

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Tuesday, March 20, 1990 8:00 p.m.

Date: 90/03/20

[The House resumed at 8 p.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

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.

[Debate adjourned March 19: Mr. Lund speaking]

MR. LUND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since I don't have a lot of time left, I think rather than proceeding with some of the comments I was going to make about my constituency – I was moved by the comments that were made yesterday by some of the hon. members on the opposite side, so I think I'll comment on those, particularly the sermon we had to listen to from the gospel according to Saint Roberts, delivered by the Member for Edmonton-Centre. That was a most disturbing and depressing speech. To talk about them being the only ones that care, really. This government has provided so many programs that are designed for the people of the province that really show a caring government. When you look at their philosophies, the one thing they do is reduce everybody to the lowest common denominator. That is not what a caring government like this one does.

Moving on from that, of course, we had the hon. Member for Calgary-North West stand up and say that they are an alternative. So I would like, Mr. Speaker, to quote from *Hansard* a couple of things that he said. He started off by saying, "In fact, some of the elementary students are traveling distances of 14 kilometres." Well, I would like to share with the hon. member that in my constituency we have people that are boarding the bus at 15 minutes past 7 in the morning to get to school by 9 o'clock. And then he complains about someone having to go 14 kilometres. Then he goes on:

I bring as a point for example that this government has been notorious – and I think that's the correct word – for building hospitals in all the rural constituencies. In fact, I believe there is a hospital slated for the town of Eckville, and they already have a hospital there, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that hospital happens to be in my constituency, and the people of that area have been waiting for years to have a hospital. They don't have one close. Continuing on:

The total population of the town of Eckville I believe is [some] 650 people. Larger than the entire town of Eckville is bused out of my constituency every day. The cost of that hospital could build a school in that community for those 700 kids. Now, how many people in the town of Eckville are going to use that hospital? Are you going to see all 650 people going into that hospital every day for 200 days of the year, which is a school year in this province as mandated by legislation? I suspect not.

So, in fact, Mr. Speaker, the question I have for this government is: where are the priorities? Get it together, guys.

You're spending money in an inappropriate manner.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if that doesn't show arrogance and selfishness, I'd like to know what it is, especially when we consider that the hon. member participated in a sod-turning ceremony on February 3 to build a new school in his constituency. On top of that, in his constituency he also has the number one priority for the Calgary public school board, so he's got another school coming there. Then to say that a town that desperately needs a hospital because the closest one that can handle the people that need that facility is about 30 miles away, to say they shouldn't have that hospital I found very, very disturbing.

So, Mr. Speaker, to talk about this being an alternative – that is not the first time I've heard members from that party stating in this House that we shouldn't be building hospitals in rural Alberta. Now, I firmly believe that we've got to look at the whole province, rural and urban, not be centring on whether it should be rural or urban. It's got to be both. So I think this government is showing that balance, and we have shown it all through the throne speech.

To go further with the problem with extended care beds and the facilities we need in the Rocky Mountain House constituency, I am aware of four communities that are planning for and need extended care facilities. We need some 170 beds in that general area. I firmly believe that we are going to have to look at some alternatives in financing these institutions. I found it very interesting to note, yesterday as a matter of fact, that Statistics Canada is saying that the number of people over age 65 who are getting the supplements from the federal and/or provincial government is decreasing. At the same time, of course, we know that the number of people who are over age 65 is increasing. So that tells me there is some ability to pay for this type of thing in the community, and I believe that's the area we'll have to move in.

Mr. Speaker, with the throne speech laying out how we have been stewards in so many fields, how we are caring for the young, the elderly, everyone in our community, I have every confidence that this government will accomplish the facilities that we desperately need in the central area.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [applause] Thank you. I'm tempted to sit down while I'm ahead over there.

First of all, I wanted to congratulate the Lieutenant Governor for a job well done reading the throne speech, Mr. Speaker, because anyone who could put the right inflections in the right places and look as if she was surprised and interested has to get an Oscar for reading that type of throne speech. Certainly she has come to epitomize the pioneer spirit of Alberta, and she's welcome in every corner she goes. I think we're very fortunate to have a Lieutenant Governor of that calibre.

I also was going to congratulate – I'll do it anyhow because it may get back to them – the mover and the seconder of the throne speech. The Member for Lesser Slave Lake is only once removed from my constituency, not too far, and the Member for Banff-Cochrane – it's where I raised most of our family. I had a summer cottage out in his area. Although he gave the Tories the credit for building the mountains and having the rivers flow clean and for the chinooks blowing through, the only place where he came close, Mr. Speaker, is the arrival of hot air every spring. Nevertheless, being a rookie, I think he had to somehow or other convince the Premier that the Premier was doing a

good job, and he did a very good job of defending the indefensible. So I hope they pass that on to him when he comes on.

When speaking on the throne speech, it seems there's always a theme. The theme here seemed to be stewardship, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's a very worthy theme indeed, although to listen to the Government House Leader and the Member for Edmonton-Centre debate yesterday was rather interesting. You sort of had a case of déjà vu watching a government that's on its way out being debated by socialism, which is also on its way out. It was very interesting to watch the two outs sounding as if they were in. There may be a possibility that like math, two negatives make a positive; two outs maybe make an in. Who knows?

Mr. Speaker, the whole case of stewardship is something that I would compliment the government on, though, in that I think it is a move in the right direction. As you are also very aware, in the good book, where you read your rules of order as put down by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, I think it's said more than once that there's more joy in Heaven for one sinner that repenteth than all the rest. So if we have 53 sinners over there repenting and now looking at stewardship, it is worth while. I will feel that all my years in politics are worth while if they have done so.

I'm afraid that it may be just words, but I suppose one should be thankful at that as we move on a little farther, because stewardship really attacks the whole heart of Conservative theory, where ownership gives you supreme rights. Stewardship does more to chip away at what ownership rights are than maybe any other doctrine. I feel it should, because too often ownership has meant selfishness. It is interesting to note that even our early pioneers, the most rugged of ranchers and trappers, set up what I'm sure the Tories if they were born tomorrow would call a socialistic policy, Mr. Speaker, of not denying access to rivers and creeks and wells, water being the very essence of ranching. They nationalized it immediately they came west. They weren't crazy enough to pass riparian rights – and I'm using a little Latin on my friends, Mr. Speaker, but I hope it'll leak through. They weren't going to pass riparian rights on to anyone. It belonged to society as a whole, and to this day the most rugged free enterpriser would look at you as if you were preaching nonsense if you wanted to fence off a stream or a well. That was stewardship.

However, we went on farther, and this is what we have today, I think. The development of our pulp mills, our oil and gas have all been done with the idea that whoever buys the right, whether it's to take oil out of the ground or to take gravel or coal or timber, has the ultimate right to do nearly anything they wish. Then the pollution or the inconvenience for others that might be in there, like fur trappers that have been there long ago, have to take a secondary place. This is where the glimmer of stewardship coming through, I think, has a great future for everybody in this House. I think all political parties are going to have to think over the base from which they operate.

Moving on from that, Mr. Speaker, I just want to touch on the areas that I am more responsible for criticizing in the House. I know I have trouble with the government opposite at times. They may not be Aristotelian or Socratic followers. They don't buy this Greek idea. I've tried to introduce Greek philosophy to them before, and usually all I get is some order for pizza. But if they go back a little farther than that, they'll realize that in the Greek idea of democracy, democracy does not work unless those who are putting forward the thesis are faced with the antithesis. Then we get synthesis.

MR. DAY: Sounds like Draco.

MR. TAYLOR: I've got the gentleman from the Old Testament yelling his cause across the floor. One of these days I will take time, Mr. Speaker, to introduce him to the New Testament, let alone the 20th century. However, slowly but surely I try to drag him into the last thousand years.

When it comes to agriculture, if we're going to exercise stewardship, one of the first areas to look at is safety nets, and in the throne speech there is nothing about that at all. There is something about crop insurance, but that's miles away from what Mazankowski calls safety nets, what I used to call negative income tax, and what other people would call income floors. But what it is is a contributory form of income insurance. I don't think we should leave it to the federal government. I think the provincial government could take a certain amount of leadership in this area, Mr. Speaker, because leaving it to the federal government when more than half the farmers in Canada are tied into supply management systems, because 80 percent of Ontario and Quebec operate under supply management systems, means we may well get an income floor system or a safety net system that is more fitting for the supply management people than it is for the export marketers here. So I think we could spend a little more time thinking on that, and I was disappointed that the throne speech didn't develop or say they were going to do something about it.

Certainly when it comes to good stewardship, there's the whole case of sustainable agriculture, if you want to call it that, and the whole case of herbicides, pesticides. In Ontario they've actually passed an Act that says somebody on a farm has to be licensed to apply pesticides and herbicides. He or she, whoever is licensed, may have others in the family doing it, but the idea of just turning somebody loose with herbicides and pesticides in the countryside without anyone to blame I think has passed. Now, I know farmers will argue, "You're interfering with my right to go out and spray the road allowances." I see my friend who was probably a civic councillor for Rocky Mountain House shaking his head. Well, I think it's an accepted principle in Alberta that you can save a lot of municipal taxes if you go out and poison the whole bloody road allowance: kill the weeds, kill the birds, and everything else. But I think you've got to get out of that – that sort of concept has to go by – and realize that we're setting in motion something that's going to cost us much more to pay down the road than it is now.

But going on from that, I was disappointed to see that there's nothing to reduce our fuel costs to farmers to the basic minimum. It makes no sense to have the provincial and federal governments taxing input costs to agriculture, and very few industries have their input costs. As a matter of fact, one of the very principles of the GST put in by the Tory cousins of these people across, put in by the people for whom these people over there went back and forth campaigning, saying: "Please elect your Tory MP; please elect your Tory MP. The world will end if we don't" . . . The very principle of a GST is still: only tax once. But you turn around today and you tax the farmers two and three times by taxing the fuel before it goes in and out. All farm fuels shouldn't have a penny of either royalty or any form of tax on it at all, yet it's creeping back. There was a philosophy accepted at one time that we would keep it out.

