

Legislative Assembly of AlbertaTitle: **Friday, March 9, 1990 10:00 a.m.**Date: **90/03/09**

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Prayers**

MR. SPEAKER: Father, on this day of a new beginning, we ask for Your guidance in the responsibility we have undertaken and Your help in fulfilling our duties.

As Members of this Legislative Assembly may we faithfully serve all Albertans and, in serving them, serve You.

Amen.

I ask that hon. members stay standing for one more moment, please. Since the Legislature last met, one of the former officers of this Legislature died. Mr. Grant Salmon, former Sergeant-at-Arms, passed away on December 19, 1989. Grant was our Sergeant-at-Arms from February of 1977 until March of 1981.

Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him.

Amen.

head: **Notices of Motions**

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 40 I intend to introduce a motion congratulating the men's world figure skating champion, Mr. Kurt Browning. I will do this after the question period.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, under Standing Order 30 I have given previous notice to your office asking that the normal business of the House be suspended so as to immediately move into a debate on the Meech Lake matter, what I call the constitutional crisis, a matter, I think, of great urgency.

head: **Tabling Returns and Reports**

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, I rise to table four copies of three documents as required by statute, these being the sixth annual report of the Advisory Committee on Wilderness Areas and Ecological Reserves, the 12th annual report of the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and the financial statements for the Alberta Sport Council for the year ended March 31, 1989.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the Provincial Senatorial Election held Monday, October 16, 1989.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of the Assembly this morning Mr. Peter Mahlangu, who is the Canadian representative of the African National Congress. He is in Alberta now on a tour across the country to talk to Canadians about how we can continue actions of solidarity so that one day the people, the majority of South Africans, will take their rightful place . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member. Now would you ask the House to . . .

MR. GIBEAULT: I would like to ask Mr. Mahlangu to please stand now and receive the very warm welcome of this House.

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly two of my constituents from Calgary-West who have come up to join us in this wonderful Assembly, Jeannette Young and Anne Birch, who are sitting in the members' gallery. I would ask them to rise and receive the warm welcome of all members.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce to you and to the members of this House 72 members of the Evansdale elementary school. They're in the public gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers Mr. Muzyka, Miss Lise Dropko, and Miss Laura Delasalle, along with parents who have come to assist. I would ask that all members of the House give the usual response in greeting to these special people from Edmonton-Glengarry. Would you please stand.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly 11 enthusiastic Girl Guides from Claresholm. They are accompanied by Mel Lyster, Jean Burnham, Mary Ann Williams, Sharon Doig, and Trevor Lyster. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they receive the normal cordial welcome to this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Solicitor General.

MR. FOWLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to and through you to members of the Assembly 23 students and their teacher Mr. Dammann from one of the finest community schools in Alberta, the William D. Cuts community school in St. Albert. I would ask that they rise and receive the usual acknowledgment and welcome of members of the Assembly.

head: **Statement by the Speaker**

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members, before we come to the exciting time known as question period, we have the ground rules. Before we begin question period this morning, I would like to bring you up to date regarding the recent Canadian radio and television commission's decision. Since my memorandum of March 6 to each member we have now been apprised that live coverage of question period in the Edmonton area will be carried on channel 5 on Videotron and channel 25 on Shaw Cable and rebroadcast nightly on the ACCESS Network at 11 p.m. An additional memo will be sent to your offices.

The House leaders and I met to discuss a number of issues, including the possibility of introduction of members' statements, a temporary Standing Order with regard to designation of House business, and of course question period. We researched question period practices across Canada, including the House of Commons, with regard to the number of questions and rotation. Some members of the House have suggested that government benchers do not have a right to participate in question period; the Chair continues to reject that suggestion. Regarding question period, the House leaders were unable to come to unanimous agreement. The following format will apply until unanimous agreement is reached by all three parties in this House. Nevertheless, the Chair expects the new format will enable more members to participate in question period.

The first three main questions will be designated as follows: the first two main questions with two supplementaries to the Leader of the Official Opposition or his designate; the third main question with two supplementaries to the leader of the Liberal Party or his designate. The leaders of the opposition are thus given due recognition in the question period order. After their participation, now comes the change. The format for all members will be one main question and one supplementary. This portion of question period will commence with a government member, followed by other members of the House on a random basis.

If a minister supplies additional information to the question at the end of question period or after subsequent question periods, the member who asked the original question will have the opportunity to ask one supplementary question, to which the minister may reply.

All points of order and questions of privilege shall be dealt with at the end of question period as stated in *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, sixth edition, section 317(3). In order to raise a relevant point of order or question of privilege, it is the member's responsibility to cite the appropriate reference from *Standing Orders*, *Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, sixth edition, and/or *Erskine May: Parliamentary Practice*, 21st edition.

With respect to Ministerial Statements I have been advised that ministers will attempt to make them as brief as possible. Only the Leader of the Official Opposition will have up to three minutes to respond to Ministerial Statements. The Chair does request the government to make more Ministerial Statements to the House.

Finally, inasmuch as the Speaker is charged with the responsibility for the Chamber and its environs, the Chair directs that at all times, including committee stage and estimates, the House is now a nonsmoking area.

head: Oral Question Period

Environmental Assessments of Pulp Mills

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Last fall this government was dragged, kicking and screaming, into holding an environmental impact assessment on the proposed Alberta-Pacific pulp mill, but now we discover that the government's own ministry of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife held back crucial studies in 1988 showing that fish in the Wapiti River had furan and dioxin levels far exceeding federal Health and Welfare guidelines. Mr. Speaker, this is outrageous. Albertans' health, especially native Albertans' health, could be seriously affected by this. My question to the Premier is this: can the Premier explain why this government had to be bullied into conducting an EIA on the Al-Pac project and then sat on crucial information that the review board specifically required?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the government did conduct an environmental impact assessment. I think the hon. member is referring to a review board, and perhaps he might want to rephrase his question when he uses his supplementary. But the government insists on environmental impact assessments on all projects that might have an impact on the environment.

As far as the Fish and Wildlife report the hon. member is referring to, I'd ask the minister responsible to reply.

MR. FJORDBOTTON: Mr. Speaker, there was no withholding

of any information whatsoever from the Alberta-Pacific board. The study that is in question is a study that was done by collecting fish taken from the Wapiti River. It was five longnose suckers, and they were collected in 1987. In the jurisdiction responsibilities that we have, river basin studies are done by the Department of the Environment. It is also the responsibility of Health and Welfare Canada and also Fisheries and Oceans. The report was forwarded to them, and in 1988 Tom Siddon, the federal minister, put out a press release on that. The request that came to my department came on January 16. It came from a lawyer to the Al-Pac board on a verbal request, and that report was provided to them. They already had the information and the interpretation of the information, and the evidence of that is that it was included in the Al-Pac report.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, this was sent on January 30. It shouldn't be legalese; this information should have been given to the review board without them even asking for it. That's the point.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to direct it back to the Premier though. In view of this serious matter, will the Premier make it clear to his minister that any information dealing with rivers, dioxins, and furans will immediately be given to the people that have knowledge of this and that he will not play games in the future with Albertans' health?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, we do not play games with Albertans' health. This government – and this province, as the throne speech says, "is the cleanest province in Canada." We have the toughest standards and the best environmental controls.

