

Legislative Assembly of Alberta

Title: Friday, March 30, 1990 10:00 a.m.

Date: 90/03/30

[The House met at 10 a.m.]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Prayers

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

Our divine Father, as we conclude for this week our work in this Assembly, we renew our thanks and ask that we may continue our work under your guidance.

Amen.

head: Reading and Receiving Petitions

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I request that a petition signed by 24,000 Albertans on pulp mills be read.

CLERK:

The undersigned request legislation to delay all proposed pulp and other forestry developments in the province of Alberta until such time as:

1. a class environmental assessment that reports the cumulative impact of all existing and proposed forestry developments has been completed, and
2. full and complete environmental impact assessments, equivalent to the federal Environmental Assessment Review Process (SOR/84-467) including public hearings, have been completed for each proposed forestry development.

head: Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

MR. DAY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to present the report of the special committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed under Standing Order 49(1) to recommend to the Assembly "the list of the members, chairmen and deputy chairmen to compose the Select . . . Committees of the Assembly."

head: Tabling Returns and Reports

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following annual reports: Lethbridge Community College 1988-89, Mount Royal College 1987-88, University of Alberta 1988-89, University of Calgary 1988-89, and the Westerra Institute of Technology for the year 1988-89.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to table with the Legislature today the 1988-89 annual report of the Surface Reclamation Fund.

MR. FOWLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table today the report for the Alberta Racing Commission for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1989.

head: Introduction of Special Guests

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased today to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly 40 members of the Girl Guides of Canada who are in Edmonton attending the Alberta Girls' Parliament. This is the 19th session

of the Alberta Girls' Parliament. We're very pleased that Kathy Ward this year will be the Premier. She is a constituent of mine. Susan Diozeghy is the Leader of the Opposition. They are accompanied by guiding leaders June Martin, Marlene Lapierre, Daphne Yeske, Betty Buckner, and Bunnie McMillan. They are seated in the members' gallery, and I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of the Assembly.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to my colleagues Rick and Marian Stamp and family. Rick is a member of the Bow River irrigation board, and the family is very active in my constituency. I'd like to have them stand and be recognized at this time.

head: Oral Question Period

Lead Poisoning in Medicine Hat

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Unfortunately, we have learned that at least three more children have got lead poisoning as a result of the Occupational Health and Safety department's negligence at the Alberta Recoveries & Rentals plant in Medicine Hat.

The minister has responded by ordering an internal investigation into his department's involvement in this fiasco. The minister has gone from pretending to have all the answers to now admitting that he doesn't have any of the answers. The frightening part about this is that this could be just the tip of the iceberg. How many other potential time bombs are around the worksites in the province of Alberta? But the key point here is that the government is asking the very people who have grossly mishandled this situation to now investigate. My question to the Premier. Given that this self-policing has great potential for turning this whole matter into a whitewash, will the Premier establish an independent inquiry into this whole matter?

MR. GETTY: Well, Mr. Speaker, first, I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition has raised an important issue. The Minister of Occupational Health and Safety was in Medicine Hat meeting with workers and plant officials yesterday. His department and the Workers' Compensation Board are taking a very serious assessment of this matter. I think that to refer to it as a fiasco is hardly the way to discuss something as serious as this and the health of workers. Also, to accuse in advance that the minister or the government would be trying to whitewash something I think is also unfair and not true. We will do everything possible to make sure the matter is handled responsibly and in as strong and sure a method as possible. The minister will be back and be able to respond to the leader. He should wait for the minister to bring that additional information.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, the point is that this lead poisoning has been going on for over a year. This was raised with this department. We can't wait any longer. This Premier is responsible. Look at the minister's record. He first called this issue just garbage, and when I asked questions in the Legislature, he said that there were no problems to begin with. All of a sudden now, because people have come forward, he has to do something. But we do not trust him in this matter, Mr. Premier, nor do the workers. I say to you that you've a minister out of control in this matter. I want to ask the Premier, in view of his answer: what possible credibility is this secretive, internal

investigation going to have with the workers and the people of Alberta? Again I ask him to make this a public inquiry.

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I just have to assure the hon. member that the minister will get all of the facts and present them to the Legislature as he has promised and as I am promising.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, were you not here at question period? He said one thing and then had to come back with another. It's his credibility that's at stake here. It's clear that this has been going on for a year. Would the Premier, then, at least for the time being do the right thing and remove this minister from this portfolio?

MR. GETTY: Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is hardly expressing concern any more for the people of Alberta and rather has tried to twist it into something of a political nature of his own making. Frankly, I think his suggestion is absolutely ridiculous.

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

MR. MARTIN: You tell that to the workers and the kids out there that are suffering from lead poisoning, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Second main.

Environment Expenditures

MR. MARTIN: Well, my question is to the Minister of Environment, Mr. Speaker. The other day, on March 22, I asked him a question on page 22 about the budget expenditures of \$110 per capita when their actual forecast is about \$50 per capita. The minister seemed unaware of this gross discrepancy at the time, but I'm sure he's had time to have the spin doctors in his department try to give him a rational answer to this matter. Again, this is another example of this government cooking the books to try to put the best possible light on it, Mr. Speaker. My question to the minister. Could he finally now explain why this misleading information was given to the people of Alberta in the 1990 Budget Address?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, this issue of cooking the books and so on is an indication and a manifestation of typical socialist paranoia. To answer the question, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition would look at page 22 of the Budget Address, he would see a chart that clearly shows that expenditures on environmental enhancement and protection in the province of Alberta are about \$119 per capita. This, if the hon. member will note in the bottom left-hand corner, was sourced through Statistics Canada which shows us, in fact, to be the leader in this country in environmental enhancement and protection. The material was compiled by Statistics Canada and takes into account not only the money that was allocated to my department but the money that has been allocated throughout this government and various departments for the protection and the enhancement of the environment.

MR. MARTIN: So, Mr. Speaker, the minister has to admit that this is misleading information. It's not from his department. I wish he would tell us, then, where they got the figures to get up

to the \$110, over double what was in his department. Tell us precisely what's a part of those figures then, Mr. Minister.

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, do I have to read and illustrate in pictures for the hon. Leader of the Opposition? I will show him the pictures; maybe he can understand better. Or perhaps we can do a videotape.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. Final supplementary.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the minister. He may think he's cute and funny, but the people of Alberta know that they're misleading. He can't answer the question. Is it not true, Mr. Minister, that part of these figures they've put out in the budget have to do with dam building, which most people would consider destroying the environment rather than protecting it?

MR. KLEIN: I would imagine that a lot of the budget – and it will come out in estimates debate – concerns itself with the wise use and protection of our water.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Gold Bar, on behalf of the Liberal Party.

Handicapped Persons Assistance

MRS. HEWES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've seen numerous examples in the House recently of the failure of this government to keep up a consistent policy, or at least consistent rhetoric relative to their policy, and AISH is one of those subjects that we're getting mixed messages on. AISH is one of the programs that the province is very proud of. Handicapped people in our province have used it for some years. Now we hear that while the Premier and the Minister of Family and Social Services have stated publicly that the AISH allocation will be reviewed, the senior advisor to the minister is saying that the budget increase is in terms of caseloads only and not in terms of an increased allocation to individuals. Mr. Speaker, my first question is to the Minister of Family and Social Services. I'm going to keep this very, very simple. Is AISH going to be increased or not?

MR. OLDRING: Well, it's not a problem for the hon. member to keep her questions simple; they usually are.

But in reference to AISH, Mr. Speaker, and the member noted it, AISH is a program that Albertans are proud of. AISH is a unique program in Alberta . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. OLDRING: Again, and I've said it before in this Assembly . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. I'll let you continue in a moment or maybe five minutes when the House settles down, if the House settles down on Friday.

Hon. minister, continue, please.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying – I've said it before in this Assembly, and I repeat it for the benefit of the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar – AISH is a unique program. We as a province are one of three provinces

in Canada that even have such a program. Ontario, as I've said before, offers a little more support for their single AISH recipients, not as much support for their couples as Alberta. British Columbia offers less support than we're offering here in Alberta. Alberta is the only province in Canada that is not both means and asset tested. Finally, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister.
Supplementary, Edmonton-Gold Bar.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry; I don't think I can make it much simpler. I believe that the handicapped people in our province and in fact everybody in our province needs to know the answer to the question. We also need to know why it is that the minister's senior policy adviser is telling us that the budget increase to AISH is only related to the numbers of caseloads, not to individual allocations, while the minister and the Premier seem to be giving a different message. We're fooling around with people's lives here, and it has to stop.

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, no, we aren't fooling around with people's lives here. We've offered them support in the past, and we'll continue to offer them support in the future. Again, as I was saying on the AISH program, we will continue to provide the commitment of this government through assured income for the severely handicapped. We'll continue our commitment to social reform here in the province of Alberta. But I would want to say that if for some reason the Member for Edmonton-Gold Bar feels that AISH is not meeting the needs of those individuals, there are still further options available to them yet in terms of social allowance for the disabled. Again, Mr. Speaker: a program that offers these individuals all the support they're going to need to be able to maintain a reasonable standard of living here in the province of Alberta.

MR. SPEAKER: Final.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister should consult, then, with the Premier.

My third question is to the Premier. The Premier on a March 12 open line show said that if the shelter portion of AISH becomes out of whack with the conditions, then we'll have to, as a caring government, make sure we make an adjustment. Now, that's the Premier's statement. The Premier made a commitment on March 12. Certainly the shelter allocation is now out of whack with what we know is happening in shelter circumstances in all of our cities. Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. Is this commitment going to come true? Will you undertake to make sure the AISH allocation for shelter and for other services is in fact increased?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to assure my hon. friend that the government will assess all of the components of the AISH payment and make sure that they are always providing the support and assistance that the minister outlined.

MR. SPEAKER: Red Deer-North, followed by Edmonton-Jasper Place.

Environment's Request for Public Input

MR. DAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've noticed with interest that the entire national media seems to be enthralled with the

federal Minister of the Environment and his recent excellent initiative of asking all Canadians to give him input on environmental matters. It's too bad that our provincial media wasn't as supportive and positive when the Alberta government's Environment minister became the first Minister of the Environment in Canada to launch an extensive program seeking public input from Albertans some months ago. It might have helped Mr. Bouchard to follow our example sooner than he did. As I notice the opposition not caring about the opinion of the people of Alberta on environmental matters, I'd like to ask the Minister of the Environment if he can share with this House if this process works, and do people indeed respond to this type of request for input?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, there's been tremendous response to the mission statement. It's very interesting to note that the form that was sent out was a single piece of paper and not a multiple choice question and answer kind of thing. Thousands and thousands of Albertans are taking the time to write down their thoughts, to think about it, to give it reasonable thought – much more, obviously, than has been given by members of the opposition to this very important issue of the environment and how we protect our environment through this decade and into the future. That information will be compiled. It will be included in draft legislation. That legislation then will be taken out for public consultation, face-to-face consultation with Albertans. As the result of that consultation we will put in place draft legislation that will provide us not only with a new set of strengthened laws but an agenda that will take us through this decade and well into the next century.

MR. DAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that several thousand Albertans have already provided a written response, they may be reluctant to go through the exercise again even though it's a good initiative federally. Will the minister, then, in compiling the report be prepared to send to the federal minister an executive summary of the feelings of Albertans so that he'll have a clear understanding of what Albertans want to see happen with the environment?

MR. KLEIN: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. We'll be very happy to share that information with the federal government, because the environment, of course, is more than a provincial issue or a national issue. It is, in fact, a global issue, and there are many instances through this process where it has been determined that we as a province have to be on the same wavelength as the government and, indeed, the rest of the world.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

Alberta-Pacific Project Report

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of the Environment went some distance in clearing up the fuzziness and miscommunication over the government's position on the Alberta-Pacific Environmental Impact Assessment Review Board report. He said:

We plan to do a study of the chlorinated organics as they affect the fish in the lower reaches of the Athabasca River.

And later on:

We feel it's going to take us at least two years to complete that kind of work and get proper, good information.

