

Legislative Assembly of Alberta**head: Tabling Returns and Reports****Title: Wednesday, April 3, 1990 2:30 p.m.****Date: 90/04/03**

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

head: Prayers

MR. SPEAKER: Let us pray.

We give thanks to God for the rich heritage of this province as found in our people.

We pray that native-born Albertans and those who have come from other places may continue to work together to preserve and enlarge the precious heritage called Alberta.

Amen.

head: Introduction of Bills**Bill 18****Personal Property Security
Amendment Act, 1990**

MR. ROSTAD: Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce Bill 18, the Personal Property Security Amendment Act, 1990. This being a money Bill, Her Honour the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the contents of this Bill, recommends the same to the Assembly.

This Bill amends the Personal Property Security Act, which was passed in the spring 1988 session and will come into force on October 1. The Bill responds to many worthwhile suggestions that have been received as a result of extensive public review of the Act and makes improvements through fine tuning and clarification.

In addition, the Bill contains amendments to continue the existing registry assurance fund for the payment of claims to persons suffering a loss as a result of errors or omissions of the registry.

[Leave granted; Bill 18 read a first time]

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Centre.

Bill 276**Institute of Health Care Ethics Act**

REV. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to introduce for first reading Bill 276, Institute of Health Care Ethics Act.

Life-and-death decisions, organ transplants, genetic technology, and the allocation of precious resources are but a few of the dilemmas facing increasing numbers of Albertans in a complex and challenging health care field. This Bill would establish an interdisciplinary body that would provide a framework for investigating these vital ethical issues as well as serving as a provincewide resource for health professionals, for patients and their families, for the media, for legislators, and for all who are affected by the values involved in making difficult health care decisions.

[Leave granted; Bill 276 read a first time]

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, in response to Motion for a Return 201 I've worked out an arrangement – and I appreciate that the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper has agreed – that because of the large volume of information and the problem with reproduction of photographs only one copy of the wildlife habitat report be tabled. This information will be put in the library.

MR. SPEAKER: Just to check, this is 201 for this year, not 223 for 1989?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, it's 201. I believe it is.*

MR. SPEAKER: Well, we'll take this under consideration for a moment or two, please, because the numbers do not check with the ones that the Chair has at the moment. We'll come back to this item. Sorry. Thank you.

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table with the Assembly my response to Question 147, which was accepted some days ago, and also a response to 215, which is going to be accepted today.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, no. I'm sorry. The last response comes back, please. The last one will have to wait till later. Sorry. Thank you for the efficiency.

MR. STEWART: Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to table the third triennial report of the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, entitled On the Edge of Discovery.

MR. R. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the annual report for the Department of Municipal Affairs, 1988-89.

head: Introduction of Special Guests

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of this Assembly 26 students from Meyonohk elementary school. They are accompanied by their teacher David Fairfield and a parent Mrs. Lynn Laidler. They are seated in the public gallery. I would ask that they rise and receive the warm welcome of this Assembly.

MR. TANNAS: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the Assembly a former mayor of Taber. He's now a constituent of Highwood. He's in the members' gallery: Mr. George Meyer, owner and managing editor of the *High River Times* and a member of the High River hospital board. I'd ask him to rise and accept the warm, traditional welcome of the Assembly.

head: Oral Question Period**Lead Poisoning In Medicine Hat**

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, to the minister of Occupational Health and Safety and the Workers' Compensation Board. Yesterday the minister tabled his so-called report into lead poisoning of workers and their families in Medicine Hat. The report says that no one is showing "serious acute" symptoms.

*see page 478, left col., para. 2

This is precisely the whitewash that we expected coming from this minister, because nowhere in this report does it mention that four months after quitting their jobs, ex-workers still have lead levels in excess of his own department's danger guidelines. Nowhere in the report does it mention that these workers are still under physicians' care, some still too sick to work and some still receiving WCB benefits. At least one of the ex-workers has been told by his physician that only time will tell how much permanent damage his kidney and liver have received as a result of the lead poisoning. My question: how does this minister justify tabling this interim report that is absolutely silent – I stress: absolutely silent – on the long-term chronic effects these workers and their families will probably suffer?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would take time to read that report and look under "Further Action," this is an interim report. Let me read again:

- Health staff from . . . Occupational Health and Safety will be following up on blood lead results to [make] sure all workers return to an acceptable level.

That's ongoing, Mr. Speaker. We have the doctors in Occupational Health and Safety monitoring this, and when we have further results, I will so advise the members of the House.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, that's precisely the point. This minister's hidden, whitewashed, run around, didn't tell the truth to us here in the Assembly, and he had to come back to this Assembly to admit that. Ex-workers are still suffering effects. As I've already mentioned, the two school aged Gauthier children are undergoing tests to determine learning disabilities they may have as a result of the exposure to the lead. I want to ask this minister, who came back with this glowing report yesterday: can the minister say, and tell the truth to this Assembly, that there will be no one suffering serious, long-term effects from the lead poisoning?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I resent the fact – I have not told the truth or lied to this House. I want the hon. member to bring that proof forward. I have complied with all the information I have at hand. I'm sure that doctors both in Medicine Hat and in our department will let us know what the long-term effects on these people will be.

MR. MARTIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, frankly, I could give two hoots what this minister resents. I resent what you've done to the workers in this province. This report is full of half-truths, and he knows it. It doesn't solve the problems. My question is: will this minister now do the honourable thing and order a complete, public, objective, and comprehensive review into what happened in Medicine Hat so that this thing doesn't happen again in the future?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, another accusation of half-truths. Now, I'd like the hon. member to present to me his facts on what are half-truths. As I've mentioned before, we are reviewing and will continue to review and assess all the workers, the families, and the children. When we have more information from the doctors and from our own department doctors, I will advise the members of this Assembly.

MR. MARTIN: So much for an objective . . .

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

MR. MARTIN: I'd like to designate my second question to the Member for Calgary-Mountain View.

Goods and Services Tax

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that the Provincial Treasurer and some of his colleagues will be meeting representatives of the Pro-Canada Network to discuss the Goods and Services Tax. The Alberta wing of the Pro-Canada Network has advised me that they've met with 13 Alberta Members of Parliament and have told those Members of Parliament in no uncertain terms that if they vote for the GST, the network will advise Albertans to vote against them in the next election. Will the Provincial Treasurer, indeed this government, get serious in opposing this tax by co-operating with the network and adopting this position?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the member is mounting at least a credible attempt to try to carve out part of the anti-GST platform. Everyone in Alberta knows that the Alberta government has taken the strongest stand against the GST. While we support the contributions by the Marxist socialists across the way, we know and Albertans know that the leadership must come from this government. It has in the past. It will in the future. We'll continue to maintain that opposition, Mr. Speaker.

I do welcome the opportunity of meeting with the Pro-Canada group this afternoon. The chairman of our economic caucus committee will be chairing that, and members of the committee will be there to discuss with them ways in which we can continue this opposition. I'm very fortunate to have the opportunity to express views and to exchange ideas about how that opposition will continue under the leadership of groups like this and the Conservative Party of Alberta.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Mr. Speaker, I understand that a scheduled meeting between the government and the Alberta Conservative Members of Parliament was recently canceled. Now, if this government is not prepared to put teeth into its so-called opposition to the tax by backing up its rhetoric here, by backing up the rhetoric at election time, and if they're not able to meet with Alberta Tory MPs, then can the Provincial Treasurer finally reveal to us what other steps he intends to take to help stop the GST before it becomes law?

MR. JOHNSTON: Again, Mr. Speaker, the meeting was canceled by the federal MPs because the socialists across the way were playing games with the votes on Friday afternoon. No doubt about it. It wasn't because there weren't good intentions. The kinds of agreements that I hope this House does still hold to were broken by the socialists in Ottawa. That's what happened.

Now, the Member for Calgary-Mountain View talks about positions. Well, I read his brief. I read his position that the Leader of the Opposition claimed was going to set back the parliamentary committee. Well, first of all, he didn't show up, didn't make the presentation, despite the trumping up of the issue. As I said before, it's just as well, because when I finally read the brief this morning, it looked like it was written by somebody in grade 3. Now, I don't want to insult those kids in grade 3, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: That's right. Thanks a bunch. Sometimes it sounds like grade 3 here.

Final supplementary.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I'm proud that New Democrats are fighting the goods and services tax, and I'm glad they're representing Canadians' lack of confidence in this government.

Mr. Speaker, in his Budget Address the Provincial Treasurer gave very strong indications that Alberta's stabilization claim of \$500 million from Ottawa had been linked by his federal Tory cousins to Alberta's stand on the GST. Is the reason the Alberta government has done nothing on the GST, or certainly very little, because they're being intimidated by the federal Conservatives for nearly \$500 million?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, there are very few things that have intimidated this government. Let me recount the history of our relationships with Ottawa and how we have pushed those centralists back. It's a very clear record going back some time, including the national energy program supported by the Marxist socialists across the way. Mr. Speaker, we'll continue our opposition . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: No, I'm sorry, hon. minister. I'm sorry. Edmonton-Glengarry.

MR. DECORE: He still had another chapter to go.

Advanced Education Funding

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, today a press conference was held at the University of Alberta, the students and staff associations meeting together to deplore and to declare war on the fact that financing for postsecondary education in Alberta has fallen so low that it is truly destroying universities and in particular the University of Alberta. Alberta was once proudly the first in Canada in terms of assistance to full-time students. We've now fallen to fifth position. Equipment is outdated at universities, classes have become unbelievably large, budgets are too tight, and libraries have fallen way behind. In desperation the students and staff associations have called for public hearings to alert Albertans to their pleas that they need funding restored to previous levels. My questions are to the Minister of Advanced Education. Given that Alberta has in the last three years fallen from first to fifth position in terms of assistance to full-time students, how can the minister continue to tell Albertans . . . I see your wallet, Jim. You don't believe in wallets. You've got no respect for wallets. You don't believe in fiscal integrity. In fact, I don't think you carry a wallet.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. It sure sounds like a concise matter of urgency that needs to be dealt with in question period. What's the question?

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, I get very excited when I see wallets being flashed in the air.

My question to the Minister of Advanced Education is this: how can we assure Albertans that young people are being

adequately and properly trained when these levels of assistance have fallen so dramatically?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I'm somewhat taken by the oratory of the hon. Liberal leader.

AN HON. MEMBER: Point of order.

MR. GOGO: Allegations have been made. I think I can only refer to the facts in the case. If one looks at the funding of our postsecondary system in Alberta, the 29 institutions, for the first time in Alberta's history we've surpassed \$1 billion. That's over a tenth of the total budget that's now before this House. The U of A's share of that is a quarter billion dollars. In addition, we provide over \$10 million for equipment. Now, I recognize that everybody wants more. Yet I've got to come to the conclusion, when I look at other institutions, such as the University of Toronto, the University of British Columbia, which are often quoted certainly by the opposition in this House, that our funding lies on par with them while at the same time maintains the second lowest tuition fees in the nation.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister is perpetuating a myth that we are somehow the best in Canada; that is not in fact correct. If you compare percentages of gross domestic product as applied to the expenditure of moneys in the post-secondary area, we are 20 percent lower than the average of all of the other provinces in Canada. Will the Minister agree that postsecondary education has received a lesser priority under his leadership?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I take exception to the question and the inference in the question that 20 percent less applies to our institutions. I certainly would not agree for one moment that our standards or our quality are any lower. That's a question to put to the boards of governors of our institutions. I certainly have to point out that this government, on behalf of the taxpayers of this province, has committed through the endowment and incentive fund, now exceeding \$390 million, to the postsecondary institutions to enable them to do the very things the hon. leader's talking about.

MR. DECORE: Mr. Speaker, given that the students and the staff have taken this unprecedented step of having a press conference to say to Albertans that we have to have public hearings to debunk the myth that we're spending all of these moneys, more so than any other province in Canada, will the minister agree that there is a crisis that has to be met by a program of proper restoration of funding?

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, the hon. leader uses terms such as "crisis" and so on. I, frankly, do not agree for one moment. The hon. leader, with all respect to the area in which he's been elected, concentrates on the University of Alberta. I point out again that there are some 29 institutions in this province. Last year over half a million adult Albertans had access to our system. I think we have a postsecondary system in place that we can be extremely proud of. For the hon. leader to continually point out that we're 20 percent less than somebody else – I simply say to the hon. leader in this Assembly: put your money and your figures up front. Why they weren't debated a week ago Monday in my estimates I am at a loss to say.