MR. MARTIN: He obviously hasn't read this document, Mr. Speaker, and the rhetoric is cheap.

Let's put his money where his mouth is. In view of the serious matters here, if it was good enough to have a hearing for Al-Pac, will the Premier now give his word that we'll have a moratorium on all pulp mills, including Daishowa and other ones, before we move ahead then, Mr. Speaker?

MR. GETTY: No, Mr. Speaker. Those other mills have had environmental impact assessments filed, and they've been accepted both by the provincial government and the federal government, and they are progressing. Now, the hon. member, I know, is quite concerned about this. It may well be that the Minister of the Environment would also want to provide some information regarding the study he's talked about.

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I really don't know what all the carping is about. If the opposition would do their research in the library rather than depending on the *Edmonton Journal* for their research, they might get the facts right. This report, which contains full disclosure of the results, was tabled as a sessional paper on May 24, 1988. It was a study done across Canada by Health and Welfare, who said, when releasing the results nationally, that the results have been analyzed by Health and Welfare officials. They indicated

that the levels of dioxins and furans found in the edible portions . . . are not considered to pose a health hazard to consumers.

And if levels were indeed unsafe, it is the responsibility of Health and Welfare Canada to issue health warnings . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Please sit down.

Second main question, Leader of the Opposition.

Federal Fiscal Policies Impact

MR. MARTIN: Well, we know it's all rhetoric. They still don't believe in anything. Hide it from the people, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we'll try now with the Treasurer, that honest, straightforward Treasurer. Recently the Conservative government in Ottawa brought down a budget that frankly is disastrous for Albertans. Not only did we lose money in transfer payments; the promised support for OSLO is gone, and eventually they're going to be bringing in a GST, which the Treasurer and I agree will be disastrous for Alberta. But I want to say, in dealing with the federal budget, that we were set up by this Treasurer and this provincial government. Do you remember, Mr. Speaker, that he came back from New York saying our economy is wonderful, no problems, and that we would be able to handle restraint in federal transfer payments better than other provinces? Michael Wilson certainly took him up on his word on that. Now, my question to the Treasurer. Would the Treasurer now finally admit that the loss of money in transfer payments to this province is a serious blow to Albertans?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, we from time to time have indicated how important transfer payments are to this province, and even if the Member for Edmonton-Norwood wants to look at the estimates – I know he doesn't like reading the detailed information, as you can see from his research; it's too obvious for him. We would suggest that the amount of transfers are important, and some of the positions taken by the federal government will cause us to rethink certain of our economic positions; no doubt about that. And any time that a contract is abridged unilaterally by one government against another, it does generate questions about how fiscal federalism does work. Mr. Speaker, we will have to bear that cross though. We will have an opportunity very soon to discuss with Mr. Wilson the very changes that have been underlined here.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, it's been six months since we've heard the opposition across the way. We've already seen the faulty research. We've seen the silliness of their questions, and we know that they're still hanging their hats on doom and despair. They talk about rhetoric; their rhetoric is just the same as ever. The rhetoric of despair pervades their entire question period.

MR. MARTIN: The Treasurer still has diarrhea of words – there's no doubt of that – after six months, Mr. Speaker. And I'd advise the Treasurer never to get in a poker game with Michael Wilson, because he'd lose his shirt.

Now, my question, Mr. Speaker; a simple suggestion. Why are we not prepared to join with B.C. and Ontario in a court challenge to fight against these cuts in the federal transfer payments? Why don't we show some backbone like they are, Mr. Speaker?

MR. JOHNSTON: Again, Mr. Speaker, we're in the process of evaluating what it is that the Ontario government and the B.C. government are proposing, and unlike the opposition, we like to have the facts. We have to understand the implications for our fiscal position before we act, and I can assure you that my colleague the Attorney General is now working on that process. As I've indicated as well, we'd like to hear Mr. Wilson's position, and I understand that he's about to call a meeting to discuss just that. But let me make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, as we said in the last session of this Assembly in 1989, the Alberta economy

is strong. It's performing very well. The revenue collections are strong. I know that throughout the course of the discussions here the numbers about employment, the numbers about retail sales, about new investment coming to this province will be clear. And the opposition will have trouble with that because, as I say, they don't like good news.

MR. MARTIN: Yes, Deficit Dick. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, the facts are that the federal government put it to us; those are the facts. Maybe the Premier would like to add to this. I'll ask him specifically then. What is this government prepared to do to send a message to their federal cousins to tell them that their treatment of Alberta with the budget and the GST is unfair and unacceptable to all Albertans?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member knows – and if he doesn't know, he should know – that the government of Alberta has led Canada in opposing the goods and services tax. As a matter of fact, I recall going to a Premiers' Conference where only two Premiers going into the conference were concerned about the goods and services tax. After the leadership of Alberta we had unanimous support from all the Premiers. We've also had that in the area of Senate reform and in the area of high interest rates. This government leads Canada in the areas of working on interprovincial and national issues.

Rental Accommodation

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, before I start, I would like to thank you, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and all the members of the House for the concern that all of you have shown during my period of illness. I'm grateful to all of you.

My first question is to the Premier. There was nothing in the Speech from the Throne yesterday that in any way dealt with the concern that I believe is now a great concern, a crisis, with respect to rental accommodation in Alberta. Does the Premier not accept the fact that there is this serious situation, that there is a crisis, that something should be done in order to meet the problems that renters are having?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, just before replying to the question, I want to express on behalf of myself and my family and members of our party and probably all members of this Legislature my sincere concern and my sincere best wishes on behalf of all of us to the hon. member regarding his health. We hope that he will be strong and healthy and able to perform the duties and responsibilities that Albertans have asked of him.

Mr. Speaker, one of the situations that has existed in this province over a period of some eight years has been the fact that in the whole area of rental housing, rents have not been able to be at a level sufficient to bring on new investment to improve and increase the amount of rental accommodation in the province. Therefore, people who have been in rental accommodation have had a great advantage in terms of shelter costs over those who have had their own homes. As a matter of fact, in homes they have suffered with the devaluation of their properties, and only now are they coming back. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, it is the government's belief that with modest increases in rents we will have dramatic increases in investment in this area. I've asked my Minister of Municipal Affairs to make sure that he works with the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs in this area, and perhaps the Minister of Municipal Affairs may want to augment my reply.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in supplement to what the Premier has said to the question of the hon. Liberal leader, we are watching very closely the vacancy rate at the present time and do have concerns in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. I've been meeting with the private sector to encourage them to move into the construction portion for rental accommodation as quickly as possible, and I'm also working with the two cities to encourage them to put land on the market so that development can occur.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that the minister has indicated that he's watching the situation closely. Given that the vacancy rates are projected to be .5 percent in Calgary and in Edmonton 1.9 percent – a healthy average is about 3 percent – I believe that the situation is serious. What specifically does the minister intend to do with the development sector to stimulate, to get us out of the situation where we have to go the NDP route and start calling for rental review boards? [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, in response to the very responsible question of the hon. Liberal leader and the responsible attitude that he has portrayed with regards to this item, one of the things that we cannot do as a government is to leap into the marketplace and start to construct public housing. And I know the two House leaders of both the Liberal Party and the ND Party have stated on a radio interview not too long ago that the some \$600 million that was lost in this last round of public housing construction shouldn't happen again. They've said that publicly. So I take that as an assumption that we agree to in this Assembly.