I thank the minister for that, but a lot of Albertans are wondering about all of the other studies which were recommended by

the Al-Pac report: those dealing with fish, fish habitat, oxygen in the river, and timber harvesting. Will the minister clarify the government's position on those studies rather than the simple point of chlorinated organics?

MR. KLEIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the Premier so eloquently pointed out yesterday, all reports received by the government are given careful review and careful consideration, and what we are doing relative to the recommendations is giving them a careful review. We're giving them a lot of thought. We have decided that indeed it will be worth while to study the effects of chlorinated organics on the fish in the Athabasca River, because we know that this has evolved through the operation of the two existing pulp mills that have been around since the early '70s and the late '60s.

Mr. Speaker, we have agreed that another recommendation in the Al-Pac report is indeed a good recommendation. We're in the process of implementing that recommendation now, and that is the establishment of a formalized process to conduct environmental impact assessments in the future. It's going to be called the natural resources conservation board. If the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place will just be patient, we will probably have that legislation in the House in the not too distant future.

So, indeed, we are taking action immediately on some of the recommendations, and we are reviewing with a great deal of thought, Mr. Speaker, those other recommendations.

MR. McINNIS: Well, Mr. Speaker, let's stop playing around. Al-Pac is in Ottawa today attempting to sell their revised proposal on the basis that they have solved the chlorinated organics problem. That's their argument. This government is trying to focus all of the attention on chlorinated organics. I want the minister's assurance today that he will not approve another pulp mill for construction until all of the studies on fish, fish habitat, oxygen, and timber harvesting recommended in this report are done. Will he make that assurance today, that he won't sign for another pulp mill?

MR. KLEIN: Well, it's not a matter of signing or not signing; it's a matter of looking at a situation when it occurs and doing a proper assessment of the situation.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I find it so very, very strange that they would be giving so much credibility to the Al-Pac review panel process when in fact if you go back in time, the opposition were saying: "Well, this is only a public relations exercise. It's pure politics. It's pure public relations. The environmental impact assessment panel is seriously flawed." You know, as Adlai Stevenson once said, "If they stop telling lies about us, we [will] stop telling the truth about them."

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-McKnight.

Advanced Education Students Housing

MRS. GAGNON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On March 2 I met with a number of student housing leaders at the University of Alberta, and my question comes from that meeting. In September of 1989 the Minister of Advanced Education established a committee on student housing to review current government policies and future needs. The committee was to report to the government by December 31, 1989. That report was later extended to March 1990, and it has since been extended to June 1990. The current crisis in student housing is particularly acute

in Edmonton where the vacancy rate generally is only 1.9 percent. A June reporting date means no funds until March 1991 and no benefit for the September 1990-91 academic year.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MRS. GAGNON: Would the minister advise the Legislature as to why their report has been delayed?

MR. GOGO: Well, essentially, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. TAYLOR: Just tell the truth.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, just let the minister get started.

MR. GOGO: . . . because I view it as such an important issue, I want to ensure that I have the views of the 29 institutions throughout the province of Alberta. I think it should be stated to hon. members the policy of this government and the Department of Advanced Education in the matter: student residences are a matter for the institutions. The institutions will collect the rents, and they in turn are expected to maintain them and provide those services for the students.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary question.

MRS. GAGNON: If that is the case, then one wonders why the University of Lethbridge got \$18 million.

My second question is: will the minister commit himself to meet with the incoming students' union executive at the University of Alberta in the very near future? This is where the crisis exists.

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, Friday last I met with 35 student association leaders. I've met with 25 institutions, their student associations. I'm always available to meet with student association leaders. As a matter of fact, it's been my policy since April 14 that the priority of my job lies with the students, and I'll meet with those students at any time that's convenient to us both.

Carbon Tax Proposal

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Speaker, we're seeing in Canada a growing national concern over the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. In that national discussion some are beginning to advocate a so-called carbon tax as one way to reduce the production of carbon dioxide. Given the fact that the Minister of Energy next week will be meeting with his federal and provincial counterparts here in Alberta, I'm wondering if he could share with the Assembly what policy position he'll be taking to that meeting with respect to the so-called carbon tax.

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, my view is that a carbon tax is not necessarily the answer to deal with the matter of carbon dioxide emissions. We in this province, myself together with the Minister of the Environment, have announced a clean air strategy which will in fact engender a dialogue as to, Firstly: what is the impact on global warming of CO₂ in the atmosphere? Is, in fact, the data base that has been presented accurate? We see that the George Marshall institute has advised the U.S. government that it doesn't appear as though there is any action necessary on global warming. At the same time, we see the former ambassador to the United Nations, Stephen Lewis, saying

that there's dire circumstances, dire consequences, and that we must move immediately. In between there is a range of views on the issue of CO₂ and global warming.

Our government's view is that education and conservation measures are really the first steps we should take. If Albertans are willing to buy into the conservation measures and into the education process, we can achieve reduction of fossil fuel emissions unto itself, and that's a good initiative. We have in our department an energy audit, Mr. Speaker. That has conducted over 2,000 audits on buildings in the last decade, and there have been potential savings in excess of \$25 million identified. Those are measures that promote conservation. The last resort would be more taxes. It is not my preference and certainly not the preference of this government. That's the message we're going to be taking to our energy ministers' conference in Kananaskis on Monday.

MR. PAYNE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I agree wholeheartedly with the Energy minister's characterization of the tax as a last resort, but given that it is still a possible resort, I wonder if he could clarify the question of jurisdiction. When it comes to the so-called carbon tax or that kind of taxation, who's going to call the shot, Ottawa or Alberta?

MR. ORMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have I think a very serious issue developing with the federal government on jurisdiction on the environment. Our government's view is that if the federal government is well intentioned and has the best interests of Albertans and Canadians at heart on environmental issues that involve jurisdiction, they're more than welcome. We have set that precedent with the AI-Pac hearings; we have set that precedent with OSLO. Through the ERCB process for reviewing OSLO, we have grafted on the federal Environment officials to participate in environmental assessment. But, Mr. Speaker, if these moves by the federal government or any other jurisdiction are ill conceived and are designed solely to gather political capital on the issue of the environment, they must be vigorously opposed. We will not allow for erosion of our jurisdiction on any issue, particularly the environment and particularly if it is just for purely political reasons. That's the direction we're taking, and we will continue to take it into the future on resource development.

MR. SPEAKER: Vegreville.

Gainers Agreements with Province

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Conservative government's incompetence and their unfortunate habit of making secret deals with taxpayers' money with their friends have seriously undermined the stability in the entire red meat industry in our province. Unfortunately, the government has steadfastly refused our demands to make public the deals between them and Peter Pocklington, something that needs to be done, I suggest, so that we can move forward and try and build a healthy future for this important industry in our province. Given the fact that the Alberta pork producers responded positively to the government's demands that Fletcher's books be made open to the public, will the Premier, in a spirit of Getty glasnost, if you will, follow the good example of the Alberta pork producers and agree to table the master agreement made between his government and Peter Pocklington and any amendments thereto?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, there are several responses for the hon. member that I think with a little thought he would have come to the same conclusions. First of all, the matter is being dealt with on the Order Paper, and secondly the matter is before a court right now.

MR. FOX: This is a real double standard, Mr. Speaker, and it's not just hurting whatever's left of the government's political credibility; I think it's hurting the red meat industry. It's no wonder farmers are concerned with this.

But, Mr. Speaker, because Albertans want to know and I think Albertans deserve to know what happened to the millions of dollars of taxpayers' money that the Getty gang shoveled into Peter Pocklington's bank accounts, when will the Premier agree to make public the books of Gainers so that we can work towards building a viable future for this important company?

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, now the hon. member has both taken a poor question and added to it a lot of untruths. I ask him to please take some time, get some help from his researcher, try and get them to write it out for him, and get it right. Surely then, with a little thoughtful assistance from his researchers, he may be able to come up with a good question.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway.

Lethbridge College Entrepreneurial Centre

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Lethbridge Community College Entrepreneurial Centre has for several years run a new ventures development program with funding support from the various departments of the government. However, the Department of Economic Development and Trade has unilaterally decided to quit funding this program which costs only a few thousand dollars, compared to the millions he's putting into the loan guarantee program. To the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. Given that this program at the Lethbridge Community College has spawned 68 new businesses and created over a hundred jobs in southern Alberta at very low cost to the taxpayers, why is the government breaking its funding commitment to this program?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, here we have another example of the opposition having their facts totally distorted. There was a commitment but not an ongoing commitment. We originally involved ourselves on the basis that we would only support it for a short period of time. We extended that time period of support, recognizing that they were having difficulties in getting additional private-sector capital, and we were very generous in the continuation of that support. We indicated to them as far as a year ago that they could no longer expect us to continue with our support and suggested to them that they be more active in getting private-sector support. It does not come as a surprise to them.

If I can also indicate, I guess, the hypocrisy of the hon. member's questions, whereby in one moment he suggests to us we should be doing less; the next he's suggesting we should do more. I would hope that the opposition would be consistent in their approach as we are in dealing with this issue, because we made them very much aware of the circumstances. We are carrying through with our commitment that we had relayed to them some time ago.

MR. McEACHERN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the millions of dollars committed to the export loan program – the losses on that program are in the millions of dollars, and this only costs a few thousand. This is exactly the kind of program that the government should be supporting. It's locally based. It's getting new, young entrepreneurs started. It makes a lot of sense, a lot more sense than giving away money to Japanese pulp companies.

My second question, then, is to the Minister of Advanced Education. Given that the students enrolled in this program paid their fees on the understanding that the program would run until August of 1990 and given that government funding is being cut off as of tomorrow, will the minister commit government funding to ensure that these students, instead of being short-changed, are allowed to complete their program?

MR. GOGO: In fairness to those students, Mr. Speaker, the Lethbridge Community College knew over a year ago, because I as the MLA for Lethbridge-West was involved along with the hon. Member for Calgary-Foothills in encouraging the Minister of Economic Development and Trade to get that extended one year. I think everybody has had adequate notice, and the Lethbridge Community College, as a board-governed institution, in my view must bear that responsibility.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I think it's only fair that we offer supplementary information for the hon. member, because again he's incorrect as it related to the export loan guarantee program, and he shouldn't rely on the press.

AN HON. MEMBER: It's irrelevant.

MR. ELZINGA: Well, then, why did he raise it if it was irrelevant? You guys are real hypocrites, aren't you? You can give it, but you can't take it. It's shameful.

But on that program, Mr. Speaker, let me share with him that 215 companies have accessed this, to a total of \$168 million, generating half a billion dollars worth of sales, which creates in excess of 10,000 jobs within this province. If the hon. member doesn't believe we should support this essential component of our trade, he should be honest enough to admit so.

MR. MARTIN: Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Point of order. Thank you. [interjections] Order. Order. Order. Sit down, please, hon. member.

MR. McEACHERN: Well, he can jump into . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Sit down, hon. member.

MR. McEACHERN: I am.

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. member would like to take a coffee break just for a few moments.

The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Forest Management

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A recent study of the Naylor Hills-Keg River area underlines the need for proper, open environmental impact assessments into forestry management areas and the agreements which cover them. After 30 years of clear-cut logging the drainage in this area has been so

fundamentally altered that it is going to take upwards of \$30 million to repair the problems before reforestation will work. Now we learn that the minister is apparently developing a "public" input process into forestry management agreements, but the people who would comment on them won't be able to see the agreements until they are signed. Of course, that's too late. To the minister. In light of this Naylor Hills-Keg River study, how can the minister continue to oppose proper, open, public environmental impact assessments into forestry management agreements?

MR. FJORBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to debate the specific area that he's raised with respect to reforestation. It certainly was a problem in that one particular area, and it was done a number of years ago. There's an awareness level and a recognition of how we approach that in the future. I am going to very soon, in the period of the next couple of weeks, announce the public participation process with respect to forest management planning in this province. As far as an EIA, maybe the hon. member would like to do it like his Liberal cousins in Ontario. They've had an EIA on forest management planning going on in that province for 11 years. I'm certain we don't need any 11-year environmental impact studies, and I believe the public of this province will be pleased when they see the overall management planning and the public participation and the opportunity to be fully involved in all aspects of forest management in Alberta.