Next, Mr. Speaker, we're talking about a stewardship society. I was disappointed to see nothing in there about rural development. I had been led to believe when what used to be my buddy in the opposition sitting on my right – Mr. Speaker, you

remember, between you and I – before he reached heavenward . . . Either that or got fed up or maybe, as Tennyson said about that great Captain Ulysses, he was one of those who wanted more experience. Remember what he said?

All experience is an arch wherethro'

Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.

I understand that the gentlemen from Little Bow, I think, is finding that the margin is fading forever and ever as he moves. In other words, we saw nothing in the throne speech about rural development. Now, moving a couple of civil servants to Vulcan is not the answer.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's a start.

MR. TAYLOR: It's a start, all right, and God knows we've got more of them than any other province in Canada, but still, unless you hide the dispensers in the high schools, you're not going to get them multiplying fast enough to alter our province.

Mr. Speaker, the question is that rural development has a lot more to it than either of the solutions I've posed. I believe we could do much more than we have done in making rural education attainable and reachable, but those who choose to locate in a small town, to set up their business in a small town, would have a chance at just as good an education or better than they would get in the city. Instead we've got places like Endiang, for instance, thinking about busing children all the way to Stettler. Now, I'll admit that Stettler is now the Vatican, the centre of rural life in Alberta, but it's not worth riding on the bus two hours a day to get to. Whether it's the Premier or the antistripping parade they'll see, it's not worth riding two hours a day. This is a helluva comment, if I may make the remark, on this government that would allow this type of system to evolve. There again, stewardship and one of our great resources, developing people – and we've got the people out in the rural areas – has to be looked at very closely.

While we're on rural development, one of my pet hobbyhorses I've suggested time and again: border to border toll-free calling on the telephones. I had AGT look at it and had a debate with an AGT person here about six months ago, and they came out with what I thought was the astounding revelation, saying, "Mr. Taylor, do you realize that could cost \$18 more a month per subscriber?" I was amazed, because here is a group that was arguing against me, saying it would be \$18 more a month. Probably it would only be \$15. Well, isn't that a very cheap price indeed if we can get businesses to locate out through our small towns? Why have it set up now that if you want to put a parts depot together or if you want to go into a business of some sort, you should locate in Calgary and Edmonton because you're going to be able to call on a majority of customers? Whereas if you'd move 50 miles out of town, which may be a better area – you may like other areas; it may have decent schools, good curling rink, whatever it is, but your long-distance bill would be horrendous. The average farmer who lives more than 80 or 100 miles out of the city tells me they spend around \$150 a month in toll charges.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Now, now, Nick.

MR. TAYLOR: Now, the Member for Little Bow says, "Now, now," but he has been on the government payroll for so many years, Mr. Speaker, and hasn't paid a long-distance bill of his own that it must be very, very hard to remember. I've even forgotten how long I've been on the government payroll, but the

point is that long-distance calls are picked up as a regular MLA. That's one of the areas where we could promote rural development, and I drop it in the lap for my hon. friend, the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Why not even try it out slowly? Make the first three minutes free. Modern computers could do that very easily. You know, you'd probably more than make your money back by talking another three minutes at the other end, but the point is that if you do a business call in a quick order, it could go through.

While we're on utilities, I was a little concerned to hear good stewardship could be practised here. Mr. Speaker, we've made much of the fact that coal-generated power is one of the backbones of our province, that coal is substituted for water power, which we need, of course, to irrigate for people. We can't afford to let water go out just to generate power except coincidentally to the other uses, so we developed coal. As in natural gas, we wanted to ship away and make money and make petrochemicals and fertilizer. But coal is probably one of the most consumptive users of our long-term credit, you might say, with our environment: terrific carbon dioxide generator, terrific sulphur generator, and a fair amount of water use or at least water that's used in cooling. The consumptive use isn't that high. I had the figures here in hectolitres, but I couldn't figure it out. I felt that if I couldn't figure it out, I didn't want to try to burden you people with the number of hectolitres it was. The point was that it was a helluva lot of water used for cooling the power plants. When we have wind power and sun power, powers that do not hurt the environment, we pay those people less than we pay those who generate power by coal, yet coal is a terrific pollutant.

Now, if we are indeed stewards of our future, should we not be doing our best to encourage . . . We're doing something towards small power. They're at least allowed in the door, but their power should be paid for at a higher figure than power that's produced by a polluting source. Yet there's no recognition of it even for small power producers. I notice the power made from using the burning of peat is paid the same as the power that's generated from wind power. Yet there's no comparison of what we in society are going to clean up and what the stewards that come after us will have to pay to clean up.

We can look into another area where our good stewardship could be used. In our whole field of native claims, both Metis and our natives, which is an area that I am also responsible for – criticizing, that is – there, is, very, very little. There's nothing in the throne speech to show that we're going to enroll the natives and the aboriginals of this province as true partners in building the future. We seem to want to perpetuate and actually exaggerate, exacerbate, and all the Xs you can think of, the isolation of our native and aboriginal people. Again, back to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I wouldn't want to pack him with all the load, Mr. Speaker, but he is probably one of the newest over there and hasn't had a chance to be corrupted or ossified or fossilized by what goes on around him. There may be some hope for him. There again if he's talking about rural development, what could we do with bringing our native and aboriginal partners in as true partners in our commerce and rural development?

There are types of businesses that work in a native area. I was surprised here a short while ago to find that it took the people of China to come all the way from China over to the Sturgeon Indian Reserve to put together a project with their money and their expertise plus Japanese equipment to make chopsticks. And they look like they're going someplace. There

was not an Alberta government employee in sight. That might have accounted for the fact that they seem to be doing something. But here it was: our own people, our own aboriginal people, our own pioneers, and it took someone from China to recognize that was a type of industry where punching a time clock wasn't a hundred percent the right thing, grabbing a lunch bucket as soon as that whistle went wasn't the right thing. But it was easy come, easy go, except that you worked when the trees were there and the mill went, and you did things in a piecework or group system.

I was lucky enough to meet the family of the Member for Rocky Mountain House. Having worked for years in the Scandinavian countries, I was able to have some rapport and was disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that such intelligent parents had turned out a Tory. I didn't bring that up to them. But one of the reasons I brought that up is that the Scandinavian people can show us, because I've worked there, what they've done in partnership in bringing their aboriginal people into the economy without destroying their individualism, or their sense of identity I guess would be a better word. Sometime when the member goes home, he might call his father over and say, "Dad, I want to learn something." And sit down and learn on his knee. Now, we'd go on like that . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: What happened to you, Nick? You come from a good country.

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, I'm always reminded of the story about the fox stumbling over the cowbell in the woods. After he uncovered it, he couldn't figure out what it was, but he said, "I don't know what you are or who you are, but you have the longest tongue and the emptiest head of anything I've ever discovered." With some of the criticism that's coming, it fits in. [interjection] Well, I'll give them a chance to let that soak in.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I think that on the throne speech everybody wants to say something about their constituency. Well, I have a large rural constituency; we have about 20,000 voters. That, I think, is one of the top two or three rural constituencies in Alberta and comes somewhere around the average. If any of you are stuck in town on the weekend, you don't have to sit here and breathe the smog-filled air of Edmonton; you don't have to go down to the fleshpots of sin town. You can shake off the dust of the town and move just out to the northern limits. We have a Francophone town, Legal: a great place to see if you want a little shot of central Quebec or what it's like to maybe get signs in French as you go around the area. In general, it'll do a great deal for many of the members over there who are so tender and so shy when they try to speak up for minorities. After going through the area, it might just somehow or other cement the backseat of their underwear, Mr. Speaker, and cause them to stand a little straighter and speak out for all minorities.

I also have Hutterite colonies, if you sprechen sie Deutsch and want to try that out. We have two Hutterite colonies in my constituency: hardworking people, people who do very well and are well liked, and they participate in politics. Unfortunately, they've been Tories, but like little kittens, their eyes will open in time, and I hope to bring them on. After all, they have only started voting in the last couple of elections.

Also in my constituency we have the beautiful Sturgeon valley with number 1 farm soil. Unfortunately, here is where the

stewardship of the government has been sadly neglected. The best land in Alberta; I kid you not. It runs parallel, I'll admit, equal to the Blindman valley. It's the type of soil that you'll find only in the Danube valley or around the Black Sea, some areas in Pennsylvania up to the Niagara peninsula, some areas on the Rhine. There's less than 1 percent of the world, as the hon. Minister of Agriculture will confirm, that has number 1 or number 2 farm soil. Yet we are letting it go under to urban sprawl, industrialization, urbanization, and you might say also to oil and gas plants. God has blessed that area very well, not only the top but the bottom and nearly everywhere. Every second or third well they drill comes up with some gas or oil. Yet they are belching forth sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, arsenic, vanadium, cadmium, whatever. Sulphur is now cut down to less than one tonne a day per plant. Big deal. How would you like one tonne of sulphur dumped out here?

The fact of the matter is that when we analyze and look at our stewardship, which is really our good farmland, our food producing land – it's unfortunate that western Canada, unlike most areas settled historically, had the towns built where the good agricultural areas were, because that's who settled this area first, farmers. Other areas were sometimes settled by sailors or by warriors or by miners or something, but in western Canada our towns are built in agricultural areas, and we are doing little. Just stop and think. What is "protecting"? Who are the stewards? If we're not the stewards for 1 and 2 farmland, who is? You can't expect the owner to be. He worked for years. Maybe he made a decent living, and maybe the kids have moved to the city or down east or, worse still, become MLAs. For some reason or other they're not farming anymore. Somebody comes and offers three times the price of what it's worth for farming to put a sulphur plant on it or to put in a Safeway parking lot or to put in a rural subdivision. Why should they hold off for generations to come; why they should fight them off and say, "No, no, we're going to leave it for farming"? They know the next person they sell it to will certainly turn it over for a huge profit.