MR. SPEAKER: Banff-Cochrane.

Environmental Assessment by Federal Government

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Energy projects in the province of Alberta have a long history of careful environmental review. Because of two recent Federal Court decisions on the Rafferty and Alameda and the Oldman dams, there appears to be a new situation developing where we'll have energy projects susceptible to additional review under the federal EARP. I know the Energy minister met with his federal and provincial counterparts in my constituency, in Kananaskis Country, yesterday, and I know as well that one of the agenda items was dealing with the issue of the federal EARP guidelines and the fact that federal legislation is contemplated in the not-too-distant future to deal with a co-operative effort between the federal and the provincial governments to ensure that we have a process that works and gives the provinces an opportunity to be involved. My question is to the Minister of Energy. Would he . . . [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. EVANS: . . . kindly indicate to the House what initiatives he has brought forward to the minister of energy federally and what we can expect in the near future in terms of federal legislation?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question from the Member for Banff-Cochrane. I should say that the Member for Banff-Cochrane also attended portions of the energy ministers' conference in Kananaskis. We met to deal with one primary issue that had to do with global warming, but I should say that at Alberta's urging there was another agenda item put on that took up the discussion in the afternoon on Monday. That was the issue of the environmental assessment and review process that is currently in place by regulation with the federal government. Alberta led the discussion and stated our position with regard to EARP. First, we pointed out that EARP as it is presently designed is creating somewhat of a chaotic situation across the country with regard to rational and reasonable economic development, particularly as it relates to energy. Our recommendation was that the process be reviewed and that as soon as possible the federal government move on new legislation rather than operate by regulation.

The second point we made was that in the consideration of new legislation we urged that provincial energy ministers be advised of the development of this legislation, and we urged that this legislation be placed on the federal government's agenda for legislation before the summer recess. We encouraged that there be no duplication of process, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to say that all provinces and territories supported the Alberta position, and Mr. Epp was taking our position back and was advised that this should become a top agenda item for the federal government.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, Banff-Cochrane.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Energy, specifically with respect to our natural gas exports. What is the impact of the EARP process on a very important part of our economy?

MR. ORMAN: Mr. Speaker, I should at the outset say that the provinces, and particularly the province of Alberta, are not in any way attempting to avoid environmental assessment. As a matter of fact, we have welcomed and invited the federal government to participate in the Al-Pac hearings together with the environmental impact assessment for OSLO. It's in that spirit of co-operation and respect for jurisdictional issues that we are willing to work with the federal government. I should point out that our Minister of Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs met with the Deputy Prime Minister on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, the one area that is in jeopardy with regard to the EARP process is new facilities expansion in Ontario and beyond. At risk are 800 million cubic feet a day of natural gas. It is absurd to the extent that the federal government's EARP process would require producers to consider the environmental impact of a pipeline going into the state of New Hampshire. This cannot continue. There has to be some rational thought brought to this new process. It must be enshrined in legislation, it must be consultative in nature, and it must be passed before the summer recess.

Workers' Compensation

MR. GIBEAULT: Mr. Speaker, to the minister of Occupational Health and Safety and the Workers' Compensation Board. Albertans have learned in recent weeks that they can't count on this minister and this Conservative government to ensure their health and safety in the workplace. Even after they've been injured now, we can't count on this minister to go to bat for them. That's demonstrated by the fact that recently pensions have gone up 10 percent while the cost of living has gone up 18 percent since the last increase in '86. I want to ask this minister: will he commit himself today to stop with half measures and ensure that those pensions are increased by the full 18 percent cost of living?

MR. TRYNCHY: Mr. Speaker, I understand that my estimates will be up before the House fairly shortly. I think the hon. member has an opportune time to raise that issue there, and I'll give him a full explanation.

MR. GIBEAULT: The injured workers of Alberta are not going to accept that kind of an excuse, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, the rule of anticipation does apply. The opposition parties are well aware of the fact.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: It's not up today.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry. It's up tomorrow. That's well within our general rules of anticipation. [interjections] Thank you for the arguments back and forth.

Edmonton-Mill Woods, if you'd like to continue with a carefully crafted supplementary.

MR. GIBEAULT: We'll look forward to that, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime, if this minister is not prepared to correct past injustices to injured workers and their pensions, will he at least make a commitment, then, to amend Bill 15, the Worker's Compensation Amendment Act, to ensure that that is a requirement every single year from now on: that there is an increase for the full cost of living to those pensions?

MR. TRYNCHY: Again, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would wait until tomorrow, I will outline the procedures that will be taken by the Workers' Compensation Board in full detail.

MS BARRETT: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Is this the second point of order?

MS BARRETT: No, the first one.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I thought there was one about two minutes ago.

The Chair recognizes Edmonton-Meadowlark.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Energy failed to endorse the international resolution calling for a 20 percent reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2005. Instead, the decision was that each province should do its best within its own boundaries. To the Minister of the Environment. Since we have seen where consultation leads in the Alberta-Pacific case, is the vague and amorphous consultative process on clean air strategy announced last week the best this government can in fact do, or is it consistent with the only environment policy this government seems to have, which is delay, delay, delay?

MR. ORMAN: The answer to the first question is yes, Mr. Speaker, and the answer to the second question is no.

MR. MITCHELL: I asked the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. members should be familiar with *Beauchesne*. The government determines who answers the question; it doesn't matter who you care to address.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well, Ralph can't make up his mind anyway; the Premier has to do that.

MR. MITCHELL: Yeah. So I guess it's the Premier or the Minister of Energy who's doing the Minister of the Environment's job these days.

Given the overwhelming risk of delaying on global warming and being wrong and given that Alberta produces one-half of one percent of all the CO₂ produced in the world, does the Minister of the Environment not believe that he in fact has a particular responsibility to provide leadership on this issue by at least, at a minimum, endorsing the 20 percent reduction resolution here today?

MR. KLEIN: Mr. Speaker, I not only believe that we have the responsibility to provide leadership; we are providing the leadership. My colleague the hon. Minister of Energy and myself had the pleasure of jointly announcing a clean air strategy for the province. It's a program that is going to involve full consultation with all sectors of Alberta society, and as a result of that consultation we hope to come forward within a year or so with proposals that are going to be sound. They're going to be reasonable. They're going to be economically sound and environmentally safe.

MR. SPEAKER: Highwood.

Nanton Spring Water Company Ltd.

MR. TANNAS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. The plight of Nanton Spring Water has been a concern to my constituents for the past several months. I understand that a Toronto-based firm headed by a well-known Liberal, Mr. Jim Coutts, has received the favour of the official receiver. My question, then, to the minister is: how was it determined that this firm be selected out of the very many firms that were interested in the Nanton Spring Water operation?

MR. ELZINGA: Mr. Speaker, these decisions are . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He didn't ask for \$100 million.

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. ELZINGA: These decisions are made by the receivers themselves so that they can accumulate the greatest amount of money possible. We're delighted that Nanton Spring Water will be continuing, and I know that the hon. member is thankful also, because he has made consistent strong representation to see it maintained within the Nanton community.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MR. TANNAS: The supplementary has been answered.

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

Alberta-Pacific Project

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of the Environment was scheduled yesterday afternoon to meet with the Al-Pac investors. We have to assume that the minister has now been briefed on the new proposal for a kraft sulphide mill involving bleaching with chlorine dioxide and hydrogen peroxide. I mean, otherwise we'd have to assume that the minister is actively avoiding information to avoid answering questions. So I wonder if the minister now understands that the new Al-Pac project involves untried, untested, and unknown technology, which therefore cries out for an environmental impact assessment.

MR. KLEIN: Well, I hate to disappoint the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, but I haven't been briefed on any proposal, because you know what, Mr. Speaker? There is no proposal. Now, there are some thoughts floating around out there that perhaps a proposal might come forward. Now, if he wants me to do an EIA on an idea, well, I guess we can crank up an EIA on an idea. It would be an interesting exercise.

MR. SPEAKER: It's starting to sound more and more like old MacDonald's farm, but anyway let's go on.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the minister is haunted by ghosts, I can't help him. He'll have to go and call the ghostbusters or something. [interjections]

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. McINNIS: The minister has mailed out 25,000 copies of the department's mission statement, which says, I quote, The Alberta government . . . requires formal Environmental Impact Assessments . . . for all major developments." Since that statement was circulated, the minister has waived an EIA on the Sunpine Forest Products, on the Trochu tire factory, on the Procter & Gamble chlorine dioxide generator, and today he's waffling on the Al-Pac proposal. I want to know if the minister is prepared to stand up and reaffirm his statement, or *is* he going to say it's not worth the recycled paper it's written on?

MR. KLEIN: I hope the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, Mr. Speaker, will take the opportunity to frame that very, very significant document, at least the picture because that's the part he can understand.

Mr. Speaker, I've said before and I'll say again: we have not received a proposal. When we do receive a proposal, if we do receive a proposal, then it will be reviewed at the time. It will be reviewed carefully, and we will take whatever measures are necessary if and when we receive a proposal. But thus far we have received no proposal. I'm sorry that we haven't received a proposal, because if I had a proposal, then we would be talking about something real, something that perhaps the hon. member could understand.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
Edmonton-Avonmore.

Women's Issues

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the minister responsible for women's issues. Yesterday the minister announced what she termed 11 new initiatives as part of the Alberta plan for action for women, a program intended to enhance women's economic and social equality by promoting women's participation in all areas of Alberta society. According to the minister the changing role of women in small business has been dramatic over the past 10 years, and most new businesses are launched by women. My question to the minister is: how can the minister say that the programs and services in support of Alberta women entrepreneurs will be enhanced by this new initiative when in fact the budget for that initiative will be reduced by 12 percent, from \$103,000 last year to \$91,000 for this fiscal year?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I always welcome an opportunity to speak on the many, many things that this government is doing under the leadership of our Premier. I would refer to our Budget Address, which outlines all of the many things that we are doing, in fact \$130 million of selected programs in support of Alberta women, which is, of course, a 14 percent increase this year over last and a 29 percent increase in funding for women's programs over the last two years: that, Mr. Speaker, in a very severe fiscal restraint period. That, I should think, shows the commitment we have.

Speaking to entrepreneurship in women, it is true that that is one of the major success stories that women in Alberta are evidencing. My colleague the Minister of Economic Development and Trade may very well wish to supplement my answer, because this is his initiative.

We are finding that we can continue counseling and giving help to women to encourage them. After all, of all the small businesses that are being started, the success rate after five years of those started by women is twice as high as those started by men.

MS M. LAING: Mr. Speaker, to continue is not to enhance.

In November of 1989 most of the 194,000 Albertans employed in clerical occupations were women, but many of them did not receive the same kind of treatment as the approximately 10,000 women in the Alberta public service who had their administrative support jobs reclassified and upgraded with resulting increases in wages. By this action the government appears to have recognized the need for employment equity initiatives to better the economic status of its own employees, but these actions affect only a small portion of Alberta's women and leave more than 40 percent of women-headed families to live in poverty. [interjections] I have two sentences.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Let's have the question.

MS M. LAING: What action is the minister going to take to ensure that these initiatives are adopted by all employers in Alberta's private sector?

MS McCOY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that the hon. member opposite is pointing to one of the programs that we as a government as employer have brought in to help women in need and, I believe, is in fact encouraging me to use that as an example for other people in Alberta to follow. Once again I can say it this way: the government of Alberta under the leadership of Premier Getty is showing the way on a wide range of issues that are supporting women in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-North West.

Tourism Funding

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In volume 1 and volume 2 of the throne speech we had last year the Department of Tourism was touted as being the big growth industry for the 1990s, promoting a quadrupling of the tourism industry from a \$2.5 billion to a \$10 billion industry. We've seen some interesting proposals under the CATA funding that we have had in the past, where we've funded such things as hot tubs and doughnut tents. Yet in the last week I've been contacted by recreational vehicle dealers and rental agents that can't get promotional material for the province of Alberta to distribute to their clientele. So my question to the Minister of Tourism is this: does this reflect a new policy direction of this government, or does the Department of Tourism not have sufficient financial resources to help with the promotional material for these dealers and rental agents?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, as you know, this government just brought down a budget that will reduce the deficit by \$1 billion, and all our departments of government participated in this exercise. One thing we have to remember is that tourism worldwide is driven by the private sector, and our department is here to serve and work with proponents throughout the province to make that growth become a reality. Government dollars are

not totally what you need. If there's a problem we can solve for the member with reference to not obtaining brochures, we would like to look into that and take his concerns to the department.