MR. MITCHELL: Eleven years underlines the magnitude of the problem.

Since the study was done with government funding, docs this now mean it will be the government of Alberta rather than the company that was responsible for these problems that will be funding the land improvement so that reforestation can in fact proceed?

MR. FJORBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, in this province reforestation is the responsibility of the company. They either do it or they pay us and we do it. In areas that have been logged in the past, yes, there were problems in some areas. It's not only here in Alberta. There have been those problems all across this country. We're working together with the industry to resolve those concerns and resolve those problems. The allusion the hon. member raises about the magnitude of the problem and how serious it is is typical of the action they normally take in making a mountain out of a molehill.

MR. SPEAKER: Banff-Cochrane, followed by Edmonton-Strathcona, then Calgary-Buffalo.

Impaired Driving

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Worldwide there are literally millions of people who are either killed or maimed as a result of accidents caused through impaired driving. Alberta this week has been hosting an international conference on impaired driving, and I understand that the deliberations have been very positive and have resulted in a redirection to address the problem. In light of the conference and in light of the very serious nature of this problem, my question is to the Solicitor General. Will the Solicitor General agree to this House today to increase the budget allocation in his department for both

education and enforcement to try to wipe out this very serious problem of impaired driving?

MR. FOWLER: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to confirm the success of the congress that is taking place with attendees from all over the world. However, this is not a readdressing of the problem. It is, in fact, the end of the 1989-90 program that we have implemented. With nearly 450 attendees from all over the world we are, indeed, learning a great deal more about the problem as it exists: a worldwide social problem. We are finding that while in Alberta we may be the toughest in Canada, we're not the toughest in the world by any means. But it certainly does reaffirm our direction on this, reaffirm our commitment to attempt to clean up our highways from the scourge of drunken drivers, referred to in the state of Oregon as scuzzballs and desperadoes; not terms we use here, but that is the state of affairs in the state of Oregon. I want to assure the member and this House and all of Alberta that we are determined to get the attention of the people who are drinking and driving at the same time, and we will do so. Once having done so, we will work on changing their attitudes.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm convinced that one of the best ways to decrease this problem and to address the problem is to increase the penalties by way of suspension of drivers' licences for those convicted of offences that involve impaired driving. I would ask the minister today if he will undertake to this House to increase the suspensions for those who are convicted of drinking and driving offences.

MR. FOWLER: Mr. Speaker, Alberta already has the toughest suspensions in Canada. But, working administratively through the Motor Vehicle Administration Act, insofar as the penalties of fines or incarceration are concerned, that is the strict prerogative under the Criminal Code of Canada – left with our courts. However, there are certain other things that we will be looking at that have come out as a result of the congress that is closing today. As I've indicated in the past to the House and people of Alberta, it's not my intention to do anything brand new in this year. However, we are developing plans for the third year of the program which will serve, I assure you, to catch the attention of the Albertans who still persist in this behaviour.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Strathcona.

Federal Prisons Policy

MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Attorney General or the Solicitor General. It concerns two key recommendations of the Weir report on the Gingras affair that have not, it seems, been accepted by the federal government. The first of them is that it was recommended that the community parole officer have a veto over the temporary absences of prisoners from the penitentiary. The second was that no warden of a penitentiary in future be appointed who did not have previous service in the penitentiary system. Both of these recommendations have strong public safety implications for the public of Alberta. My question, therefore, I guess to the Attorney General. Will he be prepared to tell Mr. Blais, the federal minister responsible, that the nonacceptance of these

recommendations threatens the safety, indeed the lives, of Albertans?

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, it's true. I think the Weir report had approximately 17 recommendations, and I know there are four or five that the federal officials have indicated they are not accepting as recommended. There may be some variations, two of which the hon. member has pointed out. I will certainly undertake dialogue with the new Solicitor General, the Hon. Pierre Cadieux – Mr. Blais was previously in that portfolio – to see if there can be changes, because there are problems. In fact, after reviewing the Weir report, the expurgated and unexpurgated editions, you do find out that in many instances the inmates are running the institution rather than the officials, and that does result in some potential for dangers.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes. I wonder if the Attorney General can tell us what excuses the federal government had in being so slow in coming up with the papers referred to in the Weir report that were necessary for his examination of the provincial implications of the astonishing revelations made in his report regarding the public safety of Albertans.

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, the federal Solicitor General was not the delay. The Solicitor General did, in fact, agree with the province that we did need all documentation to enable a thorough investigation to see if there were criminal implications to the happenings that would emanate from the events. There has been, admittedly, some bureaucratic delay, but our department now does have all documents, and I would expect that in the next week or so we will have the final determination on the investigations.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

Police Chase Inquiry

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Solicitor General with respect to the RCMP high-speed chase issue, the Simm inquiry. Now, from the beginning the minister has bobbed and weaved; he's pussyfooted; he's waffled to the point where he's beginning to look like the cartoon Roadrunner going, "Beep, beep," running in the opposite direction every time the issue is raised. When I asked the Solicitor General to set in motion a provincial review of RCMP chase policies which have resulted in 21 deaths in Alberta in the past three years, he said he wanted to hear from the Simm fatality inquiry. Now Judge Oliver has told us that RCMP policies do need to be improved and that a comprehensive review is needed. Now, given that a national review, while desirable, is probably not attainable, I'm wondering whether the minister will recognize that he should stop running from this issue and set up a provincial task force in the interests of public safety on our highways.

MR. FOWLER: Thank you. Not to make light of the question, I just wish that I had the physical condition of the Roadrunner. I, too, received the report, Mr. Speaker, late yesterday afternoon and have in fact reviewed it but have not had an opportunity to discuss it with the Attorney General. We are concerned about the recommendations in the report, but we've

also been concerned about the chases that have occurred. It seems to us that there are always questions directed or recommendations made to what the police should be doing. But we are as interested or more interested in how we can stop the chases in the first place by catching the attention of those who are running away.

Notwithstanding that, Mr. Speaker, prior to the report coming out, I commenced setting up a task force in Alberta which involved the police commissions, the police forces, and also the community. The report may change the direction on that, but I have to reconsider it in light of the report.

MR. SPEAKER: Might we have unanimous consent to complete this series of questions?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried.
Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have seen an example of the RCMP co-operating in a provincial task force with respect to prison issues in this province, and I'm wondering whether the minister has even broached with the RCMP the issue of whether or not they would co-operate in a provincial task force, not necessarily a public inquiry but a provincial task force, just to review this issue in this province. If he hasn't asked the RCMP about that, would he do so immediately and report to this House?

MR. FOWLER: It's not necessary for me to come back to a report, Mr. Speaker. I've discussed this in considerable detail within the last 30 days with Assistant Commissioner Gordon Greig of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and he was more than willing to co-operate with the suggestion of a task force on the provision that we look at all police-chase policies in the province of Alberta. That is, of course, the intent.

I would like to go on to say that this is not unrelated to the previous answer that I gave in respect to drinking and driving, because it is well known, it is an established fact, that over half the chases are as a result of drinking and driving again. Not so in the Simm case, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Before we deal with points of order and so forth, I wonder if the House might give unanimous consent to revert to the Introduction of Special Guests.

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

head: **Introduction of Special Guests**
(*reversion*)

MR. SPEAKER: The Attorney General.

MR. ROSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to make a couple of introductions. We have with us today grade 6 and grade 8 classes from the Daysland school. They are seated in the members' and public galleries. They're escorted today by teachers Eliza Kolar and Milt Openshaw and by

parents Mrs. Stefanishion, Mrs. Curtis, Dr. McKinnon, and Mr. and Mrs. Schreiber. I would ask that they stand and that the Assembly give them the welcome usually accorded to special visitors.

Also, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Elaine McCoy I would like to also extend a welcome to 28 members of a grade 5 class from the St. Thomas Aquinas school, located in the Calgary-West constituency. They are seated in the members' gallery. They're escorted by teachers Lindy Arndt and Toni Marasco and parents Sandy Murnaghan, Ginger Hamel, Elaine Johnson, and Mira Bielecki. I would ask that they rise and also receive the usual welcome accorded to special guests.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce 16 students from the Alberta Vocational Centre's business careers department. They are with us today in the public gallery with their teacher Mrs. Barbara Nimchuk. I'd ask that they please rise and receive the welcome from the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Additional?

MR. SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, point of order out of question period.

MR. MARTIN: Just under "Oral Questions," I believe *Beauchesne* 407, Mr. Speaker. I won't spend a great deal of time on this matter. It's just that when there is supplemental information from a minister, it should at least apply to the question. The question I'm talking about had to do the Lethbridge Community College entrepreneur program. We got into another government program. I know the minister was thin skinned and wanted another shot back at question period, but it seems to me that in this case it was inappropriate. I know it's difficult to please all of us, but in the future if it is supplemental information, I hope it is on the question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Additional? Thank you.

head: **Orders of the Day**

head: **Government Motions**

11. Moved by Mr. Horsman:

Be it resolved that when the Assembly adjourns on Wednesday, April 11, 1990, at the regular hour of 5:30 p.m., it shall stand adjourned to Monday, April 23, 1990, at 2:30 p.m.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, this has been agreed to by House leaders in our discussions about an Easter break to allow members to deal with planning their time with their families, and I so move that motion.

[Motion carried]

head: **Government Bills and Orders**
Second Reading

Bill 5
Insurance Amendment Act, 1990

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Banff-Cochrane.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm please to stand today to discuss in principle Bill 5, the Insurance Amendment Act, 1990. Essentially the Bill, although not long, is significant in that it deals with two very important issues, the first being making the Act more responsive to change and the second making the penalties incorporated in the Act more effective.

Firstly, with respect to making the Act more responsive to change, I would point out to hon. members that the amendment I'm speaking about is with respect to the accident insurance benefits payable under an automobile insurance policy. The intention is to make it easier to amend the amounts and the terms and conditions of those benefits to keep abreast with inflation and social factors, and the process for doing that would be to move those matters from the Act into the regulations. I think all hon. members will agree that that would speed up the process and allow for an addressing of issues far more readily than is currently the case.

The second matter deals with penalties. As members who are familiar with the Act will probably recognize, the current situation is that any penalties imposed against insurance agents and adjusters only involve suspension or revocation of the licence. That's effective if those who are suspended or whose licences are revoked are going to continue in the business and also if they're not planning a holiday or some other time off of their particular occupation. The concept here is to increase the penalty section by allowing for financial penalties to be levied. This would, of course, also involve an appeal process, which would go through the Insurance Council and ultimately to the courts, but it would have a financial impact and would make sure we do expand the penalties to make redress of the general public much more current with today's realities, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, if there are any questions from the hon. members, I'd be happy to answer them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

The Member for Edmonton-Strathcona.

MR. WRIGHT: Yes, the Bill is sound in my respectful view, Mr. Speaker. I ask only one thing, and that is that the draft regulations, if that's all they are, should be filed with us in Committee of the Whole, that being what is said by this government to be good practice. I agree; it is good practice but I'm afraid more often honoured in the breach than in the observance. If we can have it, then, that would be helpful.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Banff-Cochrane.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that some of those regulations are in place now. I'll certainly consult with the department, and if they are all available at the time of Committee of the Whole, I'm sure I'd be delighted to introduce them at that time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: There's a call for the question. The Member for Banff-Cochrane has done the summation.

[Motion carried; Bill 5 read a second time]

Bill 7
Change of Name Amendment Act, 1990

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Bow.

MRS. B. LAING: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I rise to move second reading of Bill 7, the Change of Name Amendment Act, 1990.

The Change of Name Act permits persons to apply to the director of Vital Statistics for a change of name and sets out conditions and approvals required before the change of name may be carried out. We have been advised that section 11 of the Act violates the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in that it discriminates on the ground of gender and cannot be legally justified.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Amendments to sections 6(3) and 11 have been made to remove discrimination on the grounds of gender. In addition, section 7.1 was added to authorize a change-of-name provision for children of lawfully annulled marriages. Failure to also provide for change in the names of these children could be viewed as discriminating against a class of persons and thus be contrary to the Charter.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just wondering if perhaps the mover of Bill 7 could explain for hon. members whether or not one of the implications of this Bill would be that we would in future refer to the Deputy Speaker/Chairman of Committees as Deputy Speaker/Chairperson of Committees.