Ask the municipality to protect number 1 farmland? Impossible. The municipality sits there dreaming – as a matter of fact, the MD councillors will tell you that if you fall asleep dreaming about anything, it is that half your riding will be owned by a Goodyear rubber plant, the other half will have an Esso refinery on it, and you'll only have one kid to educate. That's what your idea of heaven is. The more industrial development you can put on land the better off you are, because the assessment accrues to you.

Therefore, the owner isn't fighting to keep farmland. The MD isn't fighting to keep the farmland. The developers: maybe they're fighting to keep farmland going. The developer that builds houses, that builds gas plants, that builds shopping centres? No. Number 1 and number 2 farmland has no one to defend it unless we do it.

This is what I leave you with, the last challenge before I sit down. I think that this throne speech could go down in history for all Albertans if stewardship meant that you would see from now on that the Alberta government in general are the stewards for number 1, number 2, and number 3 farmland, that you're in charge, that you're not going to let it go under, that you're not going to let the MDs do it, that you're not going to let the developers do it, that you're not going to let the man that retires do that. It's too important to be left to society. If we could do just that one thing, I think we would have done a marvelous thing, Mr. Speaker. It'll never get me to vote Tory, but at least

it would get me to be pleasant to them.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Calgary-Millican, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. SHRAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off, I'd like to congratulate Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor for the excellent job she did this time as well as all the previous times. She always does an excellent job on the throne speech.

I guess this is one of the shortest throne speeches I've heard in my eight years here, yet it was a very important one. I hear a little chuckle, a little laugh. I guess it reminds me of what Mark Twain once said. He was asked to speak, and they said: "We'd like for you to speak for about an hour. How much would you charge?" He says, "For an hour I charge \$200." The guy says: "Well, gee, that's quite a bit. Maybe you'll only speak for five minutes." He says, "Well, for five minutes I charge \$300." So the guy said, "Why so much?" He says, "It's a lot harder to get what you have to say said in only five minutes."

This throne speech has got two basic messages in it, Mr. Speaker. They are two basic messages that are probably more important than any throne speech we've had in this Assembly in the last two decades. The province of Alberta right now is at, I would say, a threshold of opportunity. Opportunity's knocking on the door out there, yet we're under siege. Between the environment and economic diversification some hard decisions have got to be made. We're under a lot of heat. But also the dominion of Canada is probably under siege. It's probably as bad a situation now as at any time within the last 100 years. We only had our 100-year anniversary back in '67, and here today we hear talk that if the province of Quebec wants to go, let them go. We have a party in this province that says, "Let's separate; let's break up this country." I'm afraid we've got a problem here. We've got to pass up being popular, being populist, forget about our little bit of our fed bashing, blaming everything on them. We've got to get out and actually make some hard decisions. We're going to have to make the Meech Lake accord work. We've got to try, at least, for the benefit of this province to get the Triple E Senate on its way.

I just have to think back. There were people who were dying for their country: my country, right or wrong, these types of things. And now for a matter of language or economics we're willing to split this country up. What does this country mean to us anymore? We have the most beautiful country in the world. It's a terrific country. We have our freedom. We have everything. I'm beginning to wonder: do we deserve what we have; do we appreciate what we have here? I'll say this: at least when Meech Lake, the Triple E Senate, and some of these things have come up, the NDP have been fair and honest on this. They haven't played rough politics on it. They sat in here and voted for it, which is more than I can say for the Liberals. The Liberals hid outside the door and then came in looking very upset after the vote was taken. I've never figured out what game was being played there, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think it was a very good one.

I think that at this time the province has got to go ahead and take advantage of these economic opportunities, yet we've got to stay and go out and do battle and try to do what we can to save our country. I know this sounds maybe a little drastic and so on, but for a lot of you here – I immigrated to this country, and when I gave up my American citizenship, this whole country

became my country, not just a piece here or there. That includes Quebec City and Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. I've been there. I really like Quebec City, and when I went there, I didn't get this anti-English or anti-French feeling or any of those types of things. I went there during the Quebec Winter Carnival. I was from Calgary. I was with a Calgary group that went down, and we had our white hats. Wherever we went in that city, we heard those people there say, "Calgary," and they'd say, "Chapeau blanc," and they said something in French. I'm afraid my French is very poor, but I was informed that they were saying that they wanted my white hat. Before I got out of there, I gave my white hat away. I gave it to one of those Quebecers, and he gave me his toque. It was 30 below zero Fahrenheit, not Celsius, and my ears were much warmer with his toque than his ears were with my white hat, but he was happy and I was happy also.

Where did we go wrong? We were so proud. Back when we went into World War I, the Canadian troops were some of the finest soldiers. In fact, the kaiser said, "Give me a hundred thousand fighters like the Canadians." At Vimy Ridge, at the battles in Europe, we fought; we died; we came back so proud. During World War II the country of Holland was starving to death; there was no food. The Canadian soldiers went in, and what supplies they had they shared with the people in Holland. To this day, when you go to Holland, if you're from Canada, you're treated with respect. It's a proud feeling being Canadian, not western Canadian or whatever it was the WCC had on their minds. I don't know what ideas the Reform Party have. They flip back and forth. Are they for or against Canada? I don't know. [interjections] Sometimes I agree with my NDP colleagues.

At any rate, we've heard talk. Economically it would be beneficial for Alberta to withdraw from this Confederation, so we would make more money and pay less taxes. Is that all the country means to us? Where is our pride, and where is our love for this country?

There are going to be some compromises that have to be made. I guess that on the Meech Lake thing 60 percent of the people don't understand what it's all about. All they can remember is this one tiny phrase, which has confused the people in this province: Quebec is a distinct society. Well, if you've ever been to Quebec, they are a distinct society. They speak a different language, and they have a few different customs. They have some wonderful customs and traditions there. It's great. I hope they keep them. That doesn't mean that we have to give them more money. It's not Quebec that has been after our financial resources; it's been Ontario. Quebec has actually been a friend to us. But for some reason this "distinct society" thing has turned us off in this province regarding Meech Lake. It's been a hard sell. I've tried. Yet that one phrase stands out.

If you look at this throne speech on page 4, that's a commitment we're taking on, members of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker. I guess to try to compare anything in U.S. history with what we have in the present day, you have the state of Virginia. She had her distinct way of doing things, and she had her rights. She was the one who led the confederacy in seceding. The 13 states were going to break away. They fought for four years. As history has shown us, they stayed together, and it's a better country than having two separate countries. The fight there was not over slavery. Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery later to bring the Europeans on his side of the battle. It was a fight over state rights, and what we have in Canada, I guess, is over provincial rights. I don't think we want to go that far.

I don't know how accurate these polls are. I was reading in the news media, Mr. Speaker, that 59 percent in Quebec now were in favour of autonomy, I guess they call it, or seceding from the union or whatever. But what would we do? I don't think we're in the mood to send in troops, a civil war. Or let them go? If they go, who goes next? Western Canada will probably go next, maybe the maritimes or what. Where do we stand? We had better do the other thing; that is, we better not find out what's going to happen. We better find a way to make this country work. I do have to give some credit to Premier Don Getty; he has tried.

If we don't get Meech Lake, how do we ever, ever get this province to have equal status with the other provinces? I can think of no way. I've heard nobody on the floor of this Legislature come up with any idea of how we will get equal status with provinces such as Ontario, Quebec, whatever. Yet we must, or our Albertans are not going to be very happy. The only alternative we've had has been the WCC, and that is not an acceptable solution that will let us secede, let us withdraw, let us call it quits.

Yet we do have a problem. When this province was booming, the oil boom, the price of oil went to \$42 a barrel. You would think that the oil companies in this province, the financial institutions in this province would emerge out of such a boom of wealth and money that they would be strong. No, sir. The reverse took place. Over \$50 billion was siphoned out of this province so that at the end of the boom — we all know the story of Dome. It was a basket case. Thank goodness Amoco took it over, because I'd hate to see the collapse of that. The economists and lawyers would have all got rich fighting over the spoils of that one before the bankruptcy would have got through. Little Husky, that's an Alberta company, was in very sad shape. Thank goodness that guy from Hong Kong, Mr. Li, took over the company. Turbo, which was a very successful and prosperous company, ended up selling a lot of assets just to survive, because the money had been drawn out of this province. As far as our banks and our trust companies, we all know the story there: bankruptcy; they folded up. Two banks here in Alberta might have made it if the money hadn't been drawn out.

It was not a fair thing that happened, yet we were powerless to stop it because we do not have as many Members of Parliament as the province of Ontario, and that's a very simple thing. Somehow we've a reputation of being rednecks, yet we have tried harder to make this country work. It's not Alberta that has some municipalities passing laws that things are going to be in English only, and it's sure not Alberta that's passed laws that say that if you put signs out, the sign in English has got to be bigger than the sign in French. As far as I'm concerned, let the person who puts the sign out, put up the sign he wants; it's a free country. But I think it is time to stop and put our political partisanship aside for a brief moment and say: "Thank you, Don Getty. Premier Don Getty, you are trying. We hope you can make it succeed. At least you've been a leader in this. You've done a fine job."

The other thing in this Speech from the Throne is that it makes a very brief reference on page 2 that we have to bring the environment and the diversification of our economy into sync. It's a very sad thing to see people drinking champagne, toasting a \$13 billion plant stopped dead in its tracks. You think: something is wrong with this picture. I'm sure the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche was pretty heartbroken over that. There would have been several thousand jobs in the construction industry. The amount of gravel that the gravel operators could

produce for the concrete and cement, and the truckers who would haul it; the amount of carpenters and drywallers and electricians and plumbers and pipe fitters and all these people that would have worked there: it'd have been nice to have seen them have these jobs. Then afterwards there would be permanent jobs in that area, which has been so hard-pressed for the last two decades. Remember that there would be several hundred permanent jobs up there, and those people in Athabasca-Lac La Biche want the good things in life. They want nice homes and financial security. They want a good job. They want nice automobiles and all of the things that you and I want and that other Albertans want. At this point they are not going to get these opportunities. Instead of toasting the total defeat of this project, this very large economic opportunity for us, there must be a way that we find a way to work it out. I'm hoping it's not dead. I hope it can come back, that we can find a way to get around the environmental problems. Alberta Energy is going with a very interesting process. I don't understand it; I'm not a scientist or a technician. I guess it's this thermomechanical process, where they don't use bleached kraft, and maybe there's a way they can find that out.