MR. BRUSEKER: Well, I wonder, then, if the minister could address the concept that was put forward in the throne speeches from last year. How is it that the minister intends to quadruple our tourism industry over the next 10 years when we don't seem to have enough money for the marketing aspects of promoting our wonderful province of Alberta?

MR. SPARROW: Mr. Speaker, the marketing endeavours of the Department of Tourism have been greater than any other province in western Canada, and we anticipate to increase this year over last year. You have to take into consideration that last year we put in a new program called Team Tourism for marketing, and to date over 415 projects have been funded through the Team Tourism program. Along with that, the very successful community tourism action program was instituted. Between the two of them, along with our regular programs, there are some 990 projects on active files in our department today.

MR. SPEAKER: Clover Bar.

Ministik Lake Bird Sanctuary

MR. GESELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. The Ministik Lake Bird Sanctuary was the first sanctuary established in Alberta. Residents in the Clover Bar area and the Camrose constituency are very concerned about the preservation of this pristine environment. An earlier draft of a management plan for that sanctuary received some extensive public input about two years ago. As part of the present draft that has been released, there is some suggestion of a public advisory committee. To the minister. What will be the procedure, the public input process before this plan that's now out in draft form becomes implemented?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, the implementation of the plan is now ready to take place. The plan, of course, is a public document now. There'll be input from the municipalities and from naturalist groups and fish and game associations and ATV groups, and all of those, as well as the general public, will have an opportunity to review that plan. The first meeting that will take place for a public review of the plan takes place, I believe, in the latter part of May.

MR. GESELL: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, supplementary. There is some urgency due to the growing pressure that's being exerted onto the sanctuary due to all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles. Will the minister agree to implement this plan expeditiously, particularly because of the pressure that's being felt in that area right now?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, there certainly is some controversy. It falls between the ATV users and the snowmobile users in the area. I believe that they can resolve those differences. We do intend to implement the plan. It's important for the future of the sanctuary. As the member said, it's the oldest sanctuary in the province. It's one that we want to make sure is run properly, and it can't be run properly without that plan. It's going to take a little compromising on

each side. Hopefully they'll come to a resolution, because they know clearly that we do intend to implement the plan.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Social Policy Reform

MS MJOLSNESS: Mr. Speaker, today a report by Statistics Canada revealed that compared to wealthy people the poor are twice as likely to die young, poor babies are twice as likely to die, and people who are poor are dying faster from mental illness and suicide. Despite the seriousness of the issue the Minister of Family and Social Services doesn't care, because he is refusing to take any action that would help almost 70,000 people living in poverty on social assistance in this province. To the minister. Given that this minister has said he is committed to social reform, when will this minister make a commitment and raise the incomes of people living on social assistance?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Member for Edmonton-Calder is having a difficult time understanding the complexity of poverty. But let me say this: this minister does care, and this government does care. We are leading the fight against poverty and will continue to lead that charge. [interjections] I want to point out . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, hon. minister. I think we're going to just take a big time out here. We might even end question period if this noise persists.

Minister.

MR. OLDRING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, this government is leading the charge against poverty. I would want to point out that poverty is not something that's unique to Alberta. I guess we can take some consolation in knowing that we have amongst the lowest of poverty rates in all of Canada, but we're not willing to leave it at that. We're going to progress ahead. We're going to work with Albertans, and we're going to continue to address poverty in a meaningful and thoughtful way.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary.

MS MJOLSNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This minister is the one that is having trouble understanding the issue.

In this minister's own city of Red Deer an average of 50 percent of the food bank clients receive social assistance, 50 percent of the people served at that food bank are children, and the use of the food bank increased 90 percent in January of this year. This is a very serious issue, and I would ask the minister: why is he refusing to admit that it's a serious issue and to take some action?

MR. OLDRING: Mr. Speaker, again, the minister recognizes and this government recognizes the seriousness of poverty. As I said earlier, we as a government are leading the charge against poverty. Let me just outline for the benefit of the members – I know they have a difficult time going through the budget and seeing the things that it's providing for Albertans today, but I would want to point out some of the things that we have done as a government to fight poverty. The first thing I'd want to point out is that we have created 70,000 new jobs for Albertans in this last couple of years. Our budget is projecting another

30,000 new jobs: not just jobs, good jobs. We now have the second highest average weekly earnings in all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we are making some progress, but again it's a very complex issue. It's not something that this government can stand up and wave a wand and put an end to. It's not something that we as a government can legislate an end to. It's something that this government recognizes. I know that they don't like consultation. They seem to be more interested in knee-jerk reactions, but we believe in consultation, because we're a grass-roots party and we recognize the importance of working with Albertans to address these needs and these challenges. We're going to continue to consult, we're going to continue to work with Albertans, and we're going to continue to address the poverty issue in a very meaningful way.

MR. SPEAKER: Calgary-Buffalo.

Code Inquiry Costs

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Provincial Treasurer – yes, you – the 15-year veteran has promised for some time to release the full cost of the Code inquiry to Alberta taxpayers. It'll be the first information he's released for some time. The public accounts provide only some of the information on this matter, including the fact that Mr. Cormie's lawyers were paid over \$1,130,000 by taxpayers for their services. It's time for the Provincial Treasurer to stop hiding and manipulating information and to release these figures. I'm wondering whether he will stop pussyfooting and tell this House now and without further delay how much the Code inquiry has cost taxpayers to date.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?
Provincial Treasurer.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to hear the confession, if not the testimony, of the Member for Calgary-Buffalo – a lawyer, by the way – that in fact lawyers' fees are very high. In fact, that's been the case all along. We admitted that, Mr. Speaker. We concur with the observation made by the Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

Let me indicate that, as the member states, there's nothing that's being hidden. He himself said that he found this in the public accounts. Where else do we disclose it but in the public accounts, the factual information of this government's expenditures, which I filed here sometime just after the opening of the Assembly? We filed them the year before, by the way, so I appreciate that his research is quite thorough. He's been able to find the public accounts, so that's helpful and good to see that he's catching on to the Assembly.

The actual amount we have spent, Mr. Speaker: I said all along that it would be about \$25 million. I said that in the House in the fall of 1987, I said it in the House in 1988 and 1989, and I'm saying it again now, Mr. Speaker. But these costs are ongoing. The full costs are not yet in. It's going to be around that amount. But I remember the opposition, the Liberal members across the way, clamouring for the investigation, demanding to know what happened, suggesting we had to

have an inquiry on this. Well, we did it. We complied; we had one of the fullest, most comprehensive investigations of any problem in this province. We knew it was going to cost money, Mr. Speaker. The conclusions came down, and we acted on them. So we're not hiding anything at all. We're always out in front . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you. Let's have the supplementary.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's quite clear that the inquiry was needed because the Premier stonewalled and said it was the fault of unsophisticated investors. I'm wondering whether perhaps the Premier, who is now wincing, can tell this House why his government didn't simply come clean way back in 1987, admit the government's negligence and responsibility to investors, and save the taxpayers of this province that \$25 million, which never needed to have been spent. [interjections]

MR. GETTY: Mr. Speaker, it's remarkable when we have conducted the most exhaustive, detailed investigation, as the hon. Provincial Treasurer said, in the history of our province and having received a report . . .

MR. McEACHERN: Nonsense.

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. McEACHERN: Well, he just said it was an exhaustive study, and it wasn't.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Premier. Question period is at an end.

Could we have unanimous consent to revert to Introduction of Special Guests?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed?
Public Works, Supply and Services.

head: Introduction of Special Guests (reversion)

MR. KOWALSKI: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker and the members of the Assembly, for giving me this opportunity to introduce a group of 123 grade 6 students from Barrhead elementary school. This is virtually the whole population of grade 6 students in the constituency that I represent. They're sitting in both the members' gallery and the public gallery, and they're accompanied by a number of teachers – Rose McColl, Stephen Perrin, Maureen Tansowny, Laurin Lamothe – and teacher aide Vicki Properzi. They're also accompanied by three bus drivers: Mr. Ed Litke, Bill Tobey, and Bill Brinton. Mr. Speaker, I'm also very proud because there is one young gentleman in one of the two galleries that is very close to me; he's my son Michael. I would ask all of them if they would kindly rise, and I want to ask my colleagues to provide them . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Point of order, Edmonton-Highlands.

MS BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, you at least implied during question period today that a question was out of order when it was sponsored by the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods to the minister for Occupational Health and Safety on the assumption that everybody in the House is well aware that the minister's estimates are up for tomorrow. Now, if you'd like a B number, I can cite 512 and 513 in particular. But what I would like to point out in the context is this. I've since sent and received some correspondence from the Government House Leader. The point I'd like to make is this: under the anticipation rule it may be worth exercising a question as opposed to an assumption if it is not clear or a matter of record or, in this case, a matter on the Order Paper that is well known to all members of the Assembly whether or not a matter is going to arise and on what day. Now, our rules do not require that notice go on the Order Paper for consideration of any given department's estimates. The rule is an unwritten one, and that is that the Government House Leader advises the Opposition House Leader, who in turn advises the critics in that caucus.

Now, in this instance I was not advised that workers' comp and occupational health were up for consideration tomorrow. I had been advised that the Department of Education was up for estimates for tomorrow, Mr. Speaker. Under the circumstances it seems to me that when people object — as I certainly did during the exchange, to say that I didn't know that, and I know that the Member for Edmonton-Mill Woods expressed similarly that he did not know there had been a change of plans — perhaps then the question could be put. If the member has not been informed that those estimates are up for tomorrow, then the question shall proceed.

The second argument that I'd like to make, Mr. Speaker, refers to the general rule of anticipation when it comes to estimates, and that is prior rulings from you, sir, which suggested that unless the estimates were up for consideration that day and known to be up for consideration that day, the questions on the matter pertaining to the department under question would not be out of order.

Thank you for your consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The difficulty with the rule of anticipation is one which is more strictly enforced especially in the House of Commons in London, where any matter that's on the Order Paper cannot really be brought forward in terms of anticipation for question period. Now, we of course do not interpret our rules as closely as that. I also am quite aware that under the latest edition of *Beauchesne*, 409(12), "questions should not anticipate a debate scheduled for the day, but should be reserved for the debate." So even in the House of Commons the practice has been to try to narrow it at least to the day.

In terms of what transpired in question period, there was so much heckling going on that when the minister said, "No, I'm not going to answer that question today, but I'm willing to do it in estimates tomorrow," that then put a different cast onto what was happening about question period. Any minister has the right to refuse. That's clearly the practice of the House of Commons in London as well as in Ottawa, and in this case the minister gave a signal to the House that as far as he's concerned, as far as the Chair was hearing, those estimates were coming tomorrow, and that put the House into a bit of a different situation. But agreed: in terms of anticipation normally it would be in terms of the day. Anticipation is a rule that's been very difficult to call in all Legislatures, including this one. And,

of course, the other thing that applies here is Standing Order 23(e).

Now, during question period today the Leader of the Opposition made a statement to the House, and perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might be willing to withdraw that statement.

MR. MARTIN: Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty with it when I look at *Beauchesne*. Clearly, this is parliamentary and has been ruled since '58. But, also, and I'll read it into the record:

This minister's hidden, whitewashed, run around, didn't tell the truth to us here in this Assembly, and he [came] back to this Assembly to admit that.

He did have to come back and make a statement to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. That's a point of fact. It had to do with the showers that at the time he said had been installed, and they weren't. He did admit that in the Assembly.

So besides *Beauchesne* 490, which says "not telling the truth" has been ruled parliamentary, I was trying to make the point that this minister has been out of control in terms of what he's said to the House, and even he's had to come back and admit that.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. member, if you look at *Beauchesne* 489, page 146, it clearly says:

Since 1958, it has been ruled unparliamentary to use the following expressions . . . not telling the truth.

"Didn't tell the truth" is here in the Blues. On the other occasion the minister did come back and in the opinion of the Chair was exceedingly candid to the House and admitted that he had, inadvertently I assume, misled the House. He came back and said so to the House.

But the reference I have is *Beauchesne* 489, that it's clearly unparliamentary.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Speaker, if you'll look at *Beauchesne* 490 and look at the date, it's *Debates* from February 9, 1970. The citation you're referring to is before that, Mr. Speaker, and I would say that the one I'm referring to is the most recent one in *Beauchesne*.

MR. SPEAKER: What's your page number as well as the . . .

