincial agencies and commercial enterprises that the Auditor General throws into the consolidated debt figures. Funny thing that he overscared the people of the province and missed the calculation on the size of the deficit by almost 50 percent. It turned out that the consolidated debt figure was only \$1.39 billion that year, a far cry from the \$4 billion of the year before. Now, in a way the government was commended to be interested and concerned about the deficit, but the kind of scare tactic they used and the overreaction thing they used was quite unnecessary. Had they got their act together and continued to work toward a balanced budget in the next couple of years, probably we'd be in a lot better position than we are today.

But having overscared everybody, they then thought they'd better back off a little bit the next year, so they kind of did nothing -- a kind of nothing budget -- in the year '88-89. In fact, they claimed that everything was fine and hunky-dory and there would only be a some \$835 million deficit on what the Treasurer likes to call his combined deficit or his financial plan deficit figures. It turned out they were totally wrong again. In fact, the deficit for 1988-89, when it comes in, will be \$2.3 billion, a really serious and major deficit last year, a really serious underestimating of what the problem would be.

The problem, I suggest, was mostly due to the fact that the government wanted a fairly sweet budget because they thought they might like to call an election before the Code inquiry report came in. They didn't want to let the people of Alberta know that they still had a serious shortfall of revenues compared to expenditures in this province. In fact, when the Treasurer could clearly see that this province was heading for a big deficit of the

order that I just mentioned, a \$2.3 billion consolidated deficit, he still stood up on December 6, released the public accounts book -- one book; not the other one. The other one didn't come for four months. As usual, we never get the accounting of what goes on with the dollars of this province until 10 months later at best. Then, of course, if you consider it takes another year to get the next one, you're talking 10 months up to 22 months. The hard figures you have to work with are up to 22 months out of date at various times of the year just before the next one comes out. It's totally scandalous the way they don't tell us what they're doing at the time and you have to wait this 10 months or almost two years to find out what's really going on.

But back to the Treasurer and his claims in December before the calling of the provincial election. It was at the same time the Premier was running around the province announcing all these pulp mills. He was going to pollute the Athabasca and Mackenzie and Peace rivers for the sake of a few jobs at election time and sell out our forests and ruin our environment to get a few election votes. But along with that, the Treasurer stood up and said to the people of this province: "Oh, I made a little error. The debt is going to be \$536 million more than I anticipated, so it will be \$1.371 billion, not the \$835 million I had mentioned." Very honest, upright, and straightforward, eh? The problem is that that figure turns out to be \$1.9 billion on that side alone, on just the combined deficit, the heritage trust fund and the budget deficit. Now, if you throw in the other figures that make up the consolidated deficit, it's going to be \$2.3 billion. And the Treasurer knew that.

The price of oil, which is the main variable the Treasurer doesn't really control much, starting in December went up to the neighbourhood of \$20 a barrel and stayed there almost right up till just recently when it has sometimes been down around \$18 and \$19. So the Treasurer knew that the rest of the fiscal year was going to be good. Okay? At the time he did that, he was conning the people of this province to the tune of over half a billion dollars, because he must have known. In spite of the fact that the price of oil stayed up there, the debt turned out to be a billion dollar mistake, not a five hundred million dollar mistake.

So I just say to the Treasurer of this province that he has a long way to go to convince the people of this province that he's being up front with them and telling them clearly what's going on and why he needs an increase of \$2 billion in his debt borrowing power. With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I will sit down.

[Motion carried; Bill 10 read a third time]

#### **Bill 12 Credit Union Act**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill 12, the Credit Union Act.

[Motion carried; Bill 12 read a third time]

#### **Bill 14 Regional Airports Authorities Act**

MR. MAIN: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill 14.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism has moved, on behalf of the Minister of Eco-

nomie Development and Trade, third reading of Bill 14. Are you ready for the question?

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, our caucus believes that this Bill is excellent in principle. We express our distress at the complete unwillingness of the minister piloting the Bill to consider any amendments at all, although he agrees that all our points were valid and worth while. His response to every such suggestion was, "Good suggestion, but we have to work these things out either in the agreement or the regulations or in the light of experience if a Bill is necessary." We regret that the government has taken this attitude. We particularly regret this attitude because the points we raised were fundamental, we believe, to the operation of the Bill and principally concerned the control, ultimately, by the people of the regions affected over their own airports and the guarantees that ought to be in the Bill, but at present are not, that the control will continue to be under the people via their municipal councils in the areas occupied by the airports themselves.