We have so much misinformation going out in this province at this point. We hear them saying that we're cutting the rain forests in the northern part of this province. Undoubtedly those who say that have never seen the northern part of this province. Up there we have a wonderful tree; some people call it a weed. Well, it's more than a weed; it's a wonderful little tree. In my own personal life I happen to have a backyard full of aspens. I didn't ask for them. I did a little work on my yard. All the clay seemed to get on the top of the soil, and I brought in a load of black loam. I smoothed it out and seeded it to grass. The grass came up, and I had all these weird looking little things growing up. I wasn't sure what they were. So I kept running my lawnmower over them, except for the ones by the fence; I left the ones by the fence. Lo and behold, I thought they were poplars, and they were aspens. My wife just loves the things, so we let them go. So they now have half of the yard, and as long as I keep running my lawnmower over the other half, I keep whacking them off. But you whack off one of them, you know, and you've got not one; you've got half a dozen of these things. They pop up; you run the lawnmower over them, but you chop the one off and then later two of the little sprouts come up. I learned what an aspen tree was after I saw this. They're still growing. They keep coming up, and I keep cutting them.

That's the way they operate in the north. I don't think anybody understands the size of the lease that has been given out. They've been given large leases, extremely large, and there's a reason for that. LeRoy Fjordbotten, one of our own hon. members, tried to describe it in size. He says that if you took the size of that door over there and if you took an envelope, a regular little envelope that you mail a letter in, the door would be the size of the lease, and the amount that you cut in one year would be about the size of that envelope. After a few years of cutting, as you worked your way into this leasehold area, the first stuff you cut down has already grown up, and it's the same size it was when you first started cutting. I wondered about that. I have seen pictures of the area around Hinton, and I guess a plant has operated there for 35 years. You go into the Hinton area, Mr. Speaker, and you don't find any bare spots like you find off in B.C. The things grow back. They keep cutting them down, and they keep growing back. This is a phenomenal opportunity we have with this wonderful little aspen tree. Don't call it a weed, because we should show

respect for this thing. This little tree is a real opportunity for this province to produce paper, and there's a market for it.

We've been criticized that we sold out our leasehold rights, the stumpage, and all this too low, but I'd say that it's fair game that we sell it low, if in return they live up to environmental standards. I think that's the trade-off our minister's tried to make. If nothing else, think of the other thing. If there is no plant, then we get no return at all on these trees and there are no jobs. Those people up there would still like to have the bright economic future that we have in Edmonton, Calgary, and the other parts of the province.

Mr. Speaker, we've got another strange phenomenon. For some reason we in this province seem to go after dams. Remember the Dickson dam. There was so much furore over this Dickson dam, and they tried to stop it. Everybody objected; all of these terrible things were going to happen. Some guy from some university said that it was in the wrong spot, they'd get too much water, and it was going to wash off and fall over and run away; the water would just carry it away, and it wasn't going to hold. That's quite a few years ago, and it's still sitting there. I was out looking at that lake. I thought: gee, I would like to have a lot on the edge of that lake. The Red Deer river runs on towards Drumheller and out in that pretty dry country. They get water flowing in there in the summer, winter, all the time. There's always a flow, but often that is because this dam saved some of the rainwater and the snowmelt and these things. When we have the spring runoff, it doesn't run off now. They save it, and then they let it run off later. You get water all summer long.

Now, let's look at what we're trying to do with the Oldman River dam. Goodness. A rock star goes down, has a concert; he gets thousands and thousands of people. I don't know if they were there protesting the dam or if they were there to hear the rock star. Then you wonder what is going on there. Yet up in the Athabasca-Lac La Biche constituency, I guess 2,000 people went out to a meeting there, but they were not there to listen to a rock star. They were concerned about their economic future. Mr. Speaker, they have a right to stand up and say, "We deserve the same economic breaks that you have."

I have a friend who works at the University of Lethbridge, Mr. Speaker. He's an environmentalist, and he was very much opposed to the Oldman River dam. He expressed his concerns regarding the environment and all these things. I had a very nice chat with him. Two years ago we had a drouth in the southern part of this province, and the city of Lethbridge was talking of rationing water. Last time I talked to him he was no longer opposed to the Oldman River dam. He'd begun to appreciate the fact that water is a very important thing. I've been on the Oldman River in my little Zodiac. I tried to come down the St. Mary River. I came down in a rubber dinghy, unfortunately, and it was during that drouth. Unfortunately, the only water that was in that river was water that was being slowly released from the remaining water behind the St. Mary dam, which is almost into Waterton park. If it were not for that dam releasing this water, there would not have been a flow in the St. Mary. You can talk about fish, but when there is no water there, the fish die. For whatever it's worth, it's a fact of life. Believe it or not.

I've been to the Milk River when she was down mighty low. Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park: beautiful campsite, one of the nicest campsites in the province of Alberta, in Taber-Warner, on the Milk River. The August I was there, the only water was the water being released from the dam on the American side. The

Americans have a dam, and they have a contractual arrangement between them, us, and the province of Saskatchewan that they will release so much water through the year. That was the only flow that was taking place, because there had not been any rains and the snow had all melted. There had been no other water. Of course the fish, again, would have been dead.

Calgary's got a lot of dams. Thank goodness we got them built before we got this obsession about stopping dams. We've got seven of them up there. As far as protecting from floods and things and so on, Calgary did have a flood. You should see the pictures of the flood which took place back in the '30s, I guess it was. It's phenomenal that this flow of water is covering what is now downtown Calgary and the area of Inglewood all the way from Bowness through to the other part of the city. There's an irrigation canal, and even the irrigation canal flooded out, came up to be a massive thing. We haven't had one of those since the '30s, partly due to the good God looking after us, and the other thing is that our seven dams can retain enough water to take some of the sting out of what they call the hundred-year flood. We do get electrical power out of this. In a major city like Calgary, if we did not have those seven dams up the Bow River at this point, the city of Calgary would not have enough water to sustain the over 600,000 people living there. In fact, they're doing well right now to do it.

In my little area I've got a canal. This canal was built many, many years ago. In fact, I guess they built it right after the turn of the century. It cost more to build this canal through that part of Alberta than it did to build the CP railway. It's quite a thing, that canal. If they were to build it now, they'd probably have some difficulties; people would object or whatever. But it improved the environment. Water improves the environment sometimes. It has fish in it; it's nice for canoeing. It goes out through that residential area; they have birds, and the ducks often come in on the thing. A lot of the kids like to go over near the canal. It's very beautiful. Occasionally you get the deer that come up from the south of the city. They come up the old Fish Creek area, get across, go along the edge of the Bow, and turn off and head up this little greenbelt running along the old WID canal into Calgary. It's a wonderful thing.

Anyway, I think it's time we get our message out that this dam is not for a handful of little farmers down there that just want to irrigate a little bit of cabbages and turnips or something. This Oldman River dam is to provide water for the southern part of this province: cities, towns, and people. There are people that need that water, and they have a right to have that water, same as you and I have a right to have water in our home.

The other thing I'd like to speak about is that perhaps we sometimes get carried away. You know, in the mountains I went to Lake Louise, a beautiful lake. There's that Chateau Lake Louise, and it is beautiful. Gee, that's nice. I was so proud, you know, to think . . . I took these visitors there to see that. Then I got thinking: if they were to try to build that today, would they get a permit? Would they be able to build that, or would there be a group that would fight and fight and oppose and they'd never build the Chateau Lake Louise? Unfortunately, we're into a different era now. Little Sunshine Village, the ski village: they've got a beautiful site up on that mountain. I once took the gondola up there. I don't ski - I'm getting a little old for that - but they have an 80-room hotel or whatever you want to call it. They would like to build it up to 200 rooms. That's not a large hotel by today's standards or anything. They got shot down. So the tourists and the skiers, they're going to Montana, over to B.C., and going into Idaho to their mountains, not our

mountains.

I thought, though, as I was going up there in this gondola: it's so unusual sitting in this thing and looking about. It's been cleared underneath where the gondola runs, so that's the only area there's some grass. I saw all these deer in there eating the grass. I went over the top of them, sitting in the gondola, and I thought: somehow me in this gondola and the deer down below, we're living in harmony. They're happy that they're getting the grass. I was happy that I was getting a beautiful ride up to the top and I got to see some deer. But I often wonder: if they didn't have Sunshine Village on top of that mountain, how many people would ever go to the top of that mountain without that gondola lift? I don't think the average Albertan would go up there.

Anyway, the last thing I'd like to just briefly comment on is sewage treatment. In Calgary we built a tertiary treatment plant. We remove the phosphates, and we have extra capacity so if we do have big rains or, you know, heavy-duty rains, we don't have to release any of what they call solids. I picked up the word "solids" from the hon. Minister of the Environment. I didn't quite follow him. I said, "What are these solids?" He says, "Well, they're . . ." He looked a little embarrassed and said "turds." So at least we're not placing those into our river in Calgary. I hope the city of Edmonton eventually will be able to do the same.

In Calgary we have I guess the largest landfill site in the province of Alberta. It's in Calgary-Millican. We had our PCBs there. I'd like to say thanks for what this province has done for the environment. We've got a disposal plant. We have hauled our PCBs, and there were, I mean, just barrels and barrels of them. They've all been hauled to Swan Hills and disposed of.