MR. MARTIN: It's on page 148, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Page 148. "Not telling the truth." All right. Leader of the Opposition, you're entirely correct. By going over one more page, it says it has been ruled parliamentary to say that. All right. The Chair would also, then, admit its ignorance of that page, but would still ask hon. members to refer to *Beauchesne* 491, which reads that

the Speaker has consistently ruled that language used in the House should be temperate and worthy of the place in which it is spoken.

Thank you for that lesson, Leader of the Opposition.

MR. MARTIN: I'm sorry if it . . .

MR. SPEAKER: No. I just agreed with you. Thank you. I don't think it's the best parliamentary procedure, but I have to deal with that. Thank you.

Now we're going to go on to call Orders of the Day, and we have some procedural problems that have to be dealt with in terms of some tablings.

head: **Orders of the Day**

MR. FJORDBOTTON: Mr. Speaker, I apologize for the incorrect number, and hopefully I'll get it right this time.

In response to motions for returns 222, 223, 224, 225 of 1989,* and with the concurrence of the hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, because of the large volume of the material and the reproduction of photographs, only one copy of the wildlife habitat reports will be tabled. This will be put in the Legislature Library. Mr. Speaker, I understand I need unanimous consent for that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The procedural difficulty, hon. members, is this. Normally we'd have to have four copies filed, because . . . Oh, seven? I won't go into all the flurry that's been going up in here the last 45 minutes, believe me.

Ordinarily we would have more copies filed. We need to have unanimous consent of the House in this instance to have one complete copy to be tabled with the Assembly and that it be loaned to the Legislature Library for the duration of this session so that there's access for members and the general public.

So first may we have unanimous consent to bury our own procedure, that it would be one copy?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to speak to the unanimous?

MR. McINNIS: A question. Did I hear the Chair say that it would be just for the duration of this session, that it would not form a permanent part of the library's collection?

MR. SPEAKER: It will be available, yes.

Now can we come back to unanimous consent. All those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Carried. Thank you very much for that.

Now can we have all of the various tablings? Thank you. Do we have seven strong pages?

Now we'll revert to our proper procedure.

head: **Written Questions**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that the following written questions stand and retain their place on the Order Paper: 193, 206, 207, 208, 218, 219, and 234.

[Motion carried]

177. Mr. Taylor asked the government the following question:
In how many cases has the government been called upon to meet third party loan guarantee obligations in each of the years 1988 and 1989? Who were the commercial lenders that called upon the government guarantees, and what was the total amount that each commercial lender called upon for each of the years 1988 and 1989?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

192. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question:

- (1) How many workers have been involved in accidents at the Hinton pulp mill since January 1, 1989, what was the nature of each accident, and in which cases has the person affected not yet returned to work?
- (2) What procedures are being followed to reduce the chance of accidents at the Hinton pulp mill?
- (3) Why, on November 28, 1989, were two pipe fitters/welders allowed to work in an area highly contaminated with asbestos from a drum end with badly damaged insulation?
- (4) What measures are being undertaken to monitor the health of those exposed to hazardous substances such as asbestos or chlorine gas, and is the health of any such individuals who are no longer actively employed at the plant being monitored?

[Question accepted]

203. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question:
With respect to the government's guarantee of the \$55 million Gainers Properties Inc. bank loan:

- (1) To what extent is the government guaranteeing interest on the loan?
- (2) What rate of interest is payable on the loan?
- (3) At what time or times is interest due and payable on the loan?
- (4) Has all interest been paid on a timely basis in respect of the loan since the date of the province's guarantee? How much and when?
- (5) Has the government itself paid any interest on the loan?
- (6) What is the amount of interest which has accrued and is unpaid on the loan to March 15, 1990?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

215. Mr. Bruseker asked the government the following question:

- (1) How many loans did the Alberta Opportunity Company grant in each of the last three fiscal years?
- (2) How many loan guarantees did AOC grant in each of the last three fiscal years?
- (3) What percentage of AOC loans granted during the last three fiscal years were defaulted upon?
- (4) On what percentage of AOC loan guarantees granted during the last three fiscal years did the government have to pay on the guarantee?

[Question accepted]

224. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question:

- (1) Who will be paying for the drainage improvement plan laid out in the Naylor Hills/Keg River study done for Canadian Forest Products Ltd. by Delta Environmental Management Group Ltd., dated March 1989?
- (2) What is the schedule for the completion of this project?
- (3) Did the government ask for a performance bond from the company to ensure completion of this project?
- (4) As Canadian Forest Products Ltd. has recently sold its operation to Daishowa, will any plans for carrying out a drainage project be affected by a change in ownership of the quotas?

*see page 469, right col., para. 3

[Question accepted]

225. Mr. Mitchell asked the government the following question:

- (1) What is the policy of the Alberta Liquor Control Board concerning the use of plastic bags?
- (2) Does the board intend to introduce any incentives for people to supply their own bags?
- (3) Does the board have a recycling program for plastic bags, as is being introduced by some grocery super-markets?

[Question accepted]

226. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What are the details of the 1989-90 forecast of loans and advances of \$126,200,000 under the "other" category on page 38 of the government's 1990 Budget Address, including the identity of the recipient of each loan or advance and its amount and conditions?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

227. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What are the details, including beneficiary, amount, and terms and conditions, of all loan guarantees included under the "other" category as at March 31, 1988, 1989, and December 31, 1989, on page 40 of the government's 1990 Budget Address?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

228. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What are the details of the 1990-91 estimates of loans and advances of \$107,100,000 under the "other" category on page 38 of the government's 1990 Budget Address, including the identity of the recipient of each loan or advance and its amount and terms and conditions?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

229. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What are the details of the 1989-90 forecast of "long-term investments" of \$18,371,000 on page 38 of the government's 1990 Budget Address, specifying each investment and its amount and terms and conditions?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

230. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What are the details of the 1990-91 estimate of "long-term investments" of \$6,732,000 on page 38 of the government's 1990 Budget Address, specifying each investment and its amount and terms and conditions?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

231. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What is the average value of the Canadian dollar upon which the Provincial Treasurer based his projections for crude oil royalties for 1990-91?

[Question accepted]

232. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What is the estimated deduction from personal income tax as a result of the Alberta stock savings plan for 1989-90 and for 1990-91, which was specified in the 1989 Budget Address but omitted in the 1990 Budget Address?

[Question accepted]

233. Mr. Chumir asked the government the following question: What is the estimate of the natural gas price upon which the Provincial Treasurer based his projection for natural gas and by-products royalty for 1990-91?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

235. Rev. Roberts asked the government the following question: What is the government policy with respect to the training and future role of registered psychiatric nurses in Alberta?

[Question accepted]

236. Rev. Roberts asked the government the following question: How many nurses have been appointed to provincial hospital boards pursuant to the government announcement of December 22, 1988, and does the government intend to continue this directive in the face of resistance from both the United Nurses of Alberta and the Alberta Hospital Association?

[Question accepted]

242. Mr. Wickman asked the government the following question:

- (1) Is it the policy of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services to negotiate employee separation settlements with those government employees who leave on their own volition?
- (2) What is the government's policy regarding the negotiation of employee separation settlements with those employees who leave on their own volition? In particular, under what circumstances is the government willing to negotiate such settlements, and what are the guidelines regarding such negotiations?

MR. GOGO: No, Mr. Speaker.

head: **Motions for Returns**

MR. GOGO: Mr. Speaker, I move that all motions for returns appearing on the Order Paper – except for the following: 170, 171, 172, 181, 182, 205, 211, 237, and 238 – stand and retain their place on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

170. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of all studies and reports from which nonresident hunting allocations were determined by the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife for 1990 through 1993.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I recommend the Assembly reject this motion for the following reasons. In order to fulfill this, virtually all the studies, hunter questionnaires,

and licence information would have to be filed. Hunting allocations are made on a complex web of information, most of which is derived from files and the experience and the knowledge of the biologists in the field and a wide variety of reports that we get in the course of working out in the forested areas.

I've recently filed with the Legislature three boxes of information that covers the wildlife and habitat reports for FM areas from 1975 to the present, and to do justice to explaining the way that the competent staff of the Fish and Wildlife division determine harvest levels, it's best to have it explained by the staff themselves. Now, I'm more than happy with the public to make absolutely sure that it's a more open process. I've started that this year, now, with the outfitter-guides and the Fish & Game Association, in being able to do even better inventories and have better access to numbers. I'm more than happy, with any member of the public, to have them sit down with the staff and go over those reports, but to file them here, I just feel it would be wrong. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask that members reject this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Edmonton-Jasper Place.

MR. McINNIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do have a concern about the rejection of Motion 170, and it relates in part to the comment the minister made about the material he tabled today. I would like the Assembly to recall that the motion I moved last year was seeking specific information about timber harvesting practices affecting wildlife, how those two things went together. That motion was subsequently amended by the minister to provide for all wildlife studies, and we have all wildlife studies done by the province over a very long period of time, which were tabled today.

That's not terribly relevant to the motion before us, Motion 170, which seeks specifically the studies which justify the nonresident allocations for 1990 through 1993. By way of background to members of the Assembly, the new outfitter-guide policy was announced by the minister by government news release on Friday, November 3, 1989. There are very few policies announced by the government in the period since I've been elected which have caused as much disruption, dislocation, anger, and pain as this particular announcement has. I think the time is coming when we have to deal with that as a matter of policy by the Assembly. But I'd like to read one paragraph in the announcement from November 3, which states:

The prime consideration of the government is to recognize the interests of resident hunters who normally do not use outfitter-guides. Non-resident hunting shall not exceed 10 percent of the total allowable harvest, and may be less in certain areas depending on use.

That's the nub or at least the beginning point of the policy. As I understand it, a maximum of 10 percent of the available harvest will be made available to nonresidents; that is, wherever resident Albertans are on a draw or an allocation system for hunting rights, no more than 10 percent will be made available to nonresidents through the industry.

Now, on November 9, Tom Smith, director, program support branch of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, wrote a letter to every guide and outfitter in the province. Unfortunately, this letter arrived with most of the people in the industry out in the field, as they are at that time of year. But attached to that was a preliminary list of allocations for each and every one of the 150 wildlife management units in the province of Alberta. I don't wish to read the entire list in schedule A, but I will say that a lot of people in the industry, guides and outfitters, have come to me

wondering how it is that the government arrived at the figures for nonresident hunt in these various areas. They simply can't believe, Mr. Speaker, that it could be 10 percent of the total harvest. If it is, they wonder what kind of harvest is being taken out of these areas.

For example, in WMU 350, 149 moose have been allocated. Now, we want to know: was this number simply pulled out of a hat, was it generated by a computer, or what? If it's to be less than 10 percent, you'd have to believe that there are 1,500 moose who are going to be taken out of wildlife management unit 350. A little bit difficult to believe, that there's that kind of moose population available for harvest in any given year. In the same area we have 81 mule deer available for nonresident hunt. Again, you'd have to believe that there's more than 800 mule deer available for harvest within that particular zone. Some of the numbers are quite high, like white-tailed deer: in WMU 514 we have 185 animals available for nonresident allocation. Again, you'd have to project that out to almost 2,000 animals available for harvest. Moose: in 518 we've got 221 animals available. Where do these numbers come from?

In addition, there are allocations available for antelope and cougar in some of these areas; relatively small numbers, although still there is a feeling among people who are involved in the industry who, in many cases, have done the work in conservation projects to try to build up the herd because it's their business — they wonder why the government comes along and says, "Well, not only are we going to take the right away from you to hunt and give it to somebody else under this allocation system, but we're going to send them in to shoot a larger number of animals than you, the local operator, would ever dream of hunting." Now, some further adjustments have been made to these numbers later on, but surely Albertans have a right to know where these numbers come from.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

I don't say that we have to go back to square one in terms of the analysis to try to find out how many animals there were in the beginning and what kind of assessment was done, but simply who made these assessments and on what basis. Surely there must be some documentation in the file that justifies these particular allocations and puts them squarely within the 10 percent category. So on the basis of the representations that there may be some numbers here that are a little bit out of whack in terms of the 10 percent figure in the policy, I think we have a right to more information.

I want to say further that I've been told that the minister is prepared to make some additional allocation available beyond those that were announced in early November last year, perhaps to silence some of the critics who are out there. Now, if we're going to implement this policy at the expense of the resource, that's something that every Albertan has an interest in, in particular those who agreed to the 10 percent policy on the basis of assurance that it would not be any more than that. I think we have to know what's going on here, so I urge members of the Assembly to support Motion for a Return 170.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place has moved Motion 170. All those in favour, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion is rejected.