Coupled with that is a concern, Mr. Speaker, that those who work for the airports will be able to have the representatives of their choice, whether unions or associations -- but at any rate, their own workers' rights -- preserved by the change of arrangements that would be entailed in putting the organization set up by the Bills into operation. None of these things were addressed by the government. We believe that they are important.

The Bill, though, does take shape, as it ought to, to a degree, and so we just express our regret that it was not put into the best shape that it could have been in these very important respects.

[Motion carried; Bill 14 read a third time]

#### **Bill 15 Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1989**

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill 15, the Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1989.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the Minister of Energy would be extremely disappointed if I didn't participate somewhat in this debate on Bill 15, the Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1989. I will not go on a long time, and I know that will disappoint the Treasurer, but it's been well articulated, I believe, on this side that this is a very, very bad Bill; not just the Bill itself but where it's leading us down the future. As has been pointed out very clearly in this Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, it's a bad Bill for three major reasons.

Number one, it is typical Conservative ideology. I heard the minister talking about ideology. Mr. Speaker, this is the most ideological group of people I've ever seen run a government. The key to it is that it makes it easier for larger investors to own more and more of the shares: 1 percent of shares issued to 5 percent. The reality of this is that if you happen to hold shares, that's good. The minister cannot deny that he wouldn't be bringing this Bill in if the shares were going to go down. He wouldn't do that. The purpose of this Bill, making it more open to larger investors -- and I'll talk a little about the foreign owners -- is that the price is going to go up. The minister is well aware of that, and that's one of the reasons.

But what is going to happen inevitably when you bring a Bill in like this is that less and less people and bigger and bigger

companies will eventually own more and more. The minister can use the figures in this particular Bill and say, "Well, it's only up to 5 percent." I've seen this government operate when they get on their ideological kick, the privatization and all the rest of it. Probably we'll see another Bill next year to even raise that more and more. So I'm concerned about the 1 percent to 5 percent, but I'm more concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the ideological bent of this government, and this could be just the first step.

Now, the second area, Mr. Speaker, is the Tory example of private enterprise. I love it when they wax eloquent over there, telling us all about free enterprise and how they understand business. Well, they understand that if you hand out money to Peter Pocklington, take over his assets, and boy, that's good for the economy; if you give money and go from the second mortgage to a third mortgage as they did with Triple Five -- oh, what a wonderful business move. Well, who are they kidding? Tory free enterprise: hand out bushels of money to the corporate sector and hope that some of it gets around to the average people. It didn't work in the '30s and it doesn't work now, Mr. Speaker. That's the reality. And it's not just that they do that. These guys have listened and listened. They are obsessed -- obsessed, Mr. Speaker -- with foreign ownership. They have this idea that Albertans will not invest or are too timid or are Canadians or whatever, and that the public sector doesn't play a role, as most other economies are doing. We just have to open the floodgates and let the foreign money come in and we'll all be rich.

Well, I want to say to the Minister of Energy, Mr. Speaker, that if we could keep some of the money that was escaping through dividends and interest payments here in this province, in this country, we'd have a lot of money in this province to invest. We'd have a lot of money in this company. There are billions of dollars that go the other way. That's the price you pay. Maybe you get some short-term money; I'm not saying you don't always need that. But let's face it, these foreign corporations and foreign investors don't come up to jolly old Alberta just because they love the Minister of Energy or the Treasurer. They come up for a reason, Mr. Speaker, and I don't blame them for that. I would do the same if I was them. But the reality is that when you look over the last number of years -- the interest payments, the dividends flowing out -- we've lost billions of dollars in this province that we could have invested right here in Alberta and used to stimulate the economy.

So this idea that foreign ownership or foreign money is a panacea for all our economic problems is absolute nonsense. Our country is already more foreign dominated than almost any country in the western world. I think it is, Mr. Speaker. And if I may say so, the free trade agreement -- not free trade -- the Mulroney trade agreement, which this government spent \$750,000 of Alberta taxpayers' money endorsing, will leave us even more vulnerable. The old saying that we will be drawers of water and hewers of wood is really becoming true in this province. Now, it'd be one thing if this was a private company. But it's been pointed out consistently that they were set up by all the taxpayers of Alberta when they were formed: \$250 million, Mr. Speaker. They were also given land far below the value of that land -- it's worth a lot more -- again as a gift from the taxpayers of Alberta, because at that time the government was going to use it as an instrument of policy here, provincially. So it's not fair that all the taxpayers are going to pay for a windfall now for foreign-owned corporations and big investors. That's what this Bill is doing. Make no mistake about that.