But, Mr. Speaker, in response to the question, what we are looking at is a rent supplement program to assist those people in low-income areas and to assist them in affordable accommodation. We're applying that as liberally, if I can use that word correctly, as possible at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister.

Final supplementary, Edmonton-Glengarry, followed by Calgary-Glenmore.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Premier, my last question is to you. The poor and the moderate-income earners in Alberta seem to be the hardest hit in this whole issue of rental accommodation. Would your government consider bringing back the tax credit system for the poor, those people who can't make ends meet?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. member, first, that in the government's budget over the past two years huge numbers of Albertans, some 500,000, have had their taxes lowered or have been removed completely from paying taxes. That has allowed in this province the largest disposable income to Albertans of any province in Canada. Nevertheless, the hon. member has raised a question regarding a program which the government did support over a period of time. He has raised it, some members of our own party have raised it with me and members of my caucus, and we will look again at that matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Glenmore, followed by Edmonton-Calder.

Employment Initiatives

MRS. MIROSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As chairman of economic development caucus I would like to express some concerns our committee has received from various groups who've met with us over the past few months. These concerns were regarding industrial growth and the direction we are taking towards employment in this province. With the recent announcement of the cancellation or postponement of the OSLO project and the delay of the Al-Pac project, what does the Minister of Career Development and Employment plan to do in response to the employment question in this province?

MR. WEISS: The question may or may not be hypothetical, but I think it should be responded to in this way. There are two phases to the portion, first of all, as it relates to OSLO, and OSLO in the preconstruction or engineering stage is still on schedule. While there may be in her terms a postponement, it really is in my terms just a short challenge that can be overcome. Perhaps a supplementary may wish to be deferred to the Minister of Energy.

Particularly those who talk about the employment situation in Alberta, I think Albertans will be pleased to note that Alberta has the highest employment growth rate in the country. I just heard the Premier and the Provincial Treasurer, and I'd like to quote, as I did pick up on two words they did say. The Premier said "leads Canada." We do lead Canada in this area, and that's very significant. The Provincial Treasurer said that the "economy is strong." Those stats do bring it out. Mr. Speaker, there are some 1,208,700 Albertans working at this stage and some 35,100 working over this same time last year. I think those figures are very strong and very indicative of the direction this government is taking in striving towards diversification.

MRS. MIROSH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct the supplementary to the Minister of Energy. I would like to know exactly what the minister is doing to ensure the viability of the OSLO project and the employment for our future Albertans.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Career Development and Employment I think has adequately outlined the job creation and at the same time outlined the separation of job creation for the engineering phase and the construction phase for the OSLO project. We have said on a continual basis that the federal government should show an ongoing concern not only for the national security of oil supply for this country but also a concern for continued job opportunities and job growth in western Canada and Alberta. The OSLO project is on stream to continue in the engineering phase through to about the middle of 1991, and there are some 130 to 150 jobs currently as a result of the engineering phase. We expect some 160 jobs at the peak period of the engineering phase. Hopefully the federal government will see the wisdom of continuing support for OSLO at the trigger date in 1991, Mr. Speaker, and create an additional 6,000 jobs for Albertans.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Calder, followed by Edmonton-Jasper Place, then Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Assistance for Child Care

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Family and Social Services. The government's white paper on day care definitely does not present us with a fair, better system. Funding for day care is actually being cut. The quality of care for infants is being sacrificed, and many parents will either have to pay higher fees or will be forced into using cheaper, unlicensed care. To the minister. How can this minister justify reducing its budget for day care in this province by 6 percent, or almost \$5 million?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, as usual the members opposite are having a hard time getting their facts correct. But I'd be interested in knowing just specifically what it is this member takes exception to. Is she concerned that we're providing more help to low-income families? Is she concerned that we're providing more help to those single mothers? Is she concerned that we're consulting with Albertans through this process? Is she concerned that we're going to be able to help two-thirds of the existing people accessing day care even more through this process? Or is she more interested in just promoting fear-mongering amongst those users?

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Calder.

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supplementary then. It's clear that this white paper does not bring about a fair, better system. In fact, this minister has admitted that average families in this province will pay more for child care. Will this minister admit that the real agenda of this government is not to improve child care in this province but to reduce the money that's available for child care?

MR. OLDRING: No, Mr. Speaker. The member is right out to lunch on this one. This government is committed to helping low-income families even more with their day care. This government is committed in particular to helping those single mothers get back into the work force, and we're going to continue with these initiatives. We think they're positive. We think that on balance Albertans support them.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

Dioxin Levels in Wapiti River Fish

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government has had possession of the secret ecological report on fish samples in the Wapiti River since April 5, 1988, almost two years ago, which concludes that "All fish with the exception of one labeled TCDD #104 exceed the fish consumption guideline of 20 parts per trillion." The Minister of the Environment talks about research. He should be ashamed. The Department of the Environment tabled on May 18 a document alleging that all fish samples were below 20 parts per trillion; that was done by the previous Minister of the Environment. I would like to know why Alberta Environment failed in its responsibility, not the federal government's but its responsibility, to warn Albertans about the potential health hazard from these fish samples. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. KLEIN: You might think, Mr. Speaker, that the opposi-

tion would have used the hiatus to work up some new material or at least a new approach. In fact, this report contains a document that was filed in this Legislature on May 24, 1988. It contains all the information – all the information – referred to by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place. It's been in the Environment library for some time now, and you would think he would have taken the opportunity to go to the library to pick up a copy and avoid some of the political posturing we see taking place in the House today.

Thank you.

MR. McINNIS: Dodge and weave.

A specific question. The AI-Pac EIA Review Board report has a number of excellent recommendations which have not yet been responded to by the government. I wonder if the minister would respond to the one in particular that says the 20 parts per trillion level is biased against native people, who eat considerably more fish and eat different parts of the fish. Is he considering providing a higher standard on behalf of the native populations and a healthy future for all Albertans?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member refers to a very significant document, a document that probably will be a historical document in terms of environmental impact assessments in this country. It was this government that took the leadership role in providing that environmental impact assessment process.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to answer the question. My department will do the most complete study of the recommendations and will be bringing back a report in due time as to how this government will address those recommendations. And believe me, they will be given the most serious consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to pursue further the issue that the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife was suppressing evidence contained in a May, 1988, report indicating that dangerously high levels of dioxins were found in Wapiti River fish. If, in fact, this evidence can be confirmed, then surely this minister must tender his resignation. My question is to the minister. Did the minister not consciously and purposely suppress this evidence because it was contrary to his department's objective to build those pulp mills in the northern part of this province regardless of the environmental cost?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, when you holler out of an empty barrel, you make a lot of noise.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, on this particular issue there was no suppression of information whatsoever. In fact, the jurisdictional division of responsibilities between Oceans Canada, Health and Welfare Canada, Alberta Environment, as well as my department worked well in the process. We collected the fish, supplied them to Health and Welfare Canada; they did an analysis, and they received that in May. On May 16, 1988, Tom Siddon, the federal minister, put out a press release which stated:

The results of analyses of fish samples in these surveys have been evaluated by Health and Welfare officials. They have indicated that the levels of dioxins and furans found in the edible portions of fish samples are not considered to pose a health hazard to consumers.