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

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

[Eight minutes having elapsed, the House divided]

For the motion:

Barrett	Hawkesworth	Mjolsness
Bruseker	Hewes	Pashak
Chumir	Laing, M.	Roberts
Decore	Martin	Sigurdson
Doyle	McEachern	Taylor
Ewasiuk	McInnis	Wickman

Against the motion:

Ady	Fischer	Nelson
Anderson	Fjordbotten	Osterman
Betkowski	Fowler	Paszkowski
Black	Gesell	Payne
Bogle	Hyland	Rostad
Bradley	Johnston	Schumacher
Brassard	Jonson	Severtson
Calahasen	Kowalski	Shrake
Cardinal	Laing, B.	Sparrow
Clegg	Lund	Tannas
Day	Main	Thurber
Dinning	McClellan	Trynchy
Drobot	Mirosh	Weiss
Elzinga	Moore	Zarusky
Evans	Musgrove	

Totals: Ayes – 18 Noes – 44

[Motion lost]

171. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of all instructions provided to staff in the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife in respect of their participation in the proceedings of the Alberta-Pacific Environmental Impact Assessment Review Board.

MR. McINNIS: In introducing debate on this subject, I would like to cite the comments by Dr. David Schindler and others involved with the Alberta-Pacific environmental review board that they felt there were many, many occasions on which information germane to the hearings of that board was needed from staff of the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. There was some frustration expressed around the fact that the officials who would be in a position to provide that information were not always available to the panel, and that matter was ongoing over a period of some weeks during the hearings of the panel. As I say, members of the panel expressed their frustration publicly. Now, that particular matter was dealt with in the report, the Alberta-Pacific EIA Review Board report. They expressed their concern, and that was unanimous concern, I

believe, by all members of the review panel. Every member of the panel signed the report, so I think one has to assume from that that they share the concern about lack of co-operation from the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

There was a particular matter of a report on some fish samples that were taken in the Wapiti River in 1987, I believe it was, and that report had not been made available, directly at least, to the EIA review board until after January 15, 1990, which was the final deadline for submission of written material to that particular panel.

So that's the background to this particular motion. The motion seeks information on what instructions were given by the minister to his staff in respect of their participation.

Now, a further aspect of this, and this is a very important one which I'd like members to pay particular attention to, is that on March 2, 1990, the government announced an initial response to the Alberta-Pacific EIA Review Board report, and in that response there was a general endorsement of the specific recommendation requesting more studies before the project was to be licensed. But within that release there was also the news that the government would appoint yet another body of scientists or a review committee or board – I forget the exact word that was used – an additional group of scientists who would be hired to look at the scientific material in the report and come to their own conclusions. Other members of this Assembly, including the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche and the Minister of Agriculture, said that that is in essence an attempt to second-guess the findings of the panel, to have another look at the data.

Now, I recall at the time having some concern that the Alberta-Pacific EIA Review Board was in itself a review board. It was reviewing the scientific work provided by the proponents of the project and some of the other information available through government departments. I felt that perhaps there was some effort to get around the Al-Pac review board report findings through this other mechanism. What occurs to me today as the government goes through the process of attempting to appoint this second review panel to look at the data – I understand this matter went to the priorities committee of cabinet today. I understand further that it was turned back by the priorities committee of cabinet, for what reason I can't be sure, since of course I'm not party to the proceedings of that meeting.

But what occurs to me today is that perhaps there will be some information made available to the second review panel which was not made available to the first review panel, in which case we would have a very difficult situation. We may have the government attempting to attack or criticize the EIA review board report on the basis of information that it withheld from the initial Al-Pac EIA Review Board, and perhaps trying to come to some different conclusions in respect of the development of a pulp project. Whether it's the Alberta-Pacific project referred to the review board or whether it's the other project, the one that the Minister of the Environment refers to as the phantom project, the one that's probably the least kept secret in the province of Alberta at the moment, there may be some attempt to draw a different conclusion on the basis of different information.

I put that forward to the minister before he speaks on the motion so that he can understand the importance of this matter and why we're seeking information about the instructions

provided to his staff in respect to their participation at those review board hearings.

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

MR. TAYLOR: Is it all right for the minister to answer, and then I can speak again?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member rose to . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: This is just the introduction.

MR. TAYLOR: I think I'll go ahead then, because . . . After you, Alphonse.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking in support of this motion, I wanted to add on a bit, because one of the concerns I have, and I think many of us have in the province, is whether the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife is addicted to opposing hearings of any sort. It's not just a case of the Alberta-Pacific environmental impact; they seem to have a bunker mentality, Mr. Speaker. We have just a recent case where a number of ranchers up in the Beaverlodge-Grande Prairie country wanted to get an open hearing before forestry could go ahead on what was formerly grazing land. So here we have the same type of policy enunciated, because members of forestry and wildlife are quoted as saying that they didn't have to answer to anyone and they didn't have to have open hearings.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very important that the minister clarify in this motion just what happened, because I'm afraid it's an across-the-board muzzle put on everybody in forestry and wildlife. It not only applies to pulp, but when you get your own people, ranchers who have been in the Beaverlodge and Grande Prairie area for 50 years, being told by the wildlife people that they're going to go ahead with the timber berth, they're going to go ahead with the timbering regardless, they don't want to have hearings and they won't have hearings, Mr. Speaker, that's about as high-handed as you can get. The only joy I can take out of an announcement like this out of the government is that the government is surely going to be short lived if this disease spreads to the rest of the cabinet.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, it was my intention just to stand up and state clearly that I can't provide a copy of something that there isn't a copy of, that there are no written instructions provided by me to the department about the Al-Pac hearing process. But considering the preamble and also the comments from Westlock-Sturgeon, I feel compelled to say a few words at least.

In this particular instance members should know there's no bunker mentality in the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. We deal with resource issues all the time, day after day after day. It's strange, but there's not just one opinion on everything; there is a wide variety of opinions. Ministik Lake is a prime example. You have people that are snowmobilers that don't like the ATVs and others that don't want this; there's trying to resolve those kinds of differences. One of the roles we play on a continual basis, Mr. Speaker, is that through the integrated resource management planning process we provide the opportunity for public input and public review until we can put those plans in place.

There's no bunker mentality with respect to forestry operations either. I have no objection whatsoever to Alberta's

forestry management being reviewed in a public forum where that review process is run properly. I put together a process that I intend to announce very soon that will be a complete, open process for the public to review on an ongoing basis. It will be a living process that will allow the public to have an input into forest management.

One of the things that I absolutely will not stand by and allow to happen is that there are all kinds of aspersions put on my staff and my department about what they do or don't do. In the Alberta-Pacific case, for example, I encouraged one of our senior people in the department, an ADM level who's a degreed forester and a degreed ecologist, to go to the Al-Pac board and make a presentation to them. Because a process was established with a terms of reference with the Alberta Department of the Environment and the federal Department of the Environment, it was their process. Anything that was asked of us, we presented to the process through the Alberta Department of the Environment; that's the proper way to do it. In addition to that, the Al-Pac board had all of the extensive material that we did in an analysis of the environmental impact assessment that Alberta-Pacific did. We had an analysis, and all that information was public.

And the fish that are in question. If you go to page 26 in the Al-Pac report and look under Procter & Gamble, it has a 1.7-44 in a box. Guess what? The same numbers that are in this so-called fish report that everybody thinks is so secret. They had the numbers; it was there. People don't seem to understand that there's cross-jurisdictions that take place. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has responsibility; Health and Welfare Canada has responsibility on the water systems for public health. Alberta Environment has a lot of responsibility with respect to effluent levels, not only from industrial but from municipal, from cities and towns across this province, and they collect fish and look at the health of the fish with respect to the water. We collect fish, send them on to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which does their analysis, and if there's a problem, Health and Welfare Canada acts on those things. There is cross-jurisdiction.

But when it comes to forestry, I'm not about to allow the federal government to come in and start dictating forestry in Alberta. I'm reviewing the Al-Pac report, and I'll respond to it in due course. But one comment that was made is that Forestry, Lands and Wildlife should be there to talk about forestry on Indian reserves. We don't have anything to do with Indian reserves; that is not our jurisdiction. Neither is Wood Buffalo park our jurisdiction. In fact, frankly, if the federal government would practise the forest management practices that Alberta's been practising for years, it wouldn't have the problem they've got in Wood Buffalo National Park.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I want to close my comments with is that I get a little sick and tired of people coming out and insinuating that – they're looking for a worm under a rock. They say, "Well, what if?" And I know the hon. member is an honourable member, and he's trying to think: "Well, what if? What if this board is appointed?" Now, it'll be appointed by the Minister of the Environment; it was his study, so of course that's where the reporting will take place. And the suggestion that we're going to provide some information to somebody that we didn't provide somewhere else – "Oh, my goodness; the whole system is wrong" – we've got to realize . . .

MR. TAYLOR: How about Beaverlodge?

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Well, the hon. member keeps chirping over there in the corner. I know he loves his wife. I mean, she's a wonderful woman and he loves her, but the court could come today and say that because they didn't cross this "t" a certain way, you're not really married. Now, wouldn't that be terrible?

Now, there's a process that's been established, and we all live under the law, but you can't change the rules all the time and make them retroactive. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask members to reject this motion, because I provided no written instructions to staff about that, and if I did provide some, which I didn't, that is a privilege between a minister and his department. But I came clean on it; I said that I haven't provided any.

So, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of that, I ask members to reject this motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Reject the motion and save the marriage.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

All those in favour of . . . Oh, sorry. I apologize. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Kingsway.

MR. McEACHERN: In fact, I think the Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place gets the right to close debate.

Mr. Speaker, the minister assures us that there was no such written order, but it does seem fairly clear from all the reports out of the hearings as they were going on that there was some reluctance on the part of the top echelons of the forestry department to get involved in the Al-Pac hearings. We heard that a number of times from the participants in the panel. In fact, I can even find one quote here in the Al-Pac report, on page 25. Near the bottom it says:

Mr. Noton of Alberta Environment, in a 1989 review of chlorinated organic compounds, listed Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife as among agencies that had conducted organochlorine studies on the river system, but the Review Board did not receive information directly from that agency.

If not, why not? So there's a very strong perception out there that the minister's people were not as forthcoming as they should be. Now, I don't blame the people in the department for that; they're only following orders, I assume. The people that are hired by the government to do the job on the front lines in forestry or any other department, I have quite a lot of faith in. I believe they do their job to the best of their ability, same as anybody else. I think those people would have been willing to testify. I'm sure that they would want an environmentally safe project for the province of Alberta. I think it's the government that committed themselves to this project and to pulp development on a scale that was devastating to the environment without doing the proper environmental studies. It is they that decided it was politically unwise to have too much information made available through the forestry department to those hearings.

I remember a comment by David Schindler on TV just the other day to the effect that when the Premier started to question the validity of the findings and sort of said, well, you know, it's too biased – he said, in fact, that the council, the Al-Pac review board, was set up in the first place to be biased, biased in the direction of having that project go ahead. But the evidence was so overwhelming and the information that came in was so obvious, in spite of the fact that they didn't get all the information they wanted from the forestry department, that it was just clear that the project had to be put on hold until some further

studies had been done. So I think the minister should change his ways.

I don't know what this is about sort of implying that somehow it's all right for the Environment department to co-operate with the federal Environment department, but boy, those federal guys better not try to tell me how to run my forestry concerns. In fact, it would seem to me that environment is everybody's concern, and they should be looking forward to co-operating with and working with the federal government in the area of having multiple use and environmentally safe use of our forests.

So I think the minister should provide us with this information, even if there is not a written document. He may very well have been clever enough not to actually write anything down that might get leaked to anybody, but he should own up. In fact, he told the echelons of his department not to testify at these hearings.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the Assembly ready for the question? Oh. Hon. Member for Edmonton-Jasper Place, to close the debate.

MR. McINNIS: If I may, Mr. Speaker, just a few words in concluding the debate. I thought I heard the minister say that we weren't at the hearings because we don't have anything to do with timber harvesting on Indian reserve lands. I think that's a close approximation to what was said. If so, the minister stands condemned out of his own mouth. If he's saying, "My staff weren't there because they didn't have any business being there," somebody must have told them they didn't have any business being there. I don't know who that somebody would be, but my guess is that if it wasn't the minister, it would be somebody responsible to him and reporting to him. Which is an interesting complexion on this problem, because I do know the effort that the minister put into keeping environmental impact assessment away from the purview of his department. It's one of the reasons why I refer to that department as having a Berlin Wall around it. You know, the real Berlin Wall came tumbling down. I suspect this one will too; if not now, then later on.