But, you know, to talk about foreign ownership, I would remind the Minister of Energy that the foreign ownership of the oil industry is especially significant and crucial right now. I'm sure the minister is aware that foreign-controlled corporations actually reaped 65 percent of the \$47 billion in oil and natural gas revenues earned in Canada in 1988; increased four years there, Mr. Speaker. That's a very serious matter. That investment doesn't necessarily have to occur in Alberta. That can be in Oklahoma or Singapore or wherever. That's a reality, and that's a serious matter. The United States would not allow that to happen before moving in. We're well aware of that. Why is it that if it's not good business for him it's such good business for us to totally sell out? So I don't understand. I know this particular Bill is not going to change all that, but it's continuing that trend that's increased four years: 65 percent not in Alberta or Canada. Now I say to the Minister of Energy, why add to this serious problem? And that's all we're doing with this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker. I want to say it makes absolutely no sense economically; absolutely none. As I said the other day: you know, an optimist is someone who believes in Conservative economics and a pessimist is someone who understands it. And that's really true in this particular Bill.

Mr. Speaker, it makes no sense what we're doing here except for an ideological reason. The extreme right has taken over here. The old sayings: you know, if you say "deregulation," these people get so excited that they start frothing at the mouth; "foreign ownership"; "bigger is better." This is why we're into this. You talk about ideological. This Bill is a model of right-wing ideology. That's what it's all about. There's the ideologue sitting right over there, and that's the reality of it.

Mr. Speaker, but what was interesting, and I won't go into it a long time, is when the Premier set it up, he actually did use some common sense at that particular time. He actually said:

There is a demonstrated need for an energy investment company whose control will always remain in the hands of Albertans. . . . It is our intention that the ownership of the voting shares will be restricted to Canadian citizens or residents of Canada. Foreign-controlled companies will be excluded . . .

Well, I won't go on, you've heard it: another broken promise from this government. But we're used to them, and I'm sure in the future, in the next budget, we'll see a lot more broken promises from this government.

But I want to go into the third reason that this Bill is offensive, and it gets away from the Conservative ideology, Mr. Speaker. We've raised in question period the problem about ethics in government. Mr. Speaker, we've been told: "We've brought in a code of ethics Bill" -- back with the late Grant Notley and myself. How many years in a row the government said, "Oh, we don't need it; we don't need it; we don't need it." Now, feeling a little political pressure and especially dealing with this company, Mr. Speaker, they've set up a committee. I said "Good" to the government, I gave them credit for that, and I think the three people they have on the committee will do an excellent job. They're to report back at a certain period of time.

For the life of me, beyond the ideology where the government thinks that foreign ownership is good and wonderful and bigger is better, why wouldn't they wait? Was Alberta Energy Company going to fold if this didn't happen? You have cabinet ministers -- it's well documented; I have them in front of me -- who own shares. And the minister knows full well, Mr. Speaker, that when this Bill goes through, those shares are likely to go up, and that again puts these people in a potential conflict

of interest. So why, beyond the ideology, couldn't it have waited till a fall session or till the spring session, till after this matter was settled? Because specifically, Mr. Speaker, that committee that the Premier announced was to look into this precise matter. I quote from *Hansard*, July 24, 1989. This is the Premier, and he says:

I've asked them also, as I mentioned in the House, to review as a specific matter the unique situation of the Alberta Energy Company in this province and the ownership of shares by senior public servants, MLAs, and ministers of the Executive Council in relation to the Alberta Energy Company.

And he goes on to say, Mr. Minister, that this is an important matter. I repeat:

This is an important matter. I believe the panel outside of the Premier's office will give us a full assessment and review.

Now, Mr. Speaker, isn't it offensive, especially when we have a panel looking into this precise matter, that we're passing a Bill here in this Legislature that could add money to cabinet ministers? It's outrageous, Mr. Speaker. It's outrageous. And even this Bill -- if they thought because of ideological reasons, what would have been the problem of bringing it in after? That's what we asked; that's why we raised it in question period: to save the government an embarrassment. Because we're certainly going to be watching what happens here, Mr. Speaker. It would have been so simple, but they're so arrogant and set in their ways that they can't even see common sense, beyond the debate that we may have in terms of foreign ownership and that. It doesn't make any sense at all. But I guess people want to know what the hurry is. Maybe they actually do want to make a few bucks on it before it comes in. That's the only thing that we can come to, Mr. Speaker.