MRS. HEWES: Mr. Speaker, I can appreciate that this is being done to bring our legislation into conformity with the Charter, but I have wondered, reading it, if it in fact has gone far enough, because I believe there are still some discriminatory aspects in the Bill. I would hope at committee stage to introduce some amendments.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to suggest, for instance, that in whatever section it is that we refer to "patronymic," it should in fact include "matronymic" as well. I see no reason to leave out the reference to either gender. Further, Mr. Speaker, I think there should be some thought given to referring to "wife and mother" in sections 4.1(1)(a), 4.1(1)(c), and 4.1(2) instead of just referring to "mother." I believe in all three of those we should include the terminology "wife and mother" instead of just restricting it to "mother."

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be suggesting and placing before the House some amendments to this Bill. As I said in my opening statement, I believe it's going in the right direction, but it simply doesn't cover all the potential for discrimination that we should.

MRS. B. LAING: I would just like to urge the support of these amendments to bring the Bill into line with our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Thank you.

[Motion carried; Bill 7 read a second time]

Bill 9
Electrical Statutes Amendment Act, 1990

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today and move second reading of Bill 9, the Electrical Statutes Amendment Act.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated on introduction of this Bill for first reading, the purpose of the Bill is to provide electrical utilities with a similar authority as telephone utilities to locate power poles so that parts of the poles and power lines may overhang private property and, at the same time, to allow property owners or tenants to distribute secondary power services across public lands, such as highways, for use on their land without prior consent from the Energy Resources Conservation Board.

Mr. Speaker, the need for this legislation arose from an Alberta Court of Appeal decision which ruled that overhang constitutes a trespass, and this decision was consequently upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada. The courts made their decision based on current legislation, and it is believed that if current legislation had the same provisions as are found in the Telecommunications Act, then the decision might have been somewhat different. Power poles are located so that overhang exists because this is the best option for all parties involved. The use of private land is unaffected by overhang, as we know, and the use of public land as transportation and utility corridors is maximized.

This amendment will also require amendments in three other Acts, Mr. Speaker: firstly, the Hydro and Electric Energy Act, because it contains similar terms and conditions for transmission lines; the Water, Gas, Electric and Telephone Companies Act, because this Act contains conditions for distribution lines outside of municipal areas. The third Act affected will be the Municipal Government Act, because it contains terms and conditions with regard to distribution and transmission lines in municipal areas.

These amendments, Mr. Speaker, allow overhang to project over property adjacent to public lands and ensure that large administrative costs will not be incurred as a result of the Supreme Court decision. These amendments only allow overhang to exist and, of course, do not affect the private lands underneath which the overhang does occur.

Mr. Speaker, this Act also contains one other amendment. It's proposed that the Hydro and Electric Energy Act be amended to allow property owners or tenants to distribute power across public land such as highways for use on their land without prior consent of the ERCB. I think that's pretty straightforward, and I think it's a reasonable amendment also. The amendment would allow such minor extensions without board approval. The owner or tenant, however, would still be required to obtain approval from Alberta Transportation and Utilities or their local municipality.

So in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments we believe are in the public's interest and enable the industry to continue to provide electrical service to Albertans in a most efficient manner.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Stony Plain.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel very strongly, after listening to the minister's rationale for the amendments, that he's missed the point of the court decision

entirely. To introduce this legislation to have our laws conform in a contrary manner to the court decision is a completely retrograde step.

One thing that is missing in this legislation is the proper definition of what an overhang consists of. The minister indicated a cross arm. The legislation goes far beyond a cross arm. The legislation goes on to say that

any cross arm, power line, wire or other component that is attached to or rests on a power pole forming part of an electrical distribution system as defined in the . . . Act may project into the airspace over the property adjoining a public highway, street, lane, road . . . and no person is entitled to compensation for the aerial projection.

When power companies under the various Acts seek rights-of-way across private land, they can get them regardless of whether the owner wants it or not – it's a matter of process – and thereby the will of the public is protected in that no individual can stop the construction of utilities.

There are many things that enter my mind when I look upon this. The minister indicated that there would be no encroachment on the surface use of the land, and I would suggest that that is quite incorrect. By the mere projection of the various structures, and there is no limit to length – and I think this is very important: there isn't a limit to length nor a definition of the capacity of the power lines. If you are in an urban area where they have very minimal clearances from property lines, there can be in fact direct interference with buildings, and that should be looked at.

Although the minister indicated that these were only for cross arm intrusions, the way the amendment is written does not in any way eliminate the possibility of power companies running lines over property when you go at a 45-degree angle around, say, an intersection where you have the roads coming on two sides of the property. That's not very well defined.

Another aspect that keeps coming up – it keeps stressing: entitled to no compensation. I find this very, very distressing, that we would even consider giving any utility the right to intrude on the private space of any property and have it spelled out quite clearly that there shall not be any compensation. Given the weak definition of what these intrusions might be and then eliminating even the possibility of discussions for some sort of mutual agreement, I find that quite unacceptable.

The other part that I sort of wonder about: we have many power lines that follow the public corridors crossing Indian reserves, and now we have provincial legislation that I fear might in fact be entering into federal space. I would suggest that the province doesn't have the authority to impose their legislation onto the entry of structures into the air spaces over federal lands.

The part that gives me quite a bit of distress is that there's a lack of definition of size, location to houses. We are all hearing more and more about the adverse effects of power lines and how they may in fact infringe on the health of people living in the vicinity, and now we're getting no limit as to the extent to which the power line overhead structures can intrude onto properties. This is something that I think should be considered. If these intrusions are so minimal, as the minister indicates in his introduction of the Bill, then I find it rather interesting why these intrusions aren't kept totally over the corridor. If they are so small, it's not that great a problem to move the structure over a short distance to keep them within, and then all the activity that would be required around the line would be done on the public property where the line is located.

I haven't had the opportunity to look into the implications of eliminating the involvement of the ERCB in private lines crossing public property, but I would hope that the regulations accompanying that would make sure, whether it be through utilities or the ERCB, that these kinds of activities don't encroach on the safety of Albertans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Three Hills.

MRS. OSTERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to make some observations about this Bill. I realize that the hon. Minister of Energy has been put in a position where there has to be some legislation to recognize the fact that, if I understand it correctly, a judgment could put into jeopardy all the existing power lines in the province which have the effect that has been described by the minister. Therefore, not wanting to have a literally retroactive effect vis-a-vis the decision that has been rendered, it would be possible, I suppose, to put the power companies in the position where they had to renegotiate or in fact have hearings in respect of any lines that have crossbars over private property.

I've spent a number of years in the surface rights area and, indeed, worked with many people respecting power lines, so I'm very cognizant of all the points that have been made by the hon. member who has just spoken. I think all of us have some concern about the effects of this legislation. I believe there has to be corrective action taken because of the decision that was made. But I would say to the hon. minister that it certainly moves this Legislature to make sure that we make a commitment that the kinds of definitions in place, any regulations that are made, are tight enough to only deal with the small power lines, with those crossbars; that we in no way, shape, or form could have an interpretation where we get into the 240 kva or the 500 kva that obviously have a major impact on Albertans, and indeed some questions are raised about the effects of those lines on livestock and people. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. minister to comment about that.

Certainly I wouldn't want to make light of the fact that there is no effect on surface rights, and that point has been made. For those of us who work in the agricultural area, we do know that with the type of equipment we have and how quickly it is changing, at any time we could come into conflict with one of those lines. For all of those existing lines, we have accepted the circumstances. But, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to future lines, I think we have to look very carefully at the kinds of rules that are in place, the changes in circumstances, particularly in agriculture, being cognizant of the fact that in other areas, the air rights and the value of air rights are given a great deal of credence.

I'm hoping the hon. Minister will reflect on the points made and, in his summation with respect to the Bill, make comments. Thank you.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Speaker, rising to comment on the Bill, I would follow along with what the hon. Member for Three Hills and the Member for Stony Plain have already mentioned. I can't help but feel that the Bill is badly drafted, or at least had very little research and input into it outside of what the power companies have done.

Taking it bit by bit, the 750 volts limit put on the transportation of small power is intriguing, but I don't notice whether it's alternating or direct current. There's a tremendous difference,

and a great deal of small power may be of a different type. I assume it's an alternating current which is to feed into the main line. It's probably okay, but if it's a direct current, you can't have industrial users who use DC in the neighbourhood. I think we could use much more, and I think it's an unnecessary limit on small power generators. That is one of the points.

The second, and I think it was brought up so well by the members from Stony Plain and Three Hills, is that air rights are important. I know the minister – I believe one of his old teachers told me he was a whiz in geometry, so he'll know that the hypotenuse of a corner property goes right across the middle of the property. You only need a post on the alternate corners to go right through the middle of the property, so the overhang could be very considerable in that area. So I think it's very loosely worded as far as overhang is concerned.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Next, I'm not so sure the minister is aware, but he could put some of his department to work, that the University of Colorado, starting out 10 years ago – and this may even touch on Environment – with studies that are still ongoing, show with their statistics, although it may not be borne out by other studies, that the rate of cancer amongst children under 12 years of age is double other areas if they're within 200 to 300 feet proximity of power lines; that's an AC power line. That was interesting enough indeed, Mr. Speaker, that some of the people on Vancouver Island have changed their high transmission lines to direct current with the idea there would be less danger from the fallout, and alternating current creates – those of you who are engineers know that induction creates a magnetic field and so on and so forth. So there is a great deal of input to be put in yet on the effects on health of AC current. Here again I would suspect they're talking about high voltage AC.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize the hon. Member for Three Hills' point that air rights, particularly in proximity to cities, could very well be more important in the future than the subsurface rights. In fact, in Connecticut and New York states the air rights are the means by which municipal governments and state governments buy up the development rights, theoretically, over numbers 1 and 2 farmland. Therefore, they control the industrial development, being able to locate out over farmland. That's the way they solved it in a free enterprise way down there.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think in conclusion I would beg the minister maybe to withdraw this, send it out to get a few groups of environmental health people to take a good look at it, and then bring it back again in a better form.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I respectfully concur with the last three speakers. This is an astonishingly ill-thought-out Bill in respect of the encroachment provisions. In the first place, as to the thing that spurred it, the Supreme Court decision on encroachments, the encroachments there were quite minor, I think, so far as length of encroachment was concerned. But in saying that it has retroactive effect, Mr. Speaker, really says nothing. It just says that people hadn't realized that it was a trespass before. If there is damage caused from the trespass, why should they not be compensated? If it's such a minor thing, then the compensation will be minor. But that's by the way, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is that this is so ill thought out in so many ways. In the first place, there's no limit on the encroachment. There's no

limit on the size of the structure we're talking about. If we're talking about rural power lines, usually on wooden posts with a cross arm that's no more than three or four feet, well, that's okay, but it would, on the wording, apply equally to a high-power transmission line of 250, even 500 kilovolts, and they have very wide cross arms quite often. As has been pointed out, it also refers to wires; it's not just the arms. I notice the minister just stuck to cross arms, but it says wires. So in theory, if the reach was feasible, you could span property under this Bill. I find it so odd, coming from a government that was so proud of Bill 1, which says that no person may be deprived of property except by due process of law, a provision with which I agree, incidentally.

But one has property in one's air space, and it's not just a fanciful lawyer's way of collecting more money. I had a client not so long ago from the Stony Plain area past whose land – actually, I guess over whose land – they had a right-of-way for a high-power transmission line going from the power station in the Wabamun area to the city of Edmonton and past. This has now received permission to convey electrical current at 500 kilovolts, and it was built to those specs, but it was only charged up to 250 kilovolts, which of course is high power anyway. The farmer testified in the hearing before the Surface Rights Board that he could go within 200 feet of the line with a fluorescent tube and that tube would light up; not just flicker, but light up. So what would that do, he asked, to him and his cattle? He also testified that his cattle, which were in a barn close to the line, suffered unprecedented rates of spontaneous abortion and sickness and lack of thrift. Again the experts came and said that there's no scientific basis for that. All the same, we got for that farmer an award for the danger of the line, which I gather was a first in this province, perhaps in Canada, for this type of award: general damages for that. Although to a layman it would seem so obvious – his wife testified to mood changes in her husband, which of course could happen independent of the line. I could go on with the details.