It does so happen, though, that there were issues other than timber harvesting on Indian reserve lands before the Alberta-Pacific EIA Review Board; that is to say, issues dealing with the fish and fish habitat, which were the subject of a tremendous amount of information, evidence that was brought before the hearings from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, from the federal Department of the Environment, and to some extent by Alberta Environment in their various appearances before the board. My colleague from Edmonton-Kingsway referred to the specific concern that was expressed within the Al-Pac report about a lack of information from Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. To me that says it all, and I suspect that the minister, in indicating that we had no business being there – that may be what was communicated to his staff. If so, we've heard everything we need to know about this particular matter.

[Motion lost]

172. Mr. McInnis moved that an order of the Assembly do issue for a return showing a copy of the draft predator management plan for west-central Alberta prepared by the Alberta fish and wildlife branch of the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife.

MR. McINNIS: Third time lucky, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FJORDBOTTEN: Mr. Speaker, I hate to disappoint the hon. member, but I'm going to have to say reject. The reason I have to say reject is that, first of all, it's a bit of a technicality, but the draft predator management plan for west-central Alberta doesn't exist. So that in itself would trigger a rejection.

But I'll say a couple of words about it, because I'm sure that what he was really talking about was the wolf management plan. There is a wolf management plan, and I have sent that wolf management plan to the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee, which is made up of a broad cross section of membership from the public sector across this province. They've reviewed that, and they've made a recommendation to me, and I'm having a look at it. When I get finished having a look at it, I'm going to come out and make the plan itself public. It's going to take some work to make, I believe, because there's a lot of very strongly held views on all sides of this issue. It's not an easy one. It's one that the Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee reviewed – the draft management plan – and which our caucus will have a chance to have a look at. It's one that I think probably comes closest to arriving at a compromise, and I will be tabling or filing or making public that report very soon.

But this motion as worded, Mr. Speaker, "the draft predator management plan for west-central Alberta," I ask members to reject.

MR. McINNIS: Mr. Speaker, I do apologize to the Assembly for having the name of the document wrong, although it's a little bit difficult to get the correct name of a document that you don't get to have a look at.

The minister is absolutely correct: there's a tremendous amount of interest in the issue of the wolf population in west-central Alberta, related to the caribou population, especially the mountain subspecies of the woodland caribou in the area approximately corresponding to the forest management agreements of Weldwood of Canada Ltd. and Procter & Gamble. There are some people who feel that the problems are partially caused by logging of old-growth forests. Insofar as I know, it's still the policy of the Alberta Forest Service that old-growth forest is to be logged as quickly as possible within the forest management plan put forward by various logging companies. You know, the caribou need old-growth forests in order to survive. They need the cover and the freedom to move that they have within the old-growth forest because of the lack of undergrowth.

It raises an interesting question. In view of the public concern, why are we spending so long internally debating this draft policy statement within the government before its being made public? I mean, the longer you spend looking at, debating, massaging, and analyzing it within the government, the more it gets committed, the more that it gets run through the mill, the more people who are involved in the process get committed to what they've come up with. They keep hashing it, rehashing it, drafting it, redrafting it. Then there comes the day on which the department and the minister are prepared to let this draft wolf management policy see the light of day. It's difficult for people to believe the government is then open to have the thing, you know, dealt with again in an open-minded fashion when they've spent so much time at it and put so much effort into it.

My understanding is that this particular draft wolf management plan is a version of another draft from a few years ago, so it's not something that's brand new. My point is simply that the minister should look at inviting comments on the draft as well

as the finished product. So for that reason I'm hoping we could get this particular draft tabled, and that's why the motion.

[Motion lost]

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the hour I move that the remainder of the motions for returns stand and retain their place on the Order Paper.

[Motion carried]

head: **Motions Other Than Government Motions**

203. Moved by Mr. Fischer:

Be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly urge the government to introduce amendments to the Liquor Control Act to raise the age for drinking and other activities subject to the Act to 19 years.

[Debate adjourned March 29: Mr. Fischer speaking]

MR. FISCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you very much for allowing me to continue on with Motion 203.

Thursday I gave some very strong evidence in statistics to show that raising the drinking age would save some lives. But the most telling study of all, Mr. Speaker, and the one that cannot be disputed, as well, is the worry and the anxiety on the face of every parent as their teenager leaves with their school friends for a party or a graduation. When we are talking about alcohol abuse, the obvious cost is counted in terms of injury and loss of life, but there is also a huge economic consideration. The results of the Alberta transportation study in 1985 suggested that raising the legal drinking age by one year, to 19, would result in a health related saving of over \$20 million. I'm sure that in today's dollars it would be much higher.

An example of that is Alberta Hospital Ponoka, which is currently undergoing a major redevelopment plan to provide Alberta with an 80-bed, world-class brain injury rehabilitation unit. They have operated a 29-bed program for several years, during which time the clinical staff have witnessed the unfortunate consequences of needless accidents and assaults resulting in brain injuries. They are alarmed at the irreversible damage to our citizens each year that results in admission to their brain injury rehabilitation unit. A significant portion of these individuals are a direct result of motor vehicle accidents, the majority of whom are in the 16 to 35 age group. I might remind members that the Traffic Injury Research Foundation has determined that an impaired 16- to 19-year-old is 165 times more likely to die or be permanently injured in an accident.

Besides the health care related savings, the actual savings for the province would be a lot more than that, considering other alcohol-related injury accidents, not to mention the potential savings in the areas of law enforcement and social services. Another factor in the alcohol-related accident issue is that of the consistency of the neighbouring provinces. Border crossings by 18-year-olds from Saskatchewan and B.C. for the purpose of drinking in Alberta has proved to be extremely dangerous for not only those people but for anyone on the highway.

Mr. Speaker, there has been an awful lot of input from different organizations. There's been a lot of public support for raising the minimum age. The Insurance Bureau of Canada, the Canadian Medical Association as well as the Alberta one, the

Alberta Hospital Association, the Association of Chiefs of Police, the Alberta Motor Association, and the Alberta School Trustees' Association all have strongly supported this motion. There are many other organizations. I had some school kids, grade 11 kids from the Chauvin high school, that wrote me some letters. One of them, from a 17-year-old, said:

I am writing you to tell you how concerned I am on the drinking age issue. I think the drinking age should be the same in every province . . .

[It's] much too low. I feel that we're having . . . many more teenagers killed from accidents involving alcohol. They are still in school at the age of eighteen and arrive drunk while going to school. These adults bootleg for kids in their own school.

She goes on to say:

The kids in school are much too young to be wasting their lives involving alcohol.

I think when we talk about the support from these people, Mr. Speaker, it's people that are directly involved with alcohol abuse. They are the ones that see the deaths and the damage and the abuse of it in schools. It seems to me that we should begin to listen to some of these organizations.

Mr. Speaker, one criticism of raising the drinking age to 19 has been that those who are already 18 will have a legal right taken away from them. Well, a grandfather clause, where the right to drink is not revoked from someone who is old enough under the previous drinking age legislation, would deal with this problem. Another criticism concerns the loss of employment for young people who are employed at licensed establishments. This, too, could be grandfathered so the 18-year-old employees working at the time of the legal age would not lose their jobs.

Another controversial reason is the age of majority. Yes, it is difficult to justify taking the responsibility to drink away from them while giving them the responsibility of an adult in almost every other area. But it is important to note that it's not just the 18-year-olds we're dealing with. Lowering the drinking age has had a dramatic impact on the 13 to 18 age group. As we all know, this is a very delicate stage in a person's life, a stage where they are learning and developing their life skills. The infusion of alcohol into 57 percent of the teenagers on a regular basis greatly retards that process. It also, and maybe most important of all, has a gradual but steady degenerating effect on our moral standards and our life values. Changing the drinking age one year is not by any means the complete answer, but I believe it is a big step in the right direction. Another year of maturity would be a great benefit to our society.

Drug and alcohol abuse among our young people, Mr. Speaker, is the most progressive terminal illness in Alberta society. It destroys the family unit, it affects one in four young people, and it touches the lives of 14 others. Mr. Speaker, it is time that we get alcohol out of our schools. It's time that we save our millions of dollars in hospital bills. It is time that we get in step with the U.S. and other governments in Canada. It is time that we stop our senseless waste of young lives on our roads.

Mr. Speaker, I like young people. I enjoy talking with them, working with them, and just being around them. I enjoy watching their sports and their many other activities. There's nothing nicer than to go to a graduation, where we see them at their beautiful best. Their thoughts and new ideas and enthusiasm are the very link to the future health and prosperity of our province. Today I'm asking this Assembly to preserve that link by passing Motion 203.

Thank you. I look forward to hearing debate from other members.

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

MS M. LAING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just add a few comments to the debate on this motion. The hon. member who has sponsored this motion speaks very eloquently and graphically of the costs of alcohol abuse and addiction. We know it is a grave problem, a major problem in our society and of grave concern to many of us. Certainly when it afflicts our children, it is of grave concern to us as parents, as we are deeply concerned if they will survive to live out their future.

I find it curious, though, that in this session of the Legislature when this motion is brought forward, which raises and voices the great concerns many of us have about alcohol abuse, and in addition we have great concerns about drug addiction, we are confronted with a budget in which the preventative and educational components of the budget of AADAC, a world-class agency that deals with the prevention and treatment of alcohol and drug abuse, have been cut by 22 percent, over \$1.3 million. So we have to say: where is the commitment to the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse? Certainly this government needs to have stronger initiatives.

[Mr. Jonson in the Chair]

We see in the same budget that field services will be increased. But if prevention and education programs are reduced, it follows as night does day, or day after night, that the need for field services will be increased. We need to deal with prevention through education programs. What we have to do is help our children understand the nature of addiction, how easy it is to become addicted to a drug like alcohol, and we have to help children develop decision-making skills so they can say no to their peers and the peer pressure they often face and do face as young people, and often without the ego development that will allow them to know what is really best for themselves in a personal way.

It's with profound regret that we contemplate the cut to AADAC's prevention and education programs, but more importantly, I think we also have to look at the root causes of alcoholism in our society. It's often too easy to come forward with repressive measures and not recognize what it is that gives rise to alcohol abuse and addiction to drugs. I would just raise a few issues. One of them is violence in the family. We have a dearth of resources, do not have shelters, and, more importantly, do not have treatment programs for children who have witnessed or have been victims of violence, be that violence physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. We have inadequate education programs for children with learning disabilities, and we know that many children that come into trouble with the law as adolescents have undiagnosed learning disabilities. We need to address that issue.

We need to address the issue of poverty, because poverty robs children of a sense of future. In fact, I would submit that when we talk with many children who use alcohol, we will see that they are using alcohol to blunt feelings about their future, feelings of hopelessness that they have no future. Certainly we hear very young people talk about their concerns about the degradation of the environment and nuclear destruction. Not only do we have alcohol and drug addiction that arise around these problems, but we have a high suicide rate. We should be asking ourselves: what is it in our society that brings children to turn away from life and the fullness and richness it promises

either through suicide or through drug and alcohol addiction? We must look to those root causes to prevent the turning to alcohol to blunt the pain that is in far too many children's lives. We need support for programs to aid families who are in trouble. We can never deny the importance of early intervention so that families who have difficulties can, in fact, get help dealing with those difficulties.

I think another issue that is often raised when we talk about children who use drugs and alcohol is that drugs and alcohol are often abused by the adults in their lives. So we have to then look, too, at where children learn that drugs and alcohol are a way to deal with life's problems.

In closing I would say that, as we've heard, alcoholism is not only a cause of moral degradation and loss of moral values but, like so many other social ills, reflects real societal problems. We need to be looking at those root causes.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Cardston.

MR. ADY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege to stand and support Motion 203 urging the government to raise the drinking age to 19. Let me begin by letting you, Mr. Speaker, and this Assembly know exactly where I'm coming from. I'm here to argue the merits of raising our provincial drinking age by one year, not to preach the evils of alcohol or propose prohibition. So hopefully this Assembly will accept my remarks in the spirit they're given. If those issues . . .

MR. TAYLOR: The spirits or the spirit?

MR. ADY: I hoped you would pick up on that.