Mr. Speaker, that's their responsibility. If there is any tainting of fish that would cause a hazard to human health in this

province, this government will take steps to make sure health is protected. To make those ridiculous statements doesn't even make any sense.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, his department changed the conclusion that said that the fish weren't okay to say the fish were okay. Did the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife not refuse consistently to allow his staff to appear before the Al-Pac review panel because they had this information that he simply didn't want them talking about in public?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, he makes an accusation that my department changed numbers to reflect something. I mean, that's an accusation and a charge. He should put up or shut up.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Dunvegan, followed by Edmonton-Beverly and Westlock-Sturgeon.

Disaster Assistance Program

MR. CLEGG: Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the fall of 1989 northwestern Alberta was devastated by winds, rain, and snow. In February this government announced a program to help farmers that were hit hard. I would like to ask the hon. minister of public works and supply: what stage and how many applications have taken place? Because there is a real cash flow shortage in that area.

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, the disaster assistance program for northwestern Alberta that was created and announced by our Premier several weeks ago has as of yesterday received some 2,500 applications. The initial processing of the cheques is now under way. There's one difference with this program than in previous programs. Direction of the government was, because of the economic situation of farmers in northwestern Alberta, that we would allocate a one-third payment upon application received, so that farmers could get under way with their spring crops. It's unique, and it's reflective of that, but to date it's about 2,500 applications before the government.

MR. CLEGG: Well, thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm really concerned . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Excuse me, hon. member. There's no need for that. At least the person gets a chance to get out five words. Thank you.
Dunvegan.

MR. CLEGG: Well, thank you, Mr. Minister. I'm very concerned, because I get many, many phone calls, and I'm sure that the hon. members for Grande Prairie and Lesser Slave Lake and many other MLAs do. Did I understand that there are already some cheques in the mail?

MR. KOWALSKI: Mr. Speaker, it's indeed unfortunate, the disaster that struck northwestern Alberta in the summer of 1989. It brought that area some 300 percent of the normal rainfall that was really allocated. I recall hearing petitions from the two opposition parties in the province that the government should respond and react, and the government did that, in consultation with agricultural producers in northwestern Alberta, as a result of determined consultation of the two ministers of Agriculture

in our province, the MLAs in the area. The response is there; the reaction is there and to date has received, I believe, very positive feedback from agricultural producers in the area. It is indeed regrettable that the two opposition parties would snicker when the government has responded to the economic needs of agriculture in this province, that on this first day of the new Legislative Assembly they would dismay and ridicule a concern for needed information.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Beverly, followed by Westlock-Sturgeon.

Rental Accommodation

(continued)

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. For the last two years the government has been aware that falling vacancy rates would lead to high rental increases. Now we have people across the province facing rental increases far outstripping their own wages and pension increases. My question is to the minister. Given that the people's rents are going through the ceiling everywhere in the province, is the minister going to introduce measures to keep the landlords from raising rents above limits?

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the issue of rents and the increases that are there, the hon. Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs spoke to the government's general policy earlier.

I am pleased to inform the House that we foresaw some of the difficulties regarding the Landlord and Tenant Act and the fair and honest distribution of rules with regard to accommodation. We will be reviewing that Act and, in fact, established a task force last January that I expect to report in the immediate future. That should assist us in ensuring there is fairness and equity in the marketplace.

I'm not sure anybody in this government or in others across North America can assure that in each individual circumstance people will be able to have the accommodation they want and can pay for within the circumstances. The government has the programs, under the minister of housing's responsibility, which assist the senior citizens, assist low-income individuals, assist those who are handicapped. We have undertaken to continue to watch that circumstance to ensure that people who need assistance most have it. The fair and honest relationship between landlord and tenant is my responsibility. We do intend to further explore needs in that area.

MR. EWASIUK: Mr. Speaker, in the middle of this housing chaos this government has compounded the crisis by removing Alberta Mortgage and Housing units from the rental market in Edmonton, in Calgary, and, of course, in rural Alberta. Today is the deadline for Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation tenants to decide between buying the home which they can ill afford or being forced out into the streets. My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and housing. Will the minister make a commitment today to stop the sale of these badly needed rental units until such time as the department has built affordable alternative housing, and will this government, at least for once, put people before profit?

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, our ultimate concern is the

people who are out there in various accommodation, rental units. To this point in time we have under the rent supplement program some 1,075 units that were provided for people in that low-income bracket: income tested. There were another 1,300 to 1,400 units in which we had people renting facilities who were not income tested, not low-income people. So we have put on the market some 1,193 units on the basis that those people were capable of making arrangements through a 95 percent mortgage, 5 percent down, paying \$700 and some towards legal fees for buying their own accommodation. These units are condominiums. The window in the marketplace was there today to put them on the market.

The question, Mr. Speaker, is whether we're being compassionate with regards to those people in those units. We are. Anyone who has a special circumstance can come and discuss it with us, and we work out arrangements. I want to say that out of those numbers of units we have out there today that are available for purchase, over 1,000, we have somewhere in the vicinity of 20 to 30 persons who have come to us and said, "We have special circumstances," and we have worked it out with them: circumstances such as health, because they have to go to a local medical clinic or they have to be adjacent to a hospital; their children have to attend special schools; their children wish to complete their education in a certain area. We have accommodated them by both rent supplement in other facilities if necessary or accommodated them in that facility. No one out there at the present time has suffered, and we have taken every precaution possible to look after their needs. We are compassionate. We believe in people.

Crow Benefit Payment Method

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Yesterday's throne speech was a desert as far as farmers were concerned, in spite of the fact that there's a forecast drop of income of 50 to 60 percent for farmers in the coming year and we have signs like the Saskatchewan Premier putting \$300 to \$400 million this year into aiding farmers. Now, the minister and the former minister have made much of the change in the method of payment, which is putting the Crow rate directly to the farmer, but that can't go ahead unless the provincial government is willing to come up with a \$90 million dilution payment to farmers.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. TAYLOR: That, with the direct payment, will mean something like \$200 to \$300 million to the farmers. Can the minister tell me whether the minister is in the position to guarantee the dilution payment to farmers so that the method of payment can be changed?

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Agriculture.

MR. ISLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would have to respond and suggest that the throne speech was not a desert for farmers. There is one very significant commitment in that throne speech that farmers have been lobbying for for some time, and that is the improved crop insurance program. The hon. member will have to wait until budget day to see what impact that has as far as financial commitment is concerned.

His question was primarily related to the willingness of the government to pick up the dilution payment on the Alber-

ta/B.C./ Alberta Wheat Pool pay the producer pilot, and his figure of the amount is not quite correct. You'll have to do a little more research on that one, sir. But I think the hon. member and most members of the House related to the agricultural industry should be aware that that is a backup position we were developing so that we could say to the federal government, "If you don't have the will to change the Western Grain Transportation Act right across Canada, here is a way that we can do it in the two most western provinces."