The point is that there is a lot of anecdotal evidence, at the least, about the effects of the electrical field of high-power transmission lines. There is now coming to be a considerable body of scientific evidence in the same direction. Now in Ontario there are awards given for the danger posed by this phenomenon. Here we have carte blanche to string wire across, providing the structure itself is outside the limits of the property, and that can't be right, Mr. Speaker. It can't be right that there is no limit on the encroachment.

Now, this is the principle of the Bill we have to be discussing, Mr. Speaker, but it so happens that is the principle of this Bill. I join with my colleague from Westlock-Sturgeon to ask the government to rethink this one.

MR. BOGLE: Mr. Speaker, during second reading, of course, we deal with the principle of legislation, and I do support this Bill in principle. There is a specific question I have for the minister. He may wish to address it during his closing comments or during Committee of the Whole. It relates to a comment he made that the use of private land would be unaffected. That was in specific reference to the amendments dealing with cross arms or wires in the line and making the legislation compatible with the telecommunications legislation.

Clearly, when we're talking about a new subdivision in a town or a city, where the lands are identified and the appropriate caveats are placed on the property prior to an individual building a home or garage or planting trees, that's understood. The same

would be true in a rural area where a transmission line is following a road allowance up against a property line and there's not an existing shelterbelt up to that. My question is: where there are established neighbourhoods, where you have homes with established trees in a town or city, or where you have an established farm shelterbelt, and it's deemed that a new line is to be placed, what protection does the property owner have, or what recourse would the property owner have? Because surely we would not want to see a good part of a shelterbelt cut down to give the proper protection for the new line being installed or, in the case of a town or a city, some trees in one's backyard removed after they had been planted and after they had grown. So my concern is not with the existing; I think that can be worked out. The question is where there might be a new line put into an established neighbourhood or next to an established shelterbelt.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to add my voice to the chorus. I am very uneasy with the scope of this legislation. Simply put, we see in it the conflict of several public goals. On the one hand, we don't want the power companies put through huge expense and inconvenience in relation to trivial matters. We don't want that in recognition of the importance to the community of being able to have our utilities at reasonable cost and not having their expansion unduly hampered. On the other hand, the competing principle is that where there is harm, the property owner should be compensated. Now, those are competing values; they're in conflict. They don't have to be resolved on an either/or basis. However, the reality is that this Bill does resolve them on this matter. It resolves them totally in favour of the convenience of the electrical utility companies. It seems to me that it would not only be possible but would be in the public interest, with any degree of thought being put into this matter, to fine-tune it more appropriately in order to discourage simply frivolous claims and issues, yet to make provision for instances where in fact there has been a meaningful infringement with respect to the property.

So I believe this legislation has been poorly thought out. It does need to be revisited. It's flawed in principle, and I would urge the minister to have his officials look at it in somewhat more detail because I think that a much better job can be done. This is a very, very simplistic approach to a somewhat more complex issue.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: Yes, just very briefly, Mr. Speaker. Most of the previous speakers have raised the major concerns with this Bill. I wonder if the minister would consider taking the Bill back and fine-tuning it a little bit. One understands and appreciates the direction he's trying to go. There is some need, I guess, to move in that direction so we don't get frivolous court cases over some arm of a pole sticking two feet into somebody's field. But there is a danger, as pointed out by some of my colleagues and other members in the House, that if that arm were to stick out too far, of course somebody could catch their property, their combine on the arm or the wires. In fact, there's no limit on the powers of the utility company to encroach, and the private property owner would have no recourse. I do know that among your own colleagues there is a strong sense of the

rights of property owners, so I would suggest that this Bill at this stage not pass second reading and be taken back and redrafted.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Additional comments? Minister of Energy, final comments.

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to leave the impression with my colleagues on both sides of the House that I take lightly the amendment we are proposing, and I do appreciate their concerns. All parties have spoken on this issue, and basically the same concern is being expressed. I will certainly review the suggestions that have been made for our discussion at committee stage.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of points for clarification. There have been some questions raised that are of more detailed a nature than I would be prepared to respond to here, but recognizing we are in second reading, I'll hold them for our committee stage discussion. But a couple of points I should make clear; I think it's important. Firstly, for my hon. colleague from Stony Plain, it would be easier if I had an audiovisual of what this proposed legislation intends. This is one of those instances where pictures work a little better than words. What we are talking about are overhangs where right-of-way has been purchased or negotiated for an existing power line or power pole, and now we are dealing with the overhang as a result of that. We are not talking about an ability to change the voltage, the throughput, or the nature of the power going through these poles or lines. That has been determined already at the ERCB. We are talking about the part that is already part of the transmission line that overhangs the property.

The point that was made by the Member for Calgary-Buffalo is that it seems to be for the benefit of the utility companies. I can tell hon. members, and I'm sure they all know, that the cost of this is rolled into the rate base, Mr. Speaker. The implications of this are hundreds of millions of dollars to all municipalities and all utility companies in terms of having to renegotiate rights-of-way with regard to the overhang. So it's not a matter of somehow cost limited to the utility companies and the power companies; it's rolled into the rate base.

The suggestion and the comment the hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon made and the concerns that have been expressed by the Member for Edmonton-Strathcona concerning the alteration of power or the impact on health have already been dealt with in the ERCB application, Mr. Speaker. We are not doing any modifications in that connection.

Now, with regard to the setback issue, there are setback regulations existing from rights-of-way that are already in place. So if there is a concern about there being a windbreak or some kinds of buildings close to the existing right-of-way, there is already a setback requirement that is well within the range of tolerance for the overhang onto private property from the right-of-way. I think it's important to make that distinction, Mr. Speaker.

As I've indicated, I don't want to get into detail; we can do that at committee stage. But I'm certainly pleased with the comments that were made. It is an all-party concern on the issue of rights, and we are sensitive to that, Mr. Speaker.

[Motion carried; Bill 9 read a second time]

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

[Mr. Speaker left the Chair]

head: **Royal Assent**

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

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

HER HONOUR: Please be seated.

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

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

| No. | Title |
|-----|--|
| 12 | Appropriation (Interim Supply) Act, 1990 |
| 13 | Appropriation (Alberta Capital Fund) Interim Supply Act, 1990 |
| 14 | Appropriation (Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, Capital Projects Division) Interim Supply Act, 1990-91 |

[The Lieutenant Governor indicated her assent]

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

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Order!

[The Lieutenant Governor left the Chamber]

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: **Government Bills and Orders**

Second Reading

(continued)

Bill 10

**Small Power Research and Development
Amendment Act, 1990**

MR. BRADLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to move second reading today of Bill 10, the Small Power Research and Development Amendment Act, 1990.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill contains legislation that will increase the price paid for electrical power produced by small power producers, provide for an optional escalating price, and make small power producers eligible under the Utility Companies Income Tax Rebates Act. As well, the scope of the program will be broadened to include peat, solar, and geothermal resources as eligible fuels.

The small power research and development program is based on the findings of the Small Power Inquiry report from public hearings held in 1987 by the Energy Resources Conservation Board and the Public Utilities Board. This report was subsequently endorsed by the government. Last year Premier Getty asked Dr. George Govier to review the findings of the inquiry to determine if there was additional information available that

should be considered. Dr. Govier was a former dean of engineering at the University of Alberta and a past chairman of the Energy Resources Conservation Board. Dr. Govier's review supported an increase in the small power price to reflect the potential environmental benefits of using renewable resources to generate electricity. Our acceptance of Dr. Govier's recommendation demonstrates the government's priority toward the environment and reinforces the commitment to facilitating the generation of electricity by small power producers as long as this benefits the consumer in the long term.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

Small power producers will be given two price options. The fixed price option will guarantee small power producers a price fixed at 5.2 cents per kilowatt hour until 1995, at which time it will increase to 6 cents per kilowatt hour. Alternately, the small power producer may select a price of 4.64 cents per kilowatt hour starting in 1990 and escalating with inflation. Under both options the utility company will pay the program price for 10 years, and in the 11th year prices will be set by the Public Utilities Board based on the benefit to the consumer.

The small power producers will also be eligible for the utility companies' income tax rebate program. Under this program the federal income tax paid by utilities is rebated and passed on to power consumers. Small producers as a result will receive the same income tax treatment as the large generating utilities.

Mr. Speaker, the Small Power Research and Development Amendment Act also expands the definition of eligible facilities to allow for the use of fuel resources such as solar, geothermal, and peat. This responds to requests by potential small power producers who want the opportunity to consider producing power using these resources. Some supplemental use of fossil fuel, mostly natural gas, will also be permitted, as it is required for technical and safety reasons in biomass- and peat-fired power plants. However, the amount of fossil fuel which can be used will be limited in the regulations. This ensures that the objective of the program, to support the use of renewable resources for power production, is retained. The addition of these fuels will allow applicants to the program and others who have expressed interest to proceed with obtaining approvals.

Combined, Mr. Speaker, these amendments may help those projects which are currently marginal to proceed. This will help provide data for the projected review in 1995 of the impact of the small power research and development program by the Energy Resources Conservation Board and the Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Speaker, small power production is a new and exciting industry and has the potential to address some of today's environmental concerns. For example, the program has applications for facilities that use municipal waste. Peat or field overburden from agricultural land clearing is also being considered. Instead of burning waste wood in beehive burners, consideration is being given by small power producers to using it for power generation. Numerous applications have also been received for small hydro and wind projects.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the small power research and development program indicates the government's commitment to the environment. Combined with the recently announced southwest Alberta renewable energy initiative, this makes Alberta the leader in small power industry support in Canada. I urge other hon. members to support this Bill.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking on the Bill, I have just a couple of comments and questions for the minister to answer. Although I congratulate the government for joining the 20th century rather late, nevertheless it's just as welcome as if they had done it 10 or 15 years ago.

With respect to making it better for small power producers to be able to feed power to the power grid, we have been megaproject junkies for some years, Mr. Speaker, in that unless they put tens of thousands of kilowatts into a system, we didn't think it was worth while. But we have found that the megaprojects, whether damming the rivers or huge coal plants, have had a tremendous environmental cost that we're just now beginning to assess. One of the beauties of this small power process is that even those that are as polluting per kilowatt as the big projects are scattered about so that Mother Nature is able to do something more about it than when she has a massive dose, as we had with the project *in* Genesis, as the hon. Member for Bow Valley said the other day.

The fact of the matter is that this is a form of power generation that should be encouraged, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the fact that the government has moved this far, but I would like to see about 1 cent more per kilowatt to really show we are welcoming small producers and their attendant environmental and safety possibilities down the road. We're welcoming them to the club.

Secondly, with respect to small power – and I don't think it has been looked at and was not addressed in this Bill – it bothers me a bit that the government is still operating on the 1950 or '60 theory that a kilowatt is a kilowatt is a kilowatt regardless whether it's generated from a manure pile, a solar generator, a wind generator, or peat. Actually, Mr. Speaker, in this stage of the 20th century I think we have to start moving all parties/because we're all guilty of it, into pricing our energy with relation to what the cost/benefit analysis, you might say, has been to society. The idea of saying that a kilowatt that comes from a dirty, sulphur-laden coal plant that may have no inhibitors on it – and don't get me wrong; ours do have inhibitors. But just the same, saying it has the same price as from a solar collector, which has no pollution whatsoever, does not make sense.

Either through the system of taxation, Mr. Speaker, or the system of direct reward payment, this is where we can start in a very small way with our small producers. Certainly I do not see where the peat and vegetable burners, which definitely are more polluting than solar and wind, should get the same price, yet they are. So although I am congratulating the government for recognizing small power, I think now is the time, a wonderful opportunity, to start saying a kilowatt is not a kilowatt anymore. A kilowatt depends on what type of pollution or what cost it's been to society in the generation of it. That should be recognized in the pricing of the thing.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, what I would have liked to have seen here – and this is maybe a light-year jump, but I think it's quite possible – is the commitment from this government to the suspension of megaprojects until we see whether or not the multiplication and the spreading of these small power projects will indeed take up the slack. The big power companies are always great at telling you, "If you want a huge plant here and you want to have this development there, you need us." Well, I'm not too sure that the safety of supply might not be

better engendered and better arrived at by hundreds, maybe thousands, of small power producers around this province, from different systems, feeding into a grid than by a few big megaprojects. I would love to see this government's commitment to environmentally clean power and small power development and some sort of suspension or implied suspension of the major projects till we see under this power system whether or not we can establish so many new people in the field that we indeed get the safety of supply we would have gotten with a megaproject.