Let me just conclude and say this, Mr. Speaker. This is a bad Bill, one this government will regret in the future -- maybe not this government but future governments, because this government won't be around long, Mr. Speaker. But I'm frankly proud that on an important principle matter our caucus has fought the battle here in this Legislature on this particular battle. And I give full notice to this government: when they get into their real agenda of tax hikes, cutbacks in people services because of the debt they created, when they bring in their agenda of privatization -- it's probably AGT next on the block -- we know how to fight now on this side of the House. And they'd better be prepared to be around for a long time, Mr. Speaker, because I throw out the gauntlet to them. This is just a start of where I believe this government is going, and we'll be quite prepared to fight that in the next election. Make no mistake about that.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that here in this Legislature this government has the numbers to pass this Bill, so there's not much point going on much further about it. But I suggest it's this arrogance -- Bills like this among all the other things that have happened in this Legislature: the Pocklingtons, the Principal Groups, the Triple Fives, and all the rest of it -- that is one of the major reasons they will not be around in the next election. I just hope there are a few of them left over here so we could have an interesting debate at that particular time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn.

MR. PASHAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Alberta Energy

Company was created in part to provide all Canadians, but essentially Albertans, with an opportunity to invest in an important sector of a growing industry. As we recall, in the 1970s there was a real acceleration in the development of the oil and gas industry in this province. I think at that time the government showed some foresight in establishing this company and creating this opportunity for all Albertans. The Premier, who was at that time the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, indicated that the government was creating an opportunity not just for Albertans at that time but for their children and their grandchildren in the years to come to benefit from this important Alberta resource. Provincial assets that were rather considerable were transferred to the company. As well, an important goal for the company that was established was to assure all Albertans a supply of low-cost gas in the years ahead.

With this Bill, Mr. Speaker, we're reversing that policy, and during the debate and through the throne speech the Official Opposition found and brought to the attention of this Legislature many important flaws in the principle of this Bill. Our objections were essentially three. The first objection had to do with increasing the allowable individual holdings from 1 percent to 5 percent of the shares. We pointed out that this, in effect, could transfer control to a determined group of minority shareholders. Our second major objection, Mr. Speaker, had to do with the fact nonresidents are now permitted to hold up to 10 percent of the shares of this company, which could essentially see control of this very important company pass from outside the control of Canadians themselves. Finally, Mr. Speaker, a principal objection that we brought forward -- and that's why we attempted to hoist the Bill -- had to do with conflict of interest. As my leader has pointed out, many cabinet ministers hold shares in this company and have participated in the debates on issues that affect the development and growth of this company.

Certainly, in our view, the Bill should have at least been delayed until the report was brought before the House, the report that has been commissioned by the Premier in establishing a panel to look at conflict of interest with particular reference to the Alberta Energy Company. We note that over the past few months the shares in that company have increased from the range of about 13 and five-eighths up to the 19 and five-eighths range. So perhaps the reason for that is that maybe some people knew we were going to be debating this Bill in this Legislature and the changes that are being proposed would put upward pressure on the value of those shares. I don't know. Or perhaps it's possible that if there is that kind of strength being shown by the shares of that company, why do we need the changes? If the company is that strong, and their performance indicates it is, they should have no difficulty in raising capital.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to say that I agree with my leader that this is a bad Bill, and I would ask all members of the Legislature to vote against it.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, in wrapping up and moving third reading, I'd like to briefly respond to some of the discussions we've had on this Bill, and I must say I have been somewhat pleased with the debate, and I've also enjoyed it. I found it meaningful, sometimes wide-ranging, sometimes focused, and it has been for those reasons a good debate. My only regret, Mr. Speaker, is that members of the opposition -- particularly Edmonton-Norwood, Edmonton-Jasper Place, and Edmonton-Strathcona -- have impugned motives. That is the only regret I have in the discussion of this debate. As I indicated, I believe

it's been very good and wide-ranging.

On specific concerns, Mr. Speaker, we dealt with, in committee stage particularly, the issue of nonresident . . .

MR. McINNIS: On a point of order . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place is rising on a point of order.

MR. McINNIS: All members know that it's out of order in this Assembly to impugn motives to an hon. member. For the minister to stand up and accuse other members of impugning motives amounts to the same thing through the back door. It hasn't been done through the front door, and there's no reason for him to stand up now, in conclusion of the debate, and impugn a motive through the back door. He started off rather well by saying that we'd had a good debate . . . [interjections]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair does not believe that the hon. member has a valid point of order. The record will indicate whether there were any motives imputed.