We currently have a committee in place, as a result of the agrifood conference in Ottawa, studying the transportation policies of this country. If we're successful in our first objective, which is to change the method of payment along with all four western provinces, the question becomes hypothetical, and we'll have to address it at that time.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, maybe a supplemental, then, to the minister, who is very agile or at least changes faster than I can keep up. Since when did this government attach the fact that the other western provinces have to go along with the change in the method of payment before this government would go ahead on their own in this province? Since when did we get that change of policy?

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Speaker, it has always been the position of this government, it has always been the position of the bulk of the agricultural producer groups in this province – and I think at this point in time, all with the exception of one – that the Western Grain Transportation Act should be changed to pay the producer or a payout throughout western Canada. That's always been our number one position, and that is still our number one position. The hon. member, if he's doing his job as an Ag critic, should be well aware of the report of the Western Diversification Agricultural Alliance and their recommended ways of adjusting the whole Western Grain Transportation Act. I repeat: that's always been our first position. It's hypothetical for us to deal with a follow-up position until we know where we are on the first one.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Vegreville.

Loan Guarantees to Businessmen

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The sorry record of this government's dealings with their old buddy Peter Pocklington continues to frustrate and anger Albertans.

MR. KLEIN: Question.

MR. FOX: You'll get it. You're going to get a lot more of them too.

Albertans don't know why this government was so eager to shovel taxpayers' money into Peter Pocklington's bank accounts, and they've refused to tell people what the money was used for. They do know, however, that the government consistently referred to a \$55 million loan guarantee as part of the package, day in, day out during questioning in the Legislature, knowing full well that the true amount of exposure was closer to \$59 million. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Premier if he would stand up and tell the people why the government deliberately hid the truth from the people of Alberta and didn't tell us that it was indeed closer to \$59 million of exposure rather than the \$55 million they kept referring to.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, what I would ask the hon. member is to review his comments about deliberately hiding the truth. I think the hon. member, much as the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark, now has a responsibility to put up or shut up.

Other than that, the hon. member knows that the responsibility for the guarantee or other assistance to either agricultural processors or other companies within this province is under the responsibility of the Provincial Treasurer. I ask him if he would like to augment my reply.

MR. JOHNSTON: I would like to augment it, but I think the Premier has said it very clearly about the faulty way in which this member conducts his research. I may, Mr. Speaker, have to give the member a little lesson in accrual accounting. I'm sure all members would love to hear it. The fact is that the year-end of the government happens to be March 31 of each year, and in the way in which we operate, we want to provide as much information as possible. So let the record show that we have revealed in the public accounts, as the Member for Vegreville has confirmed, all the guarantees. So let's not have that argument again, because we've put that on the table, and at least the member has read that.

But because the payment date, from the date that the loan is paid to the next payment, which is usually a year later, has a March 31 year-end in between, and because our agreement with the borrower is that we will provide not just a guarantee on the principal but on the interest accrued through that period, obviously the amount of the guarantee is going to increase until the payment is made at the end of the year. The Member for Vegreville, who tells me from time to time he has been involved in a small business activity – and many people have disbelief about that. He's confirmed it, and I know he wouldn't mislead the House. Even he would know that interest increases every day from the last payment. March 31 came in between, and obviously our amount of liability increased as well. Now, if more information . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you, hon. member.

There are two questions before the House at the moment. The first one is that the Chair heard, subject to review of the Blues, "deliberately not telling the truth," which is in clear violation of our parliamentary practice, and we'd hope that perhaps the Member for Vegreville would withdraw, if not today then tomorrow after review of the Blues. Hon. Member for Vegreville, first.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to look at the Blues and would accommodate after that. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. It's just a yes or no situation.

There is one supplementary left to the Member for Vegreville if, indeed, unanimous consent is given. Does the House agree to give unanimous consent to complete this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

MR. FOX: I'd like to respectfully refuse the Treasurer's request to teach me how to fudge the books.

But I'd like to ask him very clearly, because they're his figures – his budget says \$55 million presented to us in June of last year; his public accounts say \$59 million presented to us effective

March 1989 – did he not know that we were exposed close to \$59 million last year at this time rather than the \$55 million that he put in his books? Four million dollars might not mean much to you, but it means a lot to Albertans.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I've answered that question already. I know that my colleagues, surely from this side, don't want me to go through it again. The member has difficulty understanding. I agree with that, and that should be of public record as well. It's simply a matter of accrued interest. We have not misled anybody. The guarantee was \$55 million at the time it was put in place. Of course it's going to change, both on the basis of accrued interest and payments made. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

Ordinarily we would deal with the requests under Standing Order 30 and Standing Order 40. However, due to the passage of time and the fact that there are, as far as the Chair knows, certain guests in the gallery, might we revert to the Introduction of Special Guests at this time?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

The Member for Edmonton-Glengarry, followed by the Member for Lloydminster.

MR. DECORE: I'm sorry, sir. This is Standing Order 30 that. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. The Chair apologizes. I haven't got all the members straight in my head yet.

Edmonton-Strathcona. Thank you.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, it was me, Mr. Speaker, but the guests have departed now.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. member.
Lloydminster.

Introduction of Special Guests (reversion)

MR. CHERRY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly 10 students and nine parents, also their teacher, from the Lakeland Christian school. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask them to stand and receive the traditional welcome from the Assembly.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair would also like to inform the House that the Chair has been notified of a matter of privilege which will be brought forward on Monday next.

Now let us turn to the issue under Standing Order 30. Edmonton-Glengarry.

Request for Emergency Debate

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move that the ordinary business of the House be suspended so as to deal with a matter of urgency. Subsection (7) of 30 states that "the matter pro-

posed for discussion must relate to a genuine emergency, calling for immediate and urgent consideration."

Mr. Speaker, I think the members of the Legislature are aware of our position on Meech Lake; that is, one of opposition from the outset. But this issue I'm raising today is not that issue. It is another issue, the issue which I see of extreme urgency insofar as Canada is concerned, that of the clock ticking toward the disintegration of what we know as Canada. I'd like to briefly review some of the evidence that has taken place in the last month, the last few days, the last few hours.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland Legislature brought forward notice that it would rescind its position on the Meech Lake accord. They're not bluffing. The three leaders in Manitoba have indicated their strong position on Meech Lake. They're not bluffing. Quebec has set up a special committee to examine options, presumably sovereignty association. They're not bluffing. The Prime Minister has done little except to reinforce the Quebec position to say that Quebec is not bluffing, talking about the fact that there will be consequences if Meech is not ratified. A majority of Quebec Members of Parliament in the Progressive Conservative Party are threatening to resign their seats if Meech is not ratified. On March 7 Mr. Rae, the leader of the ND Party in Ontario, indicated that this was a national crisis, greater than the conscription crisis and greater than the sovereignty vote in 1982 in Quebec. He calls for action to take place. A New York financial house yesterday already started the scenario of what happens if Quebec leaves and who's going to benefit and who can look after themselves.

Mr. Speaker, public opinion polls show clearly a strong majority in English Canada against the accord and vice versa in Quebec. But what is very interesting is that the polls show, sir, that there is a public that is not well informed. It also shows that the public have lost confidence in political leaders in dealing with this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, please. The standing order clearly states under subsection (2): "may briefly state the arguments in favour of the request for leave." We're dealing with a matter of urgency, not the matter of the subject of the motion. Please complete within 30 seconds.