Thank you.

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

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, rise to support the Bill on behalf of my colleagues. This is a good move, and it's in the right direction. It is not before it's time, but nonetheless it's a good Bill.

Just a couple of comments. In the setting of the rates, where you give the small power producer that wants to buy into the grid an option as to which method of financing they would like - the 5.2 cents and then the 6 cents later or the 4.64 cents per kilowatt hour and then increased by inflation - I can't help thinking that the expression there about "adjusted annually for inflation in the manner prescribed in the regulations ..." I guess I would like to see what the regulations say, because I believe we have a similar sort of situation with the pensions for former MLAs. They're not too happy each year when the Treasurer decides to give them 2 percent and inflation is 5. So I'm just wondering what the regulations actually say about that. We may find that the small power producers are not too happy either, unless it really does mean that inflation will be covered every year fully. I hope it does mean that, because I, like the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon, think there should probably be a little bit of a bonus built in here to make sure these small power producers are encouraged and not just sort of able to scrape by or sometimes not able to keep up to the costs and hence drop out of the system.

I want to also mention that it's interesting to note that solar energy is back on the list. It was not on the previous one. If you look on page 1, section 1 just used to say "produces electric energy from wind, hydro or biomass." I would just like to say before I move on to the next point that it is rather scandalous that solar energy wasn't in there before. I really think it was a wrong attitude on the part of this government when for many years they seemed to think that because we had oil and gas, there was somehow a conflict of interest or it was a wrong thing to do to encourage other forms of energy. I mean, we've known for years that some of the other forms of energy are much, much cleaner than oil and gas. I do know we have these incredible tar sands and we have a lot of natural gas, and they are going to be important in the future. But we also know from the environmental point of view that there has to be a gradual change, and in fact we should be encouraging that change to cleaner forms of producing power. So it's high time we had this Bill, and we should have had it sooner.

The accounting for the extra costs to the environment and the use of resources that we have been experiencing over many years - we've not really stopped in the accounting as to the actual cost of production of electricity or so many of our other products in our society to consider the use of resource costs or the environmental costs that go along with it. For example, we cut down trees and denude forests, but we only just count the cost of the

stumpage fees which you actually pay to the government, which is too small in this province, and the cost of cutting the tree down and that sort of thing. Then at the end, if the company can show they made a profit, we say, "Oh, that's wonderful, isn't it?" I mean, these input costs and the accounting process say, "We made X number of dollars, and the shareholders and the government got so much and they paid so much taxes," and so on.

I would like the members to know that there is a person from Edmonton, from the University of Alberta, I believe - he may not be; he's certainly an accountant - that I read about the other day who is going to the United Nations to join about 10 accountants from around the world who are spending a lot of time over the next few years developing accounting techniques that hopefully will eventually allow society to count and build right into the annual statements of all corporations the cost of the tree, let's say, separate and apart from the stumpage you had to pay to the government, the cost of cutting down that tree in the sense that it leaves the forest poorer because the tree is gone, or if it's coal to produce electricity, the cost of depleting that resource, or if it's oil or gas or whatever the natural resource might be that is being used to produce the goods. I think it's high time that we started to look at that and consider that, and not only the raw material itself, the depletion of that raw material, as being considered a cost to this planet, a cost to this society, but also any related environmental costs that go along with the extraction of that resource and the production of some finished product. I think it is really high time that was accounted for, and certainly that's applicable in the energy field. If we start doing that in a consistent way, I think we will find that we need to more and more start moving to renewable energy sources rather than nonrenewable energy sources.

But I do commend the government on the start they've made and the direction they're moving, and we'll support Bill 10.

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the premise of this Bill, but before they get carried away, I'd like to say that I do that with some profound misgivings at the evidence of a lost opportunity.

There are two things that could be accomplished by this kind of Bill which is to aid small power producers. One, I believe, will be accomplished, will be at least enhanced, pursued effectively - but perhaps not as well as it might be - and that is to allow for the diversification of our rural economy. This, of course, supports initiatives by many people in rural areas to find some additional way to support their income, to support their life-styles, their family, and so on. Small power production to that extent fills an important void, an important gap in rural regional economic development. It is interesting to note that it took this government an awfully long time to respond to that need, and it wasn't until just recently, I think as recently last year, that in fact they even allowed the entry of small power producers into the grid. So it would be a caution I express, their not being too smug about what they have attempted to achieve in that regard. However, I will give credit where credit is due, and it is worth supporting this Bill to the extent it does achieve that.

The second opportunity that arises with a Bill of this nature is the opportunity lost, and it is extremely unfortunate that that would be the case. In fact, not only is an opportunity lost, but this Bill may lead to further complications in the pursuit of that other opportunity in the longer term.

I am referring, of course, to carbon dioxide production and the role it plays in the global warming phenomenon. Now, I know that there are those in this government who will say: "Well, global warming hasn't been proven. There is no concrete evidence." In fact, as recently as this week the Premier's deputy minister, Barry Mellon, was quoted as saying that lack of concrete evidence with respect to global warming, however, does not seem to stop the zealots from trying to save us from ourselves. A highly cynical statement and one that I think is fraught with danger.

It is a fact that if we were to accept, to assume that global warming was in existence, was occurring, and acted accordingly, we could not in any way harm ourselves. In fact, we could only help ourselves. We could help ourselves environmentally, and we could help ourselves economically. We could discover environmentally sound technologies, for example, to reduce CO₂ emissions that would be marketable around this world, that would diversify our economy and sustain our economy, if the world decides rightly or wrongly that global warming is in effect and wants to act to reduce it. On the other hand, if we assume or act as though global warming doesn't exist, as the statement by Barry Mellon would suggest this government is about to do, then if we're wrong, the results can be fundamentally catastrophic.

My point is this: this government must understand that to assume that global warming does exist and to act accordingly cannot possibly harm us. To assume that global warming isn't existing and to be wrong can have catastrophic fundamental results about which this government would have to take responsibility in part and for which no government should be prepared to take the risks.

Now, with that in mind there is a tremendous opportunity here, Mr. Speaker, to address the issue of small power production within the environmental context. This Bill is void, is without understanding of the significance of its substance to the environmental issue and to the environmental context. What this Bill should do is promote in particular small power production from alternative energy sources which do not pollute. Instead, it treats small power production from sources which do not pollute and from sources which do pollute on an exactly equivalent basis. So instead of emphasizing this small power production, that does not pollute, in a way that would make it even more attractive than current coal-fired electrical production, which does pollute, for example, emphasizing this in a way that would allow entrepreneurs to pursue alternative energy sources that do not pollute, with a tremendous incentive for having done it – not only does it not do that, but in fact it will compound our problem in the long run. As these alternative sources of energy develop, become more efficient and more competitive, then they will take a greater and greater hold. Those entrepreneurs who have been encouraged by this Bill to pursue alternative energy sources – power production on the basis of peat, for example – will have a greater and greater interest in the production of power from that source despite the fact that that source produces carbon dioxide.

So when the world decides we can no longer take the risk inherent in carbon dioxide production, not only will Alberta's economy remain totally and fundamentally on a course of commitment to fossil fuel production or fossil fuel consumption in the way that we have always done it without being worried about CO₂ production, but the chance, the hope that we have had that could be captured in this Bill to develop alternative

sources of energy that are based upon pollution-free technology will also have been lost.

Mr. Speaker, it is for that reason that I have profound concern, and it is with great caution that I support this Bill. I only wish that this government could see beyond its current context, its current world view to a much broader world view, a world view that is evolving internationally and emerging as a consensus internationally. Yes, the world is warming. It may have warmed as much as 1 and one-half percent over the last 30 or 40 years. That may not seem significant until you realize that the difference between today and the last ice age is only four degrees. Therefore, the consequences of a 1 and a half percent rise in global temperature that may become 3 or 4 or 5 percent in 50 years are absolutely, fundamentally catastrophic, and Alberta has a particular stake in that issue because we produce one-half of 1 percent of all the carbon dioxide produced in the world.

If this government and this minister who has just recently said in the House that it is irresponsible to jump on the global-warming bandwagon – if that attitude persists, then one of two things will confront this province, neither of which is particularly palatable and both of which could be anticipated and dealt with if we had a government that was forward-thinking. One, if the world doesn't address and readjust its demand for fossil fuel consumption without CO₂ emissions somehow, then Alberta shares a huge environmental problem for which it has a particular responsibility to do something because it produces so much carbon dioxide. If on the other hand, the world does say that we can't take the risks of global warming, we cannot allow carbon dioxide to be emitted into our atmosphere anymore, then this government and this province have a huge economic problem, because so much of our economy is based upon fossil fuel consumption, based upon today's outmoded technologies that allow carbon dioxide to be emitted in huge quantities into the air.

Mr. Speaker, this is a lost opportunity. This is another indication that this government has not entered the 1990s with any concept of the seriousness of the environmental issues confronting us today, nor have they entered the 1990s with any concept of the huge economic opportunities that exist if we become world leaders in confronting these environmental problems head on, in anticipating the future, and in developing industries and environmental technologies that can be marketed around the world. It is a very sad day when we have to note that an issue of global consequence, an issue of generations to come simply cannot be grasped by this tired and old and anachronistic government.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the sponsor of the Bill wish to close debate?

Pincher Creek-Crowsnest.

MR. BRADLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the support that all hon. members are giving to this very positive piece of legislation, which enhances the opportunity for small power producers in this province to get into production. It's a very positive Bill.

I want to comment briefly on some of the remarks made by other hon. members. Firstly, the Member for Westlock-Sturgeon talked about dirty, sulphur-laden, coal-fired electrical generating plants. I'm sure he wasn't referring to the coal-fired plants here in the province of Alberta, because we have very low sulphur content coal. I'm sure the hon. member is aware of that. It is

a very efficient producer of electricity for our citizens. The Member for Westlock-Sturgeon also talked about the concept of kilowatt-hours. A kilowatt-hour is a kilowatt. I guess a kilowatt is a kilowatt if it's produced at the time you require it; when you turn on your light switch, the power is being produced. We have to recognize that in terms of some of our small power production that's interruptible. For example, if the wind isn't blowing, you're not going to get that kilowatt when you want it, so it's not the same as a kilowatt that can be produced on demand, and similarly with solar. So there has to be that consideration in terms of the remarks.

The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway talked about the regulations in terms of how the inflation rate would be calculated. That would be calculated on the basis of Alberta's inflation, and I'd be pleased to discuss that further with him.

Now, I'd like to turn to some of the remarks by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark. Perhaps he's not aware of the southwest Alberta renewable energy initiative announced by the Minister of Energy in Pincher Creek on December 18 of last year, which will see \$3 million from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund over the next three years going into developing renewable energy projects in this province, demonstrating renewable energy technologies, and leading the way in Canada in terms of renewable energy. Perhaps he was not aware of that announcement, but it was very positive in terms of development of renewable energy sources in this country.

MR. MITCHELL: Yeah, but does the right hand know what the left hand's doing?

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. BRADLEY: A very positive development. In fact, the Minister of Energy is well aware of the relationship between the Small Power Research and Development Amendment Act, 1990, which we have before us today, and the renewable energy initiative, which was announced in Pincher Creek earlier this year.

I take from the comments of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark that he is supporting the development of nuclear power in the province of Alberta, and he's also supporting the development of large hydroelectrical power projects such as the Slave River project because those are the two sources of producing electrical energy which don't create CO₂. The other options we have are in terms of the solar area and wind power, both of which are interruptible sources, where you cannot turn off or flick your switch and immediately get the kind of electrical energy you require when you need it.