The hon. Minister of Energy.

MR. ORMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We dealt with some specific concerns that were raised by primarily the Official Opposition, and they had to do with non-resident ownership of shares. As you know, we are moving from a zero nonresident ownership to a 10 percent foreign aggregate, and we are also moving from a 1 percent individual maximum to a 5 percent individual maximum.

Mr. Speaker, we also had discussions on the appropriateness of foreign investment, and what spoke volumes in its absence was the importance of foreign investment in this province in terms of job creation. We heard many of the concerns, the negatives of foreign investment that the NDP seem to subscribe to, but we overlook the thousands and thousands of jobs that have been created by capital moving into this province. It had some clarifications on both sides and there was a good airing of views, and I think for that reason it was a positive debate.

Our position in that connection, Mr. Speaker, was that in Canada there are some fairly significant restrictions on cultural endeavours and business endeavours that we as Canadians feel close too, we feel an ownership to. Air Canada is a specific example. It allowed an individual aggregation of 10 percent and a foreign aggregation of 25 percent. Cable and broadcasting allowed for an individual aggregation of 80 percent and a foreign aggregate of 20 percent. Schedule "A" banks, our biggest concern, generally from the left, Mr. Speaker, in this country, and the middle spectrum -- and there are people who are on the right of economic thought that have a concern about Schedule "A" banks and their foreign ownership and individual aggregate. Individual aggregates for Schedule "A" banks is 10 percent, foreign aggregate, 25 percent

Mr. Speaker, you can see that what we have done in connection with the Alberta Energy Company has kept it well below that threshold number, and it has to do with, I guess, the nature, the original intent of Alberta Energy Company and now examining whether or not the original intent is appropriate today. We are not tied to any particular dogma of the middle '70s that may not be appropriate 15 years later, Mr. Speaker, so AEC is well within these accepted limits.

There are additional safeguards, Mr. Speaker, in the Act.

Firstly, that the company cannot continue in another jurisdiction, that bulk disposal of property is not allowed. That is part of the amendment, and the Act has additional safeguards. There is prohibition on collusion for purposes of voting at the annual general meeting. Eighty percent of the shareholder voters is required to remove any or all of the board members, and 70 percent of the board members must be residents of Alberta. We believe there are safeguards there, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to foreign investment generally in the province, and certainly this relates to Alberta Energy Company, we are the stewards of Crown assets. We own the leases. We require orderly development of the companies, whether they are Canadian or otherwise, relinquish those leases. The ERCB has pretty strict standards on drilling and production and environmental concerns, and the Crown is in the business of reviewing removal permits and export licences by the National Energy Board. I believe, Mr. Speaker, there are appropriate safeguards in the system.

I should say, Mr. Speaker, that some of the members brought up a concern about the -- I believe it was Edmonton-Calder who said she had friends who had shares and were concerned about this. I say to them, Mr. Speaker, that they do not have to sell their shares either to foreign interests or to domestic interests. The ultimate responsibility is in their hands.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has questioned our motives. I should say that there are no ulterior motives, and to quote the Member for Calgary-Buffalo, he said that it is right to move to normalize Alberta Energy Company. My point was to take the yoke off Alberta Energy Company and put it on an even footing with other companies so that they can compete in the international marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, I've enjoyed the debate, as I've indicated. I've enjoyed it not because there has been a good discussion on the appropriateness of AEC, the spirit of AEC, not particularly because we examined the relationship between debt and equity, and not because we reviewed the manner and the extent to which the government manages Crown assets. No, Mr. Speaker, I've enjoyed this debate because it fundamentally served to separate and separate absolutely the right from the left, free enterprise from state ownership, faith in the marketplace from central socialist control. It separates the willingness to accept appropriate levels of foreign investment from xenophobic paranoia displayed by the NDP. I respect the NDP for taking their position. Hon. leader, I respect you for taking your position, and I respect the Member for Calgary-Forest Lawn. I just don't respect the position that you took. It's not right for Alberta historically, and it's why you're in opposition. Mr. Speaker, it was a very good debate, and it will allow Albertans and it will allow members in this Assembly to re-evaluate the things that we stand for. That is very, very important for us.