MR. DECORE: Sir, perhaps I could end by saying this. The matter is now of extreme urgency. The matter is one of the disintegration of our country. I don't want to see that. I don't think any member of this Legislature wants to see this. I think it's important that we start to debate and take the whips off on this debate, make it a nonpartisan debate to see what Albertans want from their 83 constituencies with respect to Meech and how Canada goes. I think we've got to soften in some areas, but I want some assurances, for example, in the Triple E Senate area before I soften my position. I'd like to hear from representatives on this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Other representatives of the parties in the House? Government House Leader.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, I know the matter being raised is a matter of concern to Canadians and Albertans and all of us in this Assembly, but the procedure of debating a motion of this kind should only be entered upon or agreed to when there is no other opportunity for debating the subject matter at hand. Clearly, when the matter has been raised in the throne speech

in a very significant way, and we are about to embark upon the throne speech debate within a matter of moments, it is totally illogical to suspend the regular procedure of the Assembly to engage in a debate on a matter which we can debate within moments.

Of course, there is the matter of urgency. *Beauchesne* 390 makes it clear that urgency of debate is the matter which should be discussed

when the ordinary opportunities provided by the rules of the House do not permit the subject to be brought on early enough and the public interest demands that discussion take place immediately.

Mr. Speaker, it can be debated within minutes of now. Not that the subject isn't important. It was raised in the throne speech in a significant way. The leader of the Liberal Party can this morning engage in debate, and other members of the Assembly can engage in debate on this very topic, since it was a significant and integral part of the throne speech presented to the Assembly yesterday. Therefore, there is no urgency of debate on this subject, because it can be dealt with in moments by debating the throne speech.

MR. SPEAKER: Comment from the Official Opposition?

The Chair appreciates the fact that appropriate notice was given with respect to the request under Standing Order 30. The Chair agrees that it is indeed an important issue. However, because of other issues involved vis-à-vis the time line of June 23 and the opportunity to speak during the throne speech debate, the Chair rules that this particular request fails the test of urgency.

head: **Motions Under Standing Order 40**

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Rocky Mountain House.

Moved by Mr. Lund:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly congratulate world championship figure skater Kurt Browning for winning the 1990 world men's figure skating championship in Halifax on March 8, 1990, becoming the first Canadian ever to win consecutive men's singles titles.

MR. LUND: Mr. Speaker, I have for distribution a copy of the motion I wish to introduce.

[Motion carried]

head: **Consideration of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech**

Moved by Ms Calahasen:

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

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

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

MS CALAHASEN: Mr. Speaker and members of the Assembly, it is with great pride and a sense of privilege that I rise today on behalf of the Lesser Slave Lake constituency to deliver my maiden speech and move acceptance of the Speech from the

Throne presented by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

I would like to compliment Her Honour for the grace and dignity she exhibits in the execution of her duties as the representative of Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, and express gratitude for the guidance and wisdom contained in the Speech from the Throne.

I beg leave now, Mr. Speaker, to address some of my constituents in my native language.

[remarks in Cree]

Hello, my people, my constituents. I thank you for giving me the opportunity and the trust to represent you in the Legislature. I am very proud to be here. I will work very hard on your behalf. [as submitted]

Mr. Speaker, please allow me to congratulate you on your re-election to the Chair of this Assembly. As a new MLA last session, I observed that your fair and impartial judgments within this Assembly maintained the order and decorum necessary for us to conduct the business of government in Alberta. I am sure I speak for all of my colleagues when I say that we are much the wiser for your tutelage and your ability to rise above the partisan nature of political discourse. I also wish to thank the Premier for extending to me the privilege of moving the acceptance of Her Honour's speech.

Yesterday we recognized, by the wearing of a red rose, International Women's Day. I am proud to live in a province and a country that treats women as equals. When you have an Assembly such as this, with women representing rural and urban constituencies on behalf of all political parties, it not only speaks of acceptance but also recognizes the contribution women make to our society. The equality, rights, and privileges of all Albertans are apparent in this Chamber today.

Mr. Speaker, the formation of a political philosophy is a unique and complex process influenced by many factors, such as one's family, friends, education, work, and personal experiences. I am proud to say that I was elected to this Assembly as a Progressive Conservative representing the people of the Lesser Slave Lake constituency. I followed to this Assembly a man who ably represented our constituency for some 14 years. As an MLA and a minister of the government, Larry Shaben exhibited the highest personal standards, and I have the utmost respect for his compassion for individuals in special need and his dedication to the development of a dynamic economy in Alberta.

Another significant experience in my life derived from working with Mr. Baldwin, who was the Conservative member for Peace River. Like Larry Shaben, Ged Baldwin also put people first and insisted that the first priority of any politician was to represent the people who elected him. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the people of my constituency will always be my first priority.

In the constituency I represent, the Lesser Slave Lake has been aptly named by some of my constituents as the jewel of the north. Mr. Speaker, I invite you and all members of this House to take an Alberta break and visit us this summer. Lesser Slave Lake is a vast and fascinating area of northern Alberta. From Sandy Lake on the eastern boundary to Winagami Lake in the west and from the Swan Hills to beyond Peerless Lake in the north, the Lesser Slave Lake constituency is the most beautiful part of our province.

But I continually remind myself, as I carry out my duties, that my constituency is not just a district of over 16,000 square miles. It's people. The people of my constituency come from broad and diverse ethnic backgrounds. They include Indian people,

Metis, and the sons, daughters, and grandchildren of the European and American pioneers who settled in this area. In addition, many other peoples from around the world have been attracted to Lesser Slave Lake by the physical beauty of the land, the prospects of a healthy provincial economy, and a social and business climate that provides a quality of life which I believe is unique in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the backgrounds of the people in my constituency are unique and diverse, as are their economic pursuits. The cultivation of the land and the settlement of the people in this constituency followed the path of the Canadian National Railway as it forged its route through Decrene, west along the south shore of the Lesser Slave Lake to High Prairie, then to Kenzie and beyond. This led to the establishment of grain and cattle farming in the western part of my constituency. In addition, many of the people in my constituency work in the forest product industries due to the vast timber available. Around the Lesser Slave Lake, which is central to my constituency, you will also find significant activity related to the energy industry of Alberta in the exploration and extraction of oil and gas.

The native peoples and early immigrants to the constituency settled around the many lakes and waterways such as Wabasca lakes in the east, Utikuma to the north, and Winagami in the west. They hunted and trapped for a living and fished the lakes and rivers for food. Today commercial hunting and fishing is not only a way of life in the north; it is the sole source of income and livelihood for many. As we enter the decade of the '90s, the people of my constituency wish to participate fully in the quality of life we are building and enjoying in Alberta. They wish to work and live in their own communities, and they want their families to live in an area where jobs and social facilities make life productive and rewarding.

The continuing social and economic development of this province has been outlined in the Speech from the Throne. This combined with continuing fiscal responsibility and a stringent environmental protection of the province is a responsive and responsible approach. This is the stewardship rule this government will continue to exercise.