So the purpose of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is to allow the development of renewable energy projects in the province, to have a period to assess it to see about the reliability. It's certainly our view that renewable energy projects have a role to play. They have a role to supplement the existing integrated grid system we have in the province and the existing source of electrical generation, but it will not be totally replacing it unless we look at the other options, which are nuclear or large hydro projects.

Mr. Speaker, I think this Bill will give the ability to our small power producers to show what they can do. We'll be reviewing that in the years to come to see how they're able to supplement the existing sources of energy which are generated in the province. It really will give them the opportunity, which they have been requesting, to assist both on the environmental side

and in the savings which can be made to the consumer in the longer term, replacing these larger projects.

I can only conclude that the initiative of this government and the foresight of this government shown by our Premier and by our Minister of Energy in supporting the small power producers will make Alberta a leader in Canada, if not North America, in the renewable energy industry. I urge all members to support this legislation.

[Motion carried; Bill 10 read a second time]

Bill 1

Premier's Council on Science and Technology Act

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, I move Bill 1, Premier's Council on Science and Technology Act, standing in my name on the Order Paper for second reading.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. McEACHERN: That's an incredibly short introduction for the Premier's flagship Bill. I mean, I thought he would at least stand up and tell us a little bit about his grand vision of how to develop science and technology in this province. This is incredible. Mr. Speaker, the Bill is innocuous enough in that there are some problems with it in a few places, but it would be my intention that we should support the Bill. Certainly if the science and technology committee does nothing more than make people of Alberta more aware of the problems of high tech, it will accomplish at least something. Although, I've got to say that I wonder about the direction the Premier is intending to take here. There's a lot of different things that that committee can do, and the directions it can take could be influenced by who's on the committee, and I'll get into that in a few minutes.

I want to just say first, though, that if you look at Bill 1 on page 1, it says:

The Council may

- (a) advise the Government on science and technology as they relate to economic and social development . . .

When I read that, I thought that's rather nice. The Premier is not only concerned about economic and technological development, but he's also concerned about the social problems of Albertans. However, I sort of had a little caution in mind, particularly this morning when I heard the Minister of Family and Social Services say something about social reform, and all of us on this side just heard cutbacks. So with that little caution, if you go on with this statement:

advise the Government on science and technology as they relate to economic and social development and to enabling Alberta to compete effectively in the global market place.

It has sort of a little ominous ring there.

Now, I realize we have to compete in international markets to some extent, but I do think that we've got a little carried away with the free trade deal and the present globalization that's going on in this world. There are some very high costs to competing in the global markets. It seems like it means that somebody else, from Tokyo or Dallas or New York or London or wherever, can come and take you over and shut down half your industries and streamline everything, and if you don't like it, tough. I mean, the fact is that you've got to pick up the unemployment insurance costs and the social costs of having a work force laid off suddenly and overnight, and if you don't like that, too bad. And if your remaining workers aren't prepared to take cutbacks in the amount of wages and benefits they get, too

bad. The company can end up moving to Mexico, producing the same goods there, and still have access to your markets to sell them to you cheap supposedly, that being the justification, I guess. I would like to say that competing in the global markets has a downside sometimes, not just a good side, and I think this government too often doesn't pay enough attention to that.

One of my concerns about the Bill is that we don't know who all will be appointed other than that the Premier will be on it. But I want to address the question a little bit as to who should or shouldn't be on the committee, what kind of a committee and what sort of direction that committee might take us. One of the main purposes of government is to educate our population so they can adapt to rapid changes, and to do that, we have to have a highly skilled force and a good education system. If this committee is interested in that sort of approach, seeing to it that we have in this province a lot of highly skilled, well-trained people who can go out and set up small companies and develop technologies that put Alberta on the leading edge of the technological revolution going on in the world, then that's great. If that is the sort of sense of purpose or direction that the Premier wants to give to the committee, he could have said so right in the Bill, or he could have stood up and said that now in his introduction of the Bill. But I didn't hear that, so I'm a little worried that the direction the committee might decide we should go is the route of putting money into companies like GSR or upgrading pork facilities, which we have also had some disasters with; for instance, putting money into Cargill at the same time that we're putting money into Gainers. Then we end up owning a company we didn't really want, no new and modern facility that's owned by the people of Alberta anyway, and finding that we're shipping off a quarter of our hogs to the United States.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. McEACHERN: So we do get into some rather strange . . .

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, hon. member. I would remind the hon. member that at second reading we are supposed to be dealing with the principle of the Bill, and I think you're straying slightly, if I might suggest.

MR. McEACHERN: I think I was using that to illustrate the different direction I would like to see this committee go. I said we could go in the direction of educating our people so that we have lots of innovators leading in technology, or we can go in the direction of putting money into companies, and I was merely giving a couple of examples. I don't think I was out of line on that. [interjections]

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order.

MR. McEACHERN: To go back to the direction I think the minister's committee should go, it's this direction of education. I don't think it's possible for the government, at its universities or colleges, to keep up to the technological revolution that's going on, let alone lead it by themselves. There's going to be a need for the government to co-operate with industry so that your educational institutions become partners with industry in educating people in the technological field. I think the University of Alberta and some of our other institutions around the province are already too far behind in terms of their capital equipment. A lot of their equipment is out of date. The government is penny-pinching with the University of Alberta,

particularly in the last few years, and the University of Alberta cannot keep up and have people on the leading edge by themselves. So the universities are going to have to work with the technological industries and do a shared training of our new people, and that's a direction I would like to see this committee go.

I guess I would have a question for the Premier, and perhaps he would be able to elaborate on it later in his reply comments on this reading, or he could go into more detail in the committee stage. How does the Premier see this council's responsibility in regard to not only the universities and colleges, which I've already mentioned, but in regard to the Alberta Research Council, AOSTRA, the microelectronic chip centre, a number of the different research institutes that we already have going in this province? Will that council have any say or control over the directions that those present relatively independent corporations or institutions – what I'm really asking the Premier is: will they be co-ordinating or taking over a certain amount of the direction and saying that this is what you will do?

Now, a question that I mentioned I wanted to get to is: who's on the council? I think that tells you quite a bit about what kind of council it's going to be. There's a number of different directions you can go with that, and I think, in a way, by putting the Premier as the chairman of the council, he's already decided. I think that's a little unfortunate. You can set up a council which has a number of professional people on it from a number of different bodies right across the country. You don't even have to stay within Alberta or Edmonton or Calgary. You could look to professional engineers or professional technicians of different types and kinds, some of the associations right across this country and ask them: who would be a good person, or would you like to nominate somebody to this committee? It is a very big one; it's got 28 members. So you could set up an arm's-length committee. You might even ask the unions to put some people on it; you might ask the really important environmentalist groups around the country to put some people on that committee. So you could set up a truly arm's-length committee that could have a lot of expertise on it, and that would be, I think, a useful thing to do.

On the other hand, there are a couple of other models that we can follow. One would be like the federal government did with the Economic Council of Canada, where they didn't put the Prime Minister on the council, but they did nonetheless appoint a lot of Tory people to it to make sure they would get out of it what they wanted, so that they would be, in effect, sort of a Tory committee that could do analyses that would fit Tory thinking and try to sell to the world what the federal government wanted to do. That's really the way the Economic Council of Canada works, make no mistake. It's a propaganda tool and a front-runner to lead on new ideas for the government of this country. That is not an acceptable type of council either. They could have gone one step further and done it a little more crassly; they could have put members of the federal cabinet on the committee. They didn't.

However, this Premier intends to; he intends to chair the council. He's also going to put the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications in as the vice-chairman. It seems to me he's already decided that he's going to set up a very political committee. Now, if he wanted to do that, why didn't he just sort of keep it quiet and set up a little group of advisors and have some little secret inner cabinet committee or something and get on with it? If he's going to make the committee political, if he had wanted to have any credibility in terms of the

people of Alberta, he would have put at least some members from the opposition on the committee as well, but I see no intentions of doing that. [interjections]

Well, it's clear that the Premier has decided that he will have a political committee. It is not an arm's-length committee; it's the Premier as the chairman, for heaven's sakes. I don't know what expertise he brings to technology, research, and telecommunications, but I'm sure that he will bring to that committee a political bias and an idea of where we should go, which he has not even been prepared to stand up and tell Albertans. I mean, here's this flagship committee, and he hasn't given us a clue about what direction he expects this committee to go or what kind of orientation this committee will have. We've been around here long enough to know that it'll be a very politically oriented committee. [interjections] Just stuff your mouth full of those cigarettes and keep quiet, Stan. I'm tired of you interfering.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, hon. member. That is not called for.

MR. McEACHERN: So, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the Premier give some serious consideration to changing the structure of the committee. I would be interested in listening to anything he has to say about the orientation and direction he intends to take that committee.

But the first step that would regain some credibility for this government in the eyes of the people out there, — and I'm talking about people in ECAT and businessmen and people all over. They are always skeptical of government interference in industry. You know that. You know also that this government has interfered in industry more than most governments, even more than social democratic governments. It isn't a question of whether or not a government can interfere in the economy; they do and they will because of just the sheer size of government in this day and age. They're expected to. It isn't a question of whether you will interfere in the economy; it's on whose behalf and how you do it that are the real questions. Don't think you can say, "Well the government should get out of interfering in the economy." That's not possible. So you will interfere, but you would regain a lot of credibility if you would have set up an arm's-length committee of people from professional organizations, from the unions, from ECAT, from environmentalists: a whole variety of people.

In fact, the Bill has no mention at all of the environment in it anywhere, and that is a big lack in the Bill. I don't see how anybody can intend to set up a committee in this day and age to do anything with the economy in any shape or form and not talk about some concern for the environment.

So those are some of my concerns, Mr. Speaker, and I would be very pleased if the Premier could bring himself to tell us a little about what his intentions are.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to support the principle of this Bill, and I am deliberating as to whether or not that is appropriate. My reluctance hinges on a critique which is very similar to the one that I found applied to the Small Power Research and Development Amendment Act, and that is that the government's emphasis and focus in establishing this Premier's council on science and technology neglects to see this initiative as an opportunity in the same way that they neglected

to see the Small Power Research and Development Amendment Act as an opportunity.

These Bills both suffer under the same limitation. They have been conceived by a government whose thinking is stuck in 1976-77, that is unable to envision a changing world, and is therefore very, very limited in its ability to produce and develop policy to meet that changing world. In a sense it is very sad to see, because I would argue that there was a time in the early '70s when this government was in fact a government of change and a government of the future. It was a government that was able to anticipate change. It was a government that was able to address issues that had not yet materialized, perhaps, had not yet crystallized fully. It was a government that was able to take risks, in some senses, on the future in important ways, to seek development in important ways. But this Bill and the Small Power Research and Development Amendment Act are deficient and underline how anachronistic, how old, and how tired this government has become, because they both fail to view these initiatives as important in the context of environmental concerns and in the context of the economic development opportunities that exist with respect to the environmental issue.

It's for that reason that while this Premier's council does address an important need — yes, we have to look to science and technology as a means of diversifying our economy, providing economic development — this Bill could be so much strengthened with a few changes or simply additions to its focus. I would argue that under section 3(1), for example, Mr. Speaker, it would be so much more appropriate that the council be directed to

advise the Government on science and technology as they relate to . . .

and I add the word "sustainable"

. . . economic and social development.

That position could be strengthened further under section 3(1)(c), where it could be said that the council should be directed to

advise the Government on the objectives of . . .

"an environmentally sustainable"

. . . science and technology development policy

with, in particular, a component that focuses this council's attention on environmentally sound technologies that can be marketed literally around the world.

How important is this, Mr. Speaker? Well, let me give you an example of how this council, if it were working properly, could have achieved something that we missed in this province but that instead was achieved in Saskatchewan to the enhancement, to the advantage of Saskatchewan and to the profound detriment of this province. Three years ago this government enticed Millar Western to build a pulp mill in Whitecourt utilizing a technology that allowed polluted effluents to go into the river. Recently, Saskatchewan has insisted upon environmental standards to which Millar Western has responded in proposing and commencing to build a similar chemithermomechanical pulp mill but with one fundamental difference, and that fundamental difference is that there will be zero liquid effluent. That province has engendered and encouraged, dictated, demanded better environmental protection technology.