What do we stand for? What do Albertans stand for? Do they stand for state control? Do they stand for central planning? Do they stand for stifled growth? I don't think they do, Mr. Speaker. I think Albertans stand for free enterprise, faith in the marketplace, and strong economic growth. The hon. Leader of the Opposition indicated that the reason this Bill will pass is because we have the majority of the seats in this Legislature. That's because Albertans believe in the fundamental principles that this government believes in.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, we are not leading Albertans on this issue on appropriate levels of foreign investment, on free enterprise. We are not leading them. They are leading us, and we are following the wishes and the desires of the people of this province on economic issues. We will respond to that. We have responded to the wishes of Albertans since 1971. We have a fantastic record of economic growth, employment, and respect for the marketplace. We will continue to respond to it. As long as we do, and as long as we continue to support those principles I've delineated, we will continue to be the government in this province.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Energy has moved third reading of Bill 15, the Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1989. Those members in favour of third reading, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion carries.

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

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Adair	Fowler	Nelson
Ady	Gesell	Oldring
Anderson	Getty	Orman
Black	Hewes	Osterman
Calahasen	Hyland	Payne
Cardinal	Isley	Rostad
Cherry	Johnston	Schumacher
Chumir	Jonson	Severtson
Clegg	Kowalski	Shrake
Day	Lund	Sparrow
Decore	Main	Tannas
Drobot	McCoy	Thurber
Elliott	Mirosh	Weiss
Elzinga	Mitchell	Wickman
Evans	Moore	Zarusky
Fischer	Musgrove	

Against the motion:

Barrett	Martin	Roberts
Fox	McInnis	Sigurdson
Gibeault	Mjolsness	Woloshyn
Laing, M.	Pashak	Wright

Totals:	Ayes -- 47	Noes -- 12
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[Motion carried; Bill 15 read a third time]

## Bill 16 Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1989

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill 16, the Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1989.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. WRIGHT: I record two points on this. First, I record our satisfaction with the thrust of the Act. The two points are as follows: first, we think it an error in this people's court to suppose that there are never important questions of law decided and consequently regret that there is no appeal to the Court of Appeal on points of law on special application.

The second is to record a promise made by the member piloting the Bill that the limits on jurisdiction under the Masters and Servants Act will be modernized so that important, if humble, area of jurisdiction will be brought into the modern age.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you. I have some very brief concluding comments to make on this Bill, Mr. Speaker. It's without dispute that the legal system in this province is badly in need of updating and reform. I presented a motion before this House with respect to that issue back in 1986 in which I pointed out that access to the legal system is very much restricted by the expense of getting involved in litigation. I pressed for a full review, and I'm disappointed that the government has taken virtually no steps in that direction. Now, I say "virtually" because this Bill is a very token, tiny step, and our party supports the Bill, but it really doesn't move us very far along the road to improving access to the legal system for average- and low-income Albertans. In fact, its major change to increase the jurisdiction of the court from \$2,000 to \$4,000 merely updates the amount on the basis of inflation. So really where we're at in that respect is where we were some 10, or whatever it was, years ago when the \$2,000 limit was set. We're really at that particular stage. However, it is an update, and it is a useful Bill.

During debate I referred to some of the problems and concerns I had with respect to perhaps formalizing the process too much and the costs of transcripts. I won't go over those again, but I did want in a very few moments just to make some comments with respect to some additional major changes that need to be made with respect to our small claims process. Now, one matter that has been raised by those who are involved in advising litigants before that court is that there is a need for night and weekend sittings. It is very inconvenient for many individuals to have to take time off work to sit around while other cases proceed. I understand that this is a matter that can be dealt with by regulations, and I urge the Attorney General and the sponsor of this Bill, the Member for Banff-Cochrane, who's no doubt taking a particular interest in this matter now, to look at the possibility of night and weekend sittings in order to enhance access.

I also commented earlier that I keep hearing problems about the difficulty of collecting, and often the person receiving a judgment is very unsophisticated. British Columbia, I understand, has a process whereby the system assists in collection of debts, and I think that's a matter that we could at the very least look at. I've also had a representation to the effect that one of the major omissions in the jurisdiction of the court is to take away the power to issue an order of replevin. This is apparently



one of the things that's most needed for low-income individuals, and I commend review of that matter to the court.

Now, I guess I would conclude, Mr. Speaker, simply by stating and reiterating that this is a small step. It's generally positive, but much more remains to be done, and I hope that the government will get after it. Read my motion from 1986, read some of the accounts of what's going on, the reviews that are going on in other provinces with respect to the need to bring our legal system up into the 1980s and into the 1990s, and take some action please.