Nor am I here to argue that adults be denied the opportunity to drink alcohol in a moderate and reasonable manner. But I do believe we have some serious problems out there as a result of alcohol use among young Albertans. Some of those problems could be avoided if we raise the drinking age by one year. As a government we can take some positive steps to help provide young Albertans with an environment that will enhance their chances of approaching alcohol in a more mature manner. Raising the drinking age isn't the only answer but is one of those steps we as legislators can take to help create that healthy environment.

The usual counterargument in this debate *is* that if someone is old enough to defend their country, they're old enough to enjoy a drink in the bar with their buddies. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to go on record by saying that in my opinion most 18-year-olds are too young to go to war and, in the same respect, most 18-year-olds are not mature enough to load up their car at the local liquor store. I had two brothers who were involved in World War II. One of them went off very young; at age 17 he went to war. He was taken from the security of a family at the age of 17 and put out into the big, tough, man's world. He came back six years later no better for that experience. I believe he could have coped better if he'd been left in that home environment for another year or so.

Unfortunately, alcohol consumption among our young people can be disastrous. Some kids leave home for high school parties and die on the road. This was mentioned by the mover of this motion. Others face the social pressure of teenage drinking at a stage in life when they feel they have too much at stake

socially to say no. Years later they find themselves on the road to alcohol abuse.

Mr. Speaker, when someone uses the age-of-majority argument against raising the drinking age, it doesn't hold water with me. Whether we talk about an 18-year-old fighting in a war or legally purchasing alcohol, I'd say we're asking our young people to grow up too fast. When I think of the average 18-year-old — and I do have some experience with them, having raised five of them — most are not ready to take on every responsibility of the adult world. The pressure to grow up literally overnight is overwhelming, and we see the fallout from that pressure in abusive alcohol habits. Maybe if alcohol wasn't so available in our high schools, kids would have a little more time to grow up without the pressures of alcohol. But the fact that most grade 12 students are old enough to drink legally means not only more drinking among grade 12s but more drinking among the 16- and 17-year-olds, those being their friends.

A 1980 survey of American high school students supports this idea. The survey showed that young people in states with lower legal drinking ages were better able to get liquor when they wanted it than in states with higher drinking ages. With peer pressure and the subtle, slick commercial tactics of alcoholic beverage producers and distributors, particularly major breweries, it's hard to imagine how a student could get through high school without at least trying alcohol. Television provides them with fast-paced, exciting beer commercials showing young people having fun while drinking. I often wonder how any young person could think he could get the pretty girl or kick a football or drive a four-wheel drive up a hill or be Mr. Cool Macho without having a drink in his hand after having watched some of those commercials. Add this to the fact that an 18-year-old can legally purchase alcohol and you have a powerful social force. It's a social force that we can weaken by raising the drinking age.

Studies indicate that raising and lowering the drinking age changes young people's attitudes toward drinking. Research shows that kids see lowering the drinking age as an indication that alcohol is acceptable or even encouraged for young people. The result is clearly that more young people start drinking at a younger age. A related American study shows that young people with little or no drinking experience say they feel more pressure to drink as more of their friends take up the habit in local bars and taverns. The study also found that the opposite occurs when we raise the drinking age. Young people start drinking less and students report that peer pressure to drink eases up as fewer of their friends drink.

Mr. Speaker, as legislators we have the opportunity to send a message to the young people of this province, along with a social release valve that I believe some young people want. Young people and older adults don't necessarily drink because they want to. They often drink just because the liquor is there; it's an arm's reach away and there's simply no excuse to not join the gang. It's the easiest thing to do at the time. I suggest to members of the Assembly that we make alcohol less accessible to high school students by raising the drinking age to 19 and give some young Albertans a legal excuse to say no. It also gives parents an additional lever. They can put pressure on their young people by saying they don't want them contravening the law. I think many of our young people would respect that.

But is keeping alcohol out of the schools that simple? Of course not. I understand the need for a multipronged approach. Programs like AADAC are extremely effective in sending helpful messages to our young people. My point simply is that by

raising the drinking age to 19, we'll eliminate some of the availability and pressure at the secondary school level over the long term. Young people today are looking for alternatives to the traditional drinking parties associated with the high school social network. Recently a young man I know in Calgary in grade 12 – it came time for his high school graduation and, of course, the kegger was organized. He and two of his friends went to this young man's father and asked if perhaps they could go to a cabin he had in the foothills for the weekend as opposed to staying and going to the kegger. The father agreed and said he would take them and they could ask some other friends if they wanted to come. Subsequent to that, before the father could get the list stopped, there were 30 young people in that school who wanted to go to the cabin as opposed to going to the kegger. Obviously they were looking for a reason to not be involved, an easy way to say no. I think we have to help those kinds of young people find their way through this time in their age when it's so difficult to say no.

This sort of trend is developing all over the province, and raising the drinking age to 19 would add fuel to their fire. It's a fire, Mr. Speaker, that is rapidly spreading across Canada. In fact, in a recent Gallup poll 69 percent of Canadians said they want a national law that would raise the drinking age to 21. The majority of Canadians see the wisdom in moving the legal age away from our high schools. They see the wisdom in giving young people more time to mature before mixing legal access to alcohol with an intense social climate.

Mr. Speaker, it's time to give our young people added support in this area. We have all seen the evidence: the tragic deaths on our highways, the emotional stress and family difficulties that result from alcohol abuse. Raising the drinking age will help some young people escape this future. It's the very least we can do. For that reason, I'd call on members of this Assembly to support Motion 203.

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

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to speak a moment on this. [some applause] With that much enthusiasm, I'm tempted to sit down. [some applause] However, I am not going to indulge them in their fantasies.

I am concerned about the motion, and I know what moves it. Like the hon. Member for Cardston, I won't get into a competition about the number of teenagers I've had go through the house, but it's been substantial; there's been a lot. But one of the problems always associated with teenage drinking is that it's nearly always tied to the damage done when a young person suffering under the effects of alcohol gets behind the wheel of a car. Hardly anyone worries about the teenager that drinks too much in the home or at the party and acts just like his older brothers and sisters and his mother and dad. That never bothers them. It's when he gets into the car that everyone gets concerned.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if indeed the idea is to stop carnage on our highways, I don't know why we stop at 19. After all, a person is an adult at 18, and who knows, they may be to 40 or 50 before they learn to vote Liberal. Nevertheless they could possibly put an age – that alcohol shouldn't be allowed for any of us until we're 35 or 40. As a matter of fact, now that I've reached the 60 mark, I think 60 is about the right age, when you don't want to cause too much damage, because right now too many drinks make me want to go home and go to sleep or just go to sleep.

Maybe that's the age you should be before you're allowed alcohol. But I don't see the logic behind picking a particular age once you're an adult; because it certainly seems to me that once you are recognized as an adult – maybe we made a mistake picking 18, but we have picked 18 – restricting their freedom to do what other adults do and . . . But there is a privilege which is a driver's licence. Maybe this is what we should be looking at. Maybe the driver's licence age – which is now as young as 16 – between 16 and 21 should be looked at very, very closely. I'm not too sure that we might not do a lot more for society and keep within the principles we are formed on that when somebody is 18, they're a full adult. We would do much more if we took the idea that maybe the driver's licence shouldn't be granted till they're 20 or 21, or maybe a temporary licence between 16 and 21 or 22, where even one or two infractions would be all that's necessary to suspend the licence rather than everybody from 16 on getting the same number of demerit points.

In other words, driving is a privilege and driving with alcohol is the problem. It's not drinking per se at 19 or drinking at 20 or drinking at 21; it's getting behind the wheel of a car. If I could try to apply a little bit of Aristotelian logic or something here, I think we have everything reversed when we're talking about saying people cannot drink once they've reached adulthood at some particular age or not, rather than attacking the privilege, which is driving licences, and looking at that much more closely.

Over and above that, of course, are all the other statements of education and what we have to do to educate people not to use alcohol. But I don't know; that's a long and slow process. Nicotine is probably just as debilitating and in the long run will kill more of us than alcohol, yet how hard it is to stop the nicotine habit. So it is a long, slow education process. But I think we should take a very serious look at the licensing of drivers or maybe temporary licensing of drivers and not infringe on people's liberties after they're 18.

I don't think going into the bar is a privilege, but I do think it's a right. I think when you tamper with rights, you're in a very, very dangerous game indeed. If we can take this right away because it is thought to cause more car troubles, we can take another right away of another group because we think they're not going to do too well for society. I don't think we can tamper with rights, but I do think we can tamper with privileges. Therefore, we should be looking at it from that end. I submit that although the motion is well intentioned . . . I think most people want to see the fact that we can cut down the person full of liquor without experience in driving – in other words, a young age. It's inexperience in driving, not the young age particularly, because after all, if you were kept away from driving a car until you were 40 and then turned loose in a car, given a few drinks, you would probably be just as bad as the one who just started to drive at 18, 19, or 17.

So the fact is that I think we have attacked this thing backwards and should be looking very, very carefully at the whole idea of licensing and how it could be applied in such a way that we would be able to drive home to our people who first acquire a car licence what a privilege it is, how important it is, and, to protect that right, how important it is to make sure we're not under drugs of any sort.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THURBER: Mr. Speaker, while I commend my hon. colleague for bringing up such an important motion – and I

think it certainly is a matter of concern – I don't think we as legislators can look at it by itself. I think we have to look at a lot of other areas, as my hon. colleague across the way has mentioned. There are a lot of other factors involved in this.

I have a lot of faith in our 18-year-old people. They are our future. They're the future of our country. If you're going to try and stop some of the people who are drinking and driving on our roads, I don't think you should even begin to stop at the 18-year-olds. You should put it up to the 22- or the 25-year-olds or, in some cases, maybe the 60-year-olds. I don't know. But I support their right to make their own decisions, and I think somebody has to stand up for them a little bit here. They can be convicted in adult court of murder. They're responsible for what they do at the age of 18. They can be taken in the army or they can join the army or the navy. I've known many people who were in there at the age of 17. I don't think it hurt them all that much. They're fast-thinking; they're good-thinking people. I think that if we're going to do this, then we'd better look at the whole picture of the age of majority. Maybe it should be 21, maybe it should be 25, or maybe it should be 30. I don't know. But I don't think you can discriminate and take one portion of their rights away. I think it's very important that we recognize that these people are the future of this country.

I, for one, cannot support this motion in its present form because of that very reason, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Drumheller.

MR. SCHUMACHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say how much I enjoyed the comments of my hon. friends the members for Wainwright and Cardston in supporting this motion today. I get the sense of some type of schizophrenia in this Assembly on the subject of liquor – well, if not schizophrenia, maybe a huge amount of inertia, because for sure nobody in here or very few of the members want to make any type of change. The hon. Member for Calgary-McCall has from time to time pleaded for some changes in our approach to the selling of liquor; I myself have made some interventions in that area. But whether it's raising the age or having a more sensible way of marketing liquor in the province, it seems like everybody's afraid to touch the status quo. I'm just sort of amazed about that attitude amongst all of us collectively. We just seem to be very, very much afraid of this topic.

I guess maybe that's easy for me to say now that my youngest child will be 19 on May 15, because I must confess to hon. members that in the last year or so when I've been making a few comments about this subject at home, the dinner table debate has gotten quite heated from time to time. My eldest child will be 21 in June. I've noticed that the fire has sort of gone out of him in the last year or two because he knows he's over the endangered age.

Nevertheless, we've heard comments about the fact that it's a proven fact that our Treasury could save millions and millions of dollars. I haven't heard anybody here who was supporting the seat belt legislation so strongly as a method of saving the Treasury millions and millions of dollars get up and support this motion. Whether it's schizophrenia or not or a double standard or a triple standard or what, I don't know, but we don't hear anybody saying that. Maybe you could say why am I doing this now when I wasn't supporting the seat belt legislation, but I guess, to have everything out on the table, that's a fact of life.

The hon. Member for Westlock-Sturgeon's comments were interesting, as they always are. He talks about rights and privileges. He says that driving is a privilege but drinking is a right. I don't know what dictionary or what source of information he uses for that. I think it's just equally easy to argue that they're either both rights or both privileges. I didn't hear him; maybe somebody else later will explain what he meant or what tests or standards he used in arriving at what is a right and what is a privilege.