The world is going to come to Saskatchewan to view that technology. When they come, they're not going to stay in Alberta hotels and they're not going to use Alberta graduates and they're not going to use Alberta universities and the technologies that can be developed out of that. They're not going to use Alberta worldwide marketing mechanisms. No. They're going to use all those things as they are found in

Saskatchewan. Unless we have a Premier's council on science and technology that is focused explicitly and directly on the importance of sustainable economic development, on the importance of pursuing environmentally sound technology based upon environmentally focused scientific research, then we, Mr. Speaker, are ensuring that this Bill, too, will be a lost opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that the Premier consider the points that I am making to be friendly amendments to his Bill and ask his caucus colleagues to accept these amendments when I propose them appropriately at that stage of the Bill's consideration.

Thank you very much.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Advanced Education.

MR. GOGO: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to support Bill 1. I think hon. members should be aware that the very fact that it's the Premier's Bill indicates the very high priority that's been given to the whole question of research in terms of science and technology.

In listening to the hon. members for Edmonton-Kingsway and Edmonton-Meadowlark, it's not my job to respond, but I find their comments interesting. For example, I cannot think of a better way, Mr. Speaker, to make Albertans aware that we have entered the '90s, that we're part of the global community, that we recognize that the future lies in competing in the global community in addition to our great neighbour to the south as a result of the free trade agreement. They tell me with regard to our institutions – and the Prime Minister of Canada has made comments – that Canada is lacking in terms of our young people going into the whole area of science and technology. What better way to make our young people aware than to have the very Bill we have before us showing the priority of one of Canada's Premiers sponsoring a Bill on the whole question of science and technology?

Mr. Speaker, we've lagged for some time, and I've listened as minister for some time to the criticism that there are not enough females involved in science and technology. What better way, again, to point this out than to have a Bill sponsored here in the Alberta Legislature?

Mr. Speaker, one looks at the operative part, section 3. What other role could a committee possibly have than to advise? Their primary purpose is to advise the government not only on science and technology but on the results of that science and technology, and that is to develop both our economic and our social policy and the effects they will have in a global marketplace.

That committee is composed of some 28 people, according to section 4, Mr. Speaker. What better way than to have them identify resources both within and without government? Surely it's time. Again, quoting the Prime Minister of Canada, although Canada as a country does not perhaps contribute to the same degree as both Japan and Germany in terms of research and development, surely if one were to read section 3(1)(b), the very thrust of that is to advise the government on which ways they can look outside of government for contributions toward the whole question in developing recommended guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, a reference was made a few minutes ago to the composition of the committee as well as funding to the university. The university is obviously somewhat close to this minister. I have great confidence that the 28 people who will be nominated to serve on this committee will be people who are closely

associated with the whole question of research and technology. We in Alberta have nothing to apologize for in terms of outstanding citizens who have made their mark in terms of research. As it applies to giving more resources to institutions, who knows? The institutions today are receiving over \$1 billion from this government, which is taxpayers' money, for postsecondary education, much of that alone, about 25 percent, going to the University of Alberta here in Edmonton. Who knows? As a result of section 3 the advice that government will receive from this committee may very well identify that as a route to go.

I don't think for one moment that any of us should attempt to be clairvoyant. It's nice to dream; it's nice to project into the future, but to stand here in the House and be clairvoyant, to make an accusation that the 28 members will be political appointees, I think there's no basis for a statement like that. I'm very surprised at the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway, who I have had the opportunity of serving with for some time, and it's been a total alien thought coming from him. So I'm somewhat surprised. It must be because we're approaching April Fools' Day on Sunday that he'd even suggest that this government would appoint any political appointees to such an outstanding committee.

I just close off by saying, Mr. Speaker – another great significance I've noticed in my 15 years in the House – that often the most important Bills passed by this Legislature, the ones that have the most effect on the citizens of Alberta are indeed those Bills which even by definition in the number of pages are short, simple, and clearly understood. For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly recommend that the House support this Bill.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to make a few comments on Bill 1, the Premier's Council on Science and Technology Act. I guess I share the concerns of my colleague for Edmonton-Kingsway. I would have hoped that if this is indeed an important Bill, as described by the Minister of Advanced Education, and a Bill that will have significant impact on Albertans especially in the future, the Premier would have taken advantage of the opportunity to at least describe in part what his vision is for the work of the committee in the future and indeed the development of the entire industry of science and technology. I think members of all parties acknowledge the importance of research and the importance of trying to keep Alberta on the leading edge of technology and putting some extra dollars and extra resources into trying to stay ahead of the times. So I would have hoped that the Premier would have elaborated a little bit on his flagship Bill, especially if it is considered to be something so important.

The Bill itself merely outlines the establishment of the committee and suggests that it would meet and it would consider whatever it considered relevant. As such, it is fairly innocuous and something that we're certainly likely to support in principle: the idea that a council should be established. But I hope the Premier takes to heart the suggestions made by my colleague for Edmonton-Kingsway, who did try and outline a number of things that the Premier's council should seek to achieve through its mandate and the kinds of things it should involve itself in with Albertans in terms of trying to develop a healthy future for our province based on expanding our commitment to the development of science and technology.

Certainly the suggestion that there be some opposition representation on the committee, I think, is a sound one; it's sound in practice. We need only look at the experience of all-party select standing committees in this Legislature dealing with a number of things. I think it fair to say that most members find those sorts of committees to be very rewarding in terms of putting down our political gloves, if you will, and trying to work together, pool our talents to the benefit of the people in the province. So having some opposition representation on the committee would certainly enhance the credibility in the eyes of the public and improve the functioning of the committee overall. I would encourage the Premier to look very closely at that when people are appointed to the committee. Although if the Member for Edmonton-Kingsway is simply suggesting that there ought to be opposition on the committee and if the Premier does, as has been the time-honoured practice, appoint nothing but Conservatives, based on the pending leadership review I think he'll likely have some opposition on the committee, Mr. Speaker. So that might take care of itself.

In terms of my closing comments I would just wonder if perhaps a precedent was established last year in terms of the Premier's flagship Bills and if we can look forward to a holiday called Science and Technology Day sometime in the near future.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the hon. Premier wish to close debate? [Mr. McEachern rose] Order please.

I assume, hon. member, that you wish to speak again, but in second reading each member of the Assembly, except for the mover of the Bill, has the opportunity to speak only once.

The hon. Premier to close debate.

MR. GETTY: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm slightly surprised that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway would try to participate twice at second reading. He says that he's been around for a while. Well, he certainly has, and he's certainly been around long enough to know that you can't speak twice on second reading.

However, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments made from the various members, but I point out to them that this is a very straightforward Bill. It has a principle, and the principle is to create this council on science and technology. Hardly the time for me to now impose into the second reading of the Bill on that principle the details of the kind the hon. member was talking about. For him to take himself down the tortuous path that it would be a failure right from the start is pretty disappointing. He just doesn't have any ability to look into the future and try and do something new and creative and growing.

Now, I do point out to the hon. member that the Premier and the Minister of Technology, Research and Telecommunications are members. Mr. Speaker, I will just go slightly into detail here, but I don't want to offend the House. Three members of the council could be members of the Legislature. If the hon. member wants to send his résumé, I would certainly take a hard look at it, and I'll have the Member for Calgary-McCall go over it with me. [laughter] I think it would probably be just on one page, and we would certainly give it full consideration.

Mr. Speaker, the whole area of science and technology is obviously an important part of the government's diversification programs. As a matter of fact, the minister of research, science and technology isn't here, but I'm sure he could tell the members what a breakthrough we have made in this province in this whole area. We want to make sure that as this part of our province's future literally explodes across this country and across

the world, we get the best possible input from Albertans. That's why we are creating this council. We know that the way our province and the people of our province compete in the future on a global basis will be to a large extent the way we handle science and technology and the way we educate our young people. Then, being on the leading edge of science and technology, that is how they will be able to compete.

Since we're asking people for their advice, I hardly think we should go into creating the council and immediately dictating to them what they should do. Rather, it would be much more valuable if we asked them for their advice and let them do some free thinking. It's hardly the time to dictate in the Bill what they should do.

I appreciate the input from the Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark. It's just wonderful to watch as the member blossoms, I guess is the word, as an environmental expert. It's been really something to see.

AN HON. MEMBER: Since the last poll.

MR. GETTY: Yes, depending on the way the polls go. But I know we can change the hon. member's thinking; he changes so easily. I remember when the Minister of the Environment was appointing the members to the AI-Pac review board. Of the very board itself, the process, the hon. member said, "They're terrible people you're appointing." He said, "They're terrible." Then he said, "The process is terrible." Now they've reported, and he gushes over it. A total reversal on his part. I know, therefore, that we're going to be able to change his thinking on this council too.

Just a word or two about thoughts on who would be on it. I would want certainly someone representing the labour movement in our province. We're thinking of outstanding members. I'd recommend that the members send nominations, advice to me. I would certainly consider people of the stature of Mr. Baskin, others: people that you respect and admire and who could, I think, make a real contribution. We would want people in the whole area of science, soil conservation, obviously business people, people in agriculture, environment, the treatment of special waste. We would want members of our academic community. We would want to have, Mr. Speaker – perhaps this would be on an ex-officio basis – the president of the Alberta Research Council. We'd want a representative of the Universities Co-ordinating Council. We would want representatives from NAIT and SAIT. We have perhaps an opportunity to tap into the national advisory board on science and technology and have an Alberta member sit on this council. I'd want for sure the Minister of Advanced Education, the Minister of the Environment, and one of the ministers of Agriculture, I think, would be very helpful on this council.

I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that if the hon. members consider how important it would be that in this whole exploding area of science and technology, the government could have a council – I think that certainly not me but the position of the Premier is respected all over this province, and it would give the council a kind of status that it deserves. So I'd ask the hon. members to consider the potential for the people of Alberta, to give the government excellent input and guidance as we proceed on such an important part of diversification, and support this legislation.

[Motion carried; Bill 1 read a second time]

Bill 11
Petroleum Incentives Program
Amendment Act, 1990

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased today to move second reading of Bill 11, the Petroleum Incentives Program Amendment Act, 1990.

This particular legislation will allow for the discontinuance of the statutory responsibilities of administration of the APIP Fund. Any assets and liabilities with regard to this fund will be transferred to the General Revenue Fund. The APIP program provided cash grants for expenses incurred after December 31, 1980, and before April 1, 1986, for exploration and development of oil and natural gas, and before January 1, 1987, for development of tertiary recovery schemes in the province. The last day of applying for incentives was March 31, 1988.

I'm also pleased to note that all applications, except for a very small number of appeals, have been processed, and the asset value of the fund for the fiscal year 1988-1989 was less than \$6 million. Mr. Speaker, small asset value does not justify an elaborate administrative mechanism required for the fund under the Act, and therefore the transfer of assets and liabilities to GRF would result in effective management of the fiscal responsibilities and savings in the administration costs.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members of the Assembly support this Bill in second reading.

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

MR. McEACHERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a very

short, more of a request, I guess, than a comment. The move, of course, is a necessary one, so it's housekeeping in that sense, but I'm wondering if the Minister of Energy would commit to the Assembly to do a summary of that program and those funds that were taken in and out of that fund over the years of its life.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the minister wish to close debate?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that on an annual basis – I'll have to check – the responsible ministers of energy filed in this Assembly the report of the Alberta petroleum incentives fund. In that it expired in 1988, I haven't had any responsibilities with regard to it. It's interesting that the implementation of the program coincided with the implementation of the national energy program, and the end of it coincides with the end of the national energy program. You should be interested in that.

I'll check it, Mr. Speaker, and we can have that discussion in committee stage.

[Motion carried; Bill 11 read a second time]

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, looking at next week, it would be the intent of the government to call estimates on Monday during the day, either Culture and Multiculturalism or Economic Development and Trade, and in the evening it would be the intent of the government to perhaps go into Committee of the Whole on the various Bills on the Order Paper.

[At 12:56 p.m. the House adjourned to Monday at 2:30 p.m.]