I guess we're supposed to say something about our constituencies, so I'd just like to make a little mention about Calgary-Millican. If you go to Calgary, you'll probably go to Calgary-Millican, because basically all the interesting things in Calgary are in Calgary-Millican. If you do go to the Stampede, the Devonian Gardens, or the Stampede grounds, if you go to city hall, the Glenbow Museum, the Centre for Performing Arts, or the place where it all began there, Fort Calgary – Fort Calgary is right in the heart of Calgary-Millican – or if you want to see the Flames and you go to the Saddledome, again you're in Calgary-Millican. We have the Bow River, the Elbow River, the Carling O'Keefe brewery, the Calgary Zoo. We've got our super-duper sewage treatment plant in Calgary-Millican also, and the largest landfill site in the province of Alberta.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see in the book, Mr. Speaker, that a speech on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne is a general debate. I suppose the point of that is that there doesn't have to be a point to the speech in particular. By convention one does speak about one's constituency, I suppose, but I would like to take a bird's-eye view of what we're about in a time that is very momentous, in the political history of the world anyway. It's the sort of thing that could be written down and read. I did think of doing that exactly so the hon. Member for Red Deer-North could call me to task, and I would refer him to section 474 of *Beauchesne* that says that on these occasions, general debate, you can read your speech. Anyway, it's boring to read one's speech, and I won't.

What I refer to, of course, as the momentous time we're in is

the year 1989, in which there was more revolution – most of it peaceful, fortunately – than in any year in the history of the world, I suppose, with the possible exception of 1848 in Europe. In the year 1848 Karl Marx published the *Communist Manifesto*, and I think it is fitting to note that the year 1989 witnessed the end of the socialist experiment in institutional socialism. By that I mean socialism in the sense (a) of the state owning the means of production and distribution and (b) of that system being institutionalized; i.e., not democratic. Most people of good will and all democrats welcomed the demise of such a system.

But in thinking about that and talking about it, we shouldn't be led into the opposite error, to think that anything that smacks of socialism is therefore finished or unnecessary or outmoded. Because there are the things that we take for granted now which at one time were considered socialist but which now are accepted by conservatives all over the world. And to suppose that that definition of socialism, which really consists of a supportive view of human society so that those that are unfortunate will not go to the wall – that definition of socialism is still very much what we must strive for. Since we all believe in a mixed economy now, really the difference between our parties is not so much one of principle as of emphasis, as to how you do it and the means by which you do it.

It's interesting that what is called socialism when we propose it, so that people can dislike it, is called a sacred trust after it becomes accepted and Tories support it. I think it follows that we find out what is sacred and other people adopt it later. Perhaps we should be listened to a little more. Don't forget that those of a Conservative complexion have consistently – consistently – opposed all those things when they came in which now they call sacred trusts. I just made a little list, Mr. Speaker, of these things.

Some of them we would find quite astonishing now, that anyone of good will and common sense would oppose. Yet Conservatives, who would probably, if they were hypocritical, have called themselves Progressive Conservatives then, opposed hanging for the theft of goods in excess of 5 shillings in Canada. This was opposed by the Conservatives of the day; child labour in factories was also. Universal manhood suffrage was opposed; that is to say, without any property qualification. Needless to say, female suffrage was opposed. Workmen's compensation, as it was then called, was opposed. Old-age pensions were opposed. Unemployment insurance was opposed until Mr. Bennett got the idea that it was . . . Even he, at the depth of the Depression, realized that something had to be done. He proposed it, but he was promptly dumped by the party. Universal medical insurance, of course, was opposed within our recent lifetimes, and coming down to very recent times, the abolition of double billing by doctors was opposed until this government was bullied into it by the finances of the national government.

The Liberals have been flipping and flopping on most of those issues through time, and in this country, as was the case with old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, and universal medical insurance, they were bullied into it by our party and its predecessors. So in dismissing what are features of socialism, because it is said . . . As the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon so dismissively said in his speech, we should be careful, to use a colloquialism, not to throw out the baby with the bath water.

The fact is that democratic socialist states, and Sweden is probably the best example, do have their difficulties, as every state does, but it seems to me that Sweden is a great place to

have certain difficulties in. It even now has an unemployment rate of only 1 and a half percent, which they think is rather high in fact. It has all the things that we take for granted, such as universal medical care, unemployment insurance, guaranteed holidays for all workers, maternity leave, paternity leave, and so on. Yet at the same time they're world-beaters in economics. They also do not have a great amount of natural resources. They have almost no oil. They do have iron ore and coal. They have an inhospitable climate, much like Canada's, through much of the year. Yet because of the way they are socially organized, and also their energy I suppose, they have been and still are world-beaters with the third highest standard of living. Yet they have a thoroughly socialist economy as a mixed economy. I mean, they have large state enterprises and a mix of private enterprise too.

So we needn't think that we have arrived at this point, Mr. Speaker, at the ideal stage of development when it comes to that safety net that someone referred to before as being necessary to a decent life. There is still far too great a gap in this province between the rich and the poor, particularly between the richest and the poorest, an obscene gap, Mr. Speaker. That does not mean to say that everyone should be reduced to the same level, but everyone should be within shouting distance of each other economically at any rate. The easiest and best way of doing that is by an equitable tax system. Nothing in the Speech from the Throne points us in that direction. The existing tax system, nationally and provincially, does not yield enough money to pay our way. If it were fairer, it would yield more money. There is no wealth tax in this country, so those with fortunes see them grow without any tax on that unless there is a disposition at some point of part of it. By use of charitable trusts, charitable foundations, fortunes can be sealed forever from taxation, yet the owners thereof, through the benefits of the taxable foundation, derive benefit. All of these are schemes whereby those who should be paying much more for the support of society escape that burden, and nothing in the Speech from the Throne will deal with that. Nothing in the Speech from the Throne from a government of this stripe will ever deal with that.

Even if the Treasurer had a brainstorm and decided to do something like that, he couldn't get to first base, because those that fund this government party wouldn't allow it. It's as simple as that. The same goes for the Liberals. A large part of the campaigns, centrally, of both those parties is financed by the very people who profit from the inequality we have in this society we're in. I'm not complaining about my condition. None of us here need complain about our condition. And by and large we live in a humane and caring society, but that's not to say that we should be complacent and think we've gone as far as we need to go.

One result of a fairer tax system, as I said, would be an increase in revenue and therefore some help in the really quite desperate situation we're in financially, although I suppose the government does try and play down the problem. I sympathize with their problem in that respect, but it would help there. Even democratic socialist countries in Europe have a value-added tax, some of them, so it is not certain that that tax, regressive though it is, is always wrong. But at least one should get a fair income tax system into place first before ever you place a universal, regressive tax such as that on the books. Now the government, true, after they've helped elect, with public money, the people who are introducing this tax, come to us and say they're again the goods and services tax too, but equally they will not, Mr. Speaker, do anything about the unfair tax system otherwise.

It's not only in the social sphere that we look for progress in the Speech from the Throne and see it not. We have a very skewed voting system in this province, not only because of the gross imbalance which everyone agrees has to be corrected. The extent of the correction is a matter for debate, doubtless, between the sizes of the largest and the smallest constituencies, but even the representation system itself, so that governments can be elected with a minority of the vote and commonly are. That's wrong. We get so complacent about our system because we're used to it, and it is common in English-speaking countries. But it isn't the best system, nor is strict proportional representation the best system either, but a mixture such as we have in the federal German republic is the best. Under that system half your House will be proportional representation and half will be first past the post with a threshold of 5 percent or some reasonable percentage before you get anything on the party list. There you can vote for the person you like regardless of party, and at the same time you can express your party preference on the party list.

We should, Mr. Speaker, be more open minded about what's good for the people in our province in the way of systems, of voting, not just the relative size of the constituencies but the system itself, and that's one of them. Social Credit was in favour of proportional representation in its early days, and they introduced it in the cities because they didn't have much representation there. Once they won the cities, then they abolished it there too. So much for that party of principle.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I see nothing in the Speech from the Throne looking towards a more equitable election system in which donations from institutional entities, including labour unions I might suggest, would be forbidden in the way of political donations. That would be a very fair trade-off for preventing contributions by corporations. Also, something must be done about parallel campaigns, because that skews the whole system enormously in favour of those with the wealth to mount those campaigns, yet they are not counted in the total money that is spent by the party whose campaign they foster.

There's nothing in the Speech from the Throne that would make our court system fairer. Litigation is undoubtedly a rich man's game in this province. The poorest do have some help with legal aid, but even that is very sparse when it comes to civil litigation. It is not a very expensive endeavour, yet it's productive, of great benefit for people. Only those with wealth or those who have a case that is capable of producing considerable damages, who can then farm it out on a contingency scheme, can afford litigation in this province.

Car insurance is unduly expensive because it's balkanized in private companies when, in my understanding, with a few buttons on that computer it can be coughed out with your annual licence as is done in other provinces.

Sure access to education to the limits you are reasonably capable of is now in danger in this province, and it's been helped by the reduction of transfer payments from the federal government admittedly. That is of particular concern in my constituency, where the single largest employer is the University of Alberta, and of course it's the largest university in the province. A great number of students live in my constituency. Some of them are really quite desperate now about the prospects of completing their education, and others are dropping out who, undoubtedly, are qualified. Now, a true system, a compassionate system, would ensure that those young men and women – and not necessarily young anymore – would be educated to the limits of their ability. In states which we somewhat look down upon,

such as some of these socialist states they've been talking about, at least they have that much.

The university is also in travail with its funding, particularly for libraries. Perhaps when the budget comes up we can talk more about that, Mr. Speaker.

But if we pursue the line I'm drawing with regard to the Speech from the Throne as to what isn't in it but should be, we must note that there is no initiative there with respect to young people, despite the gaps in the system of support for those who are disadvantaged. That's particularly acute in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, with the youth emergency shelter, which fulfills a great need but because of its sparse funding has to shut its doors during the day. Its charges are out and about, and some of them, unfortunately, get up to mischief which otherwise they would not if there was funding to keep them indoors.