The question was asked: why stop at 19? Well, I think the obvious answer is that part of our main problem, as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Cardston most recently, is that there is a serious problem in the schools. If it went to 19, it would alleviate that problem greatly. As the hon. Member for Wainwright pointed out in quoting the letter from the high school student: practical experience. This has been stated time and time again from all over the province. Our Alberta School Trustees' Association has mentioned that it is a problem. We all know it in our own communities, where we find these graduation parties. We had one in Drumheller a couple of years ago. Unfortunately, it ended in the loss of life of a budding young person who had a great future ahead of him, because alcohol led to carbon monoxide poisoning. I think we should take these things seriously. We see it happening around us all the time in our own acquaintances. Why are we so afraid to move this thing one year?

The United States federal government in 1983 – I guess it's already been pointed out – said they were going to increase the drinking age in all 50 states to 21 come hell or high water, and they did it. They did it through the abuse of a spending power, of course, but we're sort of used to that in this country. They said no more money for interstate highways in any state that did not have a drinking age limit of 21. Within a few months every state had increased its drinking age from 18 or 19 or 20, or whatever it was, to 21.

I'm not saying that the federal government should do that here, but it can be done. There has not been the imposition of a totalitarian state in the United States because of this increase in the drinking age. It has saved 4,500 lives in a space of five or six years. It has also saved a great deal of crippling and permanent disability, I would suppose, to tens of thousands of people who otherwise would be on the expensive medical care system with no end of other problems to the families of those poor victims. So the evidence is so clear that there is an illness in our system that should be corrected, and the evidence is there that it can be corrected. So why do people not want to think about it?

I guess all our own experience is that when we were 18, in those ancient days or olden days, we were able to imbibe. I certainly was. I can well remember going into a beer parlor in Donalda, Alberta.

AN HON. MEMBER: How old were you?

MR. SCHUMACHER: The drinking age was 21; I was 18. But I'm suggesting now that when it's at 18, you're getting the 15- and 16-year-old people in there.

We've talked about the future. Here we know alcohol is a very powerful drug. It's an addictive drug. Is that the way – do we want a bunch of drunks leading us in the future? I mean, that question has to be asked. Shall we make it possible for this to happen?

MR. SIGURDSON: Where's Sir John A. Macdonald when you need him?

MR. SCHUMACHER: All I'd say, hon. Member for Edmonton-Belmont: there's the exception to every rule.

But you've got to look at the common results of what we're doing here. We do have an ability to do something about a clear and pressing problem in our society, and I would urge members to think about taking, you know, that really dangerous leap of increasing the drinking age by one year. I don't think it will cause the end of our province, and I think we could do it a lot of good.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIGURDSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the hon. Member for Drumheller said in closing that he didn't think increasing the drinking age by one year would cause the end of the problem.

MR. SCHUMACHER: The province, I said.

MR. SIGURDSON: The end of the province. Oh, I'm sorry. I misunderstood.

Well, let me just say that I don't think it would cause the end of the problem either. There is a problem with a lot of people who are drinking, regardless of their age. Whether they're 18 or whether they're 80, if they're drinking excessively and especially if they're then getting behind the wheel of a motor vehicle, we have a catastrophe about to happen.

When I was attending high school in British Columbia, we had a couple of individuals in my graduating class who were under the age of majority but it never stopped them from being able to access alcohol. They were always able to pull out the bottles, have a number of drinks, and we would go out and join in with them. They would drink excessively, and some of us would leave. The problem is that when we left, they stayed behind because they had to hide. They had to hide the fact that they were going to get liquored up. That's part of the problem: if we lower an age, I believe we're just going to be driving the problem further away. We're going to be hiding the problem by saying that if we raise the drinking age, all those who are under that age are now going to have to go back to the bush parties or the grad parties that are going to host alcohol, and they're going to have to hide that. I don't think that is the intent of the motion; I'm certain that's not the intent of the motion.

One of the problems I see for people, my friends who were drinking excessively, is that they weren't getting the help they should have been getting because they were hiding. They might not make it back to the high school dance or to the parties that we were heading out to, but they weren't getting the help either. They were staying back, and they were drinking excessively. Maybe, just maybe, if they had attended some of the parties that some of us attended or there had been parental supervision or the supervision of teachers and counselors at the schools, those teachers and counselors or parents would have noticed that "Jeez, George is showing up to an awful lot of the school programs or parties in this graduation year, and he's seeming a little tipsy. He's seeming a lot tipsy. Maybe somebody ought to start looking at George and finding out what the problem is." With this, what we're saying is that if we hide or if we raise the

age, George is going to stay back. George isn't going to show up to those parties again, and nobody is going to notice. He's not conspicuous by his absence; he'd be conspicuous by the presence of alcohol on him during those parties.

So I can't support this motion. I support the intent, but the problem is that I believe what we're going to do by raising the age to some arbitrary figure is forcing too many young people back into hiding the problems they've got, the addiction they're developing, and we're going to be denying them access – hopefully access to a treatment program. That's what I would argue for. I would argue in favour of greater treatment, greater availability of treatment programs and of counseling services, not arguing for the increasing of an age, because I don't think there's any magical number. We've got to make sure that once the problem is identified, we've got the resolve to find the solution to the problem.

Thank you.

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Cypress-Redcliff.

MR. HYLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking against the motion . . .

MR. ACTING DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. This is to remind hon. members that it is necessary to rise if you wish to speak.

The Member for Cypress-Redcliff, would you please proceed.

MR. HYLAND: Mr. Speaker, in speaking against the motion, I would ask members to think about a few things. The motion talks about raising the drinking age, not the age of majority. Others have spoken of their concerns about this. I would also say that if you're an adult, you're an adult. How can you tell somebody, "You can't go and have a drink when you're 18, but you can sign a legally binding contract"? You can enlist and be a policeman and be through before you're 19 and be called to break up a fight in a bar. What do you do? "Well, I can't go in; I'm not old enough." So if we're going to do it, let's do it all. Let's raise the age of majority. Let's raise the whole thing. Let's not try and go at it bit by bit.

We had something a number of years ago called prohibition, and it did not stop drinking. It just made it so you went to the doctor to get a certificate to go to the druggist to get a bottle so you could have it for medicinal purposes.

MR. FOX: Do you remember that?

MR. HYLAND: No, but I heard stories about it.

And how many of us tried to get into a hotel, whether it was on a lark or whatever, before we were either 18 or 21?

AN HON. MEMBER: Not me.

MR. HYLAND: "Not me," somebody says.

Agreed, there's a problem in schools with drinking, but maybe, as the hon. member who spoke before me – and this is an interesting situation, where he and I are agreeing. There's got to be something wrong with one of our views, maybe people would say. [interjection] Somebody says we're both wrong.

But if there's a problem, let's go after that problem. Let's do something about that. Let's increase the penalties for those caught either in the lounges or the hotels. Let's make it

automatic or something; let's not leave it to the discretion of a judge so that they'll go in, they'll get caught, they'll hire a high-priced lawyer, and he'll get them off on a technicality or something. If we're serious, let's make it mandatory. If we get caught speeding, there's a fine; it's set. We know what the chances are when we speed. We all seem to do it. Some of us get caught, some don't. Some get caught more often than others. If that's the problem, let's approach that problem. Let's get it out of the schools. Let's go after it that way. If you're caught in a licensed premises under the age, you pay for it and not just get it thrown out the door. Let's make it a fine. Then you'll remember if it hits your pocketbook or your parents' pocketbook – they'll remind you. If you're going after something, let's not go after it with a shotgun approach.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

We heard members this afternoon speak about graduations and the terrible things that happen at graduations. I'd invite them to my small town. The way the 18-year-olds and the senior high grade 12 kids in the two schools have approached graduation: in co-operation with their parents and the police, they hold graduation parties. They hold them on the farms usually, in a quonset or something on a farm, and they're supervised by the parents. Sure, there's alcohol there, but the policemen come out, too, and they'll sit there all night if you ask them. They'll co-operate. When somebody's ready to go home, they blow, and if they blow over .08, they don't move. The parents take the keys of all the cars, Mr. Speaker. In co-operation the other kids see that it's done. Let's give our young people – let's at least recognize what they're doing to try and solve their own problems. They'll solve their problems amongst their own, and that'll last. Something we may impose on them won't always last.

I understand some of the things that happened in the States where they raised the drinking age: immediately, dramatically, it dropped. But the statistics now aren't bearing that out. It's coming back now, and it's questionable whether it was all worth it, whether they cured the problem with one fell swoop. So, Mr. Speaker, members, I would urge you to think about that as you consider not supporting this motion in the Legislature.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Vegreville.

MR. FOX: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make a few comments on the motion proposed by the Member for Wainwright. I would like to commend him for giving members of the Assembly a chance to debate what I think is an important issue and one that certainly is of concern to a lot of people in the province of Alberta.

I should note for the record that I did a survey of my constituents some years ago, the basic purpose of which was to determine what degree of support there was in the constituency for the legislated use of seat belts. We included questions on that survey – and I should point out that it was a random sample of about 500 people in the constituency selected in much the same way that the Gallup and other organizations do – about the drinking age. There was a considerable amount of support for increasing the drinking age in a general way from people in the Vegreville constituency, and I should note that support was strongest in the older age-groups, because we were able to break the sample down according to age-group. But the consensus disappeared when asked: what age should it be raised

to, 19, 20, 21? There was a wide variance on the ages suggested by people. In fact, the number of people who were willing to commit themselves to a specific age didn't add up to the number that said the age should be increased. So there seems to be some general feeling, at least out in my part of the country, that the drinking age should be raised but not much consensus on what the age should be raised to.

That, I guess, highlights the concerns I have, reminded of them by the Member for Cypress-Redcliff, that age is not always the relevant factor here, Mr. Speaker. I know there are problems with alcohol abuse, certainly problems with young people learning to handle the responsibilities of adulthood and combining that with the lure of alcohol and the assorted social activities that go along with that. I'm speaking as someone who has children, a parent with children who are entering their teenage years, and certainly I'm well aware of the pressures that are on kids and share the concern of the Member for Wainwright when he raises the possibility of increasing the drinking age. And I guess I speak as someone whose life has been touched in a very direct way by the abuse of alcohol in terms of people very close to me. So I feel sensitive to the issues, but I'm not convinced that legislating an increase in the legal drinking age is the answer.

I think our greatest asset in the battle, in the effort, to develop a more responsible and moderate use of alcohol is education. You know, I think we need to redouble our efforts to put resources into things like programs of AADAC and education programs that reach out into the community to try and help young people understand that they have responsibilities, that along with privileges go responsibilities, and that there are some considerable downside risks to the little bit of pleasure that may be involved with going out and having a few drinks with your friends on a Friday night after school.

To me, raising the age is not a solution to the problem of drinking among young people. Education and to some degree enforcement certainly have a role to play. I must say that I'm pleased in a general way with the kind of focus provided by the Solicitor General in terms of determining that we're going to be very tough in dealing with people who decide that drinking and driving is an appropriate combination. I think the concerns raised by the Member for Cypress-Redcliff about the age of majority are ones that we have to consider very seriously. We do tell young people that they are able to enjoy the privileges and responsibilities of adulthood in a number of ways. I think it would be difficult to tell them at this point that they can do all these things that come along with adulthood – marry, engage in legal contract, serve their country, borrow money and get into debt like some of us did at that age – but that they can't drink. It's a very arbitrary . . . [interjection] Vote as well. Thank you, hon. Government House Leader. They can vote at 18 as well. So they have the opportunity to elect us, to participate in the democratic process, but we would now say to them, "We don't think you're responsible enough to drink," without ever having given them a chance to do that.

So I do commend the member for bringing forward the motion. I think it's an important one. But I'm not convinced that raising the drinking age is the answer, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not convinced that raising the age would limit the availability of alcohol for young people. I think we've got to reach out into the community and redouble our efforts to educate people about the responsibilities that go along with using alcohol and the kinds of liabilities that are associated with it so that people are

aware that there can be a considerable cost associated with excessive use and abuse of alcohol.

I might move, Mr. Speaker, if it's appropriate, that we adjourn debate at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Having heard the motion, those in favour, please say aye.

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed? Carried. Thank you.

Government House Leader.

MR. HORSMAN: Mr. Speaker, by way of advice to members of the Assembly, tomorrow afternoon in Committee of Supply

it's proposed to deal with Occupational Health and Safety, Workers' Compensation, and this evening in Committee of Supply, Culture and Multiculturalism. I would move that when the members assemble at 8 o'clock this evening, they do so as the Committee of Supply and that the House stand adjourned until such time as the committee rises and reports.

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

HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Opposed, please say no. Motion carries.

(The House recessed at 5:28 p.m.)