This provincial government has responded to national uncertainty by developing a strong economy with stable employment and quality services for our people. The young people of this province will continue to become homeowners in a buoyant market because we believe in providing a sound economy for Albertans to prosper in. This government's commitment to health, education, and economic diversification remains unchanged. The unflinching commitment of this government goes beyond the short term, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to the economic and resource development of our province in a sustainable way. The future of the province, the country, and indeed the world rests with the sustainable development of natural resources. The development of our forestry, our hydrocarbon reserves, and agriculture will be carried out with the ongoing preservation of our environment and the ecosystem. The growing pains of diversification are not always easy to bear, Mr. Speaker, but we have to persevere. Alberta is in the forefront of environmental protection and will lead the world in sustainable development, resulting in meaningful and long-term jobs for the people of Lesser Slave Lake.

The latter half of 1989 saw some amazing changes within Europe and the U.S.S.R. as glasnost and perestroika gained momentum, raising the Iron Curtain. We witnessed a collapse of the Berlin Wall, and now in 1990 the possibility of a reunified Germany. The world political climate is changing almost as fast

as improvements in technology and communications. Trading patterns between nations are changing, with enhanced opportunities to export our products and expertise. As a province we are positioning ourselves to take advantage of these global changes and not be left behind trying to catch up to others. Within my own constituency we recognize these changes and the marvelous opportunities they hold for all Albertans.

Two years ago the town of Slave Lake hosted a delegation from the town of Tamishihoro of the Hokkaido province in Japan. Last year a delegation from the town of Slave Lake visited Tamishihoro; this year we are looking forward to receiving our friends again and are working toward the possibility of a formal twinning agreement between the two towns. These cultural, economic, and recreational opportunities will further build on the solid foundations this government has developed throughout the world.

The foundation of our society in Alberta is the family. Over the last year our government has moved to reinforce the family unit. Reforms to the social allowance program to foster greater independence will be welcome to my constituents. With changes to day care and the establishment of the Alberta family life and drug abuse foundation, our government recognizes and allows for help and assistance to those families that need it. As an educator I look forward to the establishment of policy and programs for International Literacy Year in 1990. Our provincial education and advanced education programs are second to none in Canada, but we must ensure that all members of society have the basic skills and knowledge to maximize their potential.

In Alberta we recognize the fundamental importance of democracy and have acted on that constitutional principle by holding the first senatorial election in the history of Canada. This government will continue to uphold the principles of a democratic society as well as fight for reforms that will give the provinces and people of this nation a stronger place in Confederation.

As a Metis representing my people and Indian peoples of my constituency and the province I am proud to be a part of the government that is seeking an amendment to the Constitution of Canada to implement the Metis settlements agreements. Mr. Speaker, the agenda Her Honour outlined in the Speech from the Throne is an agenda that has foresight, strength, determination, and integrity. Alberta must become even stronger in the days and years ahead. We must continue to build and strengthen our families, our economy, protect our environment, and provide the necessary educational opportunities to further develop our strength and our diversity.

The Speech from the Throne contains the building of our province through flexible and bold initiatives. The principles that guide this government, Mr. Speaker, are the principles that guide me *in* life. We have to give a strong individual effort, we have to encourage strong families as part of a caring society, and we must be part of the emerging global free market that keeps government intervention to a minimum. The stewardship required for Alberta to continue to be strong and free is evident in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the Speech from the Throne and look forward to being part of the dynamic and bold agenda we have created for the peoples of Lesser Slave Lake and all Albertans. Thank you.

MR. EVANS: I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to second the motion of the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake. It is with great pleasure that I follow such an eloquent speech.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin by offering my sincerest gratitude to my leader, the Premier of this great province of Alberta, for honouring my constituents and my constituency, Banff-Cochrane, by allowing me to second this very positive, very innovative, and very trendsetting Speech from the Throne. I'd like to also congratulate Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor for the elegance she displays every day in conducting her duties of office, in particular on days, such as yesterday, when she attends at this Assembly. She is someone that all Albertans are justly proud of. We are honoured to have her in our presence.

Mr. Speaker, though many words of praise and honour have been sent your way, I would like to add to those words by congratulating you on your contribution to this House through your example, your guidance, your fair-mindedness, and most importantly your sincerity in conducting your office.

Next I'd like to congratulate in a little more formal way the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake for her excellent address. The pride she so evidently holds for her constituents, her constituency, and all this province is extremely obvious. This pride is evident, Mr. Speaker, throughout Alberta, and that's what makes Alberta the leader *in* Canada.

As I speak, the significance of the Second Session of the 22nd Legislature of the province of Alberta is apparent to me. We are entering the final decade of the 20th century, and we're setting our sights on the 21st century. I recall with awe all the changes that have occurred, even in the last 40 years of my lifetime, in both this province and this nation and in this world we live in. Technology is clearly moving us from traditional lifestyles to a high tech life-style. But Albertans are not content to focus just on technology. We must integrate technology and respect for traditional values if we are to cope with the challenges of today and the challenges and changes of tomorrow. The computer has literally caused an explosion of knowledge in Alberta, and we are hungry to share in that experience.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to represent the people of Banff-Cochrane, constituents who are well educated, progressive, hard working, and most importantly optimists. They share a love of this land which is common to all Albertans, and they share a vision of Alberta as a leader today and tomorrow. My constituents personify all that Alberta has to offer and all the land that we live in. They demand accountability, and they demand to be active participants in democracy.

We all marvel at the incredible strides toward democracy that have recently been realized in the eastern European countries. Civilization today, Mr. Speaker, will not tolerate insensitivity or self-centred authority. Today's leaders must listen to and respond in a manner that recognizes the initiatives of their citizenry, and it's this challenging framework that we have before us as we enter the Second Session of this 22nd Legislature. I have a great sense of excitement as I recall the Speech from the Throne presented yesterday. It's focused not on the past but rather on the future.

This summer our province will be visited by Her Majesty the Queen of England and the Queen of Canada, and I would not be at all surprised – in fact I'd be surprised to the contrary – if her itinerary does not include travels west from the city of Calgary into Alberta's most beautiful constituency, Banff-Cochrane, with all due respect to my colleague the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake. As Her Majesty leaves Calgary, she will pass by two Indian reserves that I have the great pleasure to represent, the Sarcee and the Stoney peoples. I know they are very excited and interested in Her Majesty's visit, and I certainly

hope I will have an opportunity to meet Her Majesty with them and on their behalf. They'll travel through two very interesting areas immediately west of Calgary, the Bearspaw area and the Springbank area. Both are acreage communities that house some of the most interesting, diverse, and dynamic people from the Calgary area who have chosen to live in our constituency and who contribute greatly to the everyday affairs and the focus of our constituency. They'll also move in a westerly direction through the ranchlands and farmlands that are the basis for this province, and from there they'll move on to the foothills area, passing by Redwood Meadows, Bragg Creek to the south, and Cochrane to the north.