MR. SPEAKER: Banff-Cochrane, in summation.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the hon. members across for their support of this important Bill. I think it is an important amendment to the existing legislation. With respect, I have listened to the points that have been made as well by the hon. members, and the only point that I would like to make is with respect to the comment from the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona who advised that I had undertaken to make changes to the Masters and Servants Act, to modernize. My actual comments were at committee stage, that I would certainly bring his concerns forward to the government, and I have certainly already taken the steps to do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

[Motion carried; Bill 16 read a third time]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following Bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried]

No.	Title	Moved by
17	Department of Public Works, Supply and Services Amendment Act, 1989	Kowalski
18	Investment Contracts Repeal Act	Johnston

**Bill 22**  
**Electoral Boundaries Commission**  
**Amendment Act, 1989**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, I move third reading of Bill 22, Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 1989.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: A very brief comment. This Bill sets a process to set up a new process for electoral boundaries. The other day the Minister of Municipal Affairs scored the Liberals for wanting to set up a committee. At least they haven't set up a committee to appoint another committee, which is in effect what this Bill does. I've tried in debate on the resolution in second reading and committee to seek a simple assurance from the government, and that is this: that the process that's being set up here will be completed before we have another provincial election, and the assurance has not been forthcoming.

This committee that has been set up will report sometime next year. The House will then set up an Electoral Boundaries Commission. The experience has been, in every case that I've checked, that that commission takes at least a year to do its work. It's very, very difficult to see the commission reporting to this Assembly in time for the spring 1991 session. In fact, that would be a very optimistic assessment, based on circumstances that have never applied heretofore. So we're in a position where the commission may not be back until late in 1991. I simply would like some assurance from the government that they're prepared to call a fall session, if necessary, to get the boundaries in effect by December 31, 1991. There's a reason why that day is a critical date: because it comes two years and nine months into the mandate, which was approximately the time at which the plug was pulled in this last election.

I have to remind members that when those boundaries are passed, we won't have any poll boundaries, we won't have any poll maps, we won't have an enumeration. We won't have a thing. Unless the government indicates some sense of direction, some time frame for this, this entire initiative could well be interpreted as a means to have another election on the old boundaries. I don't suspect that that's what they want, so it would be a simple matter to indicate that the government would like to bring this entire process to a conclusion by the end of calendar 1991. Even if that needs a fall session, could we please have that assurance?

MR. GOGO: In closing debate on Bill 22, I believe all the arguments had been made, both in principle at second reading and certainly into committee stage. It's the government view, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 22 would proceed as planned, recognizing the responses given by the sponsor of the Bill, the hon. Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs. So I would therefore propose that members support third reading today.

[Motion carried; Bill 22 read a third time]

**Bill 23**  
**Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 1989**

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill 23, Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 1989.

MR. McEACHERN: A promise made, a promise broken.

MR. SPEAKER: Certainly one of the shortest speeches in the whole Assembly.

[Motion carried; Bill 23 read a third time]

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following Bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried]

No.	Title	Moved by
24	Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1989	Gogo (for Horsman)
26	Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 1989	Rostad

head: **PRIVATE BILLS**  
(Third Reading)

[It was moved by the members indicated that the following Bills be read a third time, and the motions were carried]

No.	Title	Moved by
Pr. 1	Canadian Union College Amendment Act, 1989	Moore
Pr. 2	General Hospital (Grey Nuns) of Edmonton Amendment Act, 1989	Roberts
Pr. 3	Canada Olympic Park Property Tax Exemption Amendment Act, 1989	Evans
Pr. 4	Edmonton Community Foundation Amendment Act, 1989	Hewes
Pr. 5	Misericordia Hospital Amendment Act, 1989	Zarusky
Pr. 6	Calgary Research and Development Authority Act, 1989	Nelson
Pr. 7	Calgary Foundation Amendment Act, 1989	Nelson
Pr. 9	Claudia Elizabeth Becker Adoption Act	Wright
Pr. 11	Tammy Lynn Proctor Adoption Act	McInnis

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, Her Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor will now attend upon the Assembly.

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

head: **ROYAL ASSENT**

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order! Her Honour the Honourable Lieutenant Governor.

[The Honourable W. Helen Hunley, Lieutenant Governor of Alberta, took her place upon the Throne]

HER HONOUR: Please be seated.

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly has at its present sitting passed certain Bills to which, and in the name of the Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

CLERK: Your Honour, the following are the titles of the Bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed.