Mr. Speaker, while we are fortunate to live in this province and while we count our blessings certainly, a certain complacency exists that we have done all that we need to do in social programs. We have not. That element is lacking in the Speech from the Throne, and it will be our endeavour on this side of the House, in this party, to mend that.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Clover Bar.

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the debate on the throne speech.

There are three areas I want to provide to you, Mr. Speaker, and the members of this Assembly, my beliefs and my thoughts. The first one deals with the general direction of the throne speech; the second with the comparison of the stewardship of our government as opposed to the ideology and the direction of the opposition; and the third, time permitting, some discussion of Meech Lake.

But first let me say that I want to congratulate Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor on delivering and presenting to us an excellent throne speech in a most eloquent fashion. I also want to congratulate the mover of the throne speech, the hon. Member for Lesser Slave Lake, and the seconder, the hon. Member for Banff-Cochrane.

I referenced an excellent throne speech because it is, indeed, a most positive throne speech. It is clear in the objectives and the goals that it defines for our government and for all Albertans. It is a guideline for our future. I want to re-emphasize the words of the hon. Member for Red Deer-North, who indicated that the throne speech does not dwell on the past; it shows the leadership, the stewardship: a true example of guiding us into the future. I find that particularly attractive, Mr. Speaker, because that is my preoccupation. My particular objective in dealing with any matter is to look at the long term, the future: how and why we may proceed into the future.

[Mr. Wright in the Chair]

I want to, then, also relate particularly to the comments that were made on the throne speech by the hon. member the Leader of the Opposition on March 12, and particularly the comments that were made by the Member for Edmonton-Centre on March 19. The doom and gloom presented in those discussions, that debate, is amazing, Mr. Speaker. There is a preponderance to live in the past. There is no forward thinking at all. Their talks were negative and destructive. There's no clear direction of where we are going, of where we should be in the

future. I have difficulties with that kind of attitude.

The hon. member the Leader of the Opposition indicated that there needs to be change in government. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is a problem here, because the hon. members on this side of the House have no idea how to govern. They've presented some visions and some alternatives – and I want to discuss them in more detail – but they have very little recognition of what is important. And what is important here in Alberta and Canada is the individual, our family, our neighbourhood, our community, our province, our Canada.

Now, in referencing some of the comments that were made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, and I want to quote from *Hansard* page 34, March 12 . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: This is going to be painful.

MR. GESELL: Yes, it will be extremely painful.

I quote:

To move on, the role of the opposition, of course, is to oppose.

Nobody enjoys opposing this government as much as I do, Mr. Speaker . . .

And here is the important part.

. . . and we're accused – sometimes perhaps rightfully so – of being overly negative.

Well, they certainly are overly negative in all aspects, Mr. Speaker. Being negative might be all right if there was something to be negative about. But on certain occasions – and I recall them quite clearly – the opposition feels they're being negative as a vocation. Even if the government presents – and we do that on a regular basis – some very positive and beneficial policies or legislation that will benefit Albertans, they're claiming it's their job to oppose. Well, to me, Mr. Speaker, that is destructive. It is not in the best interests of Albertans. I think this negativism is extremely detrimental to this country, this province.

Let me quote again on the same point and the same reference item.

Our job is to oppose; that's what opposition means. But it's also to try to provide alternatives.

Now I want to discuss some of those alternatives, and those alternatives lead me to my second point, Mr. Speaker: our government's clear direction as opposed to the opposition's ideology. I'm prompted to speak today because of the exchange that took place yesterday between the Red priest – and I do not speak of Vivaldi – and a member of our government. I do not speak of Vivaldi because the melody that was sung in this House was not melodious. It was extremely aggravating, anguishing, and it made me angry. Some of the visions that are outlined in these talks by the hon. members in the opposition may sound good, but let me outline what they really mean in practice.

Here I want to let you know that I have some personal experience in living in a socialist country. My family has lived in a socialist country. We left that country for particular reasons, which I will elaborate, and here we have this group proposing alternatives that would lead us in that direction. Mr. Speaker, particularly in response to the remarks from the Member for Vegreville: my family and I left East Germany in 1953. We "escaped" from East Germany is a better word than "leaving" East Germany. We left West Germany in order to come to Canada, to a country that has a government which respects the individual and the family, and here we have alternatives being proposed that would get me right back into that situation that I tried to escape from. Now, the hon. members may truly believe in what they spout in this Legisla-

ture, but none of them, not a single one of them, has actually experienced in practice what they're preaching. I have, Mr. Speaker, and I don't like it. I'll fight with all my might against it. The worst thing in this world is the oppression in the type of system – the alternative – that is being proposed by these hon. members. I would rather do anything than be subjected to that oppression again.

Now let me talk a little bit, Mr. Speaker, about the individual, the effect the alternatives that are suggested have on the individual. There is no individual freedom in these countries. There is general oppression. One might even call it thought control. If you, as a member in that community, voice an opinion to other members in the community, your neighbour, you're subject to get hauled away and thrown in prison. Now, that type of a system . . .

MR. DAY: Like Ortega.

MR. GESELL: It's worse than Ortega.

This type of system does not provide the best government for Alberta. The alternatives that are proposed encourage a lack of trust. They encourage a lack of trust of friends and of members of your family. There's absolutely no incentive to achieve in that type of a system. There's no incentive to produce, there is no incentive to be creative, because those things are not valued in the alternatives that are presented by the hon. members. There is fear in that type of system of the gains one might make through hard work and labour, because there is some political entity, a high commissioner or political high party member, that may take it away from you.

I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, but this is something that I feel so strongly about – and I have that personal experience because of my family – when others covet what you have against a direct commandment, and it's proposed by a reverend on top of that.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker, it's because of those particular shackles that are placed on the individual, this slavery, that my family left: because we believe in our ability to work, to produce, to express our beliefs freely. And I think this is the most important part: to express our beliefs freely. The impact on the family of that type of system that is being advocated here by the hon. members in the opposition is just as devastating. How do you provide cohesion in a family where each family member is afraid to share some ideas or values with others, even within the family, because an unwise word said to a child in the family may be repeated to another child of another family that may have some political power and thereby seize an opportunity to do your family harm? Now, that is onerous, oppressive.

AN HON. MEMBER: The thought police.

MR. GESELL: The thought police. Exactly.

When you have that type of system, the families live in fear. There is no stability, there's no consistency, and there's no security. It creates a situation where individuals and families are paranoid of others: an undesirable relationship. The members have mentioned that there is – and there should be – concern for the health of our children. I quote from *Hansard*, March 19, on page 142. It's spoken by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre.

. . . if the children in our province are looking forward to a healthy future, if they're going to get there not so much by the processes of social democracy, which we advocate, and of stewardship . . .

And so on. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, in the type of system they're advocating, children are, in fact, indoctrinated, brainwashed into believing through their education system that . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: You've been indoctrinated.

MR. GESELL: To some degree, yes, I have, and I'll get to that point, hon. member.

They are brainwashed, and that to me, Mr. Speaker, is not a healthy future for our children. That is one of the other reasons why my family left that type of government, that type of system: because we believe our family members should have trust, respect, and love for each other, and we should be able to share such feelings with other families.

I'd like to give you a good example. The member has mentioned indoctrination and that perhaps I have been affected by that system. I have. When I compare my family with that of my wife's, my wife has a very close family. They are very closely related; they interact together. I do not have that same type of relationship and, I'm afraid to say, it bears perhaps on the time I spent in the socialistic system. My family bears those scars from that particular system. We suppress some of the emotions that we would normally show. We reserve love and affection to some degree, because those were weaknesses in that type of system that the hon. members want to pass on to us here. I thank God, Mr. Speaker, our family left when we did.

With respect to community, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about those that are in political control in the socialistic systems, the alternatives that I suggested, because there are – and we have some good examples of that – excesses and class differences that are created. We have the mighty and the powerful that have all the benefits and the power, and we have the masses that have none, that are oppressed. The disrespect for the family and the individual: in that type of society nothing is sacred. It can be taken from you at a whim or an accusation. Whether it's rightly made or wrongly, it doesn't matter.

The futility of the individual that exists in that type of system translates to the total community. The communities in that type of system are economically bankrupt, and we see that. Have a look at East Germany, their economic status. They're morally and ethically depleted. They're socially inhibited, and the individuals are oppressed and in slavery. Human rights, suppression, tolerance – minority groups: they are all equally oppressed. Mr. Speaker, it leads me to the point where I look at what happened in November of last year, even prior to that, where more than half a million people – and when I say "people" I mean the skilled, the industrious – have left East Germany for West Germany. It is those people, I feel, that have felt this oppression most effectively and have decided they must leave. It leaves, basically, the drones in the system: those that do not contribute but only consume. That's the type of system we're talking about.

I want to talk about the overall country, Mr. Speaker. That country builds barriers around individuals: physical barriers, mental barriers, and barriers for the total country. If the ideology that the hon. members are presenting, those alternatives, would function effectively and would be accepted by people, then why those barriers, particularly the physical barriers? We saw in November of 1989 that people do not appreciate those barriers. They dance on them; they break them

down. I'm glad they have taken that action. The problem with the alternative is that it is the suppression of the mind or removal of the individual rights, and it is the individual rights that I find most obscene and most despicable. That is why my family moved: because we could not tolerate such oppression.

I want to refer to the hon. Member for Edmonton-Centre, as he's quoted in *Hansard*, page 143: "A healthy future for our children means enough is enough of this kind of madness." He's talking about unrecyclable waste and the failure to be a steward of our environment. Well I say, Mr. Speaker, that yes, it is enough, because a healthy future is the most important thing for our children. That is what our thrust, the objective, the positive approach in our throne speech outlines, not the platitudes that are presented as alternatives and vision by the opposition party.