As they move on toward the majesty of the Rocky Mountains, Mr. Speaker, they'll pass through or by Kananaskis Country, an initiative of this government, an initiative based on forward thinking and a recognition that we must plan for the future of Albertans, for the use of Albertans by the resources we have available to us. They'll move through the Bow Valley, through Exshaw, Seebe, Canmore, and on to the Banff National Park gates and then on to Banff townsite. All of the members in this Assembly, including yourself, Mr. Speaker, will recognize that the town of Banff chose to become a full partner in Alberta through a referendum and then the incorporation of Banff as Alberta's first town of 1990, first town of this decade, effective January 1 of this year. Of course, Banff townsite is only part of the magnificence of Banff National Park, Alberta's and Canada's first national park, formed in 1885.

If Her Majesty were to travel further into the mountains and perhaps along the Bow Valley parkway, which is a low speed roadway with many turnoffs, meandering through pine and spruce forest, she'd eventually arrive at Lake Louise. From there her journey would have taken her some two hours into our constituency, if she had the control to keep herself from pulling off to reflect on the beauty she had witnessed and to be part of the day-to-day world of Banff-Cochrane. But even if she were to extend her visit further and move up the Jasper park highway toward Peyto Lake, Bow summit, and on to Saskatchewan River Crossing, she would still be marveling at the wonderment and the grandeur of Banff-Cochrane constituency.

I've very proud to represent that area, Mr. Speaker, and to represent the people who have decided to make their home there. Banff-Cochrane is not an area where people are forced to live; it's an area where people choose to live because they see all of the benefits and the merit of Alberta incorporated into that area.

As a member of this government I want to be, as our Premier has indicated, a steward for this province. Now, what is a steward? A steward is someone who actively directs affairs. This government views that responsibility to be granted to it by the electorate. It's stewardship to manage, to be a provider, a protector, a responder, and a defender. But government, Mr. Speaker, doesn't decide what's right for Alberta. Albertans decide what is right for Alberta. Through dialogue with their elected officials, we identify together the goals for Alberta, and government has learned by this dialogue. We've learned that Albertans cannot live and survive by deficit spending. Albertans won't tolerate this. They won't tolerate it in their own lives, and they won't tolerate it from their government. This government has reconfirmed its commitment to balance its budget by 1992.

This government must continue to push the federal government to re-evaluate policies which we find contradictory to the best interests of Alberta and Canada. The goods and services tax at a 7 percent solution is no more palatable to this province

than a 9 percent solution. The Bank of Canada high interest rate policy does not work in Canada. It may work in southern Ontario, but it does not work in Canada. Canada is much more than southern Ontario, and this policy must be re-evaluated.

This government recognizes, Mr. Speaker, that we must continue to diversify with a focus on education primarily and certainly also on tourism, which is a great opportunity for this province to utilize its natural resources and its natural advantages. In full, our provincial budget is approximately 22 percent dedicated to education, as basic education and higher education. This government continues to show its commitment to education and to be visionary in recognizing what the future holds for us.

When I look at the roadways in Banff-Cochrane and when I drive from Canmore to Edmonton, I recognize the necessity of efficient transportation, and my constituents certainly recognize this as they travel essentially unimpeded by the elements 12 months a year in Banff-Cochrane and beyond, in other parts of this province.

The Speech from the Throne has indicated, Mr. Speaker, the importance of agriculture and energy to this province. Notwithstanding some of the comments from the opposition, there is a clear mandate in this Speech from the Throne to continue to work through our agriculture and energy sectors to improve the lot of Albertans.

One of the most exciting things that I see in the Speech from the Throne is the focus on the environment. There is an exceptional interest in the environment in Banff-Cochrane, and I'm very proud to be the chairman of our caucus committee on the environment. This was formed as a result of the farsightedness and the vision of our Premier in 1989. Some of the very important initiatives of this government, as evidenced through the Department of the Environment: the mission statement, which again, Mr. Speaker, does not say to the people of Alberta, "This is what government is going to do for you in the environmental field." It says: "Please give us your views. Get back to us. Be a part of the process." Recycling initiatives throughout the province of Alberta have been very actively pursued, not only in my constituency, where we've had recycling initiatives in Banff, in Canmore, and in Cochrane over the past year, but throughout this great province. Our Minister of the Environment will be announcing in this House a comprehensive recycling program in the future.

The round table on the environment and the economy recognizes the concept of sustainable development and the fact that we are all a part of a vision of lifestyle embracing the intimate relationship between human well-being, healthy environment, and a prosperous economy. The economy and the environment must be on equal footing, and it's this government that has taken the initiative to recognize that both of these very important parts of our world do work together. They are not mutually exclusive. One need not, in fact must not, move forward at the cost of the other.

What about our relationship with our nation, Mr. Speaker? It's clearly pointed out in the Speech from the Throne. The Meech Lake accord, which has dramatic benefits for Alberta and for this nation, is not being found to be acceptable by all sections of our provincial governments and the people of this country. It's extremely important that the benefits of Meech Lake be brought forward and that our federal government take the first step by working towards the spirit of Meech Lake in appointing the choice of Albertans, Mr. Stan Waters, as the first elected Senator to the upper House of Canada.

We have a vision in this province, Mr. Speaker, but vision isn't enough. We also have to have an action plan, and the very, very positive message throughout the Speech from the Throne *is* that we do have an action plan. We have environmental protection legislation. We have a natural resources conservation board, which will hopefully assist my constituency and particularly the Bow Valley, where there is immense pressure for tourism development.

We will be bringing forward the loan and trust corporation Act, because we recognize the importance of financial institutions in this province. They're essential to our long-term and short-term well-being.

There's a great recognition of the importance of fostering and promoting the family unit through our Alberta family life and drug abuse foundation.

There's also recognition of the problems that many Albertans face because they are disadvantaged by physical or mental disabilities. I'm very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to see in the Speech from the Throne the proposed amendment to the Individual's Rights Protection Act to prohibit discrimination based on mental disability.

These are only a few of the many positive initiatives that are evident in this Speech from the Throne. They're being brought forward in a positive framework of reducing government involvement in our daily lives and on the basis of promoting self-reliance and the pride that comes from personal achievement.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in recognition of International Women's Day yesterday may I focus again on Her Majesty, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, the women representatives in this Assembly, and the many other women who make such a productive input into today's society in Alberta. I'd be remiss if I didn't focus on one of my own constituents Sharon Wood, the first North American woman to ever scale the highest peak in the world, Mount Everest. One of our hon. members has mentioned to me another very important fact: two of the largest centres in our

constituency have mayors who have been making tremendous contributions to their communities, Mayor Paula Andrews in Canmore and Mayor Leslie Taylor in the town of Banff. May I congratulate you, one and all.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about your wife?

MR. EVANS: Other hon. members have pointed out to me that I would be extremely remiss in not recognizing the important contribution my own spouse, my wife, Debbie, makes to me and to the citizens of Banff-Cochrane, standing by my side and assisting me in carrying out my duties.

As I embark upon this decade and this session, I have great enthusiasm, Mr. Speaker, and an even greater commitment to participate in the advancement of our province, the advancement of my constituency, Banff-Cochrane, and the people, the most important part of my constituency. It's with this enthusiasm and confidence in the future of this province under the able leadership of our Premier that I second, on behalf of my constituents in Banff-Cochrane, the motion of my colleague the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake.

MR. SPEAKER: The leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Having heard the motion, all those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

[At 11:46 a.m. the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]