No.	Title
1	Family Day Act
5	Department of Health Act
6	Securities Amendment Act, 1989
8	Department of Social Services Amendment Act, 1989
9	Parks Towns Act
10	Financial Administration Amendment Act, 1989
11	Senatorial Selection Act
12	Credit Union Act
13	Department of Culture and Multiculturalism Amendment Act, 1989
14	Regional Airports Authorities Act
15	Alberta Energy Company Amendment Act, 1989
16	Provincial Court Amendment Act, 1989
17	Department of Public Works, Supply and Services Amendment Act, 1989

18	Investment Contracts Repeal Act
19	Appropriation Act, 1989
20	Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund) Act, 1989
21	Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Fund, Capital Projects Division) Act, 1989-90
22	Electoral Boundaries Commission Amendment Act, 1989
23	Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 1989
24	Legislative Assembly Amendment Act, 1989
26	Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 1989
223	Emblems of Alberta Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 1	Canadian Union College Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 2	General Hospital (Grey Nuns) of Edmonton Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 3	Canada Olympic Park Property Tax Exemption Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 4	Edmonton Community Foundation Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 5	Misericordia Hospital Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 6	Calgary Research and Development Authority Act, 1989
Pr. 7	Calgary Foundation Amendment Act, 1989
Pr. 9	Claudia Elizabeth Becker Adoption Act
Pr. 11	Tammy Lynn Proctor Adoption Act

[The Lieutenant Governor indicated her assent]

CLERK: In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these Bills.

HER HONOUR: Mr. Premier, hon. Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, and Members of the Legislative Assembly, many of you are new, and this will be your first opportunity to be part of Royal Assent. In one of my other careers I, too, was new, and I, too, experienced quite a shock when I found that after all those words and all that care and all that consideration and all that debate, Royal Assent was such a simple but a very traditional act, which is part of our parliamentary system. So those of you who are quite surprised by the suddenness of the Assent after all these weeks, it's part of our tradition, and it's one which I hope we all treasure.

During the past few days I've had the opportunity to stamp around Alberta with some members of my family, and as always I was thrilled by the diversity of its beauty and by the indications of its vitality and strength. It didn't seem to matter whether it was plus 33 degrees Celsius as it was in Brooks on Sunday when we closed the Alberta Summer Games or whether it was considerably cooler in the snowstorm on the Banff-Jasper highway last Wednesday evening; it's still a beautiful province. I'm proud to be a Canadian and to be an Albertan, and I'm sure that each of you is also.

On behalf of all Albertans, I thank all Members of this Legislative Assembly first of all for seeking elected office and for devoting your time and energy all during these past summer days and as you will, I know, in the future. I have confidence in your integrity and in your dedication to the people we all try to serve. But may each of you have, as I had, an opportunity for at least some R and R during the next short days remaining of summer. I wish you all the opportunity to relax and be restored and serve the people of Alberta as I know you all wish to do. I wish you well. Good luck.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

[The Lieutenant Governor left the Chamber]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, perhaps we could wait for the return of the Premier.

MR. SHRAKE: Oh, sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The hon. acrobatic Member for Calgary-Millican.

MR. SHRAKE: Mr. Speaker, it's a real privilege to get up on behalf of all of the members. We were all quite happy with the pages that you've had. I don't know where you get them from, but they've got to be some of the nicest young people in this province. We really appreciate the care and the diligence they've had in this House. We want to give them just a small token, and if you would present those to the pages on behalf of all members from all parties, we'd be very pleased. It's a small token from all us to them to say thank you for a job well done.

MR. SPEAKER: If all the pages would like to come closer, please.

Barbara Szybunka. Okay. Oh boy, I'm in trouble. Judith,

come on up here, please. Now I've done it. Judith Altrejos. Thank you. The members have trouble when I can't call them right, either. Emily De Groot, Dorca Spehar, Catherine Wallace, Crystal Fayant, Andrew Lee, Melissa Willock, Jannet Nguyen, Jay Riva-Cambrin.

We have two who are missing in action -- they went to do other things during the course of the summer -- Diep Do and, again, Nancy Mah. So we'll look after those as well.

So again, thank you, Member for Calgary-Millican, for helping organize this, and thank you, pages, for all of your help. And to the Deputy Speaker and deputy chairmen of committees, thank you.

Deputy Government House Leader.

#### head: **GOVERNMENT MOTIONS**

17. Moved by Mr. Gogo on behalf of Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that when the Legislative Assembly adjourns to recess the First Session of the 22nd Legislature, it shall stand adjourned until a time and date prior to the commencement of the Second Session of the Legislature as is determined by Mr. Speaker after consultation with the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

[Motion carried]

[The House adjourned at 12:48 p.m.]