Let me deal with some of these platitudes, Mr. Speaker. Elimination of poverty. We had some discussion about the elimination of poverty earlier in this House. It's a great socialistic experiment. It's the suppression, the elimination of the individual, the incentive of the individual, competition, and the inherent human desire to achieve. They've tried to make everyone the same; that is, they've tried to make us all equally poor, not only in material things but in ideas, in vision, in creative thought: *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. In strengthening our communities, the individual is our strength, and I don't know why the hon. members do not realize that. If we do not support the individual, then our families will not be strong, our community will not be strong. That strength is not achieved through government intervention, as the hon. members are proposing. It is the ability of the individual to be free, to achieve at their own pace. It does not mean that we should create barriers or other obstructions.

Look at the East German communities. Do they have a healthy future? Is their economy well? What about their environment? Well, let's look at the quality of life there. There are hundreds of thousands storming to get out. That speaks a lot about the quality of life that might be there. Look at the value of the economy, of their production. It is abysmal. Look at the environment. There is absolutely no concern in that type of system for our environment. And this is what the hon. members are suggesting we should emulate.

MR. WRIGHT: What have you been listening to?

MR. GESELL: You.

MR. GIBEAULT: Where do you get this weird idea?

MR. GESELL: The hon. members, Mr. Speaker, have very little respect for the individual, the population, or our environment when they are proposing some of these alternatives they have put in front of us. They have no reverence for our environment, our health, our future.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to go on a little bit to Meech Lake and talk about that and draw some parallels, because perhaps I'm a little more sensitive than some of the other members here to what is happening in Canada and some of the sweeping changes that are taking place in the rest of the world, particularly Europe. It appears to me – and the hon. member has mentioned this and I want to reinforce it – that there are strong benefits in defending Alberta's place as an equal partner in Confederation in order to face the challenges we are faced with in this province and this country. Now, I see one side in eastern Europe where barriers are being removed, walls are coming

down. People are talking about unity. They're pressing for it, Mr. Speaker, even though it may be an elongated process and a slower process than most people would like to see in place that live in those countries. And here we are creating some artificial barriers to unity within this country, the opposition to Meech Lake. True, there is a distinct society clause in that accord, but we are all distinct. I'm distinct. I have a particular background. So does every member here. And I would want to remind the hon. members that there was unanimous consent for that particular Meech Lake accord.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inconsistent.

MR. GESELL: No "consistency" is correct.

Now, there are benefits to us as Albertans, benefits to us as Canadians to pursue those changes. They will give us in Alberta a say over immigration, over our spending programs, over Supreme Court appointments, and it places some of the responsibilities and duties where they belong, not centralizing them in Ottawa as some previous Prime Ministers are proposing.

Mr. Speaker, we do have a great and beautiful country. We need to encourage that unity in this country. We need to strive to provide tolerance and understanding to all members of this great country. I would urge that we work together to make this the great country we have the potential of becoming. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I am proud to be an Albertan. I need to quote here from the late Grant Notley – and I hope the hon. members pay attention to that – when he said, "I'm proud to be an Albertan [and] determined to be a Canadian." I want them to reflect on those particular words, because I think they're important.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I must say I sincerely believe God has been truly blessing me and my family and such blessing extends to all Albertans, all Canadians.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar, followed by the Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to have an opportunity to respond to the throne speech and, first of all, to once again recognize the work of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor. The Lieutenant Governor continues to fulfill her office with sensitivity and intelligence and grace, and I hold her in deep respect. I'm most grateful that she will continue to serve in that capacity as a representative of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to thank you for your continued management of this House with great patience, and I also want to thank the good residents of Gold Bar for their continued advice and support to me. Gold Bar, for those of you who are not familiar with the neighbourhood, is a good and stable family community in the city of Edmonton with an abundance of schools, parks, recreation opportunities, churches, and seniors' homes. It's well served, but it's not without problems, the same as most of our neighbourhoods. It's not without those who are unemployed and those who are ill. It's a good illustration I think, Mr. Speaker, of what's happening in the rest of the province.

There is a high percentage of seniors in Gold Bar. The seniors and others often stop me and ask what on earth is happening in our province and in our country, what's happening in Canada and what's happening with the GST. They are very fearful and uncomfortable with the whole discussion and debate

around Meech Lake. They're worried about Alberta and Canada. They're worried about Alberta's deficit, and they're worried about where we are going to be years from now.

Mr. Speaker, I looked forward to the throne speech with great anticipation, and with regret I find it to be a somewhat superficial document. At a time when I thought we had a great need for aggressive leadership, and when I had anticipated that, I think it is strangely and tragically devoid of vision and devoid of understanding of the reality that's around us at this present time. Many people who have responded have already commented on the emphasis on the notion of stewardship. That's a good Presbyterian word most of us are familiar with.

MR. SPEAKER: Christian.

MRS. HEWES: A good Christian word. Thank you, sir.

You know, it seems as though it's a new word to this government, and I would have thought they might have discovered they were expected to be good stewards a decade or so ago. I think it's quite interesting that they've finally figured it out.

Mr. Speaker, I also heard the Deputy Premier indicating, and other members of the government have indicated, that it wasn't a great description of past accomplishments and wasn't a backpatting document and so on, and I accept that. I think it might have been very difficult for the government to find a lot of things to take credit for in the past year. We haven't had the best year, with the Principal Group and the Gainers problems and the environmental problems and the forestry problems and the conflict and the kicking and screaming and being dragged into environmental impact assessments. There's been a sort of litany of mismanagement, so I'm not surprised that the speech didn't contain a lot about the past year. I would have been surprised if it did. They would have been hard pressed to find them.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, there are some things in it I would like to comment on that are present. I am pleased that we recognized International Women's Day as a House. I think that was a very good move. I hope it was not simply a gesture but it has some meaning to members of this House and they will listen carefully as some of us present Bills and motions that relate to the needs of women in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I also look forward to the plan for the balanced budget by 1992. I expect we will hear this on Thursday night. I hope it has some good news in it, not just for our caucus but for all Albertans. It's interesting that under fiscal responsibility there's a description of a new committee that's now studying ways and means to end duplication of programs. Now, it occurs to me that the ordinary taxpayer in Alberta thinks we're doing that all the time, and it would come as somewhat of a surprise to the taxpayer that we suddenly have a whole committee in 1990 that's been established to make sure we're efficient. I think the taxpayer expects us to be efficient all the time.

Once again, there's no suggestion in the document about any reform of the budget process, which I think is really an oversight. I see that the government again insists they are opposed to the GST and to the high interest rate policy of the federal government, but there's no indication here as to what the state of the art is in opposing these two federal initiatives, what their targets are, and how we are going to measure whether or not this government is successful in their opposition.

Mr. Speaker, further in the economy, the speech doesn't indicate any plans. It is interesting, however, to see they are suggesting that the government will reduce intervention in the

Alberta economy, that the people management and labour and market forces must determine Alberta's economic future. I'm fascinated by that statement because it seems to me this is an admission of something that has happened in the past and which the government is now committed not to continue or not to duplicate in the future.

If we look at the section on the environment, it's nice to know that we're the cleanest province in Canada. I'm delighted to hear that. Of course, the throne speech doesn't indicate what the measurements were. Are we talking about clean air, clean water: morally clean, socially clean. It doesn't really tell us, but in any event, I'm sure we're all delighted to know that we're the cleanest province in Canada, whatever that means.

In the environment we're finally dealing with some of the difficulties the government has encountered over the last year, a good deal of it brought on by some rather irresponsible election promises and some rather hasty action without due regard to environmental impact. We're now reaping the benefits of that, both in the forestry projects and, unfortunately, with the Oldman dam. I think this really shows gross mismanagement. I do recall the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon months and months ago asking questions about the wisdom of using a technique in Alberta that has not been used in most other nations of the world for some decades and suggesting other systems, other methods of irrigation, that might be used. However, that was given short shrift at the time. Now we appear to have been moving ahead with rapidity, and perhaps we should have been more prudent at the time.

Mr. Speaker, in the section on people there are some rather feeble paragraphs that talk about future health care for Albertans. There are no promises regarding mental health programs, once again. There's another funny little paragraph about preventing violence in and out of the home and another thin one about education: really nothing of substance in them whatsoever. We say we have access to all levels of education regardless of where you live, but it really doesn't tell us whether or not you can have an education regardless of the kind of money you have.

Mr. Speaker, on page 5 in the throne speech there's a paragraph about Meech Lake and about the government's continued support of constitutional change. I'm concerned about the irony of the situation we're now in where we have a country divided when the rest of the world is engrossed in détente. I think it's ironic. We seem to have been brought to this point not just by a flawed document but by a flawed process. Ten premiers and the Prime Minister sat down together without a mandate in a rather rushed and hushed atmosphere and signed the document behind closed doors. Of course, retrospect is easy for anyone, but I think the process itself was gravely flawed, and I think the results of it now show us that we should have insisted on a different methodology. Quebec's five requirements are met in a sense, but we are now polarizing our country and dividing and driving ourselves apart by the result. We've created an environment of dissent and intolerance and fear. Meech Lake, if signed, leads us to some kind of economic alliance but not a nation.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that now is the time for our Premier to show true leadership. I think we're well beyond the sort of distinct society Senate reform. Now we're in a situation where we have a threat to our nation. I would hope that we do not maintain a rigid or defensive position, since the circumstances have changed so very dramatically. I hope our Premier can encourage other Premiers and use his good offices and his good

relationship with other Premiers and the Prime Minister to open up this accord once again, to open it up for amendment and for change. I believe he is held in respect by the other Premiers across the country, and I believe he could do it. He could bring it about if he has the will and if he can see the immense pressure there is in our country at this point in time to have Meech Lake opened up and amended and changed. I believe it needs to happen, and I sincerely hope that Alberta's Premier will take a lead in making that come about.

Mr. Speaker, on the last page of the document there . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, there is, perhaps, a point of order.

DR. WEST: Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne* 482 under Interruptions in Debate. I would ask the member if she would entertain a question during debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar?

MRS. HEWES: Certainly, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay.

DR. WEST: Would the member, please, perhaps respond to this question? You have indicated that you would like to see Meech Lake opened up in a debate. Would you indicate whether your support personally and through your party has diminished for this Meech Lake accord and that you're withdrawing your support?

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should make it clear. I have never supported Meech Lake – the accord, the constitutional amendment. I was not present, which was an unfortunate mistake on my part, and I admit that. There was nothing devious or clever about it at the time. It was simply a mistake, an error in timing, and I regret it. Those of you who've never made such a mistake wouldn't understand that, of course. But I don't know whether or not that explains to the hon. member. I have not at any point supported the Meech Lake accord nor has the Liberal caucus.

May I continue, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Indeed.

MRS. HEWES: Thank you.

On the last page, Mr. Speaker, we have a list of a number of pieces of legislation and programs that the government intends to do, to bring about during this session, some of them of major interest to me. "Training standards for day care managers and workers": the minister has asked for comments from Albertans in regard to his white paper, which contains some new training standards. Interesting to me that at the same time as he's looking for comments, there've already been advertisements for staff people to put the recommendations into place, which I think is rather curious.

Bill 8 is before us, and we will debate that tomorrow. I'm pleased that it's finally here.

The next one, "reforms to the social allowance program to encourage greater independence," is a rather mysterious comment. I anticipate with some trepidation what that might contain.

The "program policy for International Literacy Year" is

something I look forward to as well because I think we've needed that for some time.

Mr. Speaker, just a few comments about the things that are missing in the report. I stated earlier that I think it's tragic in a sense that a number of these things are not related to in any way, shape, or form. I spoke this afternoon about poverty in the province. There is no acknowledgement of this reality in the throne speech. There is no strategy. There are many systems now in place that if we put them together and used them in combined fashion, we could go a long way to resolving some of the problems. But it's not contained here. It's as though poverty doesn't exist.

There is nothing in the report about the housing crisis, which I think is on us and will take some considerable management to reduce.

There is nothing in the report about the mental health of Albertans. Particularly, the problems of the mental health of children, I believe, has reached almost a point of epidemic and scandal. I really feel that we are falling far behind in our capacity to serve the children of this province and keep them mentally healthy.

There is nothing in the report about tolerance and understanding, Mr. Speaker, and the sense of outrage that all Albertans must feel over the incidence of the racist pins that have appeared in our province and the regret and the anger that we all have when we see those kinds of things and see the cavalier fashion in which many people treat those circumstances.

There's nothing in the report on the Premier's council on the disabled, written up in last year's throne speech and much anticipation about how it would help disabled people in the province.

There's essentially nothing about day care. We do have the white paper since the throne speech has been made, but as yet we have been treated to a series of somewhat ambivalent statements in explanation of the white paper, which I think has people quite uneasy and concerned. From day to day we seem to get different replies from the minister.

There is essentially nothing in the report about education, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure my colleague from Calgary-McKnight will elucidate further on that. There's nothing about openness, freedom of information. There's nothing about recycling as an industry. There is little about health care, with the exception of some sliding references to the Rainbow Report that many Albertans are very concerned about, and about what the government's intentions are in regard to this report and implementing any or all of the recommendations that are contained in it.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there are some good recommendations in the report but there are also some that I consider to be quite wrong. The whole report tends to lack and lose credibility because of that, which I think is most unfortunate. There's nothing in the report about the needs of women for equality and for pay equity and better maintenance enforcement and so on. So there are many, many things that are missing. Perhaps we'll hear more on Thursday night.

Finally, the Member for Clover Bar invites the opposition not to be negative. Well, I should tell you, Mr. Speaker, and through you the House, that I believe we do present positive options, that we are all elected members, that we all should, I hope, hold respect for one another and for those citizens who have elected us. I invite the Member for Clover Bar to listen carefully and not be afraid of innovation and creative thought from the Liberal opposition. I don't think we essentially are

here to contaminate thinking. I would hope that he and others in the House will work towards a more collegial approach to decision-making in the future.

As far as the throne speech is concerned, it's a wish and a hope on my part that there will be more in the budget.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism.

MR. MAIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is getting late, but of course we all agree that it's never too late to talk about good ideas; it's never too late to add another voice to the expression of support for Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech from the Throne delivered just a few days ago, a Speech from the Throne that embodies a vision for a province that is growing and expanding, on the move, home to a couple of million enthusiastic Albertans who want to move ahead with this government and see growth and excitement.

Now, there are a few people, and some of them are in this Legislature tonight, who are not happy with the Speech from the Throne. They are not happy with the idea of vision, not happy with a Speech from the Throne that presents new ideas and a forward-looking plan of action.

I know another reason why some of the members of the opposition are not happy: because the Speech from the Throne this year, in a departure from tradition, does not include a list of accomplishments. It makes the job of the opposition much, much easier when there is a list of accomplishments. Then they don't have to think about all the good things the government's done. They can read about them in a document and then can point to them one by one and say: "This was no good. This was no good. This was bad. This was dumb." And on and on and on. But now when we're looking forward and we're presenting new ideas and new approaches for the future, well, it becomes a little more difficult because we now are dealing in ideas, and of course we see that the opposition and its treasury of ideas basically is bankrupt. The treasury of the opposition, especially the New Democrats, of course — their ideological treasury is operating in a huge deficit position. The ideas just don't make any sense in 1990 in this province with deep, deep commitments to growth, expansion, and opportunities for everyone.

I think what we have in the opposition, Mr. Speaker, is a vision-free zone where there's no opportunity, no ability to look forward to the future and what can be done in this province. I for one am enthusiastic and excited about what is going to be before us in the next several years.

Some of the complaints I heard and that prompted me to enter the debate concern comments from the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods, who was unable to see anything in the document here about multiculturalism. Of course, the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods believes he is the only person on the face of the earth that knows anything about multiculturalism and has the only constituency that has any multicultural folks in it. But, of course, my view is that the entire province is multicultural and that multiculturalism is not simply the purview of the ethnic groups, not simply the purview of the visible minorities, but it is a concept that embraces each and every Albertan, for it provides opportunities for each and every Albertan to grow and expand.

It does take some thought; it does take some effort to find mentions in the Speech from the Throne, but I can give you a couple here. Page 4: the paragraph talks about acceptance of different religions and cultures. That, of course, is what we do.

I can look on page 5 and see about the government stewarding Alberta's international relations and the agreements we have with a number of countries. I've traveled to some of them and will continue to do that as we continue to expand our relationships with other lands. Of course, that is an aspect of multiculturalism, but you have to look to see. I guess if something is not written down in big letters with perhaps some pictures to help some of the hon. members understand what we're talking about here, they would have difficulty embracing some of the concepts. But nevertheless . . .

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods suggests that the people have lost faith with the government and its efforts in the area of multiculturalism. My experience, in fact, is just the opposite: that there is strong support. In fact, there is enthusiasm for the new things we're going to be doing over the course of the next while in the area of multiculturalism. There is strong support for our report done by the multicultural commission called Focus for the 90's that lays out some distinct directions, some wonderful ideas on how all of Alberta can be brought into the concept and into the benefits of multiculturalism.

We'll be focusing those efforts in the coming session and in sessions ahead on three main areas. I've talked about this before in public. I've talked about it in the House and during question period, and I'll repeat it again tonight: we're going to be working hard on policies and programs that embrace all Albertans, for that's what I believe the concept of multiculturalism means. It's not to exclude people but to include people. We'll be working hard in the area of awareness, because not everybody understands that. We see in the debate on the Speech from the Throne that the two alleged critics in this area don't really understand what it's all about. So we'll be working hard on awareness, we'll be working hard on integration to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to get into all the good things that this province and this government provide. We want to make sure that there is access to all our institutions, to government, and to the services we provide. I understand and I admit and I concur with those who say that that is not 100 percent available today, but those are the areas we're going to be focusing on, and when we're done, everybody will be benefiting.

The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar just mentioned a couple of minutes ago that she was disappointed that there wasn't any mention in the throne speech about pins and calendars. The Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar, I suppose, would want to add more credibility to the bent ideas of a very few Albertans by mentioning it in a Speech from the Throne. The opposition says the government should stand up on the rooftops with bullhorns and denounce something in loud terms, offering more credibility to it when in actual fact the feeling of this minister and this government is: the ideas expressed in a few pins and a calendar and the odd bumper sticker are reprehensible, yes; are regrettable, yes; are disgusting, in fact, but not worthy of much more than that. That has been our position. That is what we will continue to advocate, as a matter of fact, emphasizing the positive by encouraging the wearing of pins that say something good about what Alberta is, and we've done that.

I notice that the Member for Edmonton-Whitemud is saddened. He says in *Hansard* on March 14:

. . . saddened when [he meets] with ethnocultural groups and they express to me their disappointment that they're singled out, treated differently by some people within our society.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I wish I had the opportunity to ask a question as was asked in the debate earlier tonight. What the

heck are you talking about here? Do ethnocultural groups want to be treated differently, or do they want to be treated as all Albertans are treated? I believe it's the latter. I believe we do not want to compartmentalize. We do not want to ghettoize. We do not want to make the crass political moves that the Liberal Party advocates by compartmentalizing, by treating ethnic groups differently. That's not what this government stands for. We're for equality of opportunity for all Albertans. That's my commitment. That's the government's commitment. That will continue to be the commitment that is given action, legislation, and program by this government.

We do believe that the vision laid out by Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor just a few days ago expresses the view of the majority of Albertans. That's evident from what happened a year ago today. We will continue to advocate for what the majority of Albertans want. We will continue to press for equality of opportunity, for the ability of all Albertans, those who have been here for generations and generations and those who may arrive today: the opportunity for all people to embrace and enjoy all that this province has to offer.

Mr. Speaker, it's late, and I beg leave to adjourn debate.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion carries.

Deputy Government House Leader.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of the government tomorrow to deal with second readings of Bills on the Order Paper beginning with Bill 8, the Individual's Rights Protection Amendment Act, 1990.

[At 10:31 p.m. the House adjourned to Wednesday at 2:30 p.m.